

The identities of South Asian girls in a
multicultural school context: constructions,
negotiations and constraints

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A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

July 2016

I, Veena Meetoo 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.

Abstract

This thesis explores the identities of South Asian girls in relation to the multicultural backdrop of one mixed sex inner-city state secondary school. It interrogates how the girls constructed, negotiated and contested their social identities within the school's approach to managing diversity through discourses of 'everyday' multiculturalism. The research constituted a three-year case study consisting of in-depth interviews to explore the perspectives of nine teachers who were involved with the Ethnic Minority Achievement and Inclusion departments, and nine 'South Asian' 15-16 year old girls, mainly first generation migrants from the Indian sub-continent and Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Afghanistan. An intersectional approach was employed to investigate the ways in which the girls, as racialized and gendered subjects are socially positioned by teachers and position themselves in the school's multicultural context.

The findings illuminate the ways in which multiculturalism was a contested 'top down' policy response to diversity, but also an 'everyday' reality, evident in teachers' varied enactments of 'everyday' multiculturalism and the girls' daily negotiations of diversity. An analytic focus on 'everyday' multiculturalism was crucial in providing an understanding of how teachers positioned the girls and the girls positioned themselves. Findings specifically highlight how racialized and gendered identities in 'everyday' multiculturalism were shifting and transformative. Yet, since essentialised versions of culture were reproduced in 'everyday' multiculturalism, the girls negotiated and navigated identities that were also constraining and hierarchical, particularly in dominant discourses of 'Asian' girls, forced marriage and 'between two cultures'. These findings have implications for policy and practice in teacher education in terms of the need to institutionalize a more complex multicultural approach in which issues of cultural racism can be openly addressed.

Acknowledgements

I would like thank, first and foremost, the nine girls who participated in this study. I am grateful for having met you and will remember your generosity in sharing your thoughts and experiences. Thank you to the nine teachers who welcomed me into the school. I deeply appreciate your willingness to participate and allowing me to intrude on your working days and precious time.

My supervisors, Professors Ann Phoenix and Heidi Safia Mirza deserve special thanks. They have supported me through this long and arduous journey, and spent much time and energy reading numerous drafts, offering invaluable intellectual comments and feedback. I am also grateful to Katherine Twamley who, as internal reader, provided me with detailed and useful comments.

I have wonderful fellow student friends to thank, both old and new, especially Cindy Brooks, Geeta Ludhra, Kathryn Kashyap, and Abigail Knight. They kept me focused and offered their ears, support and hugs.

Lastly, my family deserve a massive thank you. I would not have been able to complete this without the support of my Mum and Dad who have over these years picked up my daughters from school and looked after them when I have been occupied with the thesis. Marcello has been the most patient, respectful and dedicated husband, having spent his evenings reading and discussing my work with me, and being with our girls when I have been 'absent'. I apologise to my daughters, Nadya and Anjali, for all the times we have lost at weekends and holidays. However, I hope that they will be able to take my PhD experience as some form of inspiration to go on follow their hearts and achieve their goals.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Rationale for the study

The primary aim of this study is to interrogate the ways in which the social identities of a group of South Asian girls in an inner city secondary state comprehensive school were shaped by multicultural policies and practices. The multicultural setting of the school was discursive, encompassing top down state multiculturalism and interventions, but also multiculturalism as 'everyday' - a notion I take up and develop in this thesis. There are a number of current concerns that have influenced the topic under investigation.

First, in relation to its focus on South Asian girls, this study explores a group that has been the subject of negative state and media interest in relation to culture and tradition¹, and gender based violence that stems from the family. This can be seen in the flow of newspaper reports, documentaries as well as state interventions in practices such as forced marriage, 'honour' crimes, and bogus marriages (Phillips 2007; Gill and Anitha 2011). Further, tackling violence against women and girls from minority ethnic groups and therefore the 'cultural' specifics of violence, is high on the public agenda both nationally and on a global scale (e.g. Girls Summit, UK 2014). Such dominant representations of South Asian girls typically position them as 'between two cultures' (i.e. neither aligned to 'Eastern' culture and traditions nor to values constructed as more liberal and progressive values of the 'West'). This overly simplistic representation of South Asian girls and their families has been met with criticism, particularly through scholarly work on South Asian girls' identities.

¹ 'Culture' can be referred to as 'a way of life' for groups of people (Williams 1981), but the work of critical post-colonial writers (Said 1978; Spivak 1988) situate 'culture' in social and historical contexts that foreground binary constructions such as East and West. 'Culture' has also been understood through 'third spaces' in which subjects negotiate more fluid versions of identity and culture (Bhabha 2004). In this thesis, I do not take culture to be fixed and tangible, but something that is represented and also worked on by subjects (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of my approach). The term 'tradition' refers to ways of thinking and behaving passed down from generation to generation.

As I explore in Chapter 2, literature on South Asian girls also generally takes a disproportionate over-focus on the 'melodrama' of family life (Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003), where issues of stringent marriage practices, cultural norms, lack of agency and strict parenting continue to be main topics for research. Through this study I aim to contribute to the literature on identities but do so in relation to the discourse of multiculturalism, rather than by focusing on attainment, social and cultural capital, and configurations of cultural difference, which have been previously explored. The focus in this study therefore does not emphasise cultural specificity and ethnic differences but the ways in which they are constructed in an educational institutional context.

Second, my rationale for focusing on the discourse of multiculturalism has arisen in relation to increasingly held assumptions that we live in troubled multicultural times because of incompatibility between the cultures of South Asian groups with the white British norm (Kundnani 2012). Multiculturalism is largely referred to as a political and policy response (Kymlicka 2010) to govern and manage the new multi-ethnicity created by non-white immigrant populations (Rattansi 2011), and as an issue of 'managing' and responding to ethnic and cultural diversity more generally (Ahmed 2009). Various British governments have promoted multiculturalism in the past through top down policies².

Young British Muslims, the majority of whom are also of South Asian descent, are currently represented in dominant governmental and media discourse as examples that multiculturalism has failed (Phillips 2005; Harris 2013). Numerous key events have given rise to this, such as the terrorist attacks in New York and London that have been associated with radical Islam (11.09.01 and 07.07.05 respectively). The disturbances in the Northern British towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001, which involved clashes between Asian and white youths, were understood to be indicative of the separation and 'parallel lives' of white

² I discuss the multicultural backdrop further in Chapter 3.

and Asian residents (Cantle 2001). Multiculturalism was seen to encourage separatist identities through its policies for the continuation of distinct cultural groups to live in silos instead of interacting with one another. These events were taken as an indication that Britain was 'sleepwalking to segregation' (Phillips 2005), and marked the beginning of a challenge to Britain's 'tolerance' of difference (Kundnani 2012).

Since 2001, a number of interventions under New Labour have been developed to combat multiculturalism's failures in the form of performative signifiers of allegiance, including citizenship testing and ceremonies (Lentin and Titley 2012), and the creation of a policy agenda that involves dropping official state multiculturalism for a notion of community cohesion³ (Kundnani 2012). The rise of the discourse and policies of state community cohesion emphasise the supposed remedy of connectedness and allegiance to a British national identity in order to address the rift that multiculturalism has been accused of producing (McGhee 2008; Race 2011). Muslim groups take centre stage in these developments where:

“...almost all of the issues which are taken up by this discourse and repeatedly cited as evidence of the crisis of multiculturalism are linked to Muslim communities [who have come to symbolise]...the danger of cultural difference and become the focus for a project producing good, liberal individuals who have absorbed British, European or Western values” (Kundnani 2012: 158).

Although contradictory, discourses of community cohesion and multiculturalism continue to exist alongside one another in the management of Britain's diversity.

³ Following the report from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion ('Our Shared Future'), published in 2007, community cohesion was defined as "*what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another*". I address the community cohesion agenda in Chapter 3.

More recently, Western states have witnessed terrorism carried out by 'home-grown' Muslims (i.e. those born and raised in Western Europe) and have been grappling with the involvement and recruitment of Western born Muslims in the Islamic State (Isis)⁴. Muslim girls, some of whom are of school age, are being recruited as 'Jihadi Brides' via social media to join Isis in Syria (Saltman and Smith 2015), and are therefore increasingly visible in public life. The discourse on the failure of multiculturalism positions a significant proportion of Muslim girls who are also typically of South Asian descent (i.e. Bangladeshi and Pakistani) as the Others within, as symbols of fundamentalism, terrorism and victims of religious and cultural oppression (see Chapters 2 and 3). South Asian and Muslim girls remain a prominent focus of the British multicultural landscape as troubled subjects and in need of being 'managed'.

Third, and in light of the above issues, multiculturalism also has a key role in public institutions such as schools, and particularly our super-diverse⁵ multi ethnic schools, as a site where the management of diversity takes place for young people. In schools, structured multicultural activities and interventions often take the form of celebrations of different cultures and customs, and representation in the curriculum (Race 2011). I set out to examine how multiculturalism alongside other discourses on diversity management plays out in the 'everyday' microcosm of the school, for South Asian and Muslim girls more specifically.

Fourth, scholarly work on multiculturalism has undergone a shift towards conceptualising multiculturalism as lived experience with a focus on everyday meanings within 'everyday' multiculturalism (Gilroy 2004; Harris 2013). This shift has developed in response to the backlash against multiculturalism and some of its perceived unwanted effects such as the suggestion that Britain has sleep walked into segregation (Phillips 2005). A focus on the 'everyday' experiences and the lived realities of

⁴ Isis refers to the Islamist militant group that has seized parts of land between Syria and Iraq.

⁵ Vertovec (2007) refers to 'super-diversity' as the diversification and multiple migration paths that increasingly characterize urban contexts and cities. I discuss 'super-diversity' in Chapters 3 and 7.

multiculturalism responds to the pressing need of addressing how we can live with difference so that British 'multiculture' can be celebrated without anxiety and fear (Gilroy 2004). In this thesis, I take up the notion of multiculturalism as 'everyday' in the school as a way forward from the culture trap and reductionism that is particularly important for this group of girls given dominant negative representations of their 'culture' as oppressive.

The topic of the thesis relates to a significant proportion of the UK's black and minority population. According to the last Census in 2011, 'Asians' constituted the largest minority ethnic group at 7.5%, with population rises within each category since the previous Census (ONS 2011). The term 'South Asians' more specifically refers to those with ancestry from the Indian subcontinent (i.e. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). According to the last census South Asians constituted 5.3% of the population. Indians made up the largest of the South Asian minority ethnic group (2.5% of the population), followed by Pakistani (2%), and Bangladeshi (0.8%). However, beyond official definitions, conceptualising a single South Asian diaspora is problematic given the variety in experiences and migration histories amongst this group. A significant number of Asians in the UK have ancestry from the Indian subcontinent, but were born in other colonial and diasporic countries such as Mauritius, Kenya, and Uganda (Brown and Talbot 2006).

In addition, the last Census indicates that there has been a significant rise in the 'Other Asian' category which contains different populations such as Sri Lankan, Filipino, Afghani, Thai, Vietnamese and Iranian. The 'Other Asian' group grew the fastest, more than trebling in size to some 830,000 people (Khan 2014), but has so far been largely overlooked in research to date. I was fortunate enough to encounter 'Other Asian' girls from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Mauritius, as well as from the more traditional trio of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (see Chapter 7). These girls provided me with an opportunity to explore how 'Other' Asian and South Asian girls were socially positioned in the school context.

Despite the lack of recognition of complexity in the term, using the category 'South Asian' in research has its benefits, hence my engagement with the category throughout this thesis. Shain (2003) draws on the category 'South Asian' as opposed to a single ethnic or religious group (e.g. Sikhs, Indians, Pakistanis) to explore common experiences that are not about the individual or the sub group, but general patterns of experience due to being constructed as of the same group. In keeping with Shain, I critically engage with homogenous racialised constructions of 'Asian' girls but set out to elucidate the processes of social positioning that determine South Asian and 'Other Asian' girls as homogenous. I thus adopt the term 'South Asian' to denote shared processes of racialisation in the school due to processes of social positioning.

1.2 The research questions

Although a number of studies have explored female South Asian social identities in educational contexts (see Chapter 2), this thesis aims to contribute to knowledge by paying specific attention to how South Asian girls' identities are formed in a secondary school and the multicultural backdrop that characterizes it. Here, I refer to both the management of ethnic diversity as a state-derived discourse, and the 'everyday' multiculturalism in the school, which refers to mundane everyday interactions when living with difference (Gilroy 2004; Harris 2013). In addition, my study is situated in a school that can be described as 'super-diverse' (Vertovec 2010). The research has been conducted in light of three main questions which I set out below. In addition, a number of sub research questions have been developed as the literature searches and research process got underway.

1. How is cultural difference and ethnic diversity dealt with for South Asian girls in a multicultural school context?

In light of understandings that young people's diversity is managed by (white) adults (Harris 2013) with schools as a key institutional site in

which this occurs, this research question explores the ways in which ethnic differences are understood and responded to by school staff. My primary aim here is to scope the school's response to diversity by investigating how staff understood and responded to ethnic mix and teaching in an ethnically, super-diverse environment. By focusing on one school, I look to deepen this understanding by exploring the following sub questions:

- What discourses of diversity management are drawn upon to shape the school's approach?
- How do school staff differ from one another in their management and response to ethnic diversity, and to what effects?
- What are the implications of the school's multicultural approach for South Asian girls'?
- How do teachers position South Asian girls and their families in light of approaches to managing diversity?

2. How is gendered risk for South Asian girls understood and dealt with in a school context?

Current concerns about racialised forms of risk related to gender based violence such as 'honour' crimes and forced marriage, are also predominantly seen as the preserve of South Asian and Muslim groups. These forms of gender based violence have been commonly used in popular discourse as a marker of the 'between two cultures'⁶ thesis (Gill 2014), thus making it a timely area for exploration. South Asian and Muslim girls are ultimately positioned at the centre of interventions on 'honour' violence and forced marriage, yet their experiences remain largely absent from empirical studies (see Chapters 2 and 3). However, as it was uncertain whether I would encounter girls who had experienced 'honour' violence, forced marriage, or indeed any other form of gendered risks, I sought to keep an open mind about the dangers the girls were perceived to face or had experienced, and chose to explore 'risk' more generally from the perspectives of the teachers and the girls. Through this

⁶ I extensively discuss the 'between two cultures' thesis in Chapter 2

second overarching research question, the perceptions of staff and the girls on forms of danger and risk they saw as pressing concerns are explored. The following sub questions are addressed:

- What forms of gendered risk do school staff identify for South Asian girls?
- How do the teachers and the girls understand and manage such risks, both 'real' and potential?
- How are teachers' responses influenced by their understanding of cultural difference?

3. How do South Asian girls construct, negotiate and contest their identities in the multicultural context of the school?

Through this question, I explore the girls' identities in the 'everyday' multicultural context of the school, alongside the following sub questions:

- How do the girls position themselves as religious, ethnic, and gendered subjects?
- How do the intersections of 'race', migration, gender and generation affect the girls' social positioning in the school?
- How do the girls' intersecting social identities affect their scope for agency?

There are a number of objectives that I set out to achieve through this study. First, I hope this thesis will contribute to the limited number of studies on processes of racialization and on South Asian girls' identities in secondary school (see chapters 2 and 3). More specifically, I hope it will elucidate how processes of racialization are shaped through the multicultural backdrop, and lived through the 'everyday' experiences of girls. Second, by exploring how the girls view and navigate discourses in which they are positioned as 'between two cultures' such as 'honour' violence and forced marriage, I hope to provide a more nuanced understanding of the risks they face. Such findings may feed into developing more sensitive policy responses to gender based violence for South Asian girls. Finally, I hope this study will contribute to literature on

'race', ethnic and gender identities through the adoption of an intersectional approach that considers processes of migration, religion and sexuality in 'everyday' multicultural and super-diverse contexts to enable a more nuanced understanding of 'race' relations in our schools.

1.3 Mapping my path: the personal matters

My interest in this topic began as a result of childhood experiences growing up in Britain, which on numerous occasions involved being perceived by others as 'South Asian'. I was, for instance, asked by school friends if I would have an arranged marriage, if I could cook them curry, and by teachers, if I could speak Punjabi or Urdu. These questions are based on attributes predominantly associated with some South Asian groups but were puzzling to me, primarily because my home life did not mirror these concerns. I am of mixed descent, born in the UK to my father from Mauritius of Indian heritage and my mother, from Malaysia who is of Chinese heritage. There was no talk of arranged marriages in our house, which was not surprising to me given that my parents had a 'love' marriage. They met as young trainee NHS psychiatric nurses in South London in the 1970s where they were 'welcomed' as economic migrants, plugging a gap in a shortage of nursing staff. Rather than our family meals being characterised by Indian cuisine as my friends had assumed, our meals were varied, consisting of eclectic mixes of dishes from my parents' countries of origin but also British, Turkish and other cuisines, which were all firm family favourites.

My experience highlights that mixed race identity remains predominantly silent whilst dominant homogenous ethnic categories continue to prevail (Ahmed 1997; Ali 2003a), and how complexity is often written out of multicultural discourses in favour of reductionism. I would therefore describe my childhood experiences as being 'racialised' by others around me (i.e. the processes by which ideas about my 'race'⁷ were constructed and came to be regarded as meaningful) (Murji and Solomos 2005). I was

⁷ I refer to 'race' in parentheses to denote its instability and therefore ambiguity as a concept. Within sociology 'race' is understood to have no biological basis, and is unstable, ever shifting and connected to other structures such as class and gender.

first made aware of my racialised position around the age of seven at primary school after being called 'Paki' by another pupil and told to 'go back to where I came from'. Through other pupils' positioning of me, I became conscious that I was somehow 'different' (Phoenix 2005), and that such processes of positioning were predominantly negative.

Experiences of being racially positioned carried on well beyond primary school. Moving from South London at the age of twelve, most of my teenage years were spent in a white majority working class Kentish seaside town, situated in close proximity to the now UKIP⁸ strong presence in South Thanet. In addition to the racial banter and verbal abuse at school, as a teenage girl, issues of racialised and gendered sexuality came to the fore. I was referred to by some boys as the least sexually desirable in the class because of my 'unusual' physical features, whilst other normative 'white blonde' versions of femininity were elevated. Although not apparent to me at the time, such comments were the product of racialised hierarchies of beauty, where the darker the skin colour the less desirable one was perceived by others (Mirza et al 2011). Beyond peer relations, my schooling experiences were also characterised by expectations from teachers about my behaviour where I was expected to be quiet, well behaved and a high academic achiever. These are all traits stereotypically associated with South Asian girls (see Chapter 2) and denote the inescapability of embodying racialised and gendered difference (Mirza 2013).

My experiences of being Othered in school were coupled with the reinforcement from my parents that we were 'different' from most of the white English families. This was mainly manifested through the restrictions they placed upon how I was allowed to socialise with peers. I was forbidden from attending sleepovers and going out in the evenings. My parents repeatedly explained that their decision to restrict how I

⁸ UKIP (UK Independence Party) is a Eurosceptic and right-wing populist party in the United Kingdom. At the 2015 general election, the party gained the third largest share of votes in England.

socialised was based on their concern that I would be influenced by some 'English' girls to form relationships with boys. Having boyfriends at a young age, they told me, was 'not in our culture'. Boyfriends were seen as a distraction from school-work, which would in turn negatively influence educational attainment. Obtaining a good education was important to my parents because it was a means to career and financial progression, and most importantly, progression in relation to what they had achieved. At the time, I often harboured feelings of resentment as I viewed their style of parenting only to exacerbate my difference from the other white British pupils. I felt I had been dealt a double whammy, feeling excluded from what I saw as 'mainstream' circles of teenage peers and their activities, but also not quite feeling aligned to my parents' way of life. At the time, I felt as though I was 'caught 'between two cultures' (Watson 1977; Ghuman 2003).

My recollections of growing up in Britain as a second generation migrant are not as 'dramatic' as those that have been depicted by some South Asian women growing up in the 1960s and 1970s. Gunaratnam (1999) vividly describes childhood memories of racial abuse at age six years and how her mother had made concerted efforts to pass on vital elements of family and cultural history. I was not socialised into being a 'real' Indian Mauritian or Chinese Malaysian by my parents, but rather, it often felt like I was aligned to 'a bit of both worlds', which were based on my parents' reconstructions of their family life and values they associated with 'back home'. Their ancestors had also been through previous migratory pathways linked to empire and labour (i.e. from India to Mauritius, and China to Malaysia), and determining 'roots' was therefore complex for our family. Expressing my Britishness was never discouraged. I did not have a clear sense of ethnic allegiance because of the eclecticism in my heritage. However, in part, I began to identify with a post-colonial South Asian experience because I had been racialised by others as such (Brah 1996).

As a higher education Sociology student I began to challenge the overly simplistic 'between two cultures' understanding of myself I once had. I felt a sense of therapeutic relief that my perceptions were given legitimacy through studies which documented similar experiences of South Asian (and Muslim) girls growing up in Britain (Basit 1997, Haw 1998, Shain 2003, Bhopal 2010), which helped me to challenge the culturally reductionist explanations that I and others, including family and friends, gave to my experiences. Whilst working as a researcher in higher education, I have been influenced by studies that have examined the experiences and social positions of South Asian females in Britain, and critically examine the role of race, gender and class (Brah 1996; Bhopal 1997; 2010; Shain 2003; 2010; Gill 2003; Chantler 2006; Mirza 2009a; Ludhra 2015). This work has provided an alternative reading of the South Asian female experience by moving beyond culturally reductionist accounts and towards the power relations that mark the intersecting racialised and gendered hierarchies within British society (see Chapter 2).

My experiences of growing up as mixed heritage but also positioned as South Asian, have therefore influenced my approach to this the research. My personal experiences partially determine how I make sense of the social world, and have been a significant factor in influencing my arrival to this study. I refer to my position as shaped by a 'black feminist sensibility'. The term 'black' feminisms (plural) is perhaps a more fitting term given that like feminism(s) more generically, black feminism has been applied in multiple ways to explore the positions and experiences of a range of women from black and minority ethnic and religious groups (Mirza 1997; Mirza 2009b; 2015a)⁹. I now provide a background to black feminisms and explain why it has been a key influence in my understanding of earlier personal experiences and its significance for this study.

⁹ The term 'black' feminism has been subjected to lengthy debates, particularly in light of who can be included under the 'black feminist' umbrella and whose experiences can be addressed. Across the Atlantic, 'black' was coupled with the assumption of African descent (Hill Collins 1990), whereas in the UK, 'black' was used as a political identity to include the country's then two largest groups of immigrants from the colonies (i.e. those of African Caribbean and South Asian descent) (Mirza 1997).

1.4 A black feminist 'sensitivity'

Black feminisms largely illuminate how women of colour have been and continue to be placed at the margins of society, as well as understanding the specificity of experience (Mirza 1997; Hill Collins 1990). Black feminisms were mainly born out of a weakness in the different strands of (white Western) feminist scholarship (e.g. Marxist feminism and radical feminism) that failed to take into account how race relations impacted on gendered experiences with differential outcomes for women of colour. The early black feminist African American scholar bell hooks (1981), critiqued the processes of sexist and racist socialisation, where subjects were brainwashed to accept certain versions of history that erased racial imperialism (e.g. as in the case of education). She argued:

“Despite the predominance of patriarchal rule in American society, America was colonised on a racially imperialistic base and not a sexually imperialistic base” (hooks 1981:122.)

Although black and white women are both subject to sexism, hooks claimed that as victims of racism, black women experienced oppressions that white women did not face. Further, due to racialised hierarchies, white women occupied the role of oppressor in relation to black women and black men. While the UK has a different history and different social conditions, the black feminist writer Hazel Carby (1982) similarly problematised a unified feminist vision as issues facing black women had been excluded from white feminists' ideals. This led Carby to argue that the white feminist agenda was implicitly racist and ethnocentric because it failed to account for the different sources of oppression for black women. By not recognising the racial dimension to oppression that hooks (1981) similarly observed, white British feminism also remained oblivious to the power relations between women, which can be seen in, for instance, minority ethnic women's inequality in the labour market (Dale et al 2002; Bhavnani 2006; Nandi and Platt 2010).

The family and reproduction were also identified by black feminists as sites of difference through which patriarchy was played out for black

women (Carby 1982; Bhopal 1997). Carby (1982) argued that white feminist critiques of the family as a site of oppression were focused on the Western nuclear family structure, and in so doing neglected the strong female support networks that exist in many black sex/gender systems. While her arguments may be traced back to the 1980s, Carby's insights still hold resonance today for black and minority ethnic women. South Asian family networks and bonds still critically feature in more recent studies as both sites of control but also as providing strong and supportive networks (Bhopal 2010; Bagguley and Hussain 2014), generating high levels of 'ethnic capital' (Shah et al 2010).

Similarly, Bhopal's (1997) work on South Asian women identified the family as a site for support and resistance in racist contexts, but also as a site of patriarchal oppression. She cites the "*...form of marriage they participate in, the giving of dowries, participating in domestic labour and the degree of control they have in domestic finance*" as specific examples of manifestations of patriarchy within the family (Bhopal 1997: 4). Therefore, "*different ethnic groups may experience different forms of patriarchy*" (p6), and a distinction between public and private forms of patriarchy for South Asian women and girls are key to understanding their experience. In sum, early black feminist work advocated two key points about the social reality of black and minority ethnic females: firstly, that racism is experienced according to the racial context in which the subject is located (e.g. the postcolonial context for South Asian and African Caribbean women in Britain), and secondly, that sexism is experienced both in the contexts of patriarchal structures of the receiving society, and as with all women, the patriarchal practices located in their own homes and cultures (Hill-Collins 1990; Brah 1996).

The South Asian woman's body has historically been a site over which representations of 'Eastern' cultures have been constructed (see Chapter 2 for an extensive discussion of constructions of South Asian girls and women). Such representations have been influenced by the notion of 'Othering' as advocated by Said (1978), which suggests that colonialism

was based on constructions of the colonised as different, but also inferior from the colonisers. Through these constructions of two opposing groups of the 'civilised' and 'uncivilised', the colonisers were able to justify their superiority and endorse their rule. Similarly, Franz Fanon's psychoanalytical analysis of the black man's feelings of inadequacy in relation to the white man has paved the way for conceptualisations of identities to develop as inextricably linked (Fanon 1967; Phoenix 2009).

The work of Said and Fanon has been influential in understandings of identities as constructed through difference (Woodward 1997). As I discuss in Chapter 2, literature on social identities suggests that there is always a dominant norm against which identities are formed, and that these processes occur in a hierarchical fashion that positions some subjects and cultures as superior to others, particularly in relation to white Western culture. Building on Said's work, Bhabha (1996) suggests that the racialised body of the colonised became the object of surveillance, which resulted in the production of knowledge about the 'Other' and legitimisation of political control. Such arguments highlight processes through which colonised subjects came to be constructed, and defined and controlled, based on perceived cultural difference. This process of 'Othering' was racialised but also heavily gendered in that women were constructed as in need of saving from backward traditional practices, and men were seen as the barbaric perpetrators of culture (see Spivak 1988; Stoler 1995).

The body of the South Asian woman is often evoked as a symbol of cultural oppression that the British in India used in their 'civilizing' mission. One frequently cited example is the act of Sati, or the live burning of the widow at the deceased's funeral, which was outlawed by the British. Spivak (1988) has noted that whilst appearing to act in good faith by saving Indian women from an 'uncivilised' tradition, the concern was based on a Western perspective on what was deemed as barbaric, and in effect silenced the voice of the South Asian woman by failing to consider alternative interpretations of cultural practice. Such acts are symbolic of

what she terms 'epistemic violence', whereby the voice of the colonised woman becomes erased, and the voice(s) of the British colonisers came to represent 'her' voice.

Carby's (1982) earlier observation that practices such as female circumcision and arranged marriages, that are part of 'Other' cultures and other countries, resonate in today's 'super-diverse', multicultural Britain, if not more so. Gendered practices associated with ethnic 'Others' that are increasingly occurring on Western soil have become the subject of state intervention (e.g. female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage). South Asian females in the contemporary UK context continue to be socially constructed as passive and victims of patriarchal culture (Shain 2011). Interventions in so-called cultural and traditional practices are a prime example of the British state's relationship with South Asian and Muslim girls and women. For instance, there have been numerous interventions in the practice of marriage amongst South Asian groups, although the forms of intervention have changed over time. The state's focus on sham marriages, where immigration laws remain stringent (Wray 2006), has seen a shift in the public agenda towards forced marriage and 'honour' crimes. South Asian girls and women have therefore come to be one of the main groups that are viewed as representative of racialized and gendered Otherness. They have at various points in time been constructed as 'Others', and victims of melodramatic patriarchal practices in relation to the liberal Western values of British society (Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003; Pichler 2007).

Black feminist thought spurred the creation of shared political identities, and gave rise to movements such as the Organisation for Women of African and Asian Descent (OWAAD) in the 1990s (Yuval Davis 2012). Although highlighting and fighting for black and minority ethnic women's rights were important driving forces for social change, such shared identities also had the negative effect of reifying boundaries between groups and homogenising individuals into collective identities that were undemocratic and not always representative of the diversity amongst

women of colour. Whilst providing a platform for mobilisation, identity politics (discussed in Chapter 3), carries the weight of essentialising group identities and reducing aims to an overly simplistic shared set of characteristics and markers. For black feminists, this proved to be problematic in light of the increasing recognition of the differing barriers and inequalities between and within groups of women (Yuval-Davis 2006).

Whilst black feminist work from the 1970s to mid 1990s tended to focus on structural disadvantage such as immigration laws, labour movements, and political dialogues (Wilson 1978; Brah 1996; Bhopal 2010), more recent work on minority ethnic women stresses issues of similarities and differences between them such as identity, hybridity, agency and social change. Theorising about difference and diversity was traditionally in relation to race and gender, but now increasingly includes other analytical frames such as diaspora and 'new ethnicities' (Brah 1996). In addition, the turn in the 1990s towards intersectionality embraced the need for more complex understandings of oppression and marginalisation by looking at the intersections and relationship between race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and religion. As Denis contends:

“Intersectional analysis is an attempt to address this felt need for more complex analysis. Without calling it ‘intersectional’, by the early 1980s a number of feminist scholars were tackling the challenging task of integrating ‘gender’ as a variable into the analyses of class or ethnicity/race, integrating ethnicity/race in analyses of women’s subordination, or occasionally integrating all three” (Denis 2008: 679).

There is a general consensus amongst feminist scholars that intersectionality refers to:

“...the interaction between gender, race and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power” (Davis 2008: 68)

Broadly speaking, intersectionality posits that different social divisions interrelate in terms of production of social relations (Anthias 2012).

Intersectionality attempts to move beyond gender and race as essentialised or fixed categories by focusing on the diversity of experience produced by simultaneous positioning in other categories of difference, such as religion, migration, sexuality and class. Its focus on lived experience highlights how cross cutting social categories vary according to the context in which subjects are situated. It therefore builds on black feminism as it contextualises different social locations in terms of time, place and other intersecting social locations (further discussed in Chapter 2).

The turn to a more complex and intersectional analysis of women's oppression is captured by Mirza (2009), when she contends that black feminisms have moved from the structural axes of power (i.e. racialisation, gender and class), towards a poststructural approach which emphasises the fragmentation of a unified black feminist identity and the difference and diversity between women of colour. Identifying such complexities within and beyond 'race' and gender assists reflexive scholars in troubling the 'truth' that black feminisms assume there is - that women of colour will always be oppressed in relation to their white female counterparts (Yuval Davis 2012). Intersectionality is therefore associated with black feminisms as a way of seeing the minority ethnic female subject as multiply positioned.

Intersectionality alludes to an epistemological position that does not assume a single 'truth' about black women's oppression but views the *'process of approximating the truth as part of a dialogical relationship amongst subjects who are differentially situated'* (Yuval Davis: 2012: 47). Through an intersectional approach it can therefore be possible to contest the dichotomies of white/black, oppressor/ oppressed, male/female used to explain structural organisation of social relations, suggesting that power operates in more complex and overlapping ways. As Mirza (2015a) argues:

"The concept of 'intersectionality' has enabled black feminists to

interrogate the ways in which power, ideology and the state intersect with subjectivity, identity and agency to maintain social injustice and universal patterns of gendered and racialised economic inequality” (p6).

Given the fragmentation that post-structural approaches have brought to studies on minority ethnic women, there is now a less unified standpoint known as black feminism (Ali et al 2010). Indeed, accompanying this significant shift is a declining reference to black feminism in scholarly work on minority ethnic women (Back and Solomos 2000). Can black feminism be seen as a political project, or is it now too fragmented? Here, I find it helpful to define my black feminist sensibility by drawing on one of its the key defining features, namely, ‘lived experience’. Mirza (1997; 2009; 2015a) suggests that ‘black’ feminist approaches can be used without claiming an authentic voice and can be instead considered as an eclectic approach that aims to tell different stories that would otherwise be erased or not recognised. She argues:

“A black and postcolonial standpoint does not valorise experience as an explanation or justification in itself, but it should be seen as an interpretation of the social world that needs explaining” (Mirza 2009b: 5)

Black feminisms therefore may not be relevant as an overarching theory given shifts in racialised positioning, gender relations and class amongst black and minority ethnic women. However, it can be used as a perspective that encourages women to think about the specificities of their social locations and provide a space in which minority ethnic women can articulate experiences. Black femininists can work towards context and issue specific agendas with which shared concerns can be articulated into a political project at certain times over specific issues and tackling problems at the local level (e.g. forced marriage, immigration law, FGM) (Ali et al 2010; Erel and Reynolds 2014; Mirza 2015a).

As demonstrated through my own reflections of childhood, one of the core features of black feminisms is the importance given to experience,

so that experience forms part of the ontological basis of being (Hill Collins 1990). Black feminisms have provided me with a powerful space to articulate experiences of marginalization attached to processes of racialization that would otherwise remain silenced. I am not suggesting that a foundational category of a 'black' or South Asian woman has defined who I am, especially given my mixed heritage background. On the contrary, because of my position as a mixed heritage woman, I cannot claim to speak for South Asian girls and women. Like Ahmed (1997) I consider my mixed heritage position to trouble this 'collision of race and gender in structures of identification' (p155). Thus intersectionality *with* black feminism has enabled me to articulate my diverse identifications as a racialised South Asian woman, which is a perspective that I lend to the research I conduct.

1.5 Outline of the study

This thesis unfolds firstly with an examination of the research and literature on South Asian girls in British educational contexts (Chapter 2). I discuss how the literature mainly focuses on issues of 'culture' for this group, first, through the widely identified discourse of the girls as caught 'between two cultures' of East and West; second, on teachers' perceptions of the girls and third, the studies on South Asian girls' identities. This latter body of work provides a more nuanced and situated understanding of the girls' experiences as active agents that negotiate culture, familial expectations and relationships. At the end of Chapter 2, I situate my own approach to studying South Asian girls' identities and present my rationale for understanding identities as poststructurally located in discourse.

Chapter 3 offers a review of the literature on British multiculturalism as it relates to South Asian young people and South Asian girls. The review covers existing discourses on multiculturalism as an official top-down state discourse, multicultural policy approaches and interventions to managing diversity, and the turn to thinking about multiculturalism as 'everyday'. Chapter 4 outlines the methodology and methods adopted in

this study. A description is provided of the research site and participants, as well as a discussion of researcher reflexivity and ethical issues.

The four analysis chapters are split into two parts. The first two (Chapters 5 and 6) focus on the data from the teachers, whilst the latter two (Chapters 7 and 8) focus on the data from the girls. Chapter 5 explores the school's multicultural context and addresses how teachers 'enacted' (Ball et al 2012) diversity interventions as a top down state discourse but also how such diversity policies and discourses were enacted on an 'everyday' level (i.e. negotiated and contested). Chapter 6 revisits the theme of 'between two cultures' and how teachers positioned the girls to be lacking independence, as sexually immature and passive, which was mainly attributed to familial expectations and deficit parenting based on values of 'East and West'. The analysis homes in on examples of school trips and cases of gender violence to highlight how old stereotypes prevailed, suggesting the persistence of the 'between two cultures' discourse.

Chapter 7 examines how the girls positioned themselves within the 'everyday' multicultural context of the school. The intersections of 'race', gender, generation and migration, sexuality and religion are key to the analysis, and elucidate how difference in 'everyday' multiculturalism is imbued with power relations that are reproduced and given further significance. Chapter 8 explores how the girls' navigated scenarios in which they are popularly understood to be 'between two cultures'. The examples of boyfriends and relationships, and gender violence are drawn on to demonstrate a more complex picture in which they negotiated 'relative empowerment'. Social identities of 'race', gender, class and sexuality were used as negotiating tools to navigate familial control and gendered expectations.

In sum, this case study presents a story about the micro effects of multiculturalism for South Asian girls, where multiculturalism is an

evolving macro state discourse and enacted by teachers, but also negotiated and played out on an 'everyday' level in school.

Chapter 2: South Asian girls and British education

In this first literature review chapter, I discuss studies on South Asian girls in relation to the British educational context. I have opted to limit the boundaries of the discussion to educational contexts because the focus of this study is on how an educational context influences the construction of South Asian girls' social identities. The studies reviewed provide an insight into more general experiences of school, home, wider community as well as wider dominant representations of South Asian and Muslim girls. The chapter is focused on three main themes identified in the literature: 1) the 'between two cultures' thesis, which has also been found to inform teacher perceptions of South Asian girls and their families; 2) the educational success of South Asian girls and theories of 'capital' and 3) work on social identities.

2.1 The problem with 'between two cultures'

Although the presence of South Asians in Britain has been documented as far back as the 17th century, academic interest in South Asian girls emerged in the 1970s. These studies focused on specific ethnic or religious groups such as Sikhs (Kalra 1980), Pakistanis (Khan 1977) and South Asians more generally (Anwar 1976), exploring marriage, familial relationships, mental health and immigration (Wilson 2006; Bhopal 2010). South Asian youth were commonly thought to be caught 'between two cultures', a term coined by Watson (1977). The term originally referred to Jamaican, Chinese, West African, Cypriot, Sikhs and Pakistanis, highlighting how children of migrants were caught between the cultural expectations of their parents and those of the wider society. This positioning of second generation migrants was accompanied by what was understood to be a conflict of identities due to exposure to diverse sets of values and expectations from the distinct worlds of the home, family and ethnic community on the one hand, and wider British society, on the other.

Ghuman's (2003) study in Britain, the USA, Canada and Australia on South Asian youth highlights the different value systems of the South Asian home and the British schooling context. These include 'collectivity' at home, versus the rugged 'individuality' of the school, heightened gender inequality at home, versus the promotion of gender equality at school, and the emphasis on religion, culture and tradition of 'sending' societies, versus the norms and values of the receiving society. Home and school were posited as incompatible for South Asian youth, resulting in identity crises and the conflict of simultaneously belonging to worlds that never seem to quite meet.

The dichotomy for South Asian girls, Ghuman argues is particularly heightened because the liberal gender equality that the school advocates stands in contrast to the heightened patriarchy in South Asian culture. Girls were identified to have the added responsibility for upholding cultural rules such as the *izzat* or 'honour' of the family, resulting in heightened regulation and surveillance from parents because of fears of Western society compromising their daughters' alignment to their familial cultural norms¹⁰. This resulted in Asian parents restricting socialisation with white girls for fear that they may lure their daughters into sexual experimentation, and limiting participation in 'everyday' extra curricular schooling activities such as outings, clubs, and games after school. The conflict of cultures model has also been used as one of the main explanations for higher rates of depression and attempted suicide amongst South Asian women (Smaje 1996; Shaikh and Naz 2000; Wilson 2006).

The discourse of 'between two cultures' is now predominantly associated with South Asian and Muslim youth. It appears to be part and parcel of the backlash against multiculturalism and the problems associated with South Asians and Muslims, particularly the incompatibility of their values

¹⁰ Girls as responsible for carrying familial 'honour' has also been found by a number of feminist scholars (Gill 2007; 2014; Siddiqui 2003).

and lifestyles with British values (Kundnani 2012)¹¹. Wider representations of these groups have been characterised by significant shifts. For instance, whilst previous constructions of young Asian males were once characterised by sexual inadequacy and a lack of masculinity (Frosh et al 2002), they are increasingly being depicted as the new 'Asian' gangs or folk devils (Alexander 2000; Shain 2010b; Crozier and Davies 2008) because of their participation in riots and local disturbances (Cantle 2001), and as sexual predators due to Pakistani men 'grooming' white girls in care (Laville, 2011; CEOPC 2011; Casey 2015). South Asian girls continue to be constructed in media and policy discourse as in need of saving from backward traditions such as 'honour' violence and forced marriage (Shain 2010a), oppressive expressions of religious belief, such as veiling (Housee 2004; Mirza 2009), and more recently as jihadi brides in Syria (Saltman and Smith 2015; Mirza 2015b).

However, positioning South Asian young people as 'between two cultures' reinforces the idea of cultures as static, and generates reductionist representations and meanings of South Asian 'culture'¹². South Asians are typically positioned through binary discourses of 'East' and 'West', and the girls represented through the dichotomies of civilised/uncivilised, traditional/modern, oppressed/ liberated, and the veiled/unveiled woman. Presenting Asian culture in fixed binary terms with Western 'culture' essentialises both South Asian and Western 'culture', where they remain static and unitary. In addition, an over-focus on 'culture' as a dominant feature of South Asian life limits representations of South Asians to little beyond 'culture'. The 'between two cultures' discourse feeds into 'melodramatic constructions' of South Asian girls as possessing limited agency because of parental restrictions and cultural expectations (Puwar 2003). Within such representations

¹¹ see Chapter 3 for a discussion of the backlash against multiculturalism.

¹² I refer to cultural reductionism throughout this thesis and discuss this in some detail in Chapter 3 in relation to multiculturalism. Cultural reductionism largely refers to the processes by which the naming of culture is reduced to crude and simplistic understandings of difference, and fails to capture how culture may change, is worked on by subjects and is fluid and dynamic.

South Asian females are typically constructed as passive, quiet and in need of being saved from 'uncivilised' patriarchal culture.

2.11 Teachers' constructions of South Asian girls and their families

There is a substantial body of evidence that suggests teachers draw on cultural reductionist interpretations of South Asian girls and their families, consonant with the 'between two cultures' thesis. Teachers have been documented as perceiving:

- a) South Asian parents to have low aspirations for their daughters because of early marriage, leading to low professional aspirations and minimal educational support and investment in the girls' career trajectories (Bhatti 1999). Basit's (1997) study on Muslim adolescents similarly found teachers to hold stereotypes of the girls as having poor attendance, and on the receiving end of low academic expectations from their parents.
- b) South Asian families as separatist, by for instance, not mixing with other families, and lacking involvement in the school, preventing their daughters from participating in school trips and extra curricula activities such as school proms and concerts (Ghuman 2003; Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008; Crozier 2009).
- c) South Asian girls as lacking 'freedom', and as 'submissive', delicate, and vulnerable 'drudges' in the home (Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008; Crozier 2009).
- d) South Asian girls as the 'wrong kind of learners'. Archer (2008) demonstrates how teachers understood South Asian girls' and Chinese pupils' improved educational achievement to be a result of 'passive' behaviour and pro-school attitudes. Although they were high achievers, they did not represent 'ideal' pupils, because of their quietness and passivity (see also Youdell 2006).

These studies have also been important in demonstrating how teachers' perceptions are skewed towards Eurocentric understandings of culture and fail to account for structural disadvantages and racism. In their large-scale qualitative study of 157 Pakistani and Bangladeshi families and

teachers in primary and secondary schools, Crozier and Davies (2007; 2008) found striking contrasts in perspectives between teachers and South Asian girls and their families. Whilst teachers understood the girls' minimal participation in extra curricula activities to be symptomatic of heightened parental control and parental fears over their daughters mixing with boys, data from the families suggested that extra curricula activities were not always seen as important. In addition, the girls did not express a desire to attend events such as school proms and described them as something that as Muslim girls, they had no interest in being part of (Crozier and Davies 2008).

Basit (1997) also found teachers to hold Eurocentric interpretations of Muslim girls' 'lack of freedom', assuming that Muslim girls craved the freedom of their white counterparts (e.g. to go out with boys). Girls did express desires for more freedom, but not as much as English girls had, which they viewed as symptomatic of parental neglect. Instead, they saw going out with boys as an area for negotiation with their parents to buy further bargaining power in educational progression. Basit's work raises important points about Eurocentric signifiers of difference that teachers use, such as that of freedom, which in effect perpetuate racialised understandings of cultural difference. Further, her work considers Muslim girls as active negotiators, rather than as passive subjects in their educational trajectories through their take up of aspects of cultural and religious expectations rather than rejecting them (I explore themes of negotiation and identities in further detail in this Chapter, section 2.3 and Chapters 7 and 8).

For the girls and their families, structural racism and 'everyday' experiences of racism played a significant role in how they experienced school. The girls cited racist abuse, bullying and the lack of intervention by the school as deterring them from going on school trips. In addition, Crozier and Davies (2007; 2008) suggest that the school was 'hard to reach' for Pakistani and Bangladeshi parents due to language barriers that hindered parental involvement, their knowledge of the education

system, and factors such as long working hours that prevented fathers' involvement in school activities. Their study provided a counter narrative during a period when Asian groups were increasingly seen as 'self-segregating' (Cantle 2001; Phillips 2005) in the wake of the riots in UK Northern towns.

There is substantial evidence to suggest that teachers' racialised constructions of pupils are relative and based on what the Other is not (Said 1978; Hall 1996; Woodward 1997). Gillborn (1990) demonstrates how teachers positioned South Asian pupils as victims of over-strict culture and destructive traditions, but as high achievers and well behaved, in contrast to the African Caribbean boys who were labelled as troublemakers and low achievers. Racialised constructions are also based on gender (Mac an Ghail 1994; Frosh et al 2002; Mac an Ghail and Haywood 2014). Archer et al (2007) found that teachers described black girls' disengagement from education in 'explicitly racialized terms' (p. 557). They were positioned as louder than Asian girls who were in contrast, homogenised as passive. In addition, the 'ideal' student was positioned as neither 'too sexualised' as black girls are, nor desexualised as South Asian girls are, because of heightened oppression at home (Archer 2008).

Whilst explorations of teacher perceptions have been key in enhancing understanding of how South Asian girls are positioned in schools, this body of work has tended to treat teachers as a homogenous group with their perceptions of 'Others' embedded in racialised and gendered post-colonial constructions of difference. There has been a tendency to locate teachers as positioned within postcolonial discourses with little consideration of how multiple and shifting discourses on Otherness and diversity, including multiculturalism, community cohesion and anti-racism, may inform their practice (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, teachers tend to be examined as a largely unified group without considering how they may take up different positions, and how they can also reshape and shift boundaries. I suggest that there needs to be some level of critical

engagement with teachers as a diverse group and attempt to address this paucity in the research in this thesis (see analysis chapters 5 and 6).

2.2 Still about 'culture': educational attainment and social and ethnic capital

Contrary to teachers' perceptions that South Asian parents have low aspirations for their daughters' education, South Asian parents and their daughters have been found to have 'middle class' aspirations for educational attainment (Basit 1997), meritocratic ideals and desires for higher education (Crozier 2009), and to be educationally successful and financially independent (Bhopal 2009; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). Mothers in particular have been found to encourage their daughters' independence through higher education (Ahmad et al 2003), and also to challenge fathers' 'traditional' views (Bhatti 1999).

Statistics on educational attainment from the Department for Education (2014) show that at GCSE level, Indian pupils continue to 'outperform' the white majority. The pupils who fall under the 'Any other Asian' background followed by Bangladeshi pupils also 'outperform' white British pupils, whereas Pakistani pupils perform less well than white British pupils, and are the lowest performing of the Asian groups. When pupils of all Asian backgrounds are combined, they perform above the national level, by 3.6 percentage points (Appendix 1). Differing migration histories and class backgrounds have had a strong bearing as Indian families have a longer and more established history in the UK and have tended to come from professional backgrounds. On the other hand, the families from Bangladesh and Pakistan arrived later and have largely come from lower socio-economic and rural backgrounds (Bhavnani et al 2005).

As with females across ethnic groups, South Asian girls and particularly Bangladeshi girls are 'outperforming' their male counterparts (Haque 2000), mainly between the ages of 14 to 16 (Burgess et al 2009). This includes Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls who were once amongst the lower educational achievers. However, Bangladeshi and Pakistani girls

continue to be disadvantaged at A-level in comparison to girls from white and Indian backgrounds, are mainly concentrated in newer post 1992 universities, and face disadvantage in the labour market (Dale et al 2002; Hussain and Bagguley 2007). This suggests that despite a strong commitment to educational achievement and what Mirza (1992) terms 'educational urgency' (i.e. a belief in the transformative potential of the education system to improve prospects and life chances against the odds), Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls continue to face structural disadvantages.

A consideration of multiple factors beyond 'race' and ethnicity challenges reductionist explanations of attainment as based on cultural differences. For instance, Abbas (2002; 2003) highlights a number of factors contributing to variations in educational attainment amongst South Asian college students in Birmingham, including social class, type of school attended (e.g. selective versus comprehensive), and teachers' negative positioning of Muslim students (Abbas 2003). Further, religious and cultural factors were identified as influencing attainment for Muslim girls' marginalisation and relatively limited progression, in comparison to the Indian Hindu and Sikh girls (i.e. familial expectations to participate in domestic activities; strong religious beliefs amongst Muslims). Indians were more likely to experience a double advantage, namely high socio-economic status and access to better schools, as well as greater acceptance by teachers and wider society of their religion and 'culture' (Abbas 2002).

Theories of social capital¹³ have also influenced much sociological work on education because of their value in explaining how some groups may

¹³ Bourdieu identified social capital as the sum of resources, both actual or potential, that afford subjects a durable network of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 119). Social capital consists of the resources acquired through the operation of the nuances of language, aesthetic preferences or cultural goods, and other symbolic preferences and behavioural dispositions (Bourdieu 1997). Networks are a key feature of social capital, and in education and other spheres such as employment, they can generate beneficial contacts that lead to opportunities and profit. As such, social capital sustains the social class order.

be better placed to achieve (Bourdieu and Passerson 1977; Reay 2005; Shah et al 2010; Rampersad 2011; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). Social capital has been theorised to provide parents and young people with the means to navigate and draw on resources in educational and cultural institutions, mainly speaking to the benefit of higher social class status (Reay 2005; Shah et al 2010). However, for British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis there appears to be additional factors beyond class that are catalysts to their progression.

Shah et al (2010) attempt to explain recent trends that higher numbers of young British Pakistanis are pursuing higher education compared to their white peers, despite coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Through their study of young Pakistanis aged 16-26 and parents in West London, they found that some British Pakistani families from working class backgrounds with low levels of social capital have been able to use other capitals to achieve their educational goals. They use the concept of 'ethnic' capital, defined as familial and ethnic shared norms and values (Zhou 2005 cited in Shah et al 2010), to explain how families are achieving against the odds because of the high value placed upon educational achievement (Mirza 1992; 2009). However, whilst 'ethnic' capital may have helped progression, the authors also found that class was important as those from urban or educated backgrounds in Pakistan (i.e. typically middle class) were better able to mobilise their ethnic capital because they had access to, and created, social networks within and across ethnic groups. Working class Pakistani families' social networks consisted of working class co-ethnics who were the source of information and limited the 'horizons of possibility' (Crozier and Davies 2006).

Shah et al (2010) recognise that ethnic capital has its limits as an explanation of educational progression because the intersection of gender, ethnicity and religion produces different outcomes within working class British Pakistani families (see also Abbas 2002; 2003). In addition, notions of capital are a top down view of parental influence and exclude young people as active agents shaping their outcomes. Yet, young

people have also been found to generate positive forms of social capital (Ramji 2007; Bhopal 2010). Bhopal (2011b) found South Asian women in higher education acquire social capital through their take up of shared ethnic identification. More specifically, for the Indian women, ethnic identities were a resource to create enhanced networks through which they shared intellectual resources including ideas, notes and equipment. However, similar to Shah et al (2010), Bhopal's work places emphasis on the specifics of cultural values and ethnic difference and in doing so, reproduces static traits of ethnic groups. Notions of cultural and social capital tend to produce a list of 'characteristics' needed to be successful, but simultaneously produce essentialised accounts of social groups (Ramji 2007). Capitals have been understood as given properties of families, which fail to capture young people's negotiations, shifts and struggles with parents (Ramji 2007).

Bagguley and Hussain's (2014) study on young South Asian women in higher education challenges the social capital thesis as an explanation for South Asian success. They demonstrate how the young women are involved in reflexive negotiations with parents, which shift norms and expectations, and transform class and gender relations within South Asian groups. The students in their study selected parental norms but in modified forms. For instance, they challenged parental expectations by studying the less conventional subjects such as medicine and law, and delayed marriage through their pursuit of higher education. Bradford and Hey (2007) also challenge the social capital thesis in their study of 'successful' Year 10 pupils in 'successful' schools, which included Indian and Pakistani pupils. The authors argue that having academically successful identities helped the young people to construct 'psychological' capital (i.e. an understanding of themselves as successful). In doing so, they also highlight how educational identities were made not solely through social and cultural capital but through a combination of social identities.

The Hindu and Sikh boys in Bradford and Hey's study talked about staying focused to be successful (e.g. not being distracted by girls and having teachers as role models), whereas the girls talked about success in terms of effort, trying hard, and having role models such as mothers, who they recognised as having experienced 'oppression'. The girls did not refer to themselves as victims, which Bradford and Hey argue reflects their interpellation into the neo-liberal discourse of success (i.e. as responsible for their own making, being able to 'choose' their pathway to success, celebrating individual psychology and survival). Discourses of success therefore meshed with 'race', ethnicity and gender, as sites of identity and belonging, differentially interpellating young people into symbols of success into recognising what success is. Bradford and Hey's study provides a situated understanding of capital not just through 'race' and cultural values of ethnic groups, but through the complex interplay of a number of factors.

On the whole, understandings of 'ethnic' capital are 'compensatory' in that educational urgency, aspiration and identification with the values of education compensate for the lack of having other capitals. Whilst these theories have gone some way to disrupt notions of the 'inferiority' of South Asian culture by emphasising the positive attributes, they continue to perpetuate a gaze on cultural difference. Through their focus on capital with social identities, Bradford and Hey's (2007) and Bagguley and Hussain's (2014) work trouble this focus on cultural difference. I similarly focus this study on identity making to capture the dynamism and shifts in the social positions of South Asian girls that the 'between two cultures' thesis, and theories of social capital fail to capture. Through identity work, the fixities of culture can be challenged and its negotiations explored in the context of the school.

Most of the literature on social identities discussed in the remainder of this chapter also present convincing challenges to the cultural reductionism in the 'between two cultures' discourse, and to teachers' perceptions of South Asian girls. These studies explore 'race' and cultural

identification, but also their intersection with gender (patriarchy) and class, as well as the global, historical, migratory context and diaspora (Parmar 1988; Brah 1996). However, 'culture' and cultural difference continue to appear as a major theme in the literature. This raises a concern which this thesis attempts to address, namely whether a focus on culture and Asian 'values' obscures other aspects of the girls' lives such as more mundane and less 'melodramatic' parts of 'everyday' life. My concerns have been triggered by Puwar (2003) and Ahmad's (2003) observations that South Asian and Muslim women in the academy should be deeply reflective of why we research certain topics, and whether these feed into and reinforce the sensationalist and melodramatic constructions of the South Asian female subject. I therefore consider if studies on identities have troubled reductionist constructions of South Asian girls through their continued gaze on culture, or whether they have reinforced reductionist cultural traits.

2.3 South Asian girls and social identities

From the 1950s to the 1980s, identity studies were largely sedimented in defining 'who one is' from personal and subjective identity towards group and collective identities (Wetherell 2010), and have been key in tackling issues of resistance as well as identification in relation to 'Others' (Benwell and Stokoe 2006). Identity work now is largely concerned with 'how we become who we are' (Wetherell 2010; Wetherell and Mohanty 2010). Rather than looking at the outcome of the identity formation process, most work interrogates the process itself, exploring how identities shift and change in different contexts and over time (Reay 2010), and largely attempts to capture the complexity of social location (Du Gay et al 2008; Wetherell 2010; Wetherell and Mohanty 2010).

Poststructuralism that emerged in the latter half of the 20th century, has been a key influence in this shift, reflecting a move beyond structuralist ontologies of the social world (e.g. Marxism), in which core social, cultural or psychological structures are considered to constrain strongly the possibilities of human action (Fox 2014). Instead, poststructuralists

challenge the binary categories (e.g. working class/ bourgeoisie; black/white) that box the subject into reductionist categories and obscure the complexity of human subjects (Derrida 1976, Fox 2014), and argue that binaries function to establish authority and knowledge about the objects of which they speak (Said 1979).

However, poststructuralism retains structuralist concerns with power relations, taking the structural as the object, but interrogates both the object itself (e.g. 'race' and gender) and the systems of knowledge that produce the object. Deconstruction of the production of social categories as objects is therefore a key feature of poststructuralism, along with the role of knowledge and textual processes in achieving and sustaining relations of power. Poststructural approaches to identities have '*...resulted in the rejection of internal accounts in favour of constructionist approaches*' (Benwell and Stokoe 2006: 8), which largely characterises the approaches taken in the studies discussed on South Asian girls' identities in this chapter.

Rather than focussing on male/female, black/white, working class/elite dichotomies, poststructural work on identities highlight an array of identity positions (e.g. Haw 1998; 2010; Dwyer 1999; Shain 2003; 2010; Bradford and Hey 2007; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). Poststructural approaches take identities to be de-centred (i.e. there is no one core identity) (Hall 1996), in that they work in relation to each other, are fragmented where some identities can prevail over others, and some can be contradictory (Phoenix 2002). Subjects are therefore seen as having a multitude of cross cutting and interrelated identities, which can change, disappear and re-emerge in different contexts.

As post-structural approaches break down the dualisms of identity categories, they also challenge the duality in social organisation such as structure versus agency, and the macro and micro (Layder 1994), which suggests a more complex understanding of social organisation, and therefore power. In his widely cited piece on identities Hall (1996)

discusses 'discourse' as a poststructural understanding of power in which to situate identities, claiming that:

“...Identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse... (they are) produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices...they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of marking of difference and exclusion...identities are constructed through, not outside, difference” (Hall 1996: 4)

Hall alludes to the processes through which identities are constituted, namely the discursive formations, practices and modalities of power that take place within institutions such as schools and the family. It is in institutions that wider discourses are reproduced, negotiated and shape identities. In addition, Hall takes up the poststructuralist claim that power can be seen through social identities because they are relatively constructed through difference and exclusion (i.e. that one can be defined through what one is not) (Fanon 1967; Phoenix 2009). The notion of identities as inter-dependent suggests that there is a dominant norm against which subordinate identities are constructed.

As with wider racialized constructions (section 2.1), ethnic and class identities when understood as situated in discourse, are also relative (e.g. working class identity is based on what the middle classes are not and vice-versa (Reay 2005; Walkerdine et al 2001)). Phoenix et al (2003) demonstrate how boys took up identities based on relative racialised versions of masculinity and positioned other boys in light of ethnic difference:

“Asian boys in the study were similarly constructed as not powerful or sexually attractive and so were liable to be subjected to homophobic name-calling. By way of contrast, Black boys of African-Caribbean descent were less likely to be called “gay”” (Phoenix et al 2003: 190).

As discussed in section 2.2, Basit (1997) found that Muslim girls' desires for 'freedom' with boys were articulated in relation to racialised constructions of white girls as having 'too much' freedom.

Poststructural approaches view identities as 'socially constructed', shaped through the meanings we ascribe to the self and from the discourses available to us (Burr 2001). For instance, being 'heterosexual' is constructed within the discourse on sexuality, as is being 'black' in the political sense in the British context. Foucault describes his notion of discourse as the main form of power, referring to:

“...sometimes...the general domain of all statements, sometimes an individualisable group of statements, and sometimes a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements” (Foucault 1972: 8)

What constitutes Foucauldian discourse is relatively loose in that it could be how a topic is talked about (e.g. motherhood, sexuality, educational attainment), but can also be formed or reinforced through professional knowledge, action and 'grand' statements, which make the discourse more powerful (Foucault 1972; 1979). Discourses consist of related statements that cohere to produce meaning and effects in the social world (Burr 2001) and are 'productive' in that they produce meaning and the objects of which they speak e.g. sexuality, madness, gender normativity, racialised cultural difference in social policy (Foucault 1972; Butler 1990; 1993; Lewis 2000; Carabine 2001).

According to Burr (2001) the term 'discourse' has been used to refer to an instance of situated language use such as a conversation or all forms of written texts, where language is examined to demonstrate how certain representations of events or persons are achieved. Discourse is also located in a social constructionist stance, in that the language available to us sets limits upon what we can say and do, or what can be done to us rather than as freely drawn upon by subjects (Burr 2001). There are therefore always objects in discourse (e.g. racialised cultural difference associated with South Asian girls) to which we relate our experiences, and which give the platform to articulate identities. Whilst these 'objects' may open up opportunities for negotiation, they also set boundaries and create barriers.

Locating identities in discourse provides the scope to consider the relationship between power and identities, and more specifically how power is manifested in and exercised through identities. This can be seen in differing approaches to exploring how 'who one is' relates to patterns of marginalisation, how identities shape social structures and vice versa, and the potential for social transformation through identities. However, discourses may be constituted of contradictory statements and constructions. For instance, South Asian girls may be seen by teachers as both passive but educationally driven (Archer 2008), and as victims of cultural practices but socially active in disputes over work conditions and challenges to gender violence (Gupta 2003; Tahkhar 2015).

As most of the work discussed can be located in poststructural approaches to identities, they all to some extent engage in notions of discourse to unpack how the self is constituted in relation to multiple discourses (e.g. Dwyer 1999; Bradford and Hey 2007; Pichler 2007), and the relation between wider representations and the self (e.g. Haw 2010; Housee 2010, Hoque 2015 Chapter 3 on 'new' Muslim identities). The idea that identities are situated in multiple and sometimes contradictory discourses, suggests that meanings of who we are may be produced in accordance with various discourses. For instance, displays of Muslim identity in wider public spaces are increasingly problematic and negative, whereas Muslim identity amongst friends and family are largely positive and encouraged (Ramji 2007). Identities can therefore act as a catalyst for increasing levels of agency in some contexts and not others (Pichler 2007; Bhopal 2010).

2.31 Social positioning and agency in discourse

A further key feature of social identity studies is positioning. Positioning theory facilitates an exploration of how subjects are *positioned by others and position themselves* in various contexts. It provides a tool to understand how identities are constructed, ascribed by others, and the negotiation strategies the subject engages in to position themselves. Davies and Harré (1990) define positioning as:

“The discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines. There can be interactive positioning in which one person say positions another. And there can be reflexive positioning in which one person positions oneself” (Davies and Harré 1990: online reference).

This suggests that the making of identity happens in discourse and is produced in interaction with others, but crucially, positioning theory highlights that the subject is *actively* engaged in the making of their own identities (Burr 2001). Therefore, identities are a product of discourse but subjects are simultaneously negotiators of their identities (Davies and Harré 1990). The extent to which subjects are able to manipulate their identities is determined by how they are positioned in discourse, which may provide both possibilities and limitations (Burr 2001). Positioning, then, provides the link between the macro and the micro by looking at how people are subject to discourse and how this subjectivity is negotiated in interpersonal life (Burr 2001: 116).

Whilst positioning highlights the role of the subject as an active participant in the making of their identities, positioning as it occurs in discourse raises important questions about the extent to which the subject has agency¹⁴ (Burr 2001). If the subject is always constituted within discourse, their thoughts and desires can never be separated or set outside discourse (Duits 2008). Burr (2001) cautions that if identities can only be constructed from discourses culturally available to us, this implies that subjects are devoid of agency and must fashion identities out of discourse. Take the dominant discourse on sexuality, which affords us a set of identity categories (i.e. heterosexual, homosexual, transgender, straight or pervert). Dominant discourses on ‘race’ and ethnicity similarly afford subjects a limited number of racialised positions to adopt and identify with. The ‘between two cultures’ discourse also provides little room for positioning South Asian girls outside of understandings of

¹⁴ Although a contested concept, agency generally refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own ‘choices’. I analyse South Asian girls’ agency in Chapter 8.

cultural 'difference', and therefore that 'choices' they make are predominantly constructed in relation to 'cultural' norms and expectations.

It is therefore necessary to think beyond culture in relation to how positioning and agency may open up possibilities to further understand what agency is, rather than the fatalism associated with cultural constraints. Madhok's (2013) argument is helpful when she views agency as 'collective', referring to how agency is always exercised within power relations (i.e. discourse) and formed through intersections of hierarchies of race, class and sexuality. This suggests that there is no such thing as 'choice' which is commonly understood as a property of the individual. Instead, all 'choices' are made through collective identifications (e.g. women always make 'choices' based on their gendered social positions, and South Asian girls make 'choices' based on expectations at home but also the racialised positions that wider society affords them). Hemmings and Kabesh's (2013) view that agency is a set of discourses that mediate our relationship with the world, is also helpful as it explains what agency does, rather than what it is. This definition shifts agency from being 'resistance' towards a negotiation of norms.

Challenging Eurocentric versions of agency: South Asian girls and marriage

The agency of South Asian girls has been particularly problematised in wider dominant discourse, alluding to the idea that they may not 'fit' the prototype of the post-feminist subject¹⁵. However, most of the literature on female agency addresses conceptualisations of empowerment for white females and has failed to work with notions of agency within specific cultural (or racialized) contexts (Butler 2013). Studies on South Asian girls' identities have made significant strides in challenging

¹⁵ Post feminism can be generally understood as a '*set of politics and discourses grounded in assumptions that gender equity has now been achieved for girls and women in education, the workplace and home*' (Ringrose 2012: 1). The interpellation of the female subject into post feminist discourse has been powerful because of a wider popular belief that gender equality and sexual liberation has been achieved, and that feminism is therefore no longer needed (see McRobbie (2004); Gill (2007); Ringrose (2012) for a critical discussion of women and girls' interpellation into the post feminist discourse).

dominant understandings that this group 'lack' agency. The literature on South Asian girls' identities and marriage has been particularly helpful in disrupting Eurocentric conceptualisations of agency.

South Asian marriages are often used in popular discourse as a prime example of culture clash (Ahmad 2012), perpetuating the stereotype of the oppressed South Asian girl, and fuelling the discourse of cultural pathology (Pichler 2007). South Asian marriages are a prime example of the 'melodramatic' (Puwar 2003), typically presented as forced or arranged, as opposed to the Western 'love' marriage, and an 'alien' problem for British society (Ramji 2003). Wider societal scepticism towards Asian marriages has permeated the British immigration system, with a number of real effects on South Asian women. In the 1960s stringent surveillance of cross border marriages from the South Asian continent included virginity testing to decipher whether the spouse entering the country was a 'true' bride, rather than 'bogus' (i.e. for immigration purposes). These tests were based on the assumption that South Asian women should be virgins prior to marriage (Brah 1996).

Although virginity testing has ended, other forms of surveillance continue to mark the response to Asian marriages that have a disproportionate effect on South Asian women. Bogus or sham marriages continue to feature on the immigration agenda (Wray 2006), largely affecting those migrating from the Indian subcontinent (Kofman and Meetoo 2009). In addition, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) through the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) monitor and intercept movement across borders for those identified to be at risk of 'forced' marriage (Gill and Anitha 2011)¹⁶.

¹⁶ Forced marriage has become a 'new' concern on the political and media agenda. Although it is thought to occur in a number of communities including gypsy traveller, orthodox Jewish and Chinese, it is predominantly understood as practiced amongst South Asian and Muslim populations (Gangoli et al 2006). In the next chapter, I address the rise of the forced marriage discourse and ensuing interventions in light of the multicultural British backdrop (Phillips 2007; Gill and Anitha 2011).

Studies on South Asian marriage and identities have been crucial in highlighting the role of young women and girls as active negotiators in shifting marital expectations. Bhopal's (2010; 2011a) more recent work¹⁷ engages with the idea of South Asian women as transformative actors, and repositions them as agents in reshaping marriage practices through high status educational identities. The South Asian women in her study were the first in their families to enter higher education, which provided them with a space to reflect on their identities with other South Asian female students, and compare and discuss shared familial experiences. This space was conducive for collective agency because the young women could articulate shared norms and expectations, and also challenge them.

Informed by concepts of social capital, some studies have highlighted how higher education status may provide young South Asian women with more bargaining power to shift marital expectations and practices (Ramji 2003; Bhopal 2010; Ahmad 2012). However, these studies also place social identities at the forefront of analysis to highlight the eclecticism in marriage practices amongst South Asians. Participants were found to negotiate with parents over suitable marriage partners with similar education levels, bargain the space to 'court' first for a period before marriage to get to know their future spouse, and to decide if they wished to continue with the relationship (Bhopal 2010). Ahmad (2012) found that Muslim female students' methods of meeting and choosing a life partner were varied, ranging from parental involvement from the outset, to those resembling 'Western' modes of courtship but conducted in Islamic frameworks (p207). Twamley (2014) found young middle class Gujaratis to prefer the term 'introduced' rather than arranged. Bhopal did, however find that unlike the Indian and Sikh women, the young women with links to Pakistan (i.e. the Muslim women) were often expected to marry distant

¹⁷ In her earlier work Bhopal (1997) argued that education acted as a lever for South Asian women's agency. 'Independent' South Asian women were found to be highly educated and in the labour market, which she argued afforded them the agency to 'resist' arranged marriages. On the other hand, the 'traditional' women opted to retain the custom of arranged marriages and dowries as part of their South Asian identity (p153).

relatives or cousins, suggesting that bargaining power is experienced differentially between ethnic and religious groups, due to stronger levels of affiliation to tradition (see also Abbas 2002; 2003).

Shifts in marriage expectations have also been identified amongst girls of school age. Dwyer (2000) suggests that Pakistani girls aged between 16 and 18 from the Mirpuri region, commonly associated with first cousin marriages in Pakistan, expected to be married to cousins in the UK. In addition, studying first and getting married later was a widely held expectation. Pichler (2007; 2011) found Bangladeshi school girls to be aligned to a modified discourse of arranged marriage based on expectations of greater gendered equality. The girls challenged parental wishes to match them with spouses from Bangladesh due to their concerns about cultural incompatibility as they viewed themselves to be more 'civilised' than the men from Bangladesh, who they saw as likely to be physically abusive towards their partners.

In this thesis, I engage with the concept of agency as subjectively located and evident in the identities of young women. Agency is understood to be collective and relative in that it is rooted in the racialisation of subjects and culturally specific (Madhok 2013), rather than a tangible or fixed asset (Chapter 8). In Chapter 3, section 3.3, I discuss studies that highlight the issue of Eurocentric notions of agency employed for South Asian girls facing gender based violence (Chantler 2006; Phillips 2007; Anitha and Gill 2011). I discuss this work in the context of the literature on multiculturalism as the authors highlight the significance of the multicultural context in which representations of cultural difference and policies and interventions are formed.

2.32 Identities as intersectional

Studies on South Asian girls' identities are also largely informed by an understanding that identities are intersectional, that 'race' or ethnicity are

not a substantial unit of analysis in themselves to understand social positions, and the processes of social positioning¹⁸. Intersectionality informs analyses of identities by evidencing inequalities (Verloo 2006), and by offering a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of how subjects become marginalised through the interrelationship between different identity categories. As a result of intersectionality, macro interlocking structures and micro lived 'everyday' experiences are brought together (Bilge 2010; Mirza 2013), with the opportunity to map the affect of gendered and 'raced' discourses through the bodies of subjects (i.e. the concept of embodied intersectional identities (Mirza 2013)). It is through intersectional identities that researchers can make the link between 'everyday', micro social processes and macro structural organisation. As Winker and Degele (2011) contend, intersectionality is a sensitizing concept because it can address the complexity of social relations, it facilitates different levels of analysis of power relations from social structures to symbolic representations, as well as an analysis of identity constructions that are context specific and topic-oriented (ibid: 54).

Bilge (2010) highlights differences between scholars such as Hill-Collins who takes a structural stance by arguing for intersectionality to analyse the impact of systems/structures through a matrix of domination (i.e. the relationship between 'race', gender and class where the different systems of oppression interact to produce marginal positions), as opposed to intersectionality as a tool to explore everyday experience through identities. Most of the studies which inform my own approach take the latter stance to exploring how 'everyday' experience can be understood through intersecting identity categories. Anthias (2002; 2008; 2012) provides a different slant by conceptualising the interaction between categories of difference as 'translocational positionality' where social

¹⁸ Social positions and social positioning are not the same and should not be conflated – social position is a concrete position vis-a-vis a range of social resources such as economic, cultural and political. Social positioning is about how we articulate and understand and interact with these positions e.g. contesting, challenging, defining, which relate to the structural and identification levels, and possible connections (Burr 2001; Phoenix 2002).

categories meet in certain contexts thus creating subject positions that are contextual. In this sense, positions become more fluid and varied across contexts (e.g. home and school, and across borders).

What these approaches share is an attempt to locate analyses beyond the mono-dimensional analytical category of 'race' to understanding how 'race' is constituted through gender and class, and vice versa. In addition, rather than seeing race, gender and class in a hierarchy of oppression, intersectionality sees such axes of differentiation as functioning through an interplay in the production and reproduction of social inequality, and it is this interaction that produces inequalities (Bilge 2010). For instance, South Asian women may be disadvantaged in the public sphere i.e. employment and education, but may also be in positions of privilege in certain areas of the private sphere (Ramji 2007). Intersectionality therefore offers the possibility to explore the interrelationship between different identity categories that produce marginal positions but also those of privilege, offering a more robust conception of identity (Nash 2008).

Studies that employ an intersectional approach have been useful in troubling the dichotomous representations of Western and Eastern women, offering a more nuanced understanding of Muslim women's agency in veiling (Dwyer 1999; Afshar 2008). As a prominent symbol of religious difference, the hijab and other forms of veiling such as the burka and jilbab, continues to provoke much debate internationally (Khiabany and Williamson 2008; Afshar 2008). In wider dominant media and state discourses, veiling has become a symbol of the 'traditional' (Dwyer 1999), of Muslim female oppression, radical Islam and terrorism (Khiabany and Williamson 2008). By paying attention to the cross cutting social identity categories in light of wider discourse on the Muslim other, scholars have shifted the research focus beyond melodramatic issues such as whether Muslim women who veil are choosing to do so towards the micro 'everyday' processes constituting social identities (see also Chapter 3, section 3.31 on 'new' Muslim identities).

Dwyer (1999) found that the Muslim girls, aged 16-18 drew on their intersecting religious, ethnic, gendered and sexual identities to articulate an alternative discourse on veiling. They spoke about the veil as liberating rather than oppressive in female sexuality, offering them protection from the male heterosexual gaze. The veil was also seen as a 'fashionable' item as opposed to merely a symbol of religious identity, further demonstrating that the veil in wider discourse is an over-determined signifier of religious identity. Asian and Western styles were mixed to create new ethnicities, as young women explored their identity through clothes.

In an exploration of how identities are formed in a schooling context, Shain's (2003) study on South Asian girls aged 13-16, demonstrates how the girls were actively engaged in the negotiation of their ethnic and gendered identities to subvert and resist racism and negotiate parental expectations. Shain identified four identity categories that South Asian girls drew on to position themselves and 'survive' schooling, each representing different types of South Asian femininity. These categories were not static or mutually exclusive as the girls could move in and out of, and between, these categories at various points to employ appropriate strategies to navigate their daily lives. The range of femininities they negotiated were reproduced and struggled over, but were also used to subvert dominant discourses of the passive Other and navigate gendered expectations at home:

- 1) *Resistance through asserting their Asian cultural identity*, denoting a response to experiences of racism through girl gangs, being anti-school and anti-education;
- 2) *Survival by passivity*, denoting how the girls worked within stereotypes of themselves as passive and focused on academic achievement, being pro-education and working hard in order to negotiate their home lives and school;
- 3) *Rebelling against parental and community values* denoting being good academically, wearing western dress, and having relationships

with boys without the knowledge of their parents. These girls demonstrated awareness of uneven gender relationships in their communities;

- 4) *Religious prioritisation* through the assertion of religious identity, referring to girls who acknowledged racism in school but did not retaliate through fighting. These girls were not resistant to school but prioritised religion and home, and were accepting of their parents' choice of marriage partner.

Shain (2010a) revisited her original study and drew on additional data from a pilot study with six Muslim girls to explore how the girls positioned themselves in relation to dominant notions of 'success'. Unlike other studies that have tended to focus on typically 'successful' Asian girls, she interrogated how the low achieving girls, and therefore those that do not fit into current social and ethnic capital models of Asian girls, appeared to display two types of Asian femininity. The first was *resistance through culture* (category 1), marking their identities as the 'gang' girls. These girls were positioned by teachers and positioned themselves in opposition to the dominant culture of the school, which they defined as white and racist. The second was *religious prioritisation* (category 4) where the girls tended to speak Asian languages and wear religious dress deliberately to mark their 'difference'. The low achieving girls also saw their role as future wives and mothers as inevitable, a fatalism which she attributes to their class locations rather than to their cultural backgrounds.

Shain's work captures the complexity of the girls' educational identities, which are negotiated within the constraints of home and school, and through the adoption of coping strategies. Identities are interpreted as a product of racialisation processes in education, wider societal discourses of femininity, alongside cultural expectations at home, and ethnic and religious identities. These intersectional identities, which were tools for strategizing and negotiating their positions, were also fluid and shifted for each individual as they took up identity positions.

Rather than viewing parents' social capital as explanatory of educational success, Ludhra's (2015) study of the intersectional identities of third generation educationally successful South Asian girls demonstrates how configurations of 'culture' in ethnic and gender identities can be transformative (see also Ludhra and Jones 2010; Ludhra and Chappell 2011). Ludhra identifies configurations of cultural identity as comprised of education (examinations and beyond); role of the family; gender and equality issues; friends; role models; being a good citizen; cultural 'respectability'; interests in the arts; leadership roles at home and school; religion; online identities; fashion and dress; and happiness. The girls' narratives highlighted a complex interplay of these different factors constituted that 'culture' and cultural identity. For educationally 'successful' British South Asian girls, 'culture' was drawn on positively. It was not seen as oppressive, but was worked with and aspects 'saved' in order to shape their success. In particular, shared cultural traits amongst the Sikh Gujarati girls bound them together as 'successful' (Ludhra and Jones 2010). This suggests that for these girls, 'success' is reproduced through ethnic and gendered identities (see also Bradford and Hey 1997; Reay 2005).

Intersectional approaches have been criticised for a number of reasons, first, for the potential diversion created from the more structural experiences of inequality. By focusing on highly contextualised identities there is a danger that wider categories of difference based on 'race', class and gender will be under theorized in their new and emerging contexts. Second, concern has been raised that common identity categories become reproduced through the researcher's analyses (Walby et al 2012). Third, intersectional approaches have been criticised for failing to consider the ontology of the inequalities it investigates (Walby et al 2012). To say that racialised, gendered and class inequalities 'merely' intersect in certain contexts cannot suffice, as they have different histories and relate to different socio-structural processes. Social class is grounded in economic processes of production and consumption, gender is a mode of discourse that defines roles by sexual/biological difference,

and ethnic and racial divisions relate to discourses of collectivities, constructed around inclusionary and exclusionary boundaries (Yuval Davis 2006).

One potential way forward is to consider the location of power and its material and symbolic effects. To think about power as located in the macro and micro potentially assists in unpacking the complex interplay of structures at (e.g. 'race', gender and class) and how they are reproduced through the micro everyday level. For instance, 'race' and ethnic identifications can be located in the macro and the micro, through multicultural discourse, media and through teachers' positioning of the girls (Chapter 6). Intersectional identifications can be located at the macro and micro in the girls' readings of racialized wider discourse and positioning of them as 'between two cultures' (Chapter 8).

2.33 Identities as performative

Judith Butler's (1990) theory of performativity has heavily influenced post-structural feminist thinking on identity, treating gender as a social construct and the body as a site where identities are played out. Drawing on Foucauldian concepts of self regulation (Foucault 1984), Butler explains how gender identity is a social construction, as opposed to a biologically given category, and is constituted through the reiteration of gendered norms as a 'performance' that is materialised over time. The reiteration of gender firmly embeds gender identities so that they appear given or 'natural' (Wetherell 2010). Butler's work represents a significant move from centralising 'experience', usually associated with structural feminisms that draw on the woman's voice as a reflection of marginal positionality, to locating experience within norms and practices that are repeatedly performed through discourse throughout time.

Performances of 'doing girl' through intersections of 'race', religion gender and multiple discourses have been explored by Duits (2008) and Ringrose (2012). Duit's study on Dutch girls' identities demonstrates how agency can be understood as inseparable from social positioning within

the school's multicultural environment and discourses on girlhood. Performances of 'girl' were never only a matter of 'choice' as not all girls had equal access to all performance practices, and because 'discourse enables certain identifications and disables others' (Duits 2008: 222). Identifications were 'raced' as well as gendered, thus indicating that the performance of certain identities can be understood through access to these identities. In the UK context, Ringrose (2008) similarly explores 'doing girl' in relation to hyper-sexualised gender identities such as wearing the thong, hetero-sexualised aggression and competition for boys. When a Muslim girl appears to resist hyper-sexualised politics and displays of femininity, Ringrose explains her 'rupture' in relation to the dominant discourse of female sexuality as a result of her religious background, which *'made her negotiation into teen heterosexual culture different and possibly more difficult than for the other girls'* (Ringrose 2012: 108). Both Duit's and Ringrose's findings indicate that some girls are rendered invisible from discourses of female hypersexuality because it remains a largely 'white' space (i.e. hypersexuality is an 'unavailable' option to Muslim girls). Versions of 'girl' are performed and resisted in accordance to race, ethnic and class identifications.

Performativity theory also extends beyond gender studies through its intersections with other social categories such as class (Walkerdine et al 2001; Reay 2005) and the constellation of learner identities (Youdell 2006). Butler (1999) suggests that her theory of performativity can be used to analyse racialised and ethnic identities. Race as a performance is based on the idea that it is *"formed, made, it is doing, a process, a daily performance that is constantly changing and replenished"* (Elam and Elam 2010: 191). 'Doing race' takes place within the representational context in which it occurs, or the cultural staging required to make race meaningful and powerful. It is not so much about what 'race' is, but rather when it emerges, and for what purpose (Elam and Elam 2010; Bradbury 2014).

However, Butler (1999) warns that racialised identities should be treated with caution given that 'race' may not be constructed in the same way as gender. She further suggests:

“no single account of construction will do, and that these categories always work as a background for one another, and they often find their most powerful articulation through one another” (Butler 1999: xvi).

Butler's contention fits with an intersectional approach in that social categories are reinforced and articulated through one another. However, she also suggests that gender can be foregrounded. For instance, the stereotypical articulation of sexualised racial gendered norms (e.g. the South Asian woman as sexually passive or the African Caribbean woman as overly sexually active (Mirza 2009) can be read through multiple lens that consider both gender and 'race' as a social construct, which illuminates 'gender as an exclusive category of analysis' (Haw 1997; Butler 1999).

2.4 Situating my study

The studies discussed in this chapter highlight the experiences of South Asian girls and their families, and in the process, trouble the culturally reductionist accounts of teachers, and common representations of a clash of cultures. Whilst some focus on experiences of education (Basit 1997; Bhatti 1999; Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008), and increasing attainment (Abbas 2002; 2003; Shah et al 2010) others focus on identity production and shifting the lens away from problems at home towards the interactions between home, school and wider discourse (Shain 2003; Bradford and Hey 2007; Ludhra 2015). Even before the development of state concerns about Muslims as potential terrorist threats, most of the studies on South Asian girls in schools were largely focused on Muslim girls, and in particular Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls (e.g. Haw 1997; 2010; Basit 1997, Dwyer 1999; Bhatti 1999, Pichler 2007). The vast majority of these studies are small scale, qualitative (e.g. ethnographic, and in-depth interviewing through discourse analysis and narrative) and

use interpretive methods with the exception of larger scale studies that have used mixed methods and attitudinal surveys (e.g. Abbas 2003; Ghuman 2003).

Whilst these studies have invaluable increased understanding of the construction of the links between attainment, identities, discourse and agency, they also continue to focus on themes of culture and difference (e.g. through marriage and shared ethnic identities such as Indian or Gujarati), familial relations and 'values' (i.e. theories of capital). Although these studies may have been conducted with anti-racist aims in mind, they also arguably perpetuate a gaze on cultural and religious differences, and in so doing, risk reinforcing a gaze on the 'melodramatic' (Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003) rather than the 'mundane'. In addition, a continued focus on ethnic and cultural particularities potentially masks other categories of difference such as shared processes of racialization of South Asian and Other Asians (Shain 2003).

This chapter identifies gaps in the research literature on identities that I will address as follows:

1. There is a marked absence of work that interrogates the mundane 'everyday' negotiations of South Asian girls in schools. Negotiations in 'everyday' contexts such as schools could therefore provide a means to move beyond melodramatic constructions and towards a more nuanced understanding of how South Asian female subjectivities are formed. My focus on the 'everyday' aspects of multiculturalism attempts to address the reification or fixity of South Asian girls' social identities by exploring variations in the mundane (see Chapter 3), and to feed into a dialogue about how policy and school response can better respond to the presence of South Asian girls without resorting to cultural reductionism.
2. There also appears to be a tendency to homogenise teachers as a group, without considering the differences in social location between them and any potentially conflicting perspectives. Drawing on analysis

of interviews conducted with teachers, I reflect on the multiple ways in which they understand and put diversity discourses and policies into action. In addition, there has been minimal consideration of the context in which ethnic diversity is shaped and 'managed' within institutional settings. I attempt to address this neglect by contextualising my understanding of identities and social positioning within the school's multiculturalism.

3. My work is influenced by poststructural approaches to identities that locate the subject in multiple discourses with a range of intersecting identities, because this approach can address the complexity of the location of South Asian females. Whilst ethnic identifications and culture are important in the study of identities, I am concerned in particular with what the multicultural school context does to and for the girls' identities, and with the processes of racialization that are part of this context.
4. The studies discussed focus on second or third generation girls from the Indian subcontinent. There is a significant dearth of literature that addresses the experiences of those who are generally categorised as 'Other Asians', which includes those with ancestry from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and the East African colonies. Through my research, I encountered girls who were also first generation migrants but shared many experiences with other girls in the group who would be considered traditional 'South Asian girls'.

Given that one of the main aims of this study is to explore how South Asian girls' identities are constructed and negotiated in a multicultural school context, in the following chapter, I review the literature on British multiculturalism and how South Asian young people and girls have been positioned within the debates.

Chapter 3: South Asian young people and girls in state and ‘everyday’ multiculturalism

3.1 British multiculturalism: contestation and blurred meanings

Multiculturalism has featured in scholarly work and political commentaries as a contested and blurred term. It has been referred to as a state or ideological concept that includes top down policies and political spin (Howarth and Andreouli 2013), and cultural plurality itself (Gilroy 2004; 2012) (discussed in section 3.3). In relation to the former, multiculturalism is generally referred to as a political and policy response to govern and manage multi-ethnicity created by immigrant populations (Rattansi 2011), an issue of ‘managing’ and responding to diversity (Ahmed 2009). State multiculturalism is generally associated with the acknowledgement of cultural pluralism and the promotion of cultural variety. Its translation from state discourse to interventions can be seen as a set of policies and programmes that allow migrant and minority ethnic communities to maintain and develop cultural and religious practices and belief systems (Wise 2014).

In Britain, multiculturalism can be situated amidst numerous other state policies to deal with and manage difference and diversity, both in and beyond the education system. Diversity management policy is usually identified as assimilation in the 1970s, based on the expectation that minority groups should blend with the majority population and adapt their ‘way of being’ (Lewis 2000), containing overlaps with integration policies, where fostering good relations was achieved by learning about other cultures and the recognition of the contributions that different populations make to the life of Britain (Bhavnani et al 2005). Multiculturalism’s journey has overlapped with both integration, in its recognition of the co-existence of diverse groups of people and with the emergence of antiracist¹⁹

¹⁹ Anti-racism can be largely defined as policies and strategies for opposing and addressing racism (Turney et al 2002). However, like other diversity management terms, it is a complex one. Bonnett (2000) identifies six forms of anti-racism: 1) Everyday anti-racism: the opposition to racial

perspectives in the 1980s and 1990s. Antiracism was designed to redress the lack of attention paid by multiculturalism and integration to power and inequalities, and aimed to tackle power differentials along racial lines (Bhavnani et al 2005).

British multiculturalism also takes the form of policies for affirmative action, political consultation and funding for ethnic self-organization based on group rights (Kymlicka 2010; Rattansi 2011), As Kundnani (2012) notes, the 1980s saw at least two ideas of multiculturalism: 1) 'top down' (i.e. about managing ethnic communities); and 2) 'bottom up' (i.e. shared political struggle such as the development of the political identity 'black'). South Asian and Muslim groups have historically been aligned to 'bottom up' multiculturalism seeking group rights (e.g. the right to wear religious dress such as the turban and hijab, and to celebrate festivals such as Diwali and Eid) (Modood and May 2001). South Asian women, for example, have historically fought for resources to fund domestic violence organizations to attend to cultural specifics and structural disadvantages such as immigration (SBS 2003). In sum, multiculturalism has been about cultural recognition but also encouraging economic redistribution and participation.

Similarly, throughout British education, there have been a number of shifts in diversity discourse, which have been extensively discussed elsewhere (see Race 2011; Vincent et al 2013; Meer and Modood 2014). The 1980s in education was characterised by anti-racist policies but also a number of contradictory positions and shifts in diversity management discourse²⁰. Multicultural policies formed part of this period alongside a

equality that forms part of everyday popular culture; 2) Multicultural anti-racism: the affirmation of multicultural diversity as a way of engaging racism; 3) Psychological anti-racism: the identification and challenging of racism within structures of individual and collective consciousness; 4) Radical anti-racism: the identification and challenging of structures of socio-economic power and privilege that foster and reproduce racism; 5) Anti-Nazi and anti-fascist anti-racism; 6) The representative organisation: the policy and practice of seeking to create organisations representative of the 'wider community' and therefore actively favouring the entry and promotion of previously excluded 'races' (p 85-86).

²⁰ see The Rampton Report (1981), which highlighted teacher racism as a cause of the differential performance of 'West Indian', (now 'African Caribbean') children (Modood and May 2001), and

more general acceptance of the contribution of minority ethnic groups to wider society. To some extent, multiculturalism in 'demographic' form (Harris 2001) was present in the 1980s, whereby diversity was coined as an asset to workforce composition and learning experiences in schools (Bhavnani et al 2005). However, the early 1990s under the Conservative government saw the starving of multicultural education resources (Meer and Modood 2014) and the removal of multicultural education from the national curriculum (Graham 1993 cited in Meer and Modood 2014). This shifted again in the move towards multiculturalism in education once more following the MacPherson Report (1999)²¹, which led to schools being expected to teach cultural diversity in the curriculum in addition to merely 'accommodating' difference (Race 2011).

Since the mid 1990s a significant widespread political backlash against multiculturalism and its failure in Western countries has occurred in response to self-segregating minority ethnic groups 'holding on to their own cultures' (Ousley 2001; Phillips 2005; Rattansi 2011).

Multiculturalism has been in part blamed for promoting self segregation through its celebration of diverse cultures, which is seen to encourage separatism rather than shared national identities. Official state discourse posits multiculturalism as perpetuating a lack of integration and ethnic minority people living parallel, rather than shared lives (Modood 2005; Kundnani 2012; Kymlicka 2012), and for fostering diversity that is out of control (Lentin and Titley 2012). Minority ethnic communities have been blamed for their loss of 'love' for the British multicultural nation and their

The Swann report (1985) which demonstrated that because Asian pupils were achieving similar results to white pupils, the emphasis shifted from overt anti-racist strategies towards an inclusive multiculturalism according to a framework of commonly accepted values (Modood and May 2001). The Burnage Report (1989), commissioned as an inquiry into the racially motivated murder of Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, a 13-year old Bengali school student in Manchester found that the strong anti-racist approach that positioned all white students as racist was in part to blame for the racist violence (Modood and May 2001).

²¹ The MacPherson report (1999) investigated the failings of the police in the handling of the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence, and concluded that the police force was institutionally racist. Institutional racism refers to "*the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination, through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping*" (MacPherson 1999).

rejection of Britain as ‘embracing and welcoming’ of its diverse populations (Ahmed 2004).

The state backlash against multiculturalism has involved a reassertion of nation building, based on common values, identity, unitary citizenship, and a return of assimilation (Kymlicka 2010). This new era, which Vertovec (2010) terms ‘post-multiculturalism’ defines the competing set of interventions to tackle separatism and de-emphasises respect for diversity in favour of shared values, resonating strongly with discourses on integration and assimilation (McGhee 2008)²². Under the New Labour government (1997-2010), a number of ‘rebalancing’ interventions to buffer against separatist multiculturalism were introduced, including in schools. For instance, citizenship studies, constructed as a way to promote community cohesion, was introduced to the curriculum in 2002 (Crick Report 1999; Simon 2007). Citizenship studies sets out to address issues of rights and responsibilities, and foster feelings of inclusion and belonging to a common sense of ‘Britishness’. Such rebalancing activities have gained added momentum under the Conservative and previous Coalition government (see section 3.4 for a discussion on the state backlash towards multiculturalism).

A number of scholars have responded to the backlash against multiculturalism by highlighting flaws in how the term has been conceptualised. McGhee (2008) argues that hostility towards multiculturalism is directed towards a contested and multifaceted concept. Similarly, Gilroy (2012) contends that:

“Multiculturalism – a blurred term covering a host of different woes – is repeatedly declared counterproductive and then pronounced dead, often as part of anxiety inducing arguments about security, national identity and the menace of Islamic extremism. How much those noisy announcements refer to an ideological formation and how much they are aimed wishfully, at the fact of cultural plurality itself, has always been unclear” (384).

²² The recognition of institutional racism as significant has also diminished in the wake of of the 2001 riots (Pilkington 2008).

It would therefore be helpful to distinguish between a state or ideological version of multiculturalism (Howarth and Andreouli 2013) that includes top down policies and political spin, and as Gilroy (2012) suggests, cultural plurality itself (discussed in section 3.5 on multiculturalism as 'everyday').

Despite the shifts in discourse on diversity management and increased emphasis on cohesion, the staying power of multiculturalism has been recognized in various spheres of society from workplaces to schools (Race 2011). As Banks (cited in Race 2011) asserts, multicultural education “...*is an inclusive concept used to describe a wide variety of school practices, programs and materials designed to help children from diverse groups to experience educational equality*” (p5). Multiculturalism exists alongside 'post-multicultural' government interventions (e.g. community cohesion and citizenship) (McGhee 2008) and continues to thrive, albeit in a piecemeal fashion (Ajebo 2007; Costley and Leung 2014). It covers a range of programmes including English as a Second or Additional Language (EAL), representation and celebration of difference, anti-racism programmes, intercultural understanding (Noble and Watkins 2014), and a general multicultural ethos (e.g. Black History Month and the accommodation of the hijab as part of school uniform) (Dhaliwal and Patel 2006). Whilst these may fall under the umbrella of multicultural approaches, they also overlap with other diversity management approaches (e.g. anti-racism, integration) further marking its blurred definition and boundaries.

Given multiculturalism's eclectic and blurred presence, and the acknowledgement that it may take a variety of forms across states (see Kymlicka 1998), Steinberg and Kinchloe's (2001) model of 'types' of multiculturalism in education is a helpful tool to further understand what it may look like in practice in schools. The authors identify the following forms of multicultural education:

1. **Conservative multiculturalism** or monoculturalism, which emphasizes the superiority of Western patriarchal culture and attempts to ensure assimilation to a Western, middle-class standard;
2. **Liberal multiculturalism**, which emphasises that diverse groups are equal and suggests that inequality results from a lack of opportunity, but accepts assimilationist goals of conservative multiculturalism’
3. **Pluralist multiculturalism**, which focuses on differences rather than similarities and promotes pride in group heritage and that the curriculum should consist of studies of divergent groups;
4. **Left-essential multiculturalism**, which defines membership in groups as based on notions of ‘authenticity’ (i.e. unchanging characteristics), and by doing so erases the complexity and diversity in its history;
5. **Critical multiculturalism**, which is based on a critical pedagogy that promotes an understanding of how power is implicit in the curriculum, and identifies what gives rise to race, class and gender inequalities.

In the UK context, contested and blurred definitions of multiculturalism raise important issues about how it should be taken up as a key theme in this study. To give a foundation to my analysis of multiculturalism in the school, I refer to Steinberg and Kinchloe’s typology to enhance understanding of teachers’ take up and conceptualisation of multiculturalism (Chapters 5 and 6).

3.2 The racialization of cultural difference and multiculturalism as a neutralizing narrative

Multiculturalism when understood as the celebration of cultural pluralism, a ‘feel-good’ celebration of ethno-cultural differences promoting traditions, music and cuisine (Rattansi 2011), has been referred to as the 3S model, based on representations of ‘saris, samosas, and steel bands’. Alibhai-Brown (2000) cautions that such representations of culture:

“...are treated as authentic cultural practices to be preserved by their members and safely consumed as cultural spectacles by

others. So they are taught in multicultural school curricula, performed in multicultural festivals, displayed in multicultural museums and so on” (Alibhai-Brown 2000: 98).

In addition to this version of multiculturalism being criticized for ignoring issues of inequality such as unemployment, educational outcomes and segregation, it has also been blamed for encouraging constructions of groups as static (Dhaliwal and Patel 2006; Mirza 2009a ; Youdell 2012). As with assimilation and integration policies, multicultural interventions are located in discourses about problematic Others by reflecting hegemonic understandings of the category ‘race’, and influence constructions within social policy where racialized Others are the ‘problem’ (Lewis, 2000). They perpetuate old discursive formations of racialised differences based in particular on notions of hierarchical cultural difference.

In reflection of this point, representation and celebration of different cultures and customs in the curriculum, counselling, pastoral support, and mentoring in schools have also been identified to be based on the cultural deficit model. Such interventions have been deemed as tokenistic and link simplistic versions of ethnic minority cultures with unchanging characteristics (Rattansi 2011). Therefore, multiculturalism as it has evolved in the British context emphasizes particular versions of culture that have become reified and static. Understandings of minority ethnic students continue to be grounded in culturally determinist discourses through a focus on language deficits, cultural differences and family practices (Rasool 1999). This is particularly the case for South Asians and Muslims, where the over-emphasis on cultural differences suggests that they in particular have been subjected to the culturalisation of ‘race’, which sits at the heart of cultural racism (Goldberg 1993; Modood and May 2001; Hoque 2015). Cultural racism has been identified as one of the main products of multiculturalism through its gaze on racialised versions of cultural difference, and blaming certain groups for backward cultural practices, incompatible with ‘British’ values (section 3.1). Cultural racism is arguably the most prominent form of racism today and is critical

to how South Asians and Muslims are positioned in the wider imagination (Hoque 2015).

A plural multicultural model that schools draw on to inform practice has been highlighted as particularly perpetuating reductionist categorisations of some ethnic groups. Youdell's (2012) ethnographic study of an Australian high school demonstrates how 'multicultural' days were formed around representations of the Other and resulted in displays of 'culture' that invoked a "*will to know the Other that contains, expropriates and inscribes Same/Other hierarchies*" (Youdell 2012: 153). Minority ethnic pupils were found to be both constituted in such representations, but also actors, 'performing' the multicultural categories ascribed to them (see section 3.3 for a discussion of studies on young people's identities in everyday multiculturalism which further highlights this issue). Similarly, Patel (2007) found existing stereotypes were further entrenched in teachers' positioning of minority ethnic students in three London schools. Black identities were commonly referred to through histories of political struggles against racism and for civil and political rights, whereas South Asian identities were constructed in relation to their religious affiliations through representations in religious assemblies and Religious Education lessons. When used as 'typical' examples of black and Asian identities in schools, such foci are problematic because constructions of Asians as different are limited to 'culture' and blacks to political rights and struggles.

As a way forward from the trap of cultural essentialism, Youdell (2006) suggests that Critical Race Theory (CRT) pedagogy which critically foregrounds white supremacy in teachers' analyses and interventions, can potentially undercut race hierarchies that are reproduced under multiculturalism. In addition, CRT can make available discursive spaces in which other categories of student and learner can be taken up. Therefore, it is not the recognition of ethnic and cultural difference that is a problem per se, but rather that teacher practice involving recognition should encompass reflexivity over the 'limits to knowing'. Similarly, 'critical' multiculturalism troubles Eurocentric knowledge as the base on

which other cultures are constructed, and foregrounds anti-racism in multicultural practice (also discussed by Patel (2007) (Chapters 5 and 9).

However, the problems with multiculturalism as a celebration of difference run deeper than the production of static and hierarchical categories. As Ahmed (2009) argues, representations of ethnic and cultural difference in organizational contexts are a branding exercise that produces a 'technology of happiness'. For instance, the students in multi ethnic higher education brochures are commonly represented as happily 'getting along'. Being diverse becomes a way to communicate to the outside world that the organisation is committed to equality, and therefore automatically anti-racist without the need to adopt anti-racist interventions (Ahmed 2009: 46; 2012). The production of the 'happy' multicultural discourse through the 'fact' of diversity itself, has effectively silenced talk about racism (Ahmed 2009). Dhaliwal and Patel (2006) similarly show how teachers saw multicultural inclusion as a synonym for anti-racism. They found slippage between how teachers talked about diversity management, so that multiculturalism was discussed interchangeably with anti-racism, identity, and racial inequality.

The trickling from wider discourse into young people's everyday perceptions is evidenced by Harries (2014) in her study of 20-30 year olds in Manchester. Harries' participants appeared not to have the language to articulate racism, despite recounting experiences that could be interpreted as racist. Instead, they drew on the language of multiculturalism and ethnic mix associated with this to suggest the meaninglessness of 'race', whilst giving contradictory narratives that signified the experiences of racism through Othering based on cultural difference rather than 'race'. The language of multiculturalism therefore acted as a neutralizing narrative for structural racism, which Harries (2014) and Ahmed (2009) argue makes processes of racialisation subtler, and therefore difficult to challenge.

3.3 Multiculturalism, South Asian women and gender rights

A body of scholarly feminist work has explored the effects of multicultural discourses on gender equality. South Asian women and girls feature strongly in this literature, particularly in relation to the respect for difference that British multiculturalism generates through fostering non-intervention in gender inequalities within minority ethnic communities. For instance, Patel (2007) found that South Asian parents tended to withdraw their daughters from residential trips and other mixed gender activities, even when these were 'essential' to their studies (see also findings by Crozier and Davies 2007 and Ghuman 2003, Chapter 2). She argues that teachers' lack of will to challenge Asian parents was a result of their respect for cultural difference, fostered by the multicultural approach the school adopted. Yet, counterintuitively, children's rights as set out in Every Child Matters (ECM)²³ were therefore not closely followed for minority ethnic girls, and instead, the need to respect and tolerate South Asian families' differences over-rode the pillars of ECM (Dhaliwal and Patel 2006). One example that teachers cited was the withdrawal of South Asian girls from sex education classes because the parents were 'within their rights to do so'. Schools were therefore complicit in reinforcing particular positions at home through a failure to challenge parental views, which led to the girls' exclusion from some educational activities.

Particularly in relation to gender based violence, multicultural approaches have been deemed largely 'gender blind' (Okin 1998; Phillips 2007; Gill and Mitra-Kahn 2010), which has led to the needs of minority ethnic women being neglected (Burman and Chantler 2003; Puri 2005).

²³ Every Child Matters (ECM) was launched in 2003 aiming to give all children the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and to achieve economic well-being (DfES 2004). The legislative basis for many ECM reforms came with the passing of the Children's Act 2004, which required schools, health and social services to work closely together. Under ECM schools were obliged to engage with external agencies in order to maximise effectiveness in ensuring children reach their potential and keep them safe. In the climate of increased responsibility for professionals, service providers had to relate to young women deemed to be at risk of violence, abuse and death. Since the change to a coalition Conservative and Liberal Democrat government in 2010, ECM has been discontinued. However, at the time of data collection, ECM was operational in all schools.

Multiculturalism's focus on respect for diversity and value for cultural difference can unwittingly influence professional non-intervention in domestic violence when it is seen to be rooted in cultural and religious practices. As Beckett and Macey (2001) argue:

“Multiculturalism does not cause domestic violence, but it does facilitate its continuation through its creed of respect for cultural differences, its emphasis on non-interference in minority lifestyles and its insistence on community consultation ... This has resulted in women being invisibilised, their needs ignored and their voices silenced” (Beckett & Macey, 2001: 311).

Issues of multicultural paralysis have been reported to be particularly pronounced for South Asian women and girls deemed at risk from patriarchal, cultural and religious belief systems of 'honour and shame', that can lead to what has been popularly termed 'honour violence' (Wilson 2006). The deaths of Banaz Mahmood and Heshu Yones who were both murdered in the name of 'honour' (Payton 2010) are often cited at conferences on honour violence for professionals such as the Crown Prosecution Service and police, to demonstrate the failure of multiple agencies' slow response as a result of fears of being branded racist. As a form of honour violence, forced marriage has received much state and public attention as a result of failure in keeping girls safe. School staff have also been found to be reluctant to engage with awareness-raising about forced marriage, which *'appeared to stem from a fear of causing offence within communities where forced marriage is prevalent'* (Home Affairs Committee 2011). Criminalized since 2014, young women can seek protection and prosecute their families if they suspect they will be, or if they have been, forced into marriage. However, the law has been met with mixed reactions. Whilst some feminist activists argued that the intervention will increase victims' agency (Sangheera 2007), others have negated this claim by suggesting that the legislation will fail because young women and girls will always be resistant to 'turning in' their families (Gill and Anitha 2011).

Phoenix's (1996) argument that a normative absence, but also a pathological presence characterises state and other responses to women and girls from minority ethnic communities is helpful in thinking through the problematic visibility of South Asian girls as victims of violence. They are simultaneously invisible (i.e. experience non-intervention or delayed service response), in particular contexts and rendered visible as pathologised²⁴ victims of forced marriage and honour killings in negative media reporting and specific interventions and laws. This contradiction has arguably been exacerbated by multiculturalism that encourages group recognition (Rattansi 2011; Kundnani 2012) and creates the conditions for minority ethnic female groups to respond to 'cultural' and ethnic specific needs that have often not been met by mainstream domestic violence services (Crenshaw 1984; Mama 1989; Carby 1996), through the development of 'ethnic' specific services (e.g. organisations such as Ashiana and Imkaan).

Eurocentric underpinnings of interventions have arguably fueled this dualistic approach to gender violence. Gill and Mitra-Kahn (2010) suggest that routes to safety from domestic violence and forced marriage are typically framed through the 'right to exit' model, whereby women can 'choose' to leave their families and communities to escape violence at home. The 'right to exit' model is located in an "*unsophisticated multicultural approach*" since it reinforces the cultural deficit model of South Asian groups by *'telling women (and girls) that they have the ability to leave their communities'* (Gill and Mitra-Kahn 2010: 129). Whilst research has shown that South Asian females do not always want to 'exit' their communities, nor have the desire to prosecute their families, little has changed in how exit strategies are formulated. The 'right to exit' continues to be based on a Western narrative of progress that advocates that certain cultures should be shown the way to Western enlightenment (Gill and Mitra-Kahn 2010).

²⁴ South Asian girls as pathologised refers to their positioning as non-normative/ problematic subjects

Chantler (2006) argues that notions of 'independence', which also underpin the 'right to exit' model, are shaped by Eurocentric traits that privilege women who are white, heterosexual, able-bodied and middle class. These women also tend to be in a position to have control and are therefore more likely to 'choose' independence. The western discourse of independence and 'choice' fails to account for cultural specificities and structural constraints, such as immigration legislation and the two-year rule (i.e. where spouses were not permitted to divorce their spouses for at least two years after entering the country) (Gupta 2003; Wray 2006) as well as heightened community pressures and norms around izzat (or preserving family and community 'honour') that may shape South Asian women's scope for agency (Siddiqui 2003; Gill 2014). Consequently, western constructions of 'independence' feed into racialised constructions of South Asian women as passive and weak.

As a way forward from the gendered cultural trap, Ann Phillips (2007) has argued for a multicultural approach that gives equal weighting to gender rights and equality as it does to the right to culture, which would lead to a more 'sophisticated multiculturalism' grounded in feminist methodology and practice (Gill and Mitra-Kahn 2010). However, how this would work in practice currently remains unclear, but could be addressed through new research on how cases of cultural sensitivity and the threat of gender violence are currently dealt with, which this study partly attempts to address. In particular, there is a pressing need to understand the shifting climate in which teachers and front line staff respond to 'cultural' specifics of gender violence, particularly given that 41% of reported forced marriage cases involve victims under the age of 18 years, and because schools have a responsibility in detecting potential and 'real' forced marriage cases (Kazimirski et al 2009).

3.4 Multiculturalism's political backlash and 'new' Muslim identities

South Asian and Muslim young people also feature in the literature on multiculturalism in relation to its recent backlash. Official multicultural

state discourse in particular has moved from constructions of African Caribbean and Asian groups as 'alien' to one that racialises Muslims as disruptive to the national order. Multiculturalism of the last 10-15 years has been criticized for destroying liberal ideas of open society such as secularism, individualism, gender equality, sexual freedom and freedom of expression, and Muslims have been positioned as the disruptive Others, in need of being made into good, liberal individuals should absorb British or Western values (Kundnani 2012). In a recent speech on radicalization and security, the Prime Minister, David Cameron emphasized "the question of identity" and the need to "*confront a tragic truth that there are people born and raised in this country who don't really identify with Britain – and who feel little or no attachment to other people here*" (Grierson, 2015). The lack of commitment that radical Muslims have to the national British identity was posited by Cameron as one of the main reasons for the rise of extremism, making them "*more susceptible to radicalisation and even violence against other British people to whom they feel no real allegiance*". The current need for a more 'cohesive' society has been reiterated in state discourse, with a review to be carried out in early 2016 on how to boost opportunity and integration in ethnic minority communities.

The backlash against multiculturalism and the resulting heightened visibility and hostility towards Muslims has been found to have an effect on how young Muslims are positioning themselves. As Haw argues, feelings of exclusion from multicultural tolerance have led Muslim women to position themselves in complex ways:

"This is a generation of young Muslim women who have had to 'dance with' contradictory discourses to do with multiculturalism and essentialism and exclusion.... they now have to dance to a band of discourses playing a different tune. They are claiming equal rights as British citizens with the right not to be labeled by a notion of British identity that perceives their Muslim and Islamic identities to be difficult and dangerous, and for genuine cultural diversity" (Haw 2009: 376)

Hoque (2015) similarly argues that 'new' Muslim identities are an active site for spiritual and political articulation within the British multicultural context. His ethnographic study of six 15-19 year old third generation Bangladeshis in East London (3 males and 3 females) highlights how young Muslims were strongly aligned to being British. This was based on their birth-right and their views on education, socialisation, business, fashion, women's rights and democracy. Hoque's findings contradict dominant representations in official state cohesion discourse on Muslims as in need of integration into British (liberal) values. His findings, although small scale, also indicate that a 'new' global Muslim identity provides a sense of belonging and acceptance in a hostile, poverty stricken and racist environment, alongside the declining significance, for young people, of Bangladesh as their 'homeland' (see also Valentine and Sporton (2009), section 3.4).

Haw (1998; 2009; 2010; 2011) found young Muslim women's identities to be a product of the interaction between wider discourses with everyday practices of school, culture, and home. Her initial study was conducted with a group of Muslim girls in two schools, who were followed up eleven years later. Within the context of social change, Haw explores how Muslim girls *'constructed, inhabited and moved between different groups and contexts and their apparently 'different' and 'contradictory' behaviour in this process'* (Haw 2009: 364). Since shifts in wider discourses on Muslims have been spurred by major events (e.g. the Al Qaeda attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001, the Gulf war and the Northern riots in 2001), she found the young women's identities had also shifted. For instance, 'myths' about Muslim women as the oppressed Other that have been reinforced through key events such as the Shabina Begum case²⁵, were also present in the young women's narratives. Housee (2004; 2010) similarly found external political and global changes had increased South Asian women's visibility at university. In response, some women

²⁵ A Muslim girl who was unlawfully excluded from a Bedfordshire school for wearing the full gown, known as the jilbab, who subsequently won her case at the Court of Appeal (R (Begum) v Governors of Denbigh High School [2006])

reasserted their Muslim identity by preferring to describe themselves by their religious background rather than ethnicity, whereas others became defensive.

Other studies have found that one means of expressing Muslim identity amongst girls and women is through wearing the hijab (Dwyer 1999; Housee 2004). But this leads to added surveillance from teachers (Mirza and Meeto 2013), family members, as well as questioning in the workplace. Haw (2009; 2010) found some young women had to explain their decision to their parents as a result of their reassertion of their Muslim (rather than Pakistani) identity. According to Haw, acts such as veiling as an assertion of female Muslim identity, should be understood not just as a product of religious difference but within wider societal pressures and resistance to negative representations. Identity shifts to 'new' Muslim identities were therefore found to be linked to shifts in wider discourses and negative representations. Muslim female identities were constituted through the 'interstices' of primary discourses (e.g. wider representations on Muslims as Others) and through other aspects of daily life such as school culture, relationships with teachers, discourses of the family, kinship networks, and media. In sum, the literature on 'new' Muslim identities highlights the negative effects that the state backlash towards multiculturalism has produced. Feelings of exclusion have arguably also been fuelled by current notions of Britishness found in rebalancing activities (McGhee 2008) such as community cohesion, which are more aligned to assimilationist notions of being 'British' and therefore exclusionary (Lander 2014).

However, British multiculturalism still has a lot to offer in terms of fostering positive relations, and modified versions of multiculturalism have been advocated by a number of scholars to facilitate its continuation. For instance, Modood (2005) suggests integration can run alongside multicultural policies as a complementary idea, where integration measures take on a more multicultural than assimilationist form, alongside vibrant, dynamic national narratives of common citizenship.

Modood proposes that a 'strong multiculturalism' approach would recognize Muslims as legitimate social partners and include them in institutional compromises of the church, state, religion and politics. This more inclusive multicultural approach alongside integration policies to strengthen a shared sense of Britishness would therefore involve resisting calls for more radical French style secularism in which religious difference is confined to the private sphere (Malik 2015).

Another prominent advocate of multiculturalism is Parekh (2006; Runnymede Trust 2000). His version of multiculturalism as fluid, evolving, dynamic and contestable, and therefore incomplete, posits that no single culture can embody all that is valuable in human life nor develop the full range of human possibilities. Instead, different cultures 'correct' and complement each other, and can alert one another to new forms of fulfillment (Parekh 2006). Similar to Modood (2005), Parekh emphasizes a need for more dialogue beyond 'toleration' in the constant work towards an inclusive British identity, thus emphasizing the importance of intercultural dialogue (Modood 2005, McGlynn 2009; Meer and Modood 2012).

A further suggested way forward from the backlash against multiculturalism is a focus on its 'everyday' form. Studies taking this approach raise important points about how shifts and plurality in culture are played out on the everyday level and provide more nuanced versions of multiculturalism and inclusive British identities. This work is primarily focused on young people in everyday multiculturalism, and therefore contributes to an understanding of how young people's perspectives and identifications can inform more inclusive notions of Britishness and common citizenship (Harris 2013) as suggested by Modood (2005) and Parekh (2006).

3.5 Multiculturalism as 'everyday'

There has been growing interest in conceptualising multiculturalism as the 'fact' of diversity itself, along with a focus on everyday meanings of

living together (Gilroy 2004; 2012; Ho 2010; Harris 2013; Howarth and Andreouli 2013). As an early proponent of this approach, Hall (1999) talked about the notion of 'multicultural drift' rather than multiculturalism as policy. Multicultural drift was coined to capture the increasing visibility of 'natural' participation of minorities in the streets as an inevitable part of British life. Similarly, 'everyday' multiculturalism is an approach to understanding the everyday dimensions of multiculturalism as it is lived (Wise 2014), whereby different ethnic groups exist alongside one another. Therefore, everyday multiculturalism sits in contrast to top down state multiculturalism, as it focuses on how ethnic mix is experienced and negotiated in everyday situations such as diverse neighbourhoods, schools and organisations (Wise 2014).

Gilroy (2004) suggests that everyday British 'multiculture' can be celebrated without anxiety and fear. He refers to multiculture as often 'convivial' to denote the ethnic diversity that enriches our cities and our cultural industries. Multiculturalism for Gilroy is organically born out of the '*ordinary multiculture of the postcolonial metropolis*' (p136). His notion of conviviality is of:

“process[es] of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain’s urban areas and in post colonial cities elsewhere...it introduces a measure of distance from the pivotal term 'identity', which has proved to be such an ambiguous resource in the analysis of race, ethnicity and politics” (Gilroy 2004: xi)

The work on 'new ethnicities' can be closely aligned with 'everyday' multiculturalism because it has underpinned ideas about post structural identities as shifting, fluid and unstable, rather than as dependent on fixed ideological constructions of Otherness. Work on new ethnicities challenges what Gilroy (1993b) calls ethnic absolutism (i.e. the reductive, essentialist understanding of ethnic and national difference which operates through an absolute sense of culture), which I previously discussed as cultural essentialism (section 3.2). While minority ethnic groups have sometimes used ethnic absolutism as a protective cloak in

their fight against racism, as a form of strategic essentialism (Spivak 1984), Hall's (1998) concept of new ethnicities offers a way forward from the trap of ethnic absolutism, by emphasizing the performativity of ethnicity (or 'race').

Similarly, writers who adopt a 'post-race' stance emphasize a deconstructive approach to identities and typically draw on theories of performativity and new ethnicities (Ali 2003). Post-race thinking is not new, but is characterized by a new cluster of ideas around performativity, identity and the body that are crystallizing into a post-race frame (Nayak 2006). Whether referred to as post-race or new ethnicities, these approaches are anti-foundationalist (i.e. racial identity is an incomplete project, forever in a process of becoming). They claim 'race' is a fiction and only ever given substance through performance, action and utterance, where repetition makes it seem real (Nayak 2006). The appeal of anti-foundationalist approaches lies in their potential to counter culturalist racisms given that they do not resort to analytically defunct forms of social descriptions and explanations that reify 'race' (Nayak 2006; Paul 2013).

However, post race has come under attack because it is also equated with conservative discourses, particularly the declining significance of race and the end of racism. As Ahmed (2012) has argued in her study on racism and diversity management in higher education, it is dangerous to proceed with the idea that race and racialised categories *do not matter* because they *should not matter* as this would fail to show how categories continue to ground social existence (p182). One way forward where a post-race approach can be embraced whilst maintaining a close examination of the production of 'race', is through a focus on social categories in everyday experiences in diverse spaces and contexts. Therefore, learning from 'everyday' multicultural realities can enable an understanding of how 'race' emerges in specific contexts, and can therefore be challenged.

'Everyday' multiculturalism is in ordinary social spaces in which people of different backgrounds encounter one another, and consists of the mundane practices they construct and draw on to manage these encounters (Harris 2013). This implies that everyday multiculturalism is dynamic and a lived field of action in which social actors construct and deconstruct ideas of cultural difference, national belonging and place making. I take up these ideas in this study by using the 'everyday' as a descriptive and analytical frame to shift the focus from fixed notions of ethnic groups and their culture, towards places and practices that produce and rework ethnic and cultural identifications through mixed encounters, conflict and negotiation (Harris 2013: 7).

Advocates of 'everyday' multiculturalism suggest that the approach should be brought into politics and government as drivers for multicultural and integration policies (Gilroy 2004; Howarth and Andreouli 2013; Harris 2013). A focus on the everyday would assist in taking forward Modood's suggestion for a more inclusive Britishness, especially in current times in which the exclusion and alienation of Muslims is particularly heightened. For instance, demands for recognition in everyday spheres of life could influence policy such as in health, education, the arts and the criminal justice system (Gilroy 2004). As Harris (2013) contends, 'everyday' multiculturalism enables an alternative reading of young people and diversity. It brings to light micro projects where production and contestation of cultural difference and values occur through everyday practices and encounters, rather than assuming the problem is one of young people fitting into a homogenous national identity. Researchers working with young people in everyday contexts can learn from how they construct meanings and experience inclusion and exclusion, if and how 'race' matters, and what a national identity might look like. Such research would work towards filling a gap in research on how interventions should be developed to 'manage' diversity, based on the everyday experiences of young people living in diversity.

A further contribution of 'everyday' multiculturalism is the opportunity to move away from the longstanding challenge for researchers to talk about ethnicity and culture without reifying its categories or fixing subjects (Gilroy 2004). Back et al (2008) argue that by using terms such as migrant and black youth, we are in danger of constructing homogenous and essentialising categories of young people, although there is a simultaneous need to refer to the ways they are positioned. Despite young people using loose and shifting meanings of ethnicity and culture, the reiteration of these categories indicates that they can never be wholly free of these social positions. A focus on the 'everyday' can show how social positions are made meaningful in people's everyday lives. Social positions constrain but also enable possibilities for convivial living, and through the everyday we can capture the complex re-workings of identity, community and nation for young people (Harris 2013).

3.51 Young people and identities in 'everyday' multiculturalism

A number of empirical studies have explored everyday multiculturalism, most of which have focused on youth identities. The majority of these draw attention to the ambiguity in young people's identities as they navigate everyday multiculturalism through different spaces and contestations with others around them. Whilst some highlight the fluidity in new ethnicities (Harris 2006), others emphasise the power relations that are reproduced within everyday multiculturalism (Valentine 2008; Valentine and Sporton 2009), and both conflict and harmony (Harris 2013). Roxy Harris's (2006) study with 15-16 year old South Asian second and third generation migrant youth explored how their British identities were lived out at a routine, low key level as opposed to the general tendency in research to focus on the 'spectacular' or the melodramatic. Harris's work does not focus on Sikh, Hindu, Muslim, Asian languages nor on South Asian ethnic or racial groupings. Instead, through the everyday, he argues that young people perform new ethnicities and cultures of hybridity (Hall 1999; Harris 2007) through language.

The young people simultaneously inhabited a number of ethnic and cultural sub-communities, navigating their way through everyday practices including community language use, interaction with adolescent peers, religious practices, and diaspora connections and continuities. Boys in particular had strong affiliations to black masculinities heavily dominated by African American and Jamaican influences. They embodied through their accents and experiences of everyday cultural practices. However, they also retained diasporic connections and possibilities, and continued local Muslim and Panjabi language connections. This complexity and global connections signified that South Asian identities did not reflect a struggle between the old and the new, and the traditional and modern. Rather these elements were potentially available to the youth at all times (p13). To reflect the continuous flow of everyday life and cultural practices in which British and South Asian elements are always co-present, Harris uses the term 'BrAsians' to denote their situated British Asianess²⁶.

Taking a more critical stance of the everyday as a site where wider negative representations and discourses have a direct bearing on identity constructions, Valentine and Sporton's (2009) study of 11-18 year old Somali refugees and asylum seekers explores how they negotiate and discursively position themselves. Adopting an intersectional approach, the authors demonstrate how different social categories inflect one another in that they amplify, twist, and shape one another (McCall 2005). Young Somali identities were performed in and through different spaces (e.g. home, the nation, the transnational diaspora), but identity categories were also used to differentiate one another in specific spatial contexts, and particular subject positions were more salient or irrelevant in particular spaces (e.g. being British in Somalia but 'black' in Britain). The young people were also found to having fluctuating emotional investment in these different subject positions.

²⁶ The term 'BrAsians' was first coined in the edited publication by Ali, Kalra and Sayyid (2006) as a means of disrupting settled notions of the South Asian experience in Britain.

However, the young Somalis displayed an overriding emotional investment in the subject position 'Muslim', prioritizing faith over racial, ethno-national and gendered identities in narratives of the self. This assertion of a Muslim identity enabled them to overcome the troubling aspects of other subject positions available to them: such as the denial of Britishness, their dis-identification as black and the ambiguities of being Somali. Being Muslim offered them a stable attachment amongst transnationality, and temporal continuity. However, unlike in the studies on South Asian Muslim identities (Housee 2004; 2010; Haw 2009; 2010; 2011; Hoque 2015) Valentine and Sporton authors found no evidence of a sense of British identity for Somali youth in everyday multiculturalism.

Continuing with her scepticism of the everyday as a site where the residents merely 'rub shoulders' and get along, Valentine (2008) explored attitudes of white majority participants towards other minority ethnic groups in three UK cities. The intercultural dialogue and exchange that some social commentators (e.g. Amin 2002; Thrift 2005; Modood 2005) are calling for, Valentine argues, needs much closer consideration as there is a tendency to over romanticize the urban encounter and implicitly reproduce a naïve assumption that contact with 'others' translates into respect for difference. In addition, she found that living in multiculturalism does not always translate into greater contact between groups. Instead, the perceptions of her white participants were laced with narratives of social and economic injustice because of the presence of minority ethnic groups and racially motivated violence and hate crimes were common in these areas. When inter-ethnic civilities were present, these were in the form of encounters characterized by kindness and courtesy, which Valentine argues did not represent mixing nor respect for difference. Everyday encounters in multiculturalism therefore never take place in a space free from history, material conditions and power. Rather than focusing on 'new', fluid ethnicities more attention should be paid to the intersections of multiple identities to understand how encounters are systematically embedded within intersecting grids of power.

In her study of young people in multicultural Australian cities, Anita Harris (2013) similarly found conflict to be present. When cases of conflict arose, the young people reinforced ethnic allegiance to position themselves as powerful. However, despite the evocation of ethnic allegiance, she suggests conflicts were more about resources than cultural differences, but because of the over determination of ethnicity in wider societal discourses, young people will draw on such identities in the making of their own subject positions. In contrast to Valentine (2008) she suggests that racism and prejudice sit alongside care and recognition and are part and parcel of the norms of co-existence. Conflict should therefore be seen as a normal part of everyday multiculturalism, and was also understood by the young people as such.

However, similar to Valentine and Sporton (2009), Harris (2013) found that young people held identifications and affiliations beyond ethnic categories. Their identifications were also unstable, tied to social class, gender, sexuality and age, and specific spaces, both global and local. Of more contemporary relevance, the young people had strong transnational social networking ties, which indicate that 'community' was not always through shared, fixed space or continuous networks of trust embedded in these places, but also through connections developed virtually, thus facilitating networks of multiple identity constructions (Harris 2013).

Given that social and community cohesion agendas are assimilationist rather than inclusive (Lander 2014), there is potentially much that can be learned from everyday multicultural contact. Through 'everyday' multiculturalism it is possible to explore what kind of contact actually works and to what effects. Whilst Harris noted that informal spaces for mixing such as music festivals were positive spaces for intercultural contact, some South Asian and Muslim girls have limited possibilities to 'mix' outside of school (Ghuman 2003; Crozier and Davies 2007; 2009), which raises questions about how we explore everyday contact for girls that may be absent from conventional forms of 'ordinary mixing'.

A focus on such spaces excludes some groups, especially the girls who I worked with in this study.

In light of this, schools as sites that all young people frequent are an important space to explore everyday interactions. As Amin (2002) argues, schools can be 'micropublics' as they throw people together from diverse backgrounds, compelling them to engage in everyday negotiations of sharing a social space. Ho (2011) contends that schools are important sites as micropublics because at the most basic level, they entrench mutual recognition and respect for the presence of others. In addition, a focus on the everyday becomes a lens to assist researchers to explore hidden intersections of multiple inequalities (Werbner 2013) that are absent in dominant representations of Othered subjects. Exploring identities and social positioning in the everyday through an intersectional approach that considers 'race', class, gender, and sexuality enables an analysis of the production and continuation of inequalities, but also the positive, multiple, shifting, new ethnicities. The 'everyday' multicultural school context in this study thus provides a lens to explore manifestations and shifts in social positioning and the production of inequalities.

3.52 Super-diversity and intersectionality in everyday multiculturalism

The fact of diversity itself is also a feature of the work on 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007; Meissner and Vertovec 2015), and given the diverse migrant student body at Hillside (Chapters 4 and 7), this concept also bears relevance to this thesis. The term has been used and misused in a number of ways. For instance, it has been used to refer to 'more ethnicities', which is aligned to the term 'hyper-diversity', rather than to the term's original intention of recognizing multidimensional shifts in migration patterns. Meissner and Vertovec (2015) have attempted to address some of these different uses of super-diversity and advocate that it can be used as a descriptive term to portray changing population configurations particularly arising from global migration flows over the

past thirty years. They also suggest it can be used as a methodological tool to better understand complex and new social formations, and as a practical/policy oriented tool to highlight the need for policymakers and public practitioners to recognize new conditions created by global migration and population change.

Super-diversity has come under criticism because it overlooks theoretical notions of intersectionality (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). However, the concepts currently address different aspects of social positioning, with intersectionality emphasizing the combined workings of 'race', gender and class and the manifestation of inequality, while super-diversity addresses different categories altogether, mostly nationality/country of origin/ethnicity, migration channel/legal status (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). This implies that the two approaches are potentially compatible and can be employed as concepts to explore diversifications (superdiversity) and analyse inequalities (intersectionality). Potentially then, the fusion of the two approaches could address the failure of work on identities and ethnicities to grasp the real meaning of 'living together' in diverse contexts (Brubaker 2004 cited in Padilla et al 2015).

Padilla et al (2015) attempt to do this by drawing on super-diversity to understand how interculturality²⁷ is lived and experienced at the local level alongside the concept of everyday conviviality (Gilroy 2004). Through ethnographies in Lisbon and Grenada, they explore young people's interaction in public spaces, and how youth learned about diversity and conviviality in formal (school), less formal (out of school) institutions, and intercultural events. Their research highlights a number of current limitations in the concepts of conviviality and super-diversity. Firstly, both terms require further clarification. More boundaries are needed around what can be defined as features of super-diversity, how cultural interchanges should be conceptualized, and how we understand whether these changes relate to ethnicity rather than other

²⁷ Interculturality refers to the interaction between 'different' cultures. In intercultural encounters, meanings of culture are translated and negotiated (Rozbicki 2015).

diversifications. Secondly, and concurring with Valentine (2008) the authors found conviviality to be mediated by power relations, which led them to advocate the use of 'conviviality' as a relational approach for interactions and interchanges among diverse individuals. In light of these criticisms, super-diversity as it currently stands, is best used as a descriptive term to identify the main features of diversity in intercultural cities, rather than to address the manifestation of inequalities (Padilla et al 2015).

The literature on South Asian girls is predominantly focused on second and third generations, and largely absent of any discussions on newer migrant groups, such as those who are encompassed within the 'Other Asian' category (Khan 2015) and skilled migrants particularly from India (Kofman and Meetoo 2008). Super-diversity as a descriptive term can capture eclecticism between South Asian girls and assist in contextualizing the experiences, and identities of newer migrant South Asian girls and their families (see Chapter 7).

3.6 Situating South Asian girls' identities in multiculturalism

In these two literature review chapters, I have attempted to situate my study on the identities of South Asian girls, in light of the backdrop of British multiculturalism and previous work on social identities. I outline my approach as follows:

- 1) Identities are poststructural, located in discourse and will be explored as processes of social positioning. My approach to understanding social positioning will be informed by intersectionality to analyse how social categories of 'race', gender and class are manifested in the school context and in the girls' identities. Processes of identification and social positioning will be understood as tied to social class, gender, sexuality, migration, 'race' and religion (Harris 2013; Chapter 2).

2) In light of multiculturalism's haphazard emergence and continuation, its presence in schools as a blurred management discourse and policy intervention, I will draw on an understanding of multiculturalism as a 'framing discourse' (Haw 2010). However, referring to multiculturalism as a discourse rather than a firm set of defining principles suggests that analyzing interpretations and stories of multiculturalism amongst teachers and pupils requires a tool or typology to identify what it is and the forms it takes, and to reflect its different meanings and implementations. Whilst the argument for multiculturalism as a contested and blurred concept with varied meanings at state level is well rehearsed, there appears to be a gap in the literature on different meanings of multiculturalism on the ground and in everyday organizational contexts such as schools, and the professionals who put policy into action (Ball et al 2012) (see Chapter 5 for further discussion). I draw on the typology offered by Steinberg and Kinchloe (2001 in Race 2011; section 3.1) to inform my understanding of teachers' perspectives and 'enactment' of multiculturalism as a discourse and policy, and their positioning of South Asian girls (Chapters 5 and 6).

3) Part of my use of multiculturalism as a 'framing discourse' also engages with the notion of multiculturalism as 'everyday'. By this, I refer to its non-prescriptive aspects; the 'fact' of diversity itself. 'Everyday' multiculturalism is both a descriptive term but also a lens to explore how as a discourse, it is 'enacted' through everyday interaction and negotiation amongst teachers and the girls (Chapters 5 and 7). This opens up the possibilities to explore action, agency, contestation, but also the everyday as a site for the reproduction of social positions. Whilst schools have been typically analysed as sites for the reproduction of 'race', a focus on 'everyday' multiculturalism within the school setting also potentially elucidates micro processes of racialization, and how such processes intersect with other social categories, as well as top down policy responses.

4) Influenced by the arguments discussed in section 3.3 on gender rights and multiculturalism, I attempt to work through the dilemmas of disrupting tokenistic and reified cultural and ethnic differences produced in a multicultural context, but also aim to explore the manifestations of gendered inequalities that may be culturally specific (Mirza 2009). These dilemmas have been found to impact significantly on professionals' negotiations of the complex terrain of respecting difference through, for instance, fears of not being labeled as racist, whilst also attending to specific gendered 'cultural' issues (Patel 2007).

This brings me to my selection of a case study methodology that I employ in one inner city comprehensive school.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter details how the study was conducted, and how the data presented in the following chapters have been analysed. It is divided into two parts. In part one, I describe my ontological and epistemological position, before moving on to provide my rationale for drawing on a case study methodology and selected ethnographic methods. I describe the research site in which the single case study was conducted (i.e. the school which I call Hillside), and the study's participants. In part two, I offer my reflections on issues of power and reflexivity when conducting research on 'race' and gender, particularly as I was racialized as a South Asian woman within the school. Here, I address issues of power relations in the research process including access, gatekeepers and researcher positionality. I then move on to describe the process by which I analysed the data, namely thematic analysis, to unpack the social positioning of South Asian girls by teachers and the girls themselves. Lastly, I discuss the ethical issues associated with the research process.

Part I: Methodology and Methods

4.1 Ontological and epistemological position

In this section, I briefly outline my ontological position (i.e. the set of ideas I draw upon to inform my theory of the nature of reality) and my epistemology (i.e. how I make sense of the social world through my theory of knowledge) (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). This discussion builds on my 'black feminist sensibility' (Chapter 1) as a set of ideas that have guided my interest in the research topic, as well as my understanding of my personal experiences. I problematized the premise that women and girls of colour are double (or multiply) oppressed (Hill-Collins 1997) (see also Chapter 2), which leads me to understand the South Asian female subject as constituted through intersecting power relations of 'race', gender, class, age and sexuality. Intersectionality alludes to power relations as played out differently in different contexts, producing

positions of privilege as well as marginalisation (Ramji 2007; Anthias 2012).

Such power relations that characterize the social world are constituted through the poststructural notion of discourse (see Chapter 2; Foucault 1972; 1979; Fox 2014). Here, power does not reside in the formal structures of contemporary Western society such as patriarchal relations, class relations or the racism of post-colonial societies. Rather, a poststructuralist approach views power as diffuse, infusing all social and personal relationships, embedded in the subjectivities of individuals (Foucault 1984; Radford et al 1996). Power relations are produced, sustained and achieved through discourses that create state, professional and lay 'everyday' 'knowledge' about Others, including specific discourses on racialized and gendered groups such as South Asian girls (Haw 2010). Discourses on South Asian girls form a central feature to this study, as well as the discourse of multiculturalism associated with the professional management of, and living with, ethnic diversity in the 'everyday'.

My epistemological position is aligned to social constructionism (Denzin and Lincoln 2000), which declares there to be no objective reality that can be measured (Harrington 2005), nor that there exists a single 'truth' about the social world and the people within it (Crotty 2013). In social constructionism there is no 'natural' order of social phenomena, and the relationship between power and knowledge has consequences for subjectivity and identity (Fox 2014). Social reality, identities, and how people see themselves are constructed between people as they go about their 'everyday' lives and interact with each other. Therefore, social constructionism alludes to the meanings subjects give to their experience, their multiple realities, so that rather than assuming 'race', gender and class as materialist-realist conditions, the making of social positions are constituted through *processes* of intersectional positioning rather than given external realities (Phoenix 2002). The social world is therefore constituted through the interactions of subjects, from which meaning is

made through discourses available to us (Burr 2001; Bracken 2010) in given contexts. People may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomena (Crotty 2013). I explore the meanings that participants ascribe to discourses in the analysis (e.g. in relation to forced marriage, ethnic, cultural and sexual identities, and multiculturalism).

My epistemological and ontological perspective have informed my choice of methodology and methods (Robson 2007), so that my black feminist sensibility and my alignment to the poststructural concept of discourse established before entering the study have provided me with a framework for developing questions about intersecting differences amongst South Asian girls (Ludhra 2015). As social categories (e.g. 'race', gender and class) and their associated identities are constituted through processes of interaction, subjective meanings participants ascribe to their experiences become central to their understanding of the social world (i.e. an interpretive approach) (Bracken 2010). Employing an interpretive approach situates identities as best understood through what people say and do in interaction with each other rather than what they are, as it is through interaction that meanings are made, reinforced, and contested. I now discuss my choice of methodology and methods that facilitates my interpretivist approach to understanding social positioning and identities within a multicultural school context.

4.2 A case study approach at Hillside comprehensive

'Methodology' refers to the tools and techniques of research that are constituted by a plan of action, and a process of design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods (Crotty 1998). As the focus of this research is on the processes of identity making for South Asian girls in a multicultural school context, I have opted for a case study approach to capture how meanings are made through social positioning and identities within one school, given that schools have been identified as a key institutional context in which young people's identities are made (Jenkins 2004; Youdell 2006; Archer 2008; Reay 2010). Case studies are a useful

approach to studying real life contexts, in which particular issues can be the focus of investigation (Yin 2009), and can focus on a single or multiple cases, a setting (e.g. a school, workplace), persons, events, intervention, or projects (Thomas 2011a). Despite their use across a number of disciplines and epistemological positions (e.g. positivist and interpretivist frames) (Thomas 2011a) case studies are characterized by an overall commitment to studying the complexity of specific contexts and situations. They provide rich and in-depth data on the particularities of a context and allow attention to subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right, and a design frame that may incorporate a number of methods (Bassegy 1999; Johansson 2003).

Whilst some scholars argue that case studies should be 'representative', and the data triangulated and verified (Yin 2009), others have argued that cases may be selected not because they are typical or representative, but because they are extreme or unique (Johansson 2003; Thomas 2011b). As case studies are limited to a small number of sites, participants and contexts, they have also been criticised as presenting a distorted view of the social world, and therefore a lack of generalizability of findings (Stake 1995; Bassegy 1999; Johansson 2003; Yin 2009; Thomas 2011b). In response, Stake (1995) suggests that case studies can elucidate contradictions and ruptures as opposed to coherent themes and perspectives. Thomas (2011b) goes one step further, arguing that case studies can generate 'exemplary' or more nuanced knowledge, without always making links to generalised or grand theories, especially when generating rich in-depth data, through multiple methods.

I have opted to focus on one school as the site for the case study, rather than multiple schools because my aim is to explore, in-depth, processes of social positioning, rather than to 'contrast' different processes or multicultural approaches across schools. Further, conducting a comparative study would have minimised opportunities to develop in-depth relationships with participants as time would have to be spent across two sites. Given, therefore, that this thesis explores how the

identities of South Asian girls were constructed and negotiated in a multicultural school context, and takes into account multiple actors, a methodology that enables recognition of multiple realities in the research site (e.g. various professional staff, pupils from a range of backgrounds), but also captures fluid identifications and contestations. A case study methodology can be employed to recognize the embeddedness of social truths, discrepancies and conflicts between accounts, and alternative interpretations from multiple actors in a specific context (Bassegy 1999). Context is central in any case study and in the case of a school, especially so, given the differences between different schools and the specifics of their pupil population (Ho 2011; Ball et al 2012). However, the processes of social positioning (e.g. racialisation through diversity management) can be generalizable across contexts because they are embedded in wider discourses.

My access to the case study site, Hillside Comprehensive, was in part 'accidental'. In the early stages of my doctoral studies, I presented my research proposal at a postgraduate seminar, where I met Lizzie, a part time PhD student who was also a teacher at Hillside. Lizzie invited me to conduct my study at her school because she felt that the South Asian girls at Hillside were underperforming, in contrast to South Asian girls in general in the UK (Burgess et al 2009; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). They also had familial problems that required attention from the teachers. Lizzie considered that there were various wider familial issues that had arisen in relation to marriage prospects and gender-based violence that represented cause for concern. She was concerned about whether teachers were adequately meeting the girls' needs, concerns which were complicated by her observation that these girls were 'invisible' because they were 'quiet'.

The context specific aspects of this study were also shaped by the school staff who I worked with. They each had responsibilities for raising the achievement and inclusion of minority ethnic pupils, and therefore offered professionally situated understandings of multiculturalism and other

diversity discourses. Their perspectives directly informed the study's first research question 'How was cultural difference and ethnic diversity dealt with in the school context?' Research questions 2 and 3 arose from working with these select teachers and a group of girls positioned as South Asian. They were: 'How was gendered risk for South Asian girls understood and dealt with in the school context?' and 'How did South Asian girls construct, negotiate and contest their identities in the multicultural context of the school?' Research question 2 could arguably have been addressed by conducting research with any of the teachers, but the situated knowledge on diversity of the teacher participants provided a nuanced take on perceptions of risk as well as practical responses that were tied to the minority ethnic pupils they were assigned to work with.

The case study was carried out over a three-year period in one state comprehensive inner city secondary school. I opted to collect data over this period of time because of the study's focus on the girls' identities, which required an in-depth approach where my rapport with the participants could be developed. By focusing on one school, I was able to obtain richer data, which proved to be fruitful in accessing the girls' and teachers' experiences of dealing with sensitive issues such as gender based violence. Fieldwork commenced in the autumn term of June 2008 and continued into the summer term of June 2011. It consisted of initial periods of intense data collection with the students in the first year, and with follow up work with students and staff taking place sporadically throughout the three years of the study (see Appendix 4 for a timeline of research activities).

4.21 Hillside: a 'super-diverse' inner city comprehensive

Hillside is a mixed sex school with approximately 850 secondary students, and 100 sixth formers. At the time of data collection, the school was a state comprehensive but has since been converted to academy status and recently been recognised by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust as high performing. According to the school's Ofsted report in 2008

a high proportion of its students were eligible for free school meals. Three quarters of students were from minority ethnic groups, with a third from Black African or Black Caribbean backgrounds. In addition, the report stated that a low proportion of students in school require English language support, and a high proportion are vulnerable and have some form of learning difficulty or disability. South Asian students were in the minority and classified under 'other ethnic groups' which made up a third of the school's ethnic minority population. Within this, Indian pupils comprised 0.8%, Bangladeshi pupils 2.6%, Pakistani 1.9%, Chinese 1.3% and those of 'Any other Asian background' 4.8%. Afghani, Mauritian, and Sri Lankan pupils are included in this latter category (see Appendix 7 for a breakdown of pupils by ethnicity).

Hillside shares the local area with one other state funded, higher achieving, single-sex girls secondary school. Teachers were of the view that middle class parents opted to send their daughters to the other school. The families of students attending Hillside were mainly perceived by teachers to be from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The school could be seen as 'super-diverse' (Meissner and Vertovec 2015), which I specifically use as a descriptive term to refer to the diversified migration paths of the pupils (see Chapters 3 and 7). In addition, because the girls were nationally 'atypical' as they were underperforming South Asian girls (Shain 2010a), and came from a range of South Asian and 'Other Asian' backgrounds, this case study was particular. Therefore, I do not wish to generalise from the specifics of a sample that, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7, was characterised by varied super-diverse migration paths, socio-economic status and ethnicities.

Despite these particularities I decided to take up Lizzie's offer to conduct the case study at Hillside for a number of reasons. First, given the specific focus of the study in exploring multiculturalism in action, and in relation to identities, it provided me with the opportunity to explore

diversity management in a super-diverse setting, where one would expect the school's approach to be grounded and nuanced. Second, the school offered the possibility to explore variances and similarities within the group of girls who were positioned by teachers, and at particular moments self-identified, as South Asian.

4.3 Introducing the participants

On arrival at the school, I was introduced to a group of six Muslim girls who were essentially a 'sample of opportunity' in that they were picked by Lizzie because they were underperforming and were seen to be experiencing relationship problems at home with their parents (Brady 2006). Lizzie's understanding of who should be classified as South Asian was brought into the process of sample selection, and included girls from Afghanistan. This was based on her conflation of the terms Muslim and South Asian and concern about Muslim girls. The six girls' families had originated from Afghanistan and Pakistan. I decided to 'go with the flow' and include those from Afghanistan as they also enabled me to explore processes of ethnic identification (see Chapter 7). After this meeting I asked for the group to be broadened out so that Indian and/ or Hindu girls could also be included in the sample. Three additional girls were then selected, all of whom were from two tutor groups. These nine participating girls constituted half of all the South Asian pupils in their year (9 of 17), and three quarters of the South Asian girls in their year (9 of 12).

Over the course of my three years in the field, the girls were aged from 15 years to 18 years. They were in year 11 when fieldwork commenced (age 15-16) and those who continued with their studies post GCSE and remained in Hillside's sixth form were followed through with further interviews. This follow through to further education allowed me to track changes in the young women's lives and views through this transitory period. I chose this age group (Key Stage 4) due to the increased regulation in sexuality that is more pronounced at this point in the life course (e.g. in terms of relationships and regulation of sexual behavior from peers, families and wider communities). In addition, other issues

that commonly emerge during this period are part of the transition to adulthood (e.g. to further education, employment and marriage).

The participants are listed in table 4.1 below. Pseudonyms have been used to maintain confidentiality. Unlike the majority of South Asian children in UK schools who are ‘second’ or ‘third generation’ since their parents or grandparents migrated to Britain, the majority (eight) of the South Asian girls involved in this study were ‘first generation’ migrants (i.e. born abroad). Only one of the nine girls was born in the UK. Further, the girls all spoke English but had different levels of English fluency. With the exception of Gargi, the more recent migrants, Raani, Nasreen, Meena, Zara and Asanka, had lower levels of English ability and were receiving English language support during lessons. They did not require translators and were able to understand, and take part in, discussions. The one-to-one interviews provided a space in which the quieter ones in the focus groups could speak more freely, regardless of English language ability (methods are discussed in section 4.4).

Table 4.1: South Asian pupil participants at Hillside

Student name	Country of origin	Born in UK	Year entered UK	Religion	No of times interviewed
Zara	Afghanistan	No	2006	Muslim	6
Meena (twin of Zara)	Afghanistan	No	2006	Muslim	3
Jamila	Afghanistan	No	2003	Muslim	3
Halima	Pakistan	Yes	N/A	Muslim	3
Nasreen	Pakistan	No	2006	Muslim	2
Raani	Pakistan	No	2006	Muslim	2
Gargi	India	No	2006	Hindu	4
Vrinda	Mauritius	No	N/A	Hindu	Not interviewed (student left the school)
Asanka	Sri Lanka	No	2007	Hindu	2

Similar to the girls, the staff members who participated were 'a sample of opportunity' because I requested to speak to staff who were allocated roles that involved diversity management. Because of Lizzie's professional relationship with these staff members as Head of EMA, I was able to gain access to set up interviews. Other teachers, such as the Education Welfare Officer and English and Media teacher were happy to speak with me because they were Lizzie's 'allies'. They were, therefore, to some extent, 'handpicked' by Lizzie, as she would refer me on to or suggest that I speak to particular teachers. She acted as a gatekeeper, providing me access to some staff with whom she worked or had positive relationships.

It also became apparent that there were significant tensions between the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) department and the senior staff. Given that I was increasingly seen to be part of the EMA department (e.g. I was granted an EMA staff pass which afforded me access to the school), it was unsurprising that senior members of staff at odds with the EMA department were not open to speaking with me. For instance, once fieldwork had commenced, I attempted to make contact with the headteacher and deputy head teacher via email as well as through Lizzie to request a date for interview. I received no response. I often felt that these members of staff looked at me suspiciously or ignored my presence altogether. For the teachers that did participate, I analyse their professional positions and alignments to the EMA and Inclusion departments in detail in the following chapter.

Table 4.2: Participating staff at Hillside

Name	Position	No of times interviewed
Lizzie	Head of Ethnic Minority Achievement /English teacher	5
Josie	Education Welfare Officer	2
Fazia	Health and Social Care and PSHE teacher	3
Patricia	Head of Inclusion	2
Heather	Media teacher	1
Isabelle	Head of sixth form	1
Barbara	ELA /English language support teacher	1
Esther	Geography teacher	1
Annie	Academic mentor for casual admissions	1

4.4 Ethnographic methods

The case study approach is not a method in itself but a design frame that may incorporate a number of methods. ‘Methods’ are the tools employed in the research field to collect data, which can be both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative methods (e.g. surveys), gather data where questions and their associated codes are based on a predetermined set of assumptions, which then directly inform the frame of analysis. As questions are fixed, so too remain the boundaries that frame the content of its questions, resulting in participants’ responses taking form only within set boundaries (Robson 2007). Some open-ended questions are also used in surveys, which allow for some extent of free response. However, such approaches were not appropriate for this study given the focus on meanings for participants and processes around which identities are shaped. I therefore used qualitative methods, which provide opportunities for emerging categories of analysis to surface, as well as free responses from participants.

My initial intention to conduct an ethnographic study shifted towards conducting a case study that draws on some ethnographic methods. As I embarked on my research journey after some fieldwork visits to the school, I realised that it would not be possible to conduct in-depth ethnography which required being ‘embedded’ in the school for a sustained period of time (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). My position

as a full time employee meant that I could not have afforded the time to conduct 'real ethnography' where I could be fully immersed and embedded in the 'everyday' life of the school. Instead, my time in the field was intermittent (i.e. not continuous or regular, but concentrated at various points over the three years), and I was therefore never fully 'immersed'. In addition, I had limited opportunities to observe a substantial number of lessons. This proved to be logistically difficult for my schedule due to the limited time I could spend in the field, as well as the constraints of trying to timetable this with the teachers. My research design was therefore organic, evolving, and sometimes characterised by 'going with what I could get', and adapting to the setting and participants that I could access. Perryman (2011) adopted a similar approach in her three-year case study on school inspections in one secondary school, in which she drew on ethnographic methods comprising interviews, observation, and interaction in informal conversations.

There are a number of parallels between case study and ethnography. First, both involve 'burrowing into the social relationships of a specific local social world and revealing at least some of its internal dynamics and layers of meaning' (Riain 2009: 289). It is mainly for this reason that the research was conducted in one school over a three-year period. A focus on one school meant that relationships and practices could be established and documented in depth to gain rich insights into the data. Whilst my intermittent involvement minimised possibilities to be fully immersed and part of the day to day life of the school, it is still necessary to assess the effects of my presence in the school and any influence it may have had on the data. My presence over the three years also meant that the staff in the school became familiar with me and often asked for my advice, indicating a form of researcher embeddedness (see section 4.5 for a fuller discussion of the issues).

Second, both case studies and ethnography provide the possibility of using multiple methods for data collection such as participant observation, focus groups, and written or visual materials. Third, case studies and

ethnographies are 'flexible' and less prescriptive in that they provide the researcher with the space for adaptability in the context in which the study's participants are located. For instance, the research questions and means of data collection can evolve throughout the study (Robson 2007), suggesting that they are more 'organic' methods and sensitive to the social environment. Once the researcher is in the field, methods can also be flexibly adapted (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Bassey 1999; Johansson 2003). Furthermore, such flexible methods are sensitive to the relationship between the researcher and the participants, where any potential tension or conflict of interest can be addressed during the research process. Such negotiations may be guided by the limits and openings from participants (Hey 1997), as well as gatekeepers and researchers, and may evolve with the research process (Ali 2003a). Similarly, the data collection tools in this study evolved as I became further embedded in Hillside. For instance, the lessons which I ran with the girls and conducted in the form of focus groups, were not part of my initial plan but provided a space in which I could talk to the girls together over a regular period (see below for a description of the focus groups and other methods employed).

However, ethnographic studies typically involve the researcher observing, writing extensive fieldnotes, following a group and taking part in what is going on in that setting, which generates 'thick description'. This is the main element of ethnography that was not part of this study. The minimal observation I conducted was as a non-participative onlooker (e.g. observing the girls from the back of the classroom during lessons), and as a result, so was the generation of fieldnotes. I describe the methods used in this study below.

Interviews with school staff

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine teachers and pastoral staff. Each interview lasted between 1-1 ½ hours (see Table 4.2). I began the fieldwork process with an interview with gatekeeper Lizzie in June 2008, during which we talked through a plan for the

fieldwork and her concerns about the South Asian girls. Other staff interviews were conducted from November 2008 to October 2010, with the majority being carried out during the first year of fieldwork²⁸. Some teachers were interviewed once and multiple interviews conducted with others. For instance, Lizzie was interviewed five times because as gatekeeper, she was more accessible throughout the duration of fieldwork. With other teachers, my approach was more organic in that I anticipated speaking with them only once. I had the opportunity to interview some teachers twice, such as Josie, Education Welfare Officer and Fazia, PSHE teacher. In the second interview we further explored the issues that they raised in the first interviews.

The main aim of the staff interviews was to gather their views on South Asian female pupils, how they managed diversity, and the school's multicultural approach. Discussion was largely framed around the staff telling their stories about the South Asian girls participating in the study. I further prompted them to speak about the issues they perceived the girls to face, their educational attainment, and situations they navigated with the girls and their families. Issues discussed included friendship networks, classroom behaviour, the school's response to gender based violence and parental restrictions. The interviews also highlighted wider issues about the school's approach to diversity and racial incidents (topic guides for the staff interviews can be found in Appendix 2).

Focus groups with South Asian girls

Focus groups were conducted for the following reasons: first, as a means to build rapport and establish a relationship with the girls in order to facilitate the gathering of in-depth data at later stages in the research process; and second, to gather data and lay the groundwork for future areas of investigation, particularly in under researched areas (Kitzinger, 1995; Morgan, 1997). The data that I obtained in the focus groups were

²⁸ I took maternity leave from November 2009-September 2010. I resumed work on the thesis after returning from maternity leave, when I commenced the data analysis.

then used to formulate the areas for discussion in the in-depth interviews; Lastly, focus groups were used to enable an exploration of group interaction through which friendship dynamics, power relations and conflicts could be observed and explored.

Through discussion with Lizzie, we agreed that PSHE lessons would provide the optimal opportunity to hold the discussions because of the dedicated space this offered on a weekly basis. In total, seven focus groups were held with 9 girls (see table 4.1) during PSHE lessons at the initial stages of data collection between November 2008 and January 2009. The girls were in Year 11 (age 15-16) at the time these were conducted. Each focus group lasted the course of a PSHE lesson, which was approximately 40 minutes and sometimes slightly longer as this was the final lesson of the day and offered some leeway if the girls wished the discussion to continue. I set loose topics to initiate discussion, which included feelings of belonging, friendship, racism, and educational aspirations (topic guides can be found in Appendix 3). Lizzie was concerned that the South Asian girls were not opening up in the presence of other students during class time, and saw the opportunity to provide a 'mono-ethnic' space as an opportunity for them to discuss any concerns or opinions in a comfortable setting with girls from similar backgrounds.

A number of drawbacks have been identified when staging focus groups. It has been argued that some participants, and in particular, young people, can be overshadowed by more dominant participants in the group (Hill 2006). Such situations can pose difficulties in the focus group dynamics for both the facilitator and participants. However, they also potentially represent moments for analysis, so that the power dynamics in the group are a part of the research setting. A further consideration is that because the focus groups were part of lesson time, they may have been seen as lessons by the girls, leading them to express their views differently to how they would have done in a more 'informal' setting. However, by adopting multiple ethnographic methods, I was able to explore their views in

different scenarios. The in-depth interviews provided a space for them to speak more openly on a one-to-one basis.

As the focus groups were part of PSHE lessons, a teacher had to be present. This was a drawback. Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher who was present throughout, remained largely silent, allowed me to set the agenda and steer discussion. She is a South Asian woman who Lizzie selected as she felt having myself and a South Asian teacher (as opposed to a white teacher) was in line with her aim to provide a safe discussion space for the South Asian girls based on us being the 'same race'. Despite this constructed racialized sameness, Fazia represented a member of teaching staff and I was keen to disassociate myself from that role, as I wanted the girls to feel comfortable with me. I made a conscious effort to reiterate that I was not a teacher, that they should call me 'Veena', and that they were not being judged or assessed by the school. However, Fazia's presence may have affected what the girls said and made them wary to discuss certain issues. In individual interviews, some girls talked about smoking and truanting and would probably not have disclosed this in the presence of a teacher for fear that they would be punished. I explore the issue of how power relations may limit what research participants say in section 4.5.

Mixed ethnicity student focus groups

Two focus groups were conducted with groups of mixed ethnicity female students in the same year as the South Asian participants. These were also conducted during PSHE classes and took place in April 2009 and June 2010. The timing of these groups was not planned but a product of my 'going with the flow' and negotiating suitable time slots with Lizzie. These groups each consisted of ten girls from a mixture of ethnic backgrounds, some 'first-generation' migrants from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and East Europe, and 'second-generation' migrants from South Asia and the Caribbean. Three of the South Asian girls participating in the main sample were also present for the mixed focus

groups (pseudonymised as Zara, Gargi and Narmeen). The group discussions also allowed me to analyse the dynamics of the group and so performativity. The mixed focus groups also aimed to capture other girls' sentiments about the school's multicultural context and the multicultural dynamic to understand their views on diversity, racism and other issues that the students identified as characterising their school experiences (Ali 2003). Again, Lizzie selected the students and, in this case, she remained present for the duration of the mixed focus groups. Her presence as a teacher was likely to have had an effect on how freely the students could speak on some issues, such as feeling free to express negative views about school life.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews with South Asian girls

Multiple interviews were conducted with eight of the South Asian girls who also participated in the focus groups over the three years spent at Hillside. Only Vrinda (see table 4.1) was not interviewed as she left the school subsequent to the focus groups being conducted. I interviewed the girls from January 2009 through to June 2011 with a period of intense interviewing from January to April 2009 and again from May to July 2010 (see Appendix 4). The girls were interviewed over lunchtime for around one hour. I did not have a set plan of the order in which to interview the girls. Instead, the timetable had to fit in with who was available for interview as many of the girls attended lunchtime learning clubs. I intended to interview each of the girls three times over the three years, but as circumstances changed for some of the participants, this was not possible. Instead, some girls were interviewed two to six times with a view to establishing a more in-depth relationship to generate richer data. For instance, Zara was interviewed six times, more than other participants due to the sensitive nature of the topics she discussed in the interview setting and her willingness to share her stories further. I was unable to follow Jamila after the two interviews I conducted with her as she was no longer at the school.

The inconsistencies in the varied numbers of interviews conducted presents some issues. One could argue that gathering more data on some participants means that richer data were obtained on some girls and not others. I am conscious that a disproportionate number of interviews were conducted with members of the same family (Zara and Meena). Therefore, one major limitation of this research design is the skew in data towards some girls. However, representativeness does not always have to be an aim in qualitative research (Thomas 2011b) and exploring peculiarities or 'extreme' cases in some detail can elucidate processes of positioning for participants. The 'particular', such as forced marriage cases, needed to be explored in some detail in order to highlight less common, but important experiences. In addition, in the case study setting, researchers negotiate relationships with participants, which may be stronger with some than others and influence the quantity of interviews and type of contact that takes place.

In order to explore the meanings of education, home, popular culture and gender relations for the girls, a semi-structured approach was used. This consisted of non-leading questions, designed to *'act as triggers that stimulate the interviewee into talking about a particular broad area'* (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 113). I began by sketching a list of areas that I wanted the girls to talk about, but the direction of conversation was organic in that the young women would take the lead in talking about what was important to them. Stories were elicited by asking open ended questions, sometimes about a specific incident, time or situation (Hollway and Jefferson 2000), such as 'Can you tell me about what it was like moving to this country', 'Can you tell me about something difficult in your life'. These open-ended questions were designed to spark a response about particular themes in the participants' own words and in relation to their experiences. Questions about the future, for example, 'What do you think you will be doing in five years time?' were used as a means to explore educational aspirations, but also led to discussions

around marriage, children and familial relationships (see Appendix 5 for a list of topics covered in the interviews).

Three 'joint interviews' were conducted with two participants at the same time. Two of these joint interviews were conducted with students (Gargi and Asanka, and Zara and Meena), and one with two teachers (Lizzie and Fazia). The joint interviews generated data through the dialogue between the participants who appeared to be more relaxed in the company of one other person as opposed to a focus group setting (Mayall, 2000 and Christensen, 2004). The joint interviewees also generated dialogue and further topics for discussion.

Participant and non-participant observation

Observation is generally recognised as a key component of ethnographic work (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Delamont 2007). However, the observation undertaken in this study did not constitute the predominant form of data collection since ethnographic observation would require an extensive number of hours, which proved to be incompatible with my status as a full time employee. In total, two citizenship lessons and an end of year event were observed during the first year of data collection as a non-participant observer. My presence as a participant observer was predominantly during the seven focus groups conducted during PSHE classes. After these sessions had ended, I made some reflective notes. As these data from observations were 'thin' I have chosen not to include them in the analysis, but mention them here since that it was part of the initial research plan that changed as it became clear what was achievable.

Written exercises

The girls also participated in two written exercises during the last two of the seven PSHE lessons. The aim of this was to investigate the girls' identities by engaging the girls to write about 'who they are'. They were

also asked to write descriptive paragraphs on ‘their feelings about school’. Those who were not born in UK were asked what more the school could have done for them (see Appendix 6). These exercises were used as a tool to obtain further data on their identities and experiences of school.

Part II: Power relations, analysis and ethics

4.5 Power relations in research

Lizzie was keen that I should develop rapport with the girls, because she was of the opinion that I would act as a positive role model for them. I was positioned by Lizzie to provide a source of inspiration to the girls, based particularly on my racialised, gendered and classed presence. As an ‘Asian’ mother with two young children (‘race’ and gender) and also as a university researcher and student (social class), my presence was seen as a catalyst to spur the girls to think beyond marriage and the possibility of pursuing multiple paths and educational attainment. Physically speaking, I was for Lizzie a South Asian woman despite my mixed heritage background (see Chapter 1). The position that I was ascribed did not, therefore, reflect the complexity of my family’s history.

This dilemma in the mismatch between racial self-identification and racialised positioning by others raises issues of positionality (Phoenix et al 2003, Phoenix 2005), and how our bodies relate to the ideologies of race, class and gendered structures that define who we are. It also raises ethical issues about how we position ourselves as researchers doing ‘race’ research, and how ‘race’ is intrinsically tied to our positions of power as knowledge producers (Nayak 2006). Lizzie’s expectations of what I would bring to the school because of my embodiment as a South Asian female facilitated my own research agenda to focus on South Asian girls, and my access to Hillside. I did not resist this label, but took it up because it facilitated my access. This raises ethical issues in relation to transparency to participants about whether we should disclose how we self-identify, if this matters and ‘buying into’ the processes of racialization as researchers. I discussed my background with my participants

because they were also interested in me and asked a number of questions, but our differences only appeared to matter up to a point²⁹.

Despite the ethnic differences between the girls and I, there were also a shared a number of experiences including being racialised, marginalisation and patriarchal practices at home and by the wider extended family. Similar to Egharevba (2001), a black African woman who researched South Asian women, I found that sharing experiences of racism, and minority status had a significant bearing on the research process. The perceived commonalities that I expressed on numerous occasions in the focus groups and interviews enabled me to present myself as an insider, and appeared to make the young women feel that I understood what they were saying. For instance, some of the girls explicitly stated that the white teachers did not understand them, and in contrast felt that I did. Being both an insider and outsider simultaneously, or being like your participants and at the same time not like them can be advantageous (Song 2005), offering both objectivity and distance to understand what is going on, and subjectivity to interpret events with a degree of insider knowledge.

Gunaratnam (2003) argues that experiencing racism and marginalisation needs to be dissected, as experiences of racism will differ according to context. The racism that I experienced growing up in a small almost all white seaside resort in England is different from the marginalisation that these young women experience in multicultural London. The girls did not report feeling like the 'odd one out' as I was made to feel by other pupils. They spoke about strong friendship networks based on religious and ethnic similarities. Further, rather than the majority white and African Caribbean boys making them feel inadequate or undesirable, they spoke about relationships with boys within their own communities as major problems. This shows that my experiences were different to theirs as a consequence of locality and generation.

²⁹ I further explore the same 'race' issue in my analysis of same 'race' role models (Chapter 5).

However, same 'race' identification can also facilitate dialogue and open up other non-threatening spaces where some experiences can be shared. For instance, when Housee (2004) tried to stimulate dialogue around anti-racism in a higher education setting, the Muslim female students in her study felt uncomfortable to share their views and their experiences with the whole class. However, their silences were broken outside of the classroom context where Housee was able to hear their counter narratives. Their perception of the space outside the classroom as 'safe' was tied to their perceptions of same race identification with her as a South Asian Muslim female academic and with other South Asian female Muslims (see Chapter 5 for an analysis of same 'race' in the research setting).

However, easy access and positive relationships between same 'race' researchers and participants is not always a given. Phoenix (1994) found that being black did not guarantee her access to all black participants. Similarly, Bhopal (1997) found that being South Asian did not necessarily guarantee her access to South Asian women who she claims were a difficult group to study due to cultural boundaries and strong views regarding male and female roles in the community. She identified them to be a close knit group who portray a strong, cohesive sense of belonging and security. One consequence of such community characteristics is that outsiders who do not identify with the group are viewed with suspicion and seen as a threat (Bhopal 1997). I would add that age may have been a factor in limiting what the girls told me as my participants were of a younger generation.

Whilst access was not an issue in this study as it was granted and sustained through my gatekeeper, having Lizzie as a strong presence brought a number of other challenges. This is not unusual in qualitative research as dealing with gatekeepers always involves processes of negotiation (Seidman 2013; Yin 2009). As discussed in section 4.2, the teachers were essentially hand picked by Lizzie, and were her 'allies'.

This suggests that their responses could have been based on what I wanted to hear or what Lizzie wanted them to say. In addition, the conflict between this group of participating teachers and other members of school staff over the school's management of diversity (see Chapter 4 for analysis on this issue), also signalled that I was hearing certain selected versions of events. I contextualise these potential skews in the data by placing the participating teachers as the 'best case scenario' in relation to their commitment to diversity management (Chapter 5).

Further, having Lizzie as a gatekeeper, I was keen to maintain a sense of loyalty to her, not least because I appreciated her facilitating my access and because I regarded her as a highly committed professional. However, alongside this allegiance to Lizzie came the added burden that I would be positioned by other participants and non-participating teachers as her spy or ally, which may also have had an influence on their responses and the non-participation of the other teachers who were not recruited. The data, then, needs to be contextualised within these constraints in presenting participants' versions of events.

My role as researcher was predominantly as an outsider (i.e. a non-member of staff), but this was underwritten by my alliance with Lizzie. She restricted my internal movements to a handpicked selection of girls, allowing me to conduct focus groups only whilst in the presence of another teacher, and also by streaming my access to other staff in the school. I became part and parcel of her vision of diversity and ethnic minority achievement, positioned as the 'intruder' by some teachers who refused to be interviewed. This suggests that the role of the qualitative case study researcher as insider/outsider is not so dichotomous and should rather be seen as on a continuum (Perryman 2011). Similar to Perryman (2011), I experienced a change in relationship with my participants which grew over time. I started as a researcher, but became a role model, 'expert', and sometimes a friend which all affected how participants spoke to me. My position was shifting, characterised by blurred boundaries and multiple positions.

4.6 Analytic thematic process

Ramazanoglu (2003) contends that any interpretation of data sources, be they interviews, focus groups, or field notes, essentially involve communicating to others what they mean. However, interpretation does not begin here. Rather, *'interpretation and analysis will have permeated the research process'* (ibid: 159). What I go on to present in the analysis chapters are essentially selections, refinements and organisations of a wealth of data collected. As with much case study research, it was more of an iterative process and the analysis started from the moment I stepped into the school and made decisions along with my gatekeeper about the research process. I made analytical judgments as she did about who should be included.

The interview transcripts, focus groups, and written and drawing exercises provide a range of data sources. All focus group and interview data were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. As I was presented with a wealth of transcripts, during the initial stages of analysis, I often felt that I was 'drowning' in data (Ramazanoglu 2003). In order not to lose sight of continuities, ruptures, conflicts and similarities across the different types of data, I opted for an analytical approach that could capture the themes grounded in my initial research questions. At the first stage of the process I employed a thematic analysis, using Nvivo to group the transcript data from staff and pupils, and merged these under emergent themes. I thematically coded the different data sources to analyse for continuity (Scott-Jones and Watt 2010). Thematic analysis is an analytical method that involves identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data, which can then be theoretically framed and where sub themes can emerge under main themes (Braun and Clarke 2006). My main reason for drawing on thematic analysis is that it offers a relatively flexible approach to data analysis, and is compatible with a constructionist method, *'which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society'* (Braun and Clarke 2006: 9). This

was particularly important given that the case study methodology included multiple actors that were located in different positions. This also suggests participants may be located in different discourses their experiences made sense of accordingly.

The themes and sub themes that I extracted from the data have been constructed in two stages. The first stage of thematic coding occurred in line with the topics of my research questions and original interview and focus group topic guides (Braun and Clarke 2006). The areas of investigation through the themes reflect the study's research questions on:

1. Diversity management and multicultural context of the school: here, emergent themes included definitions of multiculturalism, examples of school interventions, notions of 'everyday' multiculturalism, teacher conflict, understandings of difference, racism, language support, and migrant students.
2. Identity construction, negotiation and constraint: themes included parental relationships, marriage, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender inequalities, family, and experiences of migration.
3. Understandings of gendered risk: themes included gender violence in specific forms such as forced marriage, 'honour' killings, rape, boyfriends and relationships, parenting concerns, and 'between two cultures'.

Codes for other 'unexpected' themes were also formed during this initial process of coding where I employed an inductive approach to extracting themes (i.e. identifying emerging themes). Here I aimed to provide the space for the participants' experiences and perceptions to emerge (e.g. social networking, transnational ties). This first layer of coding generated a large number of themes and required further merging and therefore a further layer of analysis.

The second layer to thematising the initial themes was carried out by exploring the data that specifically reflected the processes of social

positioning as a fundamental element of identity construction, and negotiation, particularly through the intersections of 'race', gender and class (i.e. how we are positioned by others, and how we position ourselves (Phoenix 2005; 2002). This process of analysis was by no means linear, and involved moving back and forth through the raw data to familiarise myself with it, the first and second layers of themes, and trying out a number of ways to present the analysis. This second stage of thematic analysis was conducted at the 'latent' level, which attempts to examine participants' *'underlying ideas assumptions and conceptualisations – and ideologies'*, to give the analysis of identities and social positioning in discourse particular form and meaning, which reflects a social constructionist paradigm (Braun and Clarke 2006: 13). Therefore:

“...thematic analysis conducted within a constructionist framework cannot and does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions that enable the individual accounts that are provided” (Braun and Clarke 2006: 14).

I situated my interpretation of the data in relation to discourses that participants appear to take up including discourses on diversity, predominantly multiculturalism, and violence, marriage, religion, ethnicity, and culture, to name a few.

Tuhiwai Smith (2008) contends that all research techniques should be treated with caution and the concept of research itself should be troubled as a post colonial tool which is used to gaze at 'Others'. She argues:

“Research is not a distant academic exercise but an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions” (Tuhiwai Smith 2008: 5).

Therefore, as reflexive researchers working on issues of 'race' and ethnicity, good practice should involve questioning why the study is being conducted on some groups rather than others and why certain topics have been selected for investigation. As reflexive minority ethnic female

academics researching issues about ourselves, we should be asking why we are given the space to speak now about certain issues such as certain forms of gender based violence. Are we merely perpetuating 'melodramatic postures and constructions' of South Asian women in our research by honing in on certain issues over others (Puwar 2003)? I attempt to take these issues on board throughout my analysis. For instance, in Chapter 7, I attempt to address the current overemphasis in literature on cultural difference and the 'melodrama' of South Asian life by analyzing the girls' identities in relation to the 'everyday' multiculturalism in the school, focusing on the mundane negotiations. In Chapter 8, I attempt to engage with how the girls make 'choices' or how agency is exercised relatively and collectively, rather than as neo-liberal individualised subjects. I address how forced marriage should be seen as a construction within a set of discourses in which the girls navigate and exercise relative empowerment and collective agency (Hemmings and Kabesh 2013). Such moves to situate the girls' responses beyond the melodrama also act to question the constructions of topics that come to be part of the research agenda.

I do not attempt to generate typologies to characterise the types of identities that the girls displayed because of the small number of participants involved. Rather, as this thesis is concerned with processes of social positioning that constitute identities, processes such as racialization in light of multicultural discourses in schools can be generalizable to other studies of racialized groups. This is highlighted through examples of racialized positioning as it intersects with gender (e.g. school trip in Chapter 6) and extreme or particular cases as subjects of analysis (e.g. experiences of gender based violence in Chapter 8).

4.7 Ethical issues

In line with all doctoral research at the IOE, ethical approval was obtained from the IOE research ethics committee prior to fieldwork commencing for which I drew on BERA's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research 2004, BSA Ethical Guidelines 2004. I provided the ethics reviewers with

a sample of letters to teachers, parents and the students explaining the study, its aims and their involvement (letters can be found in Appendix 8). The ethical issues when conducting research with young people under the age of 18 can be extensive and sometimes difficult to navigate due to intersectional categories of difference including age, gender and ethnicity. In particular, when intersections of ethnicity, gender and age are manifested in an institutional context, ethical issues are further complicated. Such ethical considerations include parental consent, confidentiality and complexities in following ethical protocols, which I discuss below. I also obtained a Criminal Record Bureau check (now known as a DBS) to allow my access to working in the school.

4.71 Parental consent

Standard ethical procedures of obtaining informed consent from young people below the age of 18 and their parents were complicated by some families' limited understanding of English. The usual procedure involves informing parents of their child's participation in the study to which they should give their consent. Some of the students in my sample acted as language brokers for their parents, which raises some concerns about how far parents really understood what their children were participating in. Although the parents (or their children!) may have signed the consent form, there remains some doubt about parents' knowledge of what was really being discussed during the focus groups and interviews.

A problem common to parents who fully understand English and those who do not is their potential disagreement to their child's involvement in research, particularly when it covers sensitive topics such as sexuality and violence. Therefore, ethical procedures can hinder children and young people's involvement if parents are not happy for them to participate, leaving stones unturned for researchers. In anticipation of this, Lizzie felt that there may have been some opposition from parents and recommended that consent letters should express that the research was fully endorsed by Hillside, and that it formed part of PSHE lessons. I went along with her suggestion and received no opposition to the girls'

participation. However, this course of action also highlighted a tension in ethical procedures that recommend transparency, which may in effect act as an obstacle to some young people's participation. Therefore, as researchers we need to be aware of such limitations on young people to make the research process simultaneously respectful but also encourage participation in research to advance knowledge.

4.72 Confidentiality, distress and support: difficulties in following ethical protocols

Some students shared stories of abuse at home perpetrated by parents and other family members, negative experiences with other adults outside of the family, and also talked about some members of staff both positively and negatively. It was therefore essential that whatever they chose to disclose in focus groups or interviews did not compromise their position or put them in any danger³⁰. However, as they were under the age of 18, for the first phases of data collection, this guarantee of confidentiality was sometimes not watertight if I perceived them to be in danger.

When sensitive data did emerge from the students I adopted a consultative and collaborative approach with the school staff. I developed my ethical protocol in line with a continuous process of review and consultation with the school and my supervisors. As a result of these discussions it was deemed my responsibility to report back to a member of school staff so that the issues could be dealt with institutionally and as the school saw fit thereafter. As my experience highlights, researchers are in a 'third space' given that we are not members of staff but still have a duty to report abuse³¹. When a student appeared distressed or disclosed a sensitive story, I attempted to put them at ease by offering

³⁰ Taken from BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research 2004, since revised 2011.

³¹ Since my fieldwork has been conducted, charities such as the National Children's Bureau and Action for Children have developed ethical guidelines for researchers that address some of the issues that arise around safeguarding, confidentiality and disclosure. In line with my approach, these organisations suggest that children and young people be informed that confidentiality may have to be breached if there is disclosure relating to serious harm, abuse and/or other child protection concerns. The researcher should then inform the organisation responsible for safeguarding (e.g. school, local authority) of the disclosure.

them the option to withdraw from the study or stop the interview (BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research 2004), based on the premise that interview setting may cause them more harm. Providing the participants with options on whether to continue, and whether or not to turn off the digital recorder can minimise actions that cause emotional or other harm (BERA revised ethical guidelines 2004).

4.8 Conclusion: reflections on a case study approach

In this chapter, I have presented the methodology and methods used in the study. I have advocated that by drawing on a case study approach in one inner city secondary school, with specific reference to the teachers in the EMA and Inclusion departments, my study provides an analysis of the making of South Asian girls' identities in a multicultural school context. This case study is particular in that it provides analysis of diversity management of South Asian girls amongst a specific group of professionals who are aligned to raising achievement and well being of minority ethnic students. This sample is not a representative case, but a study of a school in light of its specific context in diversity management and its super-diverse student body. The case study also provides a setting for an analysis of the girls' positioning of themselves in the multicultural backdrop of the school as a place where 'everyday' encounters and identity negotiations in super-diversity takes place.

I have also highlighted that by adopting a case study approach, a number of issues in relation to power in the research process and ethics came to light. As a researcher, I navigated terrains of racialization and the power dynamics involved in taking up labels ascribed to me for the benefit of research access, raising ethical issues about how one presents oneself to their participants. Thus conducting this case study has not just been about understanding how identities are made, but also the intricate navigations involved in dealing with participants' issues and views.

Chapter 5: Teachers in plural, contested and ‘everyday’ multiculturalism

A variety of forms of multiculturalism co-exist in the UK, alongside other discourses on ‘diversity management’ such as community cohesion, integration and anti-racism, which influence educational settings as public institutions (see Chapter 3). Relatively little is known, however, about what filters down and how it is taken up or resisted by teachers. This chapter explores the discourses on difference and diversity held by Hillside’s staff and the ways in which they operationalised these discourses, taking up (or resisting) particular versions of diversity discourses and interventions. The chapter addresses the study’s first research question ‘*what are the discourses around difference and diversity in the school context?*’, by exploring the discourses teachers drew on to inform their professional practice in response to student diversity.

My analysis is informed by the idea that teachers ‘enact’ multiculturalism and other diversity policies and discourses, rather than understanding such policies to be merely straightforward implementations of policies devised from ‘above’ (Ball et al 2012). By ‘enactment’, Ball et al refer to the ways in which policies are interpreted, translated, and reconstructed and remade in complex and sometimes incoherent or contradictory social assemblages within schools. Policies may be formulated from ‘above’, whereas others may be produced in schools or local authorities, or just simply become fashionable approaches with no clear end or beginning (Ball et al 2012: 7). This approach suggests that putting policies into practice is a creative, sophisticated and complex process. However, policy ‘enactment’ is also bound by discourse and power, are part and parcel of discourses of ‘truth’ to which the policies refer, which become part of the day to day life of schools through the bodies of and relationships between teachers and students (Foucault 1980; Ball et al 2012).

Ball et al's (2012) work focuses on a number of policies in schools and how they may come together through the different roles of teachers, such as the policy *entrepreneurs* and *interpreters* who drive the way in which policies are understood and taken forward, middle level *implementers* who render actions into outcomes, the *critics* and *refusers* who bring their own perspectives to the table, and the *copers* who are at the receiving end of policy. My analysis is informed by the notion of 'enactment' to develop my understanding of how diversity management policies at Hillside were taken up, negotiated and critiqued by the staff in my sample, in light of their own situated understandings of the discourse of multiculturalism.

In section 5.1, I explore how the teachers' in my sample had professionally ascribed roles born out of 'top-down' multicultural and anti-racist policy approaches. In sections 5.2 onwards, I discuss how the school's multicultural approach was also manifested in more ambiguous and intangible forms that denote the 'everydayness' of multiculturalism. By its 'everydayness' I refer to the school's multicultural approach as slippery, fluid and varied as opposed to a 'fixed' top down or official state ideology. I explore how the teachers enacted 'everyday' plural multiculturalism³² alongside other discourses of diversity management (section 5.2 and 5.3), and specific interventions of role models and 'race' matching (sections 5.4 and 5.5).

5.1 Top down diversity management and managers

The ways in which teachers enact policy will be discussed later in this chapter. Yet, while teachers may 'do' policy, the context in which they do so is one in which policy is 'done to them' (Ball et al 2012) as a consequence of their professionally ascribed roles to manage pupil diversity. At the time of data collection, these teachers' positions reflected national approaches to addressing the inclusion and educational

³² Plural multiculturalism refers to the representation, celebration and inclusion of ethnic and cultural difference (Race 2011)

attainment of minority ethnic groups. My access to the school's staffing body was confined to a particular group of teachers, who were predominantly drawn from the school's Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) and Inclusion departments. They were therefore not representative of the Hillside's staff body as a whole as they were employed to enact the school's diversity policies, devised at local authority and school level, which were characterised by a multicultural approach, fused with elements of anti-racism.

The managers of the two departments involved were the school's diversity policy entrepreneurs and interpreters who, in part, drove the way policies were taken forward. They were also middle level implementers of diversity policies, responsible for monitoring and improving outcomes (Ball et al 2012). The Head of Inclusion, Patricia, was responsible for Special Education Needs (SEN), English as an Additional Language (EAL), the learning support centre, the learning mentoring service, and alternative provision. Patricia's post was newly created in 2008 to ensure that the school had a *"cohesive, inclusion support service that fulfils the needs of all the students in the school"* (Interview 1). She described the school's model of managing diversity as 'strong inclusion', which involved translating equal opportunities into services and the curriculum. Lizzie, who led the EMA department (and was line managed by Patricia) was responsible for *'every child from a minority ethnic background'* and to *'assess the progress of all those students through various data mechanisms'* (Interview 1). Lizzie was therefore employed to think about attainment in racialised terms, by separating and making distinctions between groups of students by ethnic group, refugee status and English language levels to understand patterns of attainment and identify needs. Her tasks involved managing the timetabling of support and running withdrawal groups for reading. Lizzie and her team were also responsible for identifying target groups of minority ethnic pupils who they felt needed more assistance to raise their achievement.

The school also had systems in place to attend to both the linguistic and pastoral needs of newly arrived migrant pupils. These teachers were middle level interpreters but were also copers at the receiving end of policy (Ball et al 2012). The EMA department employed one other permanent member of staff, Barbara, the school's EAL teacher. Barbara's role was to work with pupils who had limited English in withdrawal groups, which consisted of small numbers of pupils who were taken out of lessons such as Physical Education or Art. In addition, she would assist groups of pupils during lessons to understand what was expected of them in group activities. This appeared to be an important aspect of the EMA department's work that had positive outcomes for pupils as EAL pupils were achieving outstanding results.

For the pupils who joined the school during the school year, many of whom were first generation migrants, Annie, the Casual Admissions Mentor, was employed to assist them and their parents to navigate the school system. Her role involved explaining requirements and expectations of the British education system, such as the structure of the school day, forms of discipline, and 'buddying' up new children. Annie was available to parents and children during the time the children were assigned to her.

Other teachers who agreed to participate in the study were 'allies' of the EMA and Inclusion staff, and aligned to being diversity policy *copers* (Ball et al 2012). Although their jobs were not predominantly concerned with diversity, they were given less formal roles by EMA and Inclusion staff to attend to the school's diverse student body. As a second generation South Asian woman, Fazia, (Health and Social Care teacher), was assigned the role of role model/mentor for the South Asian girls in this study. A Geography and Citizenship teacher, Esther was given the role of International Coordinator to increase multicultural and intercultural school activities (discussed in section 5.31). The participating teachers were women, nearly all of whom were white, with the exception of Fazia who self-identified as South Asian Muslim, and Heather who self-

identified as African Caribbean. Data were not collected on their socio-economic status prior to becoming teachers as this was outside the scope of the study.

Table 5.1 details the roles of the participating teachers and highlights where their work supported the school's diversity agenda:

Table 5.1: Diversity roles of staff participating in the study

Staff member	Job Title	Type of 'formal' diversity enactor	Type of 'informal' diversity enactor	Role in enacting diversity
Lizzie	Head of EMA	Entrepreneur/ implementer		Raising ethnic minority achievement; identifying needs and allocating appropriate support;
Patricia	Head of Inclusion	Entrepreneur/ implementer		Overseeing inclusion support services for all students including minority ethnic, SEN, via an equal opportunity approach
Fazia	Health and Social Care teacher		Coper	Role model; providing pastoral care and mentoring via discussion groups
Heather	English and Media teacher		Coper	Role model; Responsible for making the texts less 'Anglo-centric'
Josie	Educational Welfare Officer	N/A	N/A	
Annie	Casual Admissions Mentor	Implementer/ Coper		Supporting new arrivals to navigate the school, particularly first generation migrants
Barbara	EAL teacher	Implementer/ Coper		Teaching English as a second language; providing in and out of class language support
Isabelle	Head of Sixth Form	N/A	N/A	
Esther	Geography and Citizenship teacher		Coper	International coordinator as an add on role; closely aligned to the EMA department

My data indicate that the school's approach to diversity appeared to be a site over which teachers experienced conflict and marginalisation. The main tension was identified by some to be between the EMA/Inclusion departments and 'unsupportive' senior management staff over how 'multiculturalism' should be enacted as a 'whole school approach' rather than through piecemeal activities. In the following example, Lizzie explained why there were limits to what she and her team could achieve

due to what she saw as the low priority and importance that the headteacher placed on the activities of the EMA department:

I don't think the Head actually wants it to be a multicultural school, I really don't. There are a lot of tensions around how the school is recognised and valued and how we are given space to do development work. It is about me being given time by the school leadership to do that sort of training, and it always gets left till last. I have been asking for two years to do a whole school training on Somalia. It is not on the head's priority list. (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 1).

Lizzie suggested that the EMA department's work was marginalised in the school's priorities as she was not given the space and resources to train teachers on specific groups of pupils and their needs. She took this to signify that the Head did not support the school in being truly multicultural. The sentiment that the work of EMA was a 'tag on', last on the list of the school's priorities, was also felt by Esther (Geography and Citizenship teacher) who commented, *'there isn't really a huge whole school ethos'* and credited Lizzie with the achievements in *'the bits that Lizzie has been doing, like the quizzes in form time about different places and different cultures'*.

Religious dress was perceived as another area of potential contestation in relation to multicultural reach. As Fazia explained:

I've heard that the Head has said that if she could do away with the scarf she would. She doesn't want the kids to wear a headscarf...And she was advised by the NUT rep that that was a very sort of inappropriate line to take in this kind of school, especially considering the school is supposed to be inclusive to everybody (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 2).

Whilst Hillside did have a clear top down strategy of diversity management to raise achievement of minority ethnic students and provide pastoral care for newer migrants, it is noteworthy that a number of staff aligned to the Inclusion and EMA staff considered their

departments to be at loggerheads with the senior management team³³ (see section 5.2). EMA and Inclusion staff viewed inclusiveness as a key feature of successful multiculturalism, and issues such as expression of difference through religious dress as important markers of this. The example of religious dress demonstrates conflicting teacher views over what a multicultural school should look like, but also reflects current hostility towards Muslim groups (Housee 2004; Kundnani 2012; Lentin and Titely 2012). The reported headteacher's views were specifically directed at Muslim girls in the headscarf as opposed to religious dress and symbols per se (e.g. turbans or crosses). This suggests that Muslim girls are seen as 'outsiders within', a view that is deeply embedded within wider discourses (Housee 2004) that appeared to be played out in the school context and a site for tension amongst teachers.

Given that these teachers' professional positions were designed to enhance the learning experience for, and attainment of, minority ethnic and newly arrived migrant students, they can be expected to represent the 'best-case scenario' and to be open and embracing towards difference. As I discuss throughout the remainder of this chapter, their professional commitment to diversity management was characterized by a plural 'multicultural ethos' (i.e. the commitment to representing and celebrating cultural and ethnic difference). However, although a top down plural multicultural, inclusive approach appeared to be the dominant trope employed by teachers, this also appeared to be situated in conflicting wider discourses on diversity management (section 5.2), which took varied and sometimes conflicting forms in how teachers 'enacted' multicultural interventions (sections 5.3 and 5.4).

³³ References were also made by Fazia, Lizzie and Patricia to other members of the senior management team (e.g. the deputy head) and lack of intervention in racial 'gang' bullying amongst boys, further denoting a 'them' and 'us' sentiment amongst EMA/Inclusion staff and to other staff in the school.

5.2 'Everyday' multiculturalism, anti-racism and community cohesion

In addition to it being a 'top down' policy in which diversity was 'done to them' through professionally ascribed roles, the teachers described the school as multicultural in the 'everyday' sense because of the school's 'ethnic mix' (Chapter 3). The 'fact' of diversity itself also led some teachers to the conclusion that racism was no longer a problem (Ahmed 2012; Harries 2014):

Bullying goes on, but ...there are so many nationalities in the school that you won't be bullied because you are Polish or Albanian or small, or foreign looking...You can get bullied for just about anything. I would have thought that in areas like London, well inner London, that racism, that battle has been won...There is racism now, but I think it is just fear of the unknown, fear of strangeness. But I don't think racism is an issue in London (Barbara, EAL teacher).

Barbara suggests that the school's multicultural student body and living in London's multiculture automatically acts as a buffer against racism, and enough to promote tolerance. Similar sentiments were echoed by Esther and Fazia who suggested that the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism led to a decrease in racism. Their accounts lend support to Harries' (2014) notion that, in 'everyday' talk, racism appears to no longer be a significant issue. This also suggests that some teachers' perspectives may also contain elements of 'post race' discourses in which the impact of racism is ignored (Lentin 2014; Harries 2014). The 'warmth' and embrace of living convivially with ethnic diversity (Gilroy 2004) appeared to be central to these teachers' interpretations of 'everyday' multiculturalism (Ahmed 2012; see Chapter 3).

However, not all teachers were of the view that racism was no longer a problem in the school. Instead, it appeared to be a site of tension between the managers of the school's Inclusion and EMA departments, Lizzie and Patricia, and other senior management staff. Lizzie and Patricia cited examples where colleagues were resistant to labelling

incidents as racist, such as fights between groups of Afghan and Pakistani boys, and African Caribbean and Somali girls:

People do not want to view something as racist. My boss and I had a huge battle last year over a couple of things where we (Patricia and Lizzie) felt the incident was racist and it was not being labelled as such. They don't want to label it as racism because then you have to do more ... But the school refuses to label incidences as racist because he (the deputy head) doesn't want the school to be seen as a racist place (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 3).

Patricia voiced similar concerns and attributed the silence over racism to the fear of *'opening up something that you then can't shut down, that actually you just can't cope with, and that it could take you over'* (Interview 1). Identifying racism was therefore a site of tension between some teachers, which appeared to be influenced by the Head and Deputy Head's desire to perform 'happy diversity' (Ahmed 2012) for Ofsted reports on the one hand, and the need to recognise forms of disadvantage and exclusion by the Heads of EMA and Inclusion on the other. On the whole, discussions about racism in the school were minimal and anti-racist practice did not constitute a major part of teacher discussions on the school's approach to diversity. From Lizzie's account, the multicultural discourse of ethnic groups 'happily getting along' appeared to take precedence over an anti-racist approach for reasons both of effort and school presentation.

However, some teachers commented on the visible segregation between ethnic groups in the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism:

I am sometimes struck by how much they fractionalise and they do divide into groups. You have the middle class Goths, and then working class white kids, and the Jamaican or African Caribbean kids might be in a group, Somali boys and girls in a group, South Asian girls in a group, or Asian Muslim girls might hang together. But the Asian girls tend to not worry so much, so like they seem less, so they might be Asian girls together...but maybe that is multiculturalism and they function together but they still have strong identities (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 1).

Josie understood 'everyday' multiculturalism not to equate with mixing between groups and did not see informal ethnicised segregation as problematic. This can be seen in her suggestion that separation between groups may just be '*multiculturalism and they function together*' (i.e. live convivially alongside one another (Gilroy 2004; Harris 2013)), and do not mix because of 'strong (ethnic) identities'. Esther, similarly perceived divisions between groups:

I'd say for the majority they stay like with like. I don't know whether that's because they are familiar to begin with, or whether, ultimately, they do just have more in common, as they weed out other friends...it does tend to be black and black and then the Polish hang out, and that means they have to start mixing inter-year (Esther, Geography and Citizenship teacher).

Here, the state discourse on multiculturalism as causing separation between groups appeared to have some presence in teachers' views on the lack of inter-ethnic mixing at the 'everyday' level in school. Like the young people in Harris's (2013) study, the teachers saw separation in 'everyday' multiculturalism as the norm amongst young people and an 'everyday' reality rather than a problem. However, community cohesion interventions that promote a shared sense of national identity, and commonly focus on young people, problematise state concerns that multiculturalism causes ethnic enclaves and 'separation' (Harris 2013).

At the time of data collection, schools were instrumental sites for the promotion and delivery of the cohesion agenda (see Chapters 1 and 3). Hillside attempted to embed the community cohesion agenda through curriculum based Citizenship lessons and interventions, that latter of which were school devised activities. Both sought to build and promote a stronger sense of Britishness and shared identity. State schools were accountable through Ofsted inspections and the SEF (School Evaluation Form) to provide evidence of their role in promoting community cohesion. Patricia, Head of Inclusion described it as:

...real and true partnership between schools, families, parents, and the community. That schools have to educate themselves about the community they serve and the existence of the community they serve (Patricia, Head of Inclusion, Interview 2)

Patricia explained how the school building was used to demonstrate their engagement with local groups by providing a hub for external community liaison. This included letting the building to various organisations in the community. One of the school's more clearly defined community cohesion activities was an extended schools programme that sought to foster inclusion by assisting newly arrived migrant parents to support their children through a potentially unfamiliar education system. This involved holding additional parents' evenings with translators for selected groups (e.g. Somali families). Despite this being classified as a community cohesion intervention, it overlapped with multicultural and anti-racist approaches as it sought to represent and address specific needs of minoritised ethnic groups and raise achievement. What was seen as a community cohesion intervention could also be interpreted in slightly different terms as an inclusive, plural multiculturalist, and an assimilationist/ integrationalist approach that 'welcomed' and educated newly arrived Somali families about the British system, thus demonstrating the overlaps in diversity management discourse.

Such blurriness in the concept of community cohesion underpinned Patricia's concerns about it as an ill-defined government strategy:

I think nobody's thinking has got to the point of what I would conceptualise as community cohesion, which is the school as the centre for the community, but adapting for the community, so the school becomes a centre where all community groups can meet and get to know each other, and do activities together. Because the truth is the government don't know how to create community cohesion, do they? So schools are bound to be finding their way (Patricia, Head of Inclusion, Interview 2).

Poorly defined notions of community cohesion were reflected in other teachers' mixed levels of awareness about what it does or should do. Community cohesion was recognised to be about connections with

parents, holding parents' evenings with the translators and translated letters (i.e. the extended schools programme) (Barbara, EAL teacher), but it was also conflated with anti-racism interventions. For instance, Isabelle, Head of Sixth form cited assemblies on key issues such as racism, and understanding different cultures, and Esther and Fazia confessed to having no clear understanding of what it was. Therefore, anti-racism and community cohesion were often conflated with multicultural discourse and interventions, which I turn to discuss below.

5.3 The 'framing' discourse: plural 'everyday' multiculturalism

In this section, I discuss my identification of a pluralist multicultural approach as the 'framing' or dominant discourse on diversity management in the school. However, I also demonstrate how despite the participating teachers being professionally aligned to the EMA and Inclusion departments, they were not a homogenous group in terms of their views and take up of plural multiculturalism. Instead, they appeared to have different understandings and perspectives on how difference should be dealt within the plural multicultural approach. These variations complicated the enactment of diversity policies, and denote what I view as the 'everyday' enactment of multiculturalism on the ground amongst diversity professionals.

To further an understanding of this heterogeneity I draw on Richard Race's (2011) analysis of Steinberg and Kincheloe's (2001) typology of multiculturalisms as a framework to capture the different ways in which it may appear (see Chapter 3). These include conservative multiculturalism (the superiority of Western patriarchal culture), critical multiculturalism (an understanding that inequality results from a lack of opportunity), and pluralist multiculturalism (whereby the curriculum consist of studies of various groups and promotes pride in group heritage). It is noteworthy that although some of the teachers were policy *copers* (i.e. on the receiving end of enacting diversity policies), some also displayed critical multicultural perspectives, making them critics and potential refiners of policy enactment.

Most of the staff I interviewed cited a number of examples to demonstrate how they actively sought to make the curriculum more multicultural through the representation of different groups in learning materials, promoting pride in group heritage and the study of various groups (Race 2011). My data indicate that teachers drew on the discourse of pluralist multiculturalism but did so in different ways, signalling how they were in effect, 'making it up' as they navigated dealing with difference on a daily basis. Lizzie, a diversity policy *interpreter*, was responsible for ensuring that teaching material was representative of pupils' backgrounds. In the following extract she explains the benefits of this approach:

It's about the fact that if a child is sitting in a class and they are discussing *Of Mice and Men*, and you are talking about a farm, if you have a picture of a Somali or Afghan farm on your Powerpoint they will sit up and take notice, and actually link it with their own experience (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 2).

One of Heather's roles was to make literature texts less 'Anglo-Centric'. Therefore, representation also meant being inclusive, suggesting that if pupils are able to identify with what they are being taught, they are more likely to achieve educationally. As Patricia commented:

I think a lot of work has been done in this school about trying to make the curriculum culturally relevant to students... I think it's about the home lives, and the practical day to day lives of students being reflected in lessons (Patricia, Head of Inclusion, Interview 1).

The school's approach was one that attempted to move beyond the three S's of multiculturalism (i.e. saris, samosas and steel bands) (Rattansi 2011; Kymlicka 2012), by incorporating their 'home lives' and the 'day to day' aspects of difference. Making learning culturally inclusive was also viewed as a means to challenge negative representations, signalling an overlap with an anti-racist approach. Heather explained that the concept of 'refugee' was discussed over a dedicated day where the pupils had to '*think about the concept ...to get away from the stigma*'.

The school's approach to fostering inclusiveness, challenge negative representations and capture the stories of different groups trickled into other areas of daily school life where diversity was celebrated in a number of forms. In addition to celebrating religious festivals and black history month, I noted that there were all year round displays in the corridors to recognise and celebrate the school's "*...multilingual and diverse student body by displaying the languages spoken by pupils and flags of different nations of the pupils*" (Fieldnotes, school corridors 28.02.09). Other interventions included focused learning on continents to explore dance, food and culture (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 1), and the canteen eating 'experiences' whereby food from a specific country would be served alongside a display of pictures and voiceovers in the language from the country that was in the spotlight (Mixed pupil, focus group 1).

As a diversity policy *interpreter*, Lizzie was the driving force for the organisation of multicultural displays. Rather than advocating a top down approach, she saw the importance of involving the pupils in the content of the displays to produce a more 'authentic' version of being. This could be seen as a progressive approach that attempted to engage with meanings of culture from pupils themselves rather than imposing a version of what is expected of them. However, it is noteworthy how Lizzie also imposed a pluralist model of multiculturalism for the pupils to slot into by only giving them an option to talk about culture and heritage. Although she advocated an approach to inclusivity that worked from the pupils' perspectives, pupils were still expected to define their difference through culture and ethnic identifications rather than their multifaceted identities by gender, sexuality and social class.

The pluralist multicultural model to which the school subscribed was evident in their assignment of specific roles to teachers who were made responsible for maintaining the promotion of diversity (i.e. the diversity policy *copers*). Esther, Geography and Citizenship teacher had recently been given the role of International Co-ordinator which involved

developing the school's links by sharing work with schools from other countries such as China. In addition, her role was to increase 'international awareness' by teaching pupils about each others' diversity and to put a more 'authentic' version of multiculturalism back into the school (i.e. embracing their 'roots' in their countries of origin):

... it was in that interview that they said why do you need an international coordinator in school, why do the kids need an international thing, when they are already multicultural? And they are not that multicultural. They all come, like Polish kids saying "allow it man" and the girls with their headscarves on covering up with hoodies, so they all just become south London kids at the end of the day. So that was my reasoning, partly, for doing the job, to try and get them to embrace where they came from (Esther, Geography teacher and International Co-ordinator)

Esther's role as international coordinator facilitated pupils to express their cultural and religious diversity. Whilst she acknowledges that migrant pupils 'become' South London kids through the identities they share, when for instance girls in 'headscarves cover up with hoodies' and Polish pupils use street language, she also yearns to position minority ethnic pupils in static ethnic categories based on her vision of 'where they come from'. This is evident in her view of shifts in displays of ethnic identity as problematic and as representing slippage towards loss of understanding of one's origins. Therefore, whilst she observes that there is fluidity in the pupils' identities, she does not accept the complexity of the pupils' identities and attempts to push them back towards the 'authentic' self. Esther's insistence that the pupils should 'embrace where they come from' can be located in a more 'conservative' multicultural approach (Dahwalhia and Patel 2006, Kymlicka 2010; Race 2011) that gives recognition to difference by positing Western knowledge about 'others' as the way forward. Therefore, although she was predominantly a policy *coper*, the way in which she received and 'enacted' her role as international coordinator was informed by her conservative multiculturalist stance.

Similarly, Harris (2013) found that when minority ethnic students encountered multicultural festivals in Australian cities, they were

encouraged to participate and put on displays of their authentic selves. The displays were based on their performance of essentialised ethnic and cultural identities, but the young people in Harris's study noted that white students were not expected to do the same. This was also the case at Hillside and echoes Youdell's (2012) claim that pluralist multicultural models essentialise the differences of minority ethnic groups from the white majority ethnic group. My data suggest that minority ethnic pupils were expected to perform being 'ethnic' and the different cultures associated with this. I analyse this further in Chapter 6 in relation to South Asian girls.

As the school's dominant discourse, plural multiculturalism based on essentialised notions of ethnicity and culture was readily available for teachers to take up. Although some had views that could be located in a critical multicultural perspective, teachers were provided with little room for alternative thinking outside of the dominant management discourse which was predominantly about 'race' and culture (discussed further below).

5.4 Role modelling and 'race' matching

As with representing and celebrating ethnic differences, same 'race' role modelling and race matching interventions are based on essentialised understandings of 'race' and cultural difference. It is an intervention modelled on perceived biological sameness and difference (i.e. skin colour) rather than social relations and has therefore been criticised for being reductionist (Martino and Rezai-Rasthi 2012). Before moving onto a discussion of the problems with same 'race' role models, it is noteworthy that a number of benefits of this intervention have been evidenced, including the better understanding minority ethnic teachers have of local communities and pupils with similar socio cultural backgrounds, and the potentially educative role they serve for white pupils to help potentially counteract negative racial stereotypes. In addition, minority ethnic parents may be more willing to communicate with the school through these teachers and as a result are more likely to have

their views represented (Sewell 1997; Lightfoot 2000; Bush et al 2006; McNamara et al 2010; Mirza and Meeto 2012). Role modelling alludes to the idea that if pupils are better able to identify with the education system because it includes teachers who are 'like them' this will lead to better educational performance and better relations between minority ethnic families and schools. In this section, I discuss how at Hillside, role modelling was taken up as a plural multicultural intervention, but was enacted in different ways that were rooted in the teachers' perspectives of managing diversity.

The teachers were largely in consensus that role models based on 'race' were a positive intervention, although their understandings of the benefits and enactments of the intervention were varied. For instance, some of the white British teachers spoke about feeling anxious when dealing with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and as a result supported the case for role models and 'race matching'. Josie explained:

I have had meetings with families before when it is just me and another white British officer when the kid is like Asian or African Caribbean and I have said I am not happy with this. Sometimes I want someone there that they can relate to better, that they will respond to better. I have heard them say to me, like they often hold prejudices, you know they think, two white women telling us this and you don't understand our culture. I have tried to say well, we do, but they know we are not one of them. It is a very difficult area (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 2)

Josie's anxiety to deal with minority ethnic families led her to place a high value on interventions like 'race' matching when liaising over welfare issues because, in her view, families respond and relate better to someone of the same ethnic background. Her narrative also illuminates how her position on diversity is located in a more conservative multicultural approach. Firstly, she perceives herself not as 'one of them', as different to the minority ethnic families. Secondly, even though she does not see herself as one of them, she essentialises their differences by claiming to know their 'culture', as if there is something concrete to 'know'. This reinforces the idea of culture as essentialised and static and

echoes Martino and Rezai-Rashti's (2012) argument that in principle, role modelling is based on perceived biological difference and sameness (i.e. skin colour) but also perpetuates racialised categories and reinforces the social construction of 'race'. Lastly, by positioning the families as the ones who are 'prejudiced' against her and her white colleague, she attributes the need for having same 'race' interventions to the families' deficits, rather than as a deficit in her own knowledge base about their needs or 'culture'. Therefore, Josie's enactment of role modelling is based on intervening in cultural deficit rather than structural disadvantage (Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2012).

Although still based on racialised (religious) differences, Isabelle understood 'race' matching and role modelling to have a different effect:

I don't think we do enough of this promoting positive role models...and I think there's too much of white teachers telling non-white children what they should do and feel and think. And I don't really agree with that...I think we should have more, I don't know, in a way I am really reluctant to say mentoring by successful Muslim men for Muslim boys. I don't want to be too ghettoising with what I do. But I think that can be helpful - their long-term progress in life will be hampered slightly, because they don't understand the way social norms and systems work, all those kind of things, and I think some work with those students to kind of proactively help them just negotiate those things would be really, really, helpful for them (Isabelle, Head of Sixth Form)

Isabelle points to a different function of having role models and race matching to address the lack of knowledge that Muslim boys and implicitly, migrant pupils have to navigate social norms. In her account, the knowledge deficit for some minority ethnic groups is not seen as a product of cultural difference and their positioning of white teachers as outsiders as in Josie's account, but because of socioeconomic positions that limit their access to certain types of knowledge and capitals needed to succeed in schools (Abbas 2003; Shah et al 2010).

Comparing Isabelle and Josie's views indicates their different positions on dealing with difference. Josie's comments can be aligned to an approach

that reinforces the hierarchical discourse on racialised Others that minority ethnic families are different and that these differences are 'cultural'. Her conservative multicultural views are representative of what Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2012) identify as role modelling based on biological difference and sameness, rather than structure through unequal social relations. In contrast, Isabelle viewed the function of role models as empowering migrant pupils and their families. She saw the intervention as a vehicle for families to receive cultural capital to buffer against material and social inequalities. Isabelle's views are more aligned to a critical multiculturalism approach that seeks to attend to inequalities rather than problematizing the essentialised cultural practices of certain groups, denoting her position as a critic and potential refiner (Ball et al 2012) of diversity policies.

These differences in drawing on multicultural interventions suggest that further understanding is needed about the arguments for race matching and role modelling in light of teachers' heterogeneous positions, how these interventions take place, and to what effects. Teachers do not merely implement policy interventions. Instead, policy and its interventions are best seen as a process subject to different interpretations, and enacted rather than implemented in different ways (Ball et al 2012). In addition, differences in take up of interventions suggest that although role modelling and 'race' matching may be based on essentialised constructions of racialised difference, its enactment through an anti-racist lens may be useful, as opposed to focusing on cultural deficit (Ahmed 2012).

5.5 'South Asian' women doing 'race' as role models: a double-edged sword?

Doing research that recognises that categories of 'race' are not essentialist remains problematic as we often reify categories that we are seeking to abolish through research. It is therefore an absent present that haunts our social constructionist interpretations (Nayak 2006). As a researcher, I found myself to be complicit in its reproduction as I was

bound by my embodiment of 'race' and gender difference when allocated the position of role model for the girls by Lizzie. As discussed in Chapter 4, my access to the school was based on my racialised position as a South Asian woman. My presence was expected to complement Fazia's in order to encourage the Muslim girls to 'open up' and talk about issues at home and school in a comfortable space. PSHE classes were used to facilitate this 'comfort zone'.

As policy *copers*, Fazia and I enacted the intervention of role models for the girls. Our South Asianess was something that we performed rather than being representative of who we were (Nayak 2006). 'Race' was (re)created through our encounters with the girls, similarly to how 'race' was created through celebrations and representation of ethnic and cultural difference. I recognise that there were a number of similarities between Fazia, the girls and me. We were physically interpreted as South Asian, Fazia identified as Muslim as some of the girls did, and there were some similarities around familial expectations of how we as women and girls should behave. However, we did not all share similar socioeconomic backgrounds, migration routes, nor the same levels of gendered surveillance and regulation, age and generation. There were, therefore, also significant differences that were not explicitly evident that were at risk of being silenced, overlooked, downplayed or simply forgotten in the moments of doing research and enacting multicultural interventions.

I found enacting role modelling to be a complex and an unsettling task because it appeared to have contradictory effects and entailed contradictory responsibilities for me as a researcher. I recorded my concerns about my role in reifying cultural similarities between the girls, Fazia and myself. I was conscious that by having South Asian girl only focus groups we were potentially (re)constructing and reinforcing similarities. However, the discussion groups appeared to have a number of positive effects for the girls. As Lizzie had anticipated, nearly all of the girls explicitly welcomed my presence, telling me how much they liked the

sessions because they had the space to talk about issues that affected them without feeling embarrassed. Positive sentiments about same race teachers were also expressed in a mixed pupil discussion group, where minority ethnic teachers' presence was seen as beneficial (Lightfoot 2000):

They can see (that teacher) has succeeded in life, and they will try to achieve that (South Asian pupil, Mixed focus group 2).

...when you are having a tough time, you know someone is part of your culture they might have gone through the same thing, or had experience of dealing with that situation (African heritage pupil, Mixed focus group 2).

However, some pupils also made observations about the benefits of role models beyond 'race'. As one pupil commented:

it doesn't really make a difference so long (as) we have someone who is there, and cares for us, and fills that need that their parents or friends might not be able to fill (Mixed focus group 2).

Fazia observed that the focus groups were a space for the girls to talk in a non-threatening and non-judgemental environment, which was what *'they don't have in the rest of the school'*. They could for instance *'talk about arranged marriages without having anyone laugh at them'* (Fazia, Interview 2). Therefore, Fazia saw some important benefits in this multicultural intervention whereby our racialised similarities were given further meaning in this environment, but also acted as a space for the girls to create an awareness of their own subjectivities. Multicultural interventions may thus reproduce 'race' through using static categories of difference to implement interventions, but may also provide the space to articulate disadvantage and build alliances, and create solidarities through shared experiences. This for me represents its double-edged sword (I discuss this further in Chapter 8 on the girls' navigation of racialised discourses on gender-based violence).

My relationship with Fazia demonstrated this point because it signalled being the racial Other, but also gave her the space to articulate negative

experiences that could be attributed to our 'race' and gender. I felt comfortable running the groups with Fazia, more so than I would have done with a white female teacher and the feeling appeared to be mutual. Rather than this being a result of same 'race', our shared sense of identification arose from our informal discussions after PSHE lessons about being racialised subjects (i.e. how we felt positioned as Others), second generation migrant women, and working mothers. Shared identities based on 'race' can be important and provide powerful anti-racist spaces, especially when such spaces are free from the 'white gaze' in which hierarchies of difference may be reinforced (Housee 2010). Our shared identities led Fazia to explain experiences of exclusion in the school:

Because I am Asian it is assumed that I will know everything (about forced marriage). And I don't cos I come from a very particular type of Asian background with a particular life experience, and these kids are different, so I don't necessarily know. I think a lot of the time, that kind of information probably wouldn't reach me cos they think I know. Also sometimes people don't say stuff cos they think they will offend me on things like arranged marriages (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 1)

Fazia understood her racialised position as an Asian to be an explanation for her marginalisation by other staff (*'people don't say stuff cos they think it will offend me'*). The racialised reductionism that the school's multiculturalism promoted also led her to be pigeon holed as a minority ethnic teacher with expertise on 'race' issues (*'because I am Asian it is assumed that I will know everything'*) (Portelli and Campbell-Stephens 2009; Mirza and Meeto 2012). The experiences of minority ethnic teachers being marginalised or Othered in the workplace have been well documented (Powney et al 2003; McNamara et al 2010). Fazia provided other numerous examples of feeling marginalised, such as being given more work in comparison to other colleagues, which she attributed to not being white, and also being seen as quiet because she was a 'South Asian woman' (Interview 2). Her opening up about this followed her first

interview where she describes a difficult discussion with teacher over the topic of 'honour' killings:

This member of staff with whom I was supposed to sit down and plan basically the citizenship day together on diversity, I went to have a discussion with him and he started talking about 'honour' killings, and how if we didn't have such a massive Sikh community in the north of Britain, then we wouldn't have the 'honour' killings, the police wouldn't be so busy, and all this kind of thing. I have to say I was really, really shocked, because I feel that if you have those kinds of views, you really shouldn't be teaching in a multicultural school (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 2)

In this instance, the other teacher appeared to racialise Fazia as a spokesperson for communities in which 'honour' killings are commonly depicted to be a problem. Talking to Fazia specifically about 'honour' killings was problematic in this instance because given that their meeting was supposed to focus on planning a session on diversity as a positive feature of British society, he opted to divert the discussion towards the topic of gender violence as an explicitly racialised problem on which she was expected to have a view and engage in discussion. Fazia's experience demonstrates the burden racialised difference placed on her in her role as a professional particularly amidst negative culturally racialised discourses. She was a policy *copier* for South Asian girls, and had to 'cope' with being racialized as South Asian and the associated negative connotations.

My data suggest that there are a number of consequences to using racialised bodies to implement multicultural interventions and 'do' diversity work (Ahmed 2009). There may be positive outcomes that provide a platform for subjects to speak about shared experiences that can translate into action. On the other hand, when cultural racialised difference based on negative hierarchies underpin understandings of difference, feelings of exclusion, marginalisation and tokenism may arise for racialised subjects as the policy *copers* enacting such multicultural interventions. Furthermore, the subjective burden placed on minority ethnic teachers as responsible for the wellbeing of pupils' 'like them' can

be great, especially when they are made to feel that they are best placed to solve minority ethnic pupils' 'problems'. In addition, as Fazia observed (Interview 1), being made responsible for people 'like us' also shifts responsibility for minority ethnic pupils to minority ethnic teachers, which protects white teachers from being accused of being racist or culturally insensitive, and makes minority ethnic teachers accountable for minority ethnic students. Her observations echo Ahmed's (2009; 2012) argument that addressing racial issues through the bodies of minority ethnic staff acts as a means for white majority staff to avoid addressing race relations and inequalities.

5.6 Conclusions: towards a more 'complex' multiculturalism

Despite widespread political claims that state multiculturalism has witnessed a significant backlash, multiculturalism, in all its forms, was the predominant way that diversity was managed in Hillside. Teachers in the EMA and Inclusion departments predominantly took up top down professional roles and school based policies associated with state plural multicultural interventions based on the celebration, welcoming and representation of ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences (Rattansi 2011, Race 2011; Martino and Rezai Rashti 2012), but these were enacted differently by different teachers. There was for instance, significant tension among staff about what multicultural provision should look like and do, such as recognition of racism, wearing of the hijab, and the significance of role models. Teachers spoke and acted from different positions from which they shaped, re-shaped and negotiated the school's disjointed multicultural approach. They drew on predominantly plural multiculturalism, but also all had mixed approaches, sometimes conservative, with only a few critical multiculturalists who considered structural inequalities.

Although teachers spoke about school policies that could be likened to anti-racism and community cohesion, the ways in which these interventions were enacted by teachers were 'bitty' and disjointed, rather than a whole school approach. The school was therefore a microcosm of

diversity in action, whereby diversity management consisted of diverse enactments of multicultural and other diversity management discourses, denoting its 'everydayness'.

Teachers' enactments of 'everyday' multiculturalism were to moulded and shaped by firstly, the policy entrepreneurs/interpreters who were also responsible for outcomes (i.e. the head of the EMA and Inclusion departments), whose views were located in a conservative multicultural approach (see Chapter 6 for a further discussion on their views in relation to South Asian girls), and secondly, individual teacher's perceptions. For example, Fazia and Isabelle appeared to be sensitive to intersectional differences and the problems associated with lack of social capital³⁴. Other teachers tended towards essentialist understandings of difference and drew on dominant discourses about racialised Others to inform their versions of 'authentic' multiculturalism (e.g. Josie, Patricia, Barbara and Esther who took up pluralist multicultural policies but enacted them through conservative interpretations of multiculturalism).

The dominant plural multicultural model at Hillside provided little room for alternative thinking outside of racialised boxes for teachers. As will also be discussed in Chapter 6 on teachers' positioning of South Asian girls, I found that the heterogeneous positions of teachers did shape the way that multicultural interventions were enacted, but only up to a point because of the prominence of the plural multicultural discourse that "*contains, expropriates and inscribes Same/Other hierarchies*" (Youdell 2012: 153). Pupils could only fill cultural slots as prescribed by the school, and in the process, their complex intersectional identities were overlooked.

³⁴ How far the 'critics or refusers' were able to shape how they delivered the diversity policy was not explored in detailed as it was outside the original scope of the study. However, it is noteworthy that the policy entrepreneurs or interpreters were predominantly conservative multiculturalists (see also Chapter 6) and in charge of directing the policies, denoting a hierarchy of power within diversity management.

In addition, my data also suggest that regardless of their heterogeneous positions, the teachers appeared to take up increasingly prominent 'post' race discourses that minimised the presence of racism. This was not only confined to 'conservative' multiculturalists but also those more aligned to critical multiculturalism such as Fazia, who did not view racism as an issue because of 'everyday' convivial multiculturalism. Their views therefore represented a range of perspectives that were sometimes conflicting, and represent the complex and contradictory ways in which multiculturalism was enacted in the context of wider discourses on diversity.

Given that multiculturalism currently does not afford subjects 'equality in difference' (Haw 1998) should multiculturalism have a future in our schools? As a state response and most importantly, an 'everyday' discourse, multiculturalism in schools like Hillside still clearly matters and is very much alive in day to day negotiations. Therefore, exploring how multiculturalism is enacted on the ground remains important for understanding the influence it has on teaching in our diverse multicultural schools. However, certain versions of culture that reinforce racialised boundaries continue to negate notions of 'post race'. We therefore need to work with multiculturalism and find new forms to facilitate a form of 'mature' multiculturalism (Dahwahlia and Patel 2006; Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2012), whereby more 'complex' understandings of identities would underpin interventions such as role models.

More 'complex' or nuanced understandings of identities could also feed into a form of multiculturalism that is inclusive of minority ethnic groups in developing shared notions of 'Britishness' as the property of all, rather than a process of assimilation for minority ethnic groups into white British norms (Modood 2005). Exploring enactments of multiculturalism through 'everyday' professional negotiations potentially provides a step towards developing a more 'mature', or complex and 'critical' multicultural approach (I discuss this in Chapter 9, Conclusions).

Chapter 6: Teachers enacting multiculturalism and positioning South Asian girls

The 1970s was characterized by the overriding presumption that South Asian girls in the UK were situated ‘between two cultures’, that is, neither ‘east’ (i.e. the traditions of family and community) nor ‘west’ (i.e. the liberal values of wider British society) (Watson 1977; Ghuman 2003). In the backlash against multiculturalism, South Asian and/or Muslim youth continue to be positioned as ‘between two cultures’ (Harris 2013; see Chapters 2 and 3). In this chapter I interrogate this persistent discourse by exploring the continuities and changes in how teachers positioned the girls. In light of the teachers’ diverse enactments of multiculturalism, I ask if and how South Asian girls continue to be positioned as ‘between two cultures’ by teachers, and to what effects. The study’s second research question ‘*How is gendered risk for South Asian girls understood and dealt with in a school context?*’ is addressed from the teachers’ perspective as an area that was highly topical at the time of data collection.

In section 6.1 I discuss the the ‘between two cultures’ discourse as it featured in the narratives of the wider pool of teacher participants. In sections 6.2 and 6.3 I provide a more in-depth analysis of how discourses on problematic South Asian ‘culture’ and parenting played out in relation to two main areas of concern raised by teachers. In section 6.2 I focus on the example of school trips and analyse teachers’ understandings of the girls’ lack of participation. In section 6.3 I focus on analysis on the timely topic of ‘vulnerable’ and ‘at risk’ girls to exploitation and forced marriage. Through these two examples, I present my argument of why teacher response to and intervention were problematic because of an assumed version of Eurocentric progression and empowerment imposed on the girls. The analysis in these latter two sections is informed by data from a smaller pool of teachers who were able to share their insights because their professional roles to attend to welfare concerns and/or South Asian girls’ specific needs and include Josie, Educational Welfare

Officer, who had dealings with attendance and child protection issues, Lizzie, Head of EMA and Patricia, Head of Inclusion. I also draw on insights from Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher. She features strongly in this chapter, as I was able to capture her extensive views on the girls due to my close relationship with her through our joint work as role models.

6.1 Continuity in discourse: South Asian girls as ‘between two cultures’

In dominant discourse, South Asian girls tend to be represented as oppressed and powerless because of culture and tradition in the family (Dwyer 2000; Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003). Such representations shift the focus from structural inequalities and constraints solely towards the inequalities they experience at home and within their ethnic communities as a product of ‘culture’ (Harries 2014). Despite the varied and conflicting perspectives on doing diversity, there was a tendency for teachers at Hillside to position South Asian girls in ways that could be described as culturally essentialist, and which mirrored the dominant discourse on South Asian girls.

Teachers at Hillside understood the girls through their positioning in South Asian ‘culture’. This is in line with my suggestion that the multicultural climate in which the school responded to students appeared to provide the teachers little room for alternative thinking outside of culturally racialised boxes, even for those who displayed more critical stances and considered multiple axes of disadvantage (see Chapter 5). Therefore, the culturalisation of ‘race’ (Hoque 2015) as it intersects with gender is a key theme that runs through this analysis. I explore the ways in which teachers made culture central in their understandings of difference for South Asian girls, and show how they constructed South Asian culture as based on an East/West binary (Said 1978). The data are drawn from all but one of the participating teachers, suggesting that this perception of the girls was highly prominent. Only Isabelle, Head of Sixth form, did not talk about the girls in such reductionist terms. As

discussed in Chapter 4, her views on diversity were generally 'critical multicultural', and her silence on the subject could be attributed to this position.

6.11 Positioning disruptive and second-generation girls as 'between two cultures'

The data illustrate how the teachers talked about South Asian girls as 'between two cultures' predominantly in terms of a 'conflict' of cultures. More specifically, most of the teachers saw the girls who *transcended* fixed cultural boundaries as likely to be caught 'between two cultures' (Watson 1977; Ghuman 2003). When I asked Annie what she thought the main issues were for South Asian girls entering the school as first generation migrants, she replied:

I think we forget in the UK how open and progressive we are, and we expect everybody else coming here to be able to be like that, and they can't, but also it's not sort of imbued in them in the way it is with us...and so I think that's a problem for a lot of these girls, they are very worried about being disloyal to their families, there is a tremendous amount of conflict over things like that (Annie, Casual Admissions Mentor).

Annie positions South Asian girls as experiencing a form of conflict when the girls are 'disloyal to their families' (i.e. going against expected norms). Her comment that the UK is 'open and progressive' implies that South Asian families are the opposite (i.e. closed and backward) and reflect Ghuman's (2003) identification of a conflict of cultures for South Asian youth. Although this is a highly contestable argument (see Chapter 2), it was one that was embedded in a number of teachers' narratives.

For Fazia it was second generation girls like Halima who were more likely to be caught 'between two cultures', and face pressure to locate themselves in either Western or their familial culture:

I think she's (Halima) also got the greatest amount of conflict, in terms of the two cultures that she lives in. She was born here. Whereas all the others, it is quite, you know, one culture is dominant, the other one isn't, and that's OK, they are comfortable with that.

Whereas I think she has got a big issue with deciding where she is (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 2).

Given her critical stance on diversity (chapter 5), Fazia's perception of a dichotomy between East and West, and girls being under pressure to align themselves to one cultural group or another, may appear perplexing. However, one interpretation might suggest that Fazia's views are symbolic of her subjectification of the dominant discourses on the dichotomy between Western and Eastern cultures (Said 1978; Hall 1996), as she made sense of her own and others' experiences of parental conflict through this discourse. Despite her experiences of being racialised by other staff in the school, her own position, like the other teachers, was complex and contradictory in her enactments of 'everyday' multiculturalism. Fazia's comments may also reflect an insider's view that the girls are encouraged or pressurised by their family and community to align themselves to one 'cultural' group or another, representing a similar discourse that circulates within one's own ethnic enclaves.

The data also indicate that the girls were expected to perform being 'authentic' Muslims by some teachers (Mirza 2013). This pressure was particularly pronounced for girls who teachers saw as transcending cultural boundaries and who were labelled as 'disruptive'. For instance, when asked about the school's policy on uniform and religious dress Patricia commented:

...my issue is Muslim girls, in particular, wearing a headscarf with big earrings, and actually the two are mutually exclusive, because the headscarf is about being modest isn't it? It's about modesty, it's about not drawing attention to yourself, because you are there as a vehicle for God, not as a body yourself, right? I understand that these students are tremendously conflicted about their place within society, and I recognise that...I say it's either the headscarf or it's the earrings, it's not both (Patricia, Head of Inclusion).

Gendered symbols and practices denoting cultural and ethnic difference such as dress (e.g. the headscarf), female genital cutting, and marriage practices have been used as vehicles through which forms of control are

exercised over the female body, and can be taken to symbolise East and West (Duits and Van Zoonen 2007; Gill 2007; Pedwell 2008). Patricia drew on such gendered symbols of East (headscarf) and West (big earrings) to name and mark difference, and to regulate and position the girls into boxes of expected behaviour (Mirza and Meeto 2013).

Although wearing large earrings was not permitted for any of the pupils, Patricia singled out Muslim girls in religious dress as particularly problematic. This was predominantly based on her understanding that Muslim girls who transcended traditional or ethnically prescribed religious and cultural boundaries were performing two incompatible identities:

I worry about the impression that young people, girls and boys, create of Islam when they send those mixed messages. Because I think they are reinforcing stereotypes actually of – they are not really religious, they are terrorists. That’s why I think they make themselves vulnerable, because I think they are sending a mixed message. I don’t think they recognise they are sending a mixed message and you place yourself at risk by doing that, and the boys and girls, you know, swear and use all sorts of bad language whilst wearing their headscarf. And again I think that reinforces that stereotype of (WHISPERS) – they are not really religious. And to me that is unbearable, because I think it’s very disrespectful to all the people who actually are Muslim, practicing Muslims (Patricia, Head of Inclusion).

Patricia positioned Muslim girls who wore big earrings and swore as being untrue to their religious background, and therefore as experiencing a conflict of cultures. Her narrative contains a number of attributes that can be aligned to her conservative multicultural approach. Firstly, she perceived there to be an authentic religious and cultural ‘self’ to which the girls should aspire. Secondly, by positioning Muslim pupils who transcended religious and cultural expectations as disrespectful to practising Muslims and at risk of being branded as terrorists and not real Muslims, she exerts her authority by defining what constitutes a good and ‘actual practising Muslim’. This demonstrates how, as a white middle class teacher, she positions herself as more knowledgeable than the girls about how they should behave as Muslims. She assumes a responsibility

to police their performance of being Muslim, further denoting her position as a 'conservative' multiculturalist (Race 2011).

The above example from Patricia highlights how enactments of plural multiculturalism have real effects for Muslim girls. Whilst they may be supported in wearing religious dress, they can simultaneously experience heightened surveillance and regulation from teachers like Patricia who take on the task of keeping their authentic Muslim identity in check. This suggests that plural multiculturalism can support pupil diversity but can also provide the grounds for teachers to police and test South Asian and Muslim girls' authenticity, especially when compounded with teachers' personal views that mirror a conservative multicultural approach. For Muslim girls who breached constructed boundaries by displaying 'Westernised' behaviour, the consequence was stricter regulation and surveillance by teachers to push them back towards an 'authentic' cultural and religious identity. Being surveilled and disciplined into performing certain versions of 'Muslimness' appears to be particularly heightened for these girls in the current Islamophobic climate (Housee 2004; Haw 2010; 2009; Mirza and Meeto 2013).

6.12 Meet the parents: supportive but regulatory

South Asian parents were seen to be stricter than other parents with their daughters and as overly controlling. Parental discipline and punishment were mostly understood to be relational to the girls transcending cultural boundaries or moving towards a more Westernised culture (e.g. by showing an interest in boys). This was evident in Barbara's response about the issues she perceived South Asian girls to face:

Barbara: I don't know what goes on at home but I know they are from strict backgrounds, and they are quite streetwise at school. And a lot of these girls in year 10 like Aisha and Ruskha, they've been here a long time, speak with a London cockney accent, they are very streetwise. They are both Pakistani Urdu speakers.

VM: when you say they are streetwise?

Barbara: they know what they can get away with, they know the jargon, they are one of the gang, they talk to boys, they are well integrated superficially.

VM: Could you give me an example of how you think they are integrated?

Barbara: Like, of course they are interested in boys, so they have had this Western type education so they have this problem with East and West clashing (Barbara, EAL teacher)

Barbara's narrative contains a number of dichotomies and sees the clash of 'East and West' to be more of a problem for girls who have been in the UK for some time. As a result of residing in the UK, these girls have taken on a London accent, which she perceives to be an indication of their assimilation into English culture. It is also these girls who she saw as more likely to experience a culture clash as they are more 'integrated' or 'streetwise', and therefore 'know what they can get away with'. Further, Barbara's description of the girls as 'superficially' integrated into wider British society suggests that they were separated due to being held back by their families from pursuing their interest in boys. Similarly, Heather considered South Asian girls to be 'torn between being Asian' and living in the 'dominant' culture:

I think the biggest strength to them is their family life, but the flipside of that is this sense that I think, not quite understanding, being really torn between being Asian, but being sort of, I guess, that sense of Anglofied Asian in the sense that they come and live within the culture, and, you know, of course things like boyfriends they want to sort of deal with (Heather, English and Media teacher)

Also present in Heather's narrative was the view of the South Asian family as both the source of the problem but also the girls' 'biggest strength'. This has been discussed in previous studies which position the South Asian family as strong, closely knit, supportive and stable, but also as more regulatory, traditional and based on stronger patriarchal values (Wilson 2006; Bhopal 2010). Therefore, South Asian families were positioned as a source of strength, but also the major obstacle to their daughters' wellbeing.

A further discourse present in teachers' narratives was that of South Asian parents as supportive of education (Shah et al 2010; Bagguley and

Hussain 2014), but unable to equip their daughters with the right kind of knowledge. The teachers commented that the girls came from working class families who were committed to their daughters' educational progression (Shah et al 2010), which they saw as evident in their investment in extra paid tuition (Nasreen and Halima), and supporting their daughters' attendance at after school and homework clubs (Zara, Meena, Asanka and Raani).

There were variations in attainment according to social class background, to which some of the teachers displayed some sensitivity. For instance, Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, recognised that middle class students like Gargi were advantaged by her family's position, as they could provide her with higher levels of support and their knowledge of the education system and networks (i.e. high levels of social and cultural capital (Shah et al 2010)). Fazia suggested that the lower achievers' level of educational attainment was tied to their parents' lack of knowledge of the education system (e.g. not knowing 'what a university is') and the limited cultural capital that accompanies this (e.g. families not knowing what is outside their local area):

A lot of these people don't even know what a university is. They have no idea what the other half of the world looks like, wears, or lives like. It's beyond their imagination. Let's just say the group that we had. If we took that group of kids to [affluent new development within the city], with the new buildings, the apartments, if we just took them around there, they'd be shocked that that is on their doorstep (Fazia, Health and Social Care Teacher, Interview 2)

Fazia's interpretation of low achievement reflects the intersectional positioning of these families, rather than solely focusing on cultural deficit. Similarly, Esther commented on the link between social class and investment in education:

... lots of them, if they do work hard, it seems to me they are more of the middle class and have parents that are chivvying them to do their homework, and they've just started off on a good foot (Esther, Geography and Citizenship teacher)

Ethnicity and social class were therefore seen as significant factors in parental support and educational success by some of the teachers. However, old stereotypes were also evident in their responses. For instance, when asked about her experience with South Asian families more generally, Josie showed some understanding of class differentials, language barriers and lack of confidence, but also referred to culture when explaining lack of educational attainment and desire:

The main thing that strikes me is that if they haven't had a high level of access to education themselves, they just don't understand it, they don't get it, especially if it is girls where in their culture it is not a priority... They want to produce a well-mannered potential wife for somebody. And I think they just don't communicate, maybe through fear, the language barrier, confidence and they just think it is a British school. They have sent their kids here, you know they think it is a British system and it is nothing to do with me, I am Bangladeshi... just send them there cos I have to but it is only because it is the law that I am doing it (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 2).

Here, old stereotypes were evoked of the '*well-mannered potential wife*', whose parents do not invest in her education because of the prioritisation of marriage. In addition, Josie's narrative reflects the stereotypical image of South Asian groups as separatist, as they do not identify with the British schooling system (Crozier and Davies 2008).

Old cultural stereotypes were also present in some teachers' narratives of the girls as the 'wrong kinds of learners' (Youdell 2006; Archer 2008). This was applicable to both the low and high achieving girls. Gargi, a high achiever was referred to as 'quiet' and 'compliant' (Lizzie Interview 1), and Begum, a first generation migrant Muslim from Mauritius, as "*absolutely meticulous, but very quiet because she doesn't put herself forward to discuss things*" (Esther, Geography and Citizenship teacher). Begum was positioned as a passive learner who achieved but not the 'right sort' of learner (Youdell 2006; Archer 2008) because she was perceived as quiet and unquestioning. This was sometimes attributed to parental approaches. Lizzie saw Raani as not having the ability to

analyse as a factor in her underachievement because her family failed to encourage her to develop her own views and ideas. She therefore considered her disadvantaged because her parents did not rear her to be an independent thinker:

Lizzie: Raani is not particularly bright. She doesn't have the same ability, particularly to analyse. She cannot analyse things

VM: can you give an example when you say about the analysis?

Lizzie: so the whole thing about not just describing an art piece, not that it's just blue, green, light and dark tones, but why has the artist used this and what is the meaning behind it. What do you think the artist was trying to say to ...they are taught very much from their educational background to just describe and repeat the description and not come out with their own ideas, and they really struggle to say what they think... Like he (dad) says to me oh I make them copy things out ...I think he has really basic ideas about how to help
(Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 1)

Regardless of their differing take up and enactment of multicultural discourse, teachers' constructions of South Asian familial and cultural values were overwhelmingly formed around an East/West dichotomy. This was based on the perception that the school represented the West in its reflection of the liberal values of wider British society, as opposed to the South Asian family as the East seen through its attachment to traditional values, strict discipline and lack of integration (i.e. self-segregation). Such pathological constructions of the South Asian family as the strength, but also the source of problem was evident across the two examples explored in the next part of the chapter (i.e. school trips and risk and vulnerability).

The table below represents the East (South Asian/Muslim) and West (other white groups) dichotomy as it appeared in teachers' talk about South Asian girls, as discussed. The dichotomies provide a useful representation of the way in which the teachers positioned the girls and assist the analysis by highlighting the mismatch between the reductionist typologies drawn on by teachers and the 'everyday' lived experiences of the girls (Chapters 7 and 8). The defining characteristics that refer to South Asian and Muslim girls in the left column denote the characteristics

that the teachers attributed to the girls and their families. These dichotomous traits therefore signal the continuities in the ‘between two cultures’ discourse:

Table 6.1: Teachers’ essentialising constructions of South Asian girls

East: South Asian and Muslim girls and their families	West: white groups and dominant school culture	Girls who fitted the ‘Eastern’ typology (as referred to by teachers)
Passive, weak, non-assertive, lacking independence	Streetwise, assertive, independent	Halima, Raani, Nasreen
Quiet/passive learners	Assertive learners/ independent thinkers	Gargi, Raani
Strict parents, harsh discipline	Freedom and independence	Halima, Jamila
Parental restrictions around having boyfriends	Freedom to have boyfriends	Zara, Meena, Halima
Sexually immature/inexperienced	Sexually experienced, more knowledgeable	Halima
Strong, closely knit family, educationally supportive	Weaker family ties	All girls (except Jamila as educationally supportive)
Conservative, traditional cultural values	Liberal, progressive values	Halima, Jamila
Separatist	Integrated and inclusive	Referred to generically

6.2 The limits to ‘warm’ multiculturalism: ‘saving’ South Asian girls through school trips

Given the problematisation of South Asian ‘culture’, a number of limitations to the ‘warmth’ of multiculturalism (Chapter 5) were evident in the teachers’ responses to the girls. In the analysis that follows, I examine teachers’ enactment of multicultural policies and the implications for South Asian girls, which overall indicate that the girls were seen as in need of ‘saving’ from culturally inferior parenting. This is carried out in relation to the example of school trips where the girls were ‘problematized’ because of perceived conflicting values between home and school. Whilst examining how South Asian girls were positioned by the teachers

in relation to these examples, I also explore the implications and effects of this positioning. I suggest three main limitations to teachers' enactment of 'everyday' multicultural interventions specifically for South Asian girls, which I demonstrate in the analysis of school trips and teachers' identifications of vulnerable subjects: first, teacher interventions specifically for South Asian girls reinforced culturally racialised and essentialist constructions of difference; second, such constructions of culture were based on a hierarchy of racialised difference, where South Asian girls and their families continued to be positioned as the Other, in need of saving from flawed parenting practices; and third, Eurocentric norms and ideals as silently embedded in teachers' enactments of multicultural interventions. These three limitations run throughout the remainder of the analysis in this chapter.

6.21 School trips: essentialised teacher constructions of South Asian parenting and cultural deficit

Teachers who had directly been on or involved in organising school trips talked about encountering difficulties with parental consent with regards to their daughters' participation. When Lizzie recounted a five night Art trip to Cornwall some of the girls had been on (Halima, Nasreen, Raani, Vrinda and Asanka), she talked about having to negotiate the girls' attendance with fathers:

...all of them (the South Asian girls) we had to persuade the families to, to a lesser or larger extent, had to persuade parents that it was OK for them to go, that I was there etc. Raani, very much because of my relationship with dad, he says anything that you think my daughter needs to do, I will say yes to. Halima, again, dad, although I've hardly had any dealings with him, thinks that I know what I'm doing. And Shareen's dad was only persuaded, she's from Bengali background, was only persuaded by David Smith, the Head of Art. He wouldn't say yes to me, as a woman...Vrinda, had to persuade them (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 3)

These findings mirror those discussed in Chapter 2 that highlight how parents of South Asian and Muslim girls may be reluctant to allow their daughters to participate in extra curricula activities including school trips,

especially if they involve overnight stays away from home (Ghuman 2003, Patel 2007; Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008). Teachers drew on a number of stereotypes to explain why this trend was more pronounced amongst South Asians. Josie referred to a Bengali girl in Year 10 who was not allowed to go on a school cinema trip:

They are not anti-education that family, they are just very sexist, and what they haven't done is accepted that their children are being brought up in Britain. It is a common thing, but it is as if they wish they were bringing her up in Bangladesh, and it is so unfair on a young person because you are making these expectations of her. She is at school here in London with all of the stuff (*school trips*) it offers and yet they prevent her from friendship, she can't socialise outside of school (Josie, Education Welfare Officer, Interview 1)

Josie's comments are informed by the stereotype of South Asian family values as the antithesis of the liberal values of the school (Ghuman 2003). She also constructs South Asian parental values as inferior because of their conservative and 'sexist' values which stood in contrast to the school 'offering' the girls' opportunities they would otherwise not have, such as friendship and socializing, which Josie assumed to be absent in their country of origin. The British schooling system was therefore presented as progressive, and parental resistance to school trips represented their will to retain their own culture or resist its liberal opportunities (*'it is as if they were bringing her up in Bangladesh'*).

Constructions of the girls as lacking independence were similarly informed by negative and hierarchical stereotypes of their relative passivity and 'weakness' (Wilson 1978; Bhopal 1997). Lizzie explained how during the art trip, she had to *'actually teach them how to go and ask for things'* and felt *'frustrated and amazed at their lack of ability to look after themselves'*. She cited examples of Halima being reluctant to ask for more milk from café staff and Raani not knowing how to keep warm and dry her clothes on the radiator after getting wet in the rain. This came as a surprise to Lizzie given that Raani helped her mum for Ramadan:

So she does all that stuff at home, but actually knowing a wet coat goes on the radiator and not in the cupboard, or when I'm cold I wear socks...But it makes me think yes, is she told – do that, do that, do that – rather than being given – go and do that job – and she has to do it herself (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 4)

Lizzie's comments also indicate that she perceived South Asian girls as less assertive, weaker and less independent than others, as a result of parents not taking the right approach when teaching them how to do daily chores. Therefore, South Asian parenting approaches were deemed to be deficient, which led some teachers to use school trips as a symbolic site over which address parental deficit. School trips were therefore seen to be more important for South Asian girls who were positioned to be lacking in independence.

6.22 Interventions to increase participation in school trips: hauling South Asian girls towards a 'progressive' 'British' norm

The teachers' strategy to include South Asian girls in school trips was implicitly underpinned by Eurocentric ideals of what constituted 'progression'. School trips became a symbolic site of liberation over which multicultural difference and the tolerance and 'warmth' associated with it were disrupted and challenged by teachers. Teacher intervention to increase the girls' participation in trips suggests that culture was not accepted as a given reason for their non-participation. Rather than accepting parental wishes, both Josie and Lizzie challenged their decisions via telephone and face-to-face meetings and attempted to convince parents that their daughters would be closely supervised and sleep in separate dormitories to the boys. In addition, the school occasionally held 'Asian girls only' trips so that parents would feel more comfortable in allowing their children to stay overnight (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 1). They would also organise trips to the cinema specifically for South Asian girls.

Such interventions indicate that some teachers were prepared to take major steps to address the girls' exclusion from specific extra curricula activities. The end product for the girls was the creation of a space for

them to take part in extra curricular activities in modified ways that were acceptable to parents. This can be seen as progress since Patel's (2007) study which found the teachers largely respected and tolerated 'cultural' difference, including supporting South Asian parents' wishes to withdraw their daughters from sex education classes and non-attendance of school trips. The response at Hillside was tailor made to the perceived needs of the school's South Asian girls and their parents, and can therefore be seen as a form of multicultural policy that prioritised gender rights over cultural respect (i.e. the girls' rights to participate in the school's activities), as opposed to a multicultural approach solely based on respect for culture (Burman and Chantler 2004).

This shift in prioritising gender rights over cultural difference in schools has been found in a study by Mirza et al (2011) in which one school had developed interventions to challenge parental views and negotiate the limits to their daughters' participation in schooling activities (e.g. after school talks, taking parents on trips to university halls of residence). Although this may have been done on a more piecemeal basis at Hillside, it could also be viewed as a step towards the prioritization of gender rights over teachers' perceptions of cultural difference.

The flip side, however, has three effects. First, this approach continues to position South Asian families as backward because they are 'constraining' and in need of intervention, therefore reinforcing a hierarchy of difference. Second, separating the girls from other pupils potentially has repercussions that work against convivial 'everyday' multiculturalism. Such interventions may prioritise their rights as young women, but also simultaneously act to reinforce racialized differences. Third, as teachers separated culture from the complex location of subjects, issues such as social class were dislocated from understandings of parental resistance, and limited understandings of other factors including safety concerns and financial constraints. Overall, the intersections of class were overlooked in the versions of teachers' 'everyday' multiculturalism, as religion,

ethnicity, culture and gender were at the forefront of their positioning of the girls.

There appeared to be some recognition of the factors beyond 'culture' that may influence parents' skepticism towards trips, such as concerns for their daughters' safety (Lizzie Interview 1), especially newer migrants who may be less familiar with the British education system (Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008; Mirza et al 2011). Parents may have not fully understood what was involved in school trips if they had not experienced them in their country of origin, leading to concerns that their daughters would be in shared dormitories with boys, as found by Mirza et al (2011). In addition, considering that a significant number of students at Hillside came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, school trips costing £200 would have posed a problem for some families. As Lizzie observed, Raani's parents initially refused to allow her attend the Art trip to Cornwall because of the cost, and Vrinda's parents had similar concerns (Interview 4).

6.3 Dominant cultural tropes in teachers' constructions of girls 'at risk' of exploitation and violence

In this final section, I discuss how teachers appeared to employ dominant cultural tropes to understand which girls were 'at risk' of violence and exploitation. In addition, I discuss how teacher response to girls at risk of forced marriage was predominantly reflective of the 'right to exit' model, which is underpinned by Eurocentric ideals of empowerment (see Chapter 3).

6.31 Sexually naïve, 'vulnerable' girls

Again, 'culture' appeared to be the main driver in teachers' understandings of who were vulnerable subjects, which teachers attributed to their naivety, lack of independence and being subjected to familial control and surveillance (i.e. essentialised cultural characteristics to South Asian families previously discussed). An incident on the art trip prompted Lizzie to draw on the stereotype of South Asian girls as

sexually immature and naïve (Brah 1996; Bhopal 1997) when an empty condom was found in the girls' shower. She explained:

...This is very serious. Culturally it's very serious. We are trusting you to be responsible...Probably a silly joke, but we need to know who's done this. Nobody would own up, obviously. Halima was very, very, very, upset. Shaky – I'm really scared. Came into the staffroom saying – I'm really scared...And we talked it through with her, and said – look, you are not in any danger. Somebody's been very silly. I mean, she didn't even know what a condom was, and she said to me – but Miss, we don't get any freedom. And I said – I know. I know that's an issue (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 4)

As in a number of examples previously discussed, Halima took centre stage in this story because she was seen by Lizzie and some other teachers as sexually immature and naïve (*she didn't even know what a condom was*). It is noteworthy how Lizzie refers to the incident as 'culturally serious', rather than sexually serious, reinforcing the importance of the culturally racialised lens with which the girls were seen. As the extract is a recounting of an incident from Lizzie's perspective, the sequence of events appears disjointed in that she moves from talking about Halima feeling scared to Halima saying that she and the other girls do not 'get any freedom', which she recognizes is an 'issue'. This disjuncture in Lizzie's account suggests that she works towards constructing Halima and the other South Asian girls' lack of freedom as a cause for concern, rather than a given 'fact'.

In light of fears that young women and girls are now overly sexualised (Papadopolous 2010; Ringrose 2012), teachers' concern about South Asian girls' sexual naivety placed them outside of the (white) mainstream category of 'girl' because they were not seen as sexualised 'enough'. This cultural racialization of the female subject can be seen in Lizzie's description of other girls involved in the incident on the the art trip:

And those three girls, Halima, Raani, Nasreeen, all blamed Danuta, a Polish girl, who had spent the two days up to that point putting a huge amount of make-up on, her and her friend, who is from Hungary. And I kept saying to them – too much make-up girls, you

need to take it off, too much make-up. And I went outside, and she said – everyone’s blaming me. And I said – that is because of how you are looking Danuta, and I keep trying to tell you ‘stop dressing like that, and wearing that much make-up’. I was really quite cross with her. Because they’d come out in small shorts and things, and it wasn’t just the Muslim girls saying it, it was the other girls as well, saying – oh Miss, who do they think they are? You know, some of the quite streetwise kids were like – what are they doing? Because they looked like painted dolls (Lizzie, Interview 4)

Lizzie positioned the girls, all from minority ethnic and migrant backgrounds, in the field of racialised and gendered negative identities (Werbner 2013). In this instance, South Asian girls were understood to be sexually naïve, and pitted against the Eastern European girls, like Danuta from Poland, who were sexually knowledgeable and hyper-sexualised (Ringrose 2012). Lizzie’s disapproval was channeled towards the Eastern European girls who were seen as hypersexualised migrant girls. The meaning of hypersexual activity had ‘stuck’ to these girls’ bodies (Ahmed 2004). In addition, the dichotomy between the two groups of girls was given further meaning through Lizzie’s positioning of the Eastern European girls as able to choose to display their sexuality. They were free agents who could ‘*stop dressing like that*’, which stood in contrast to the South Asian girls who lacked agency and were in need of empowerment and assistance. This episode provides an example of how the process of gendered and racialized Othering is relative and includes a range of racialised migrant ethnic groups including white migrant girls in the super-diverse context. Furthermore, these girls are positioned in varied negative ways according to culturally specific notions of ‘race’.

There was concern amongst some teachers about Halima because of her naivety and innocence, which led them to perceive her to be vulnerable. Josie and Lizzie saw Halima as in need of protection from being mistreated by her boyfriend, which they did by equipping her with the

knowledge to manage her safety (e.g. by advising on safe spaces for them to meet)³⁵:

I explained it all to her, I think it is fine and I suggested they met at the local library as it was a neutral ground and it was populated. We (Josie and Lizzie) asked and she said I think he is a really nice person, I know him through a cousin and I know he is a good character...And we said we understand the position you are in, you want to have a relationship, I don't even know if it is a relationship in the full sense, but she wants to meet men, boys, but this is a man, and we understand her plight but you have got to be very careful (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 2)

Halima may have been in a vulnerable situation, as would other girls who were in similar relationships. However, their concerns were articulated in relation to racialised constructions of vulnerability of Halima as sexually immature and naïve (see beginning of this section).

6.32 Forced marriage victims: disruptive girls

Another risk that South Asian girls were seen potentially to face was forced marriage. Teachers explained how they would look for a combination of indicators to identify girls at risk such as length of time in the country (i.e. more likely amongst newer arrivals), the family's approach to discipline problems such as keeping their daughters at home for lengthy periods of time, emotional stability, age (14 and above), and if the pupil displayed challenging behaviour. One significant characteristic that would steer them towards labelling a girl as potentially at risk of forced marriage was displaying 'disruptive' behaviour.

Teachers' understandings were, again, driven by culturally racialised typologies. For instance, they talked about such girls as highly visible because they went against the expected norms of behaviour for South Asian Muslim girls (i.e. as quiet and passive). These girls were more likely to be noticed by the teachers and therefore more likely to receive

³⁵ Protecting young people from harm was a key aspect of the teachers' work under Every Child Matters (Race 2011), which I refer to in Chapter 3. Although this policy has now ceased to be in operation under the current Conservative government, teachers continue to be key actors in safeguarding children.

intervention. In the following extract, Lizzie suggests that South Asian girls who were loud and disruptive attracted attention because their behaviour was unexpected. In contrast, African Caribbean girls who were loud did not arouse attention because they were expected to be loud:

...I think in a way it helps them cos they are not expected to truant or be very rude, so it gets noticed more quickly, yes, because I think there was a Pakistani girl in year 12 who truanted a lot and didn't get her grades and is now coming to my reading class. Connexions have done loads of work with her, but I don't know if an African Caribbean girl would be treated in the same way (Lizzie, Head of Ethic Minority Achievement EMA, Interview 2)

Lizzie's approach to identify girls in need of protection requires looking for 'abnormal' behaviour in accordance with culturally racialised expectations. However, this approach may also limit teachers' ability to identify and therefore protect those 'at risk' of violence, including quiet South Asian girls who would not attract attention, but also girls from other ethnic groups who may be coerced into marriage (Gangoli et al 2006).

Both Lizzie and Patricia referred to Jamila as a disruptive girl, with low academic performance and erratic attendance, which they took to be significant indicators of her risk of forced marriage. As Patricia commented:

...I think the problem is she was completely out of control and I suspect that if I was that family, with that girl, I can completely understand why you might marry her off to an older man who might smack her about a bit to bring her into line. And that's not right. Of course it's not right. But as a psychologist I can see actually maybe that's how you deal with that as a problem, because you don't know how to deal with it (Patricia, Head of Inclusion, Interview 1).

Patricia understands forced marriage as a mechanism to discipline unruly girls. For Jamila, she envisages how '*marrying her off to an older man who might smack her about a bit*' may be used as a means to restore order. Such constructions of traditional South Asian and Muslim families as overly controlling and violent are commonly depicted in media stories. To problematize such populist constructions, I return to explore Jamila's

case in some detail (Chapter 8) in relation to how she and other girls navigated the discourses on forced marriage in light of their intersectional identities.

Fazia gave a more nuanced understanding of forced marriage. As one of the critical teachers on diversity and because of her minoritised ethnicity (Chapter 5), she talked about the complexities involved in determining whether or not a marriage is arranged or forced (Anitha and Gill 2011; Phillips 2013), and provided an alternative reading by suggesting that girls negotiate and resist marriages (Pichler 2007; Bhopal 2010). In addition, she suggested that dominant representations of forced marriage are based on negative constructions of Muslim men as more 'forceful', and that there is a different value system of 'choice' and coercion in Muslim families:

I think for most families it's alright. There's some coercion from the parents to get married, and the girls manage to resist it if they want to, it's ok, and that's the standard form. But there is also some kind of extreme stuff as well...I think people who are not from the culture tend to have that view of it, all of the time. I think also arranged marriage gets a lot of negative press and that has quite a lot to offer... it's not always a bad thing. I think that what these girls have in common is that they are all Muslim and that makes them in some people's eyes significantly different from other students
VM: do you think that is something that has increased recently?
Fazia: probably because people now have this image of Muslims, boys and men in the home as being much more forceful than they really are. They exaggerate things a little bit more but with the whole media spin on it (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 1)

Fazia also suggests that it is Muslim girls in particular who are subject to teachers' preoccupation with arranged and forced marriage, primarily due to the negative press of Muslim men being overly controlling (Shain 2011). My observations echoed Fazia's in that it was Muslim girls who were predominantly under the professional gaze of being recognised as at risk of forced marriage. This was reinforced by a consideration of the girls who were *not* seen to be at risk of forced marriage. For instance, from my conversations with Asanka, a first generation migrant from Sri Lanka,

and a Hindu rather than a Muslim, it appeared that she also potentially fitted the profile of a girl potentially at risk of forced marriage. She was not disruptive which suggests one possible explanation why teachers were not concerned about her safety. However, her academic performance was low, and she was engaged to an older man who was also a distant family member.

'Sexually naïve' girls like Halima and 'disruptive' girls like Jamila may possibly have been likely to experience mistreatment by older men and forced into marriage. However, one needs to ask if Eastern European girls like Danuta in similar circumstances are similarly seen as vulnerable given so-called sexual experience and 'control'. We need to ask how helpful are racialized stereotypes in informing professional responses to protecting young women from sexual exploitation, and who falls through the net because they do not fit the stereotype? South Asian girls may be experiencing specific types of 'cultural' regulation such as heightened control of relationships based on gendered expectations of acceptable behaviour. But given the dominance of 'culture' as a main indicator of risk, how then should professionals deal with such dilemmas without reinforcing the 'race' trap?

This dilemma in navigating the racialization of gender violence can be seen in the recent sexual grooming cases in Rotherham and Derbyshire whereby victims have been predominantly represented as white girls in care, sexually exploited by Pakistani men (Casey 2015). However, emerging evidence suggest that girls across a number of backgrounds have been and continue to be at risk of sexual exploitation and grooming. A recent study by Gohir (2013) indicates that Asian and Muslim girls and young women have also been victims of sexual exploitation. Most often the offenders were men from their own communities or shared ethnic backgrounds. Gohir's research highlights the importance of cultural specifics such as honor and shame that act as barriers to Asian and Muslim females disclosing sexual exploitation (e.g. victims reported being blackmailed into silence to preserve their and their family's 'honour').

However, Gohir also documents that the women reported other barriers to reporting abuse that are common to all women, such as fear of not being believed (an issue common across all groups of victims), and further violence. A further flaw with ethnic and cultural reductionism in sexual exploitation can be seen in the recent high profile cases of men 'higher up' the social ladder who have been found guilty of child sexual exploitation, and suggests that men from all backgrounds can be perpetrators of abuse and grooming (Moore, 2014). Therefore, ethnicity cannot solely be used as an explanatory factor in identifying abusers or the victims, but must be taken up in conjunction with the cultural specifics in women's and girls' narratives.

Being sensitive to cultural difference to keep girls safe raises difficult dilemmas about professionals working with racialised representations. We therefore need to continue to ask difficult questions about how we understand such phenomena and reflect on how to identify risk factors, which girls are at risk, and how this may shift. I explore some of these complexities in the next section through teachers' responses to girls at risk.

6.33 Teacher response to forced marriage: state discourse and embedded 'Eurocentricity'

Whilst the paralysis that particular multicultural discourses have created when responding to ethnicised forms of violence such as 'honour' crimes has been well discussed (Okin 1998; Siddiqui 2003; Phillips 2007), there has been a counter discourse for the prioritization of gender rights over culture in recent years. This shift has been underpinned by arguments that gender violence should never be excused as a product of culture and should therefore be dealt with accordingly without cultural concessions (Phillips 2007). For instance, state discourse sends out the message that violence against girls and women is not legally tolerated due to the criminalization of forced marriage and existing laws against female genital mutilation. However, this shift in discourse has continued to heighten negative attention towards ethnicised practices and further rendered them

visible as cultural expressions of violence that need to be combated by the progressive 'West', rather than viewing the problem as gender violence per se (Gill and Mitra-Khan 2010; Walby et al 2012).

As a microcosm of diversity in action, the school also had to address gender violence in racialized forms that reflected official state discourse. For instance, when government guidelines from the Forced Marriage Unit were sent to the school, they 'landed' on Lizzie's desk. This is noteworthy given that she was responsible for the achievement of minority ethnic students (Interview 2), and raises two issues: firstly, that forced marriage was predominantly seen as a problem for minority ethnic students (i.e. the EMA department's responsibility), and secondly, that there was a blurring of the EMA department's role to not only raise achievement but also to safeguard minority ethnic girls. All the other teachers reported having limited or no knowledge of the guidelines. Lizzie and Patricia were therefore more familiar and engaged with the forced marriage discourse because the issue had been brought to their attention by wider agencies. Such processes of liaison and resting responsibility with the EMA department further compounded the issue as the preserve of South Asian and Muslim groups, despite evidence suggesting that forced marriage may cut across different ethnic groups including gypsy traveler, Chinese and orthodox Jewish communities (Gangoli et al 2006).

Whilst forced marriage was dealt with as 'ethnic' specific phenomena, the 'right to exit' continued to be the leading approach in some of the teachers' narratives about leaving violent relationships. This concept is one that positions victims of violence as having a way out, because they have the 'choice' to leave their abusive families. This has been criticised by a number of minority ethnic activists and academics for being a 'westernised' model of empowerment (Phillips 2007; Gill and Mitra Khan 2010; see Chapter 3). Therefore, whilst recognition of forms of violence may have been attributed to culture, the dominant western model with which to intervene and 'save' minority ethnic women and girls continued

to be based on a model of safety that failed to consider the specificities of culture, patriarchy and community relations. The dominant Western model that underpins this approach can be seen in the following extract when Josie suggests that girls who do not choose this path are 'weak':

They (the girls) have to make a choice ultimately I guess, although sometimes I worry that the weaker ones never will, and we can tell them at least that they do have a choice and protection (Josie, Educational Welfare Officer, Interview 1).

When they 'choose' not to take pathways that have been laid out specifically for them, such as by seeking help via the Forced Marriage Unit, the girls were positioned as weak through their failure to choose Westernised notions of 'independence' and empowerment (Chantler 2006).

Educational attainment was an empowering tool that was seen by Lizzie potentially leading to independence. She used the promise of self sufficiency to convince Jamila about the value of education and staying on to finish her GCSEs to enable her 'right to exit' her family:

I was very honest with her and said I want you to have an option. I want you, if you want to leave your family, to be able to, and I said I have a lot of examples of students I have known who have not had that option because they have not passed their exams and have been stuck at home and they actually needed to get out, get a job and be able to look after themselves. I said please don't go home and tell your dad that I said this, but this is the truth. This is why I want you to do your GCSEs and then make any decision you want (Lizzie, Head of EMA, Interview 2).

Financial independence may well be an important factor in increasing one's options to leave their family. However, Lizzie's promise to Jamila that she will be able '*to make any decision you want*' suggests that educational attainment and achieving financial independence to 'escape' violence is the property of the individual and equated with 'choice'. It is something that the girls can achieve if they make the 'right' choices. Lizzie and Josie's views on the *right to exit approach* positions the girls as lacking agency when they do not take up paths that they see are best available to them. But their responses were embedded in the unspoken

norm of 'whiteness' and Eurocentricity, where their situated understandings as white women of what constituted agency were perpetuated through 'everyday' enactments in their responses to the girls.

In line with her more critical and nuanced understanding that does not binarise East and West dichotomies, Fazia, identified multiple constraints that potentially impact on South Asian girls' agency. In the following extract she talks about the limitations of the girls' denouncing violence at home, especially those who do not have British citizenship:

It's also about economic independence, isn't it? I don't know what the rules are, but I'm sure these guys can't be entitled to everything. And even if they are, they probably don't know that it's available to them...The underlying thing is if you don't comply there's either the threat of being sent back home, getting married off, all of that, or we'll kick you out. They don't...I mean, I don't know what they are entitled to, but according to them they are entitled to nothing, they have no idea (Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher, Interview 2).

Fazia raises key issues about limited awareness that the girls may have of the assistance available to them, and the limits to their access to assistance depending on citizenship status. Her narrative also highlights other factors that influence the girls' agency in terms of constraints of familial expectations. She explained that if the girls do not comply, penalties could include being sent back home, kicked out of the house, and being married against their will. Fazia suggests that the girls exercise agency in the context of a number of coercive forces (e.g. regulation of femininity, sexuality, 'honour'/shame complex, and systemic responses) (Anitha and Gill 2011). Her critical, complex understanding of violence and its effects that moves beyond 'between two cultures' common to other teachers' accounts was also present in the girls' narratives, which I explore in Chapter 8.

6.4 Conclusions: limits to multiculturalism for South Asian girls through the culturalisation of 'race' and gender

The analysis presented in this chapter strongly supports Shain's (2010) suggestion that South Asian families continue to be positioned as problematic through what is constructed as their refusal to integrate, culture clash and subordination of women and girls. The girls who transcended cultural boundaries between East and West were frequently positioned as 'between two cultures'. These stereotypes present in the teachers' narratives suggest a reworking of old colonial stereotypes in new times (Shain 2010a: 71). Further, these findings complement the body of literature that suggest processes of racialisation are now subtler, and shaped through a focus on cultural differences rather than racialised categories (Harris 2013; Harries 2014; Hoque 2015).

Teachers evoked discourses of cultural difference particularly for Muslim girls who were prone to being positioned as transcending cultural boundaries through their sexuality and 'bad' behaviour. Mirroring wider discourse on Muslims as the Others within (Shain 2010b; Harris 2013), it was Muslim girls in headscarves that were subjected to stricter levels of teacher discipline and regulation (Mirza and Meeto 2013), sometimes in the guise of protection and maintaining their cultures. The reinforcement of racial hierarchies through culture, and the 'between two cultures' discourse had real effects for the girls under the school's multicultural approach. It could be seen in teachers' missions to 'contain' and regulate the girls' behaviour in order to maintain an 'authentic' self.

In addition, teachers' concerns about South Asian culture were found across the two areas that they highlighted as main areas of concern for the girls' welfare: firstly, in relation to attendance on school trips, and secondly, as vulnerable subjects at risk of violence and exploitation. Teachers' perceptions of their gendered and racialised positions exposed the limits to multicultural 'warmth' and tolerance, whereby the gender inequities within South Asian and Muslim culture became the focus in their plight to save the girls. Their understandings of need, vulnerability

and risk were constructed through culturally racialized lens, which were embedded in wider racialized discourses (e.g. forced marriage).

The model of multiculturalism in which these interventions were shaped and enacted provided the girls with a limited number of outcomes. Some teachers attempted to haul the girls into the progressive British values that state schooling was seen to represent (e.g. increasing attendance at school trips). Such interventions may appear to be 'helping' South Asian girls, offering them a way out and assistance towards an enhanced education system. However, this resulted in a reinforcement of hierarchal racialised positions in which the girls and their families featured negatively, and that placed the South Asian female as powerless, and lacking agency. In addition, the exit routes that teachers appeared to draw to 'empower' the girls were predominantly located in the 'right to exit' model which pushed the girls to fit into a pre-existing and problematic (Western) model. This is further discussed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7: ‘Race’, religion and gender matter in ‘everyday’ multiculturalism

This chapter focuses on the girls’ social identities, and more specifically, how they positioned themselves in light of the school’s ‘everyday’ multiculturalism. I draw on the concept of intersectionality as an analytical tool to explore the processes and constitution of the girls’ identities as it enables the addressing of the complexity of social relations and identity constructions that are specific to the school’s multiculturalist practices (Winker and Degele 2011). As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the school’s multiculturalism was not a unified approach among the staff but characterised by eclectic enactments of the discourse of multiculturalism within a plethora of diversity discourses such as community cohesion and anti-racism. It was therefore an ‘everyday’ enactment and negotiation by teachers as well as a state driven policy response. However, minority ethnic students were largely expected to fit into pre-existing fixed, essentialist identity positions within the school’s management of diversity. Teachers’ mainly positioned South Asian girls as ‘between two cultures’, and developed professional responses and interventions accordingly. This is despite the wealth of evidence that South Asian young people do not simply experience a conflict of cultures, but rather negotiate and contest their social positioning (see Chapter 2 e.g. Dwyer 1999; Shain 2003; 2010).

To move the debate forward, this chapter seeks to develop the body of work on South Asian girls’ identities in relation to ‘everyday’ multiculturalism in the school context (i.e. the mundane, routine negotiations of difference that occur when people ‘live with’ diversity). ‘Everyday’ multiculturalism enables an alternative reading of young people’s place within troubled discourses of ethnic diversity, and moves us beyond moral panics of the lack of social cohesion (Harris 2013). So rather than seeing the problem of diversity as one of integration, as in the teachers’ narratives on South Asian families (see also Crozier and Davies 2007; 2008), the attention is shifted from ‘blaming’ ethnic minorities to the

micro production of cultural difference through ‘everyday’ practices in mundane sites, communities and neighbourhoods. In an ‘everyday’ multicultural approach subjects are positioned as actively involved in the messy work of negotiating diversity through an on-going contestation of identity, place and belonging (Harris 2013).

Schools have been recognised as ‘micropublics’, where people from diverse backgrounds are compelled to negotiate with each other and are sometimes enabled to transcend cultural boundaries (Ho 2011; Amin 2002; Wise 2014). Micropublics are, then, spaces in which intercultural understanding can be transmitted and provide the opportunity for social transformation because they are sites of cultural destabilization (Amin 2002) where researchers can explore ‘everyday’ multiculturalism (see Chapter 3). There are however, potential problems with treating schools as an ‘everyday’ context. Ethnic and class segregation that characterise local areas, along with parental ‘choice’ have resulted in significant divisions (Burgess and Wilson 2004; Demos 2015). In addition, schools in inner-city communities tend to be disproportionately migrant-dominated and some have witnessed ‘white flight’ (i.e. white middle class families moving out of areas) (Ho 2011; Kulz 2014), which have shaped the ethnic demographics of living with diversity.

Issues of ethnic segregation within the local area could be seen in Hillside’s pupil population. Predominantly a working class school, Hillside is located in a gentrified part of the city which has seen an increasing number of white middle class families moving into the area over recent years (Evening Standard, January 2015). However, the school’s ethnic population was unreflective of the local ward population, which indicate that 80.6% are white, 3.7% mixed, 8.5% Asian (including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and other Asian), 6.3% Black Caribbean and African, and 1.1 % other ethnic group (ONS 2011)³⁶. At the time of data collection, Hillside’s pupil population was predominantly minority

³⁶ I do not refer to the article or ward to maintain the school’s anonymity

ethnic (two thirds), and not reflective of the 20% minority ethnic population in the ward. This suggests that the ward's local schools were characterised by ethnic and class groupings or what Savage et al (2005) refer to as social distance (cited in Anthias 2012).

I begin the analysis by exploring how the girls' were super-diverse (Meissner and Vertovec 2015), reflecting not only their diverse migratory paths but the place of social class (section 7.1). Their super-diversity has been fundamental in considering if and how migratory positions and identities come to light in 'everyday' multiculturalism. I explore how processes of social positioning through migration, 'race', religion, and gender underpinned the constitution of the girls' identities in the school's 'everyday' multicultural context.

7.1 Diverse migratory paths

South Asian girls in other academic studies are usually second or third generation settlers, born in the UK and with ancestry from the South Indian continent (i.e. Pakistan, India and Bangladesh) (See Shain 2003; Bhopal 2010; Ludhra 2015). However eight of the nine South Asian girls in my study stand out from other girls in other studies as first generation migrants, with complex migratory experiences, denoting the heterogeneity and diversity amongst them³⁷. The concept of 'super-diversity' as a descriptive tool is potentially helpful here to recognize the multidimensional shifts in migration patterns (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). Accounting for such variations in the girls' migratory histories potentially acts as a tool to challenge how teachers position the girls predominantly in terms of 'race' and gender, rather than seeing the complexity that migration brings to their social positioning. This analysis of the relationship between being migrant, female and minority ethnic

³⁷ I recognise that 'South Asian' is a problematic label for such a diverse group of girls (Chapter 1). However, I use the term to explore the way in which they were grouped via the research process, by the teachers and how they often referred to themselves, whilst recognising that there was constant movement in how ethnic identifications were used (e.g. I overheard side comments during discussions in which most of the girls frequently used the term 'Asian' to refer to the group such as "*this is the Asian gang!*" (Nasreen, focus group 2). See section 7.22 for a full discussion of their ethnic self positioning.

contributes to the literature on South Asian girls, which currently does not address the racialization of more recent migrant girls.

Table 7.1 below details the girls' migratory pathways, which represented a varied spectrum of routes, migrant generation (1st/2nd/multiple), migration 'type' (economic/refugee), and parental occupation pre and post migration. Most had migrated during their secondary schooling years, apart from Vrinda who came to the UK aged 4. Their migration routes into the UK were also diverse. Although all migrated as family dependents (i.e. at the same time as the lead migrant parent) or for family reunification purposes (i.e. at a later date than the lead migrating parent), four were family dependents of refugee parents (Asanka, Meena, Zara and Jamila), and four were family dependents of economic migrants (Nasreen, Raani, Vrinda and Gargi). There were also differences within these broad classifications of migrant dependents. Of the four who were dependents of refugee migrants, three were multiple migrants in that they had resided in other countries before coming to the UK. Jamila had spent time in Pakistan and then Japan, and the twins, Zara and Meena, migrated to Holland at the age of 4 and moved to the UK in 2006. Only Halima was born in the UK.

Table 7.1: Migration channels and social class

Name	Country of Origin	Migrant generation	Migration channel	Parental occupation in country of origin	Parental occupation in UK
Gargi	India	1 st	Family dependent of economic migrant (highly skilled migrant programme (HSMP))	Mother: registered general nurse, father: mechanical engineer	Mother: registered general nurse (HSMP) Father: waiter and supermarket cashier
Vrinda	Mauritius	1 st	Family dependent of economic migrant	Father: accountant Mother: Housewife	Father: accountant Mother: housewife
Zara	Afghanistan	Multiple	Family dependent of Refugee	Father: accountant Mother: midwife	Father and mother on incapacity benefit and studying English at college
Meena	Afghanistan	Multiple	Family dependent of Refugee	Father: accountant Mother: midwife	Father and mother on incapacity benefit and studying English at college
Nasreen	Pakistan	1 st	Family dependent of economic migrant (father)	Did not comment	Father: incapacity benefit Mother: housewife
Asanka	Sri Lanka	1 st	Family reunification with refugee (Father)	Father: farmer Mother: housewife	Father: laundry factory worker Mother: housewife
Raani	Pakistan	1 st	Family dependent of economic migrant (Father)	Father: mobile phone engineer Mother: houswife	Father: worked in large supermarket chain Mother: housewife
Halima	Pakistan	2 nd	N/A	N/A	Father: removal man, Mother: housewife
Jamila	Afghanistan	Multiple	Family dependent of refugee	Did not comment ³⁸	Father: occupation unknown Mother: studying English at college

³⁸ Jamila and Nasreen chose not to comment on their father's work status in their country of origin during our conversations. However, Jamila's family had migrated as asylum seekers, which suggests that it was highly likely that her family were of low socio economic status here in the UK.

7.11 Super-diversity and the temporality of social class

The girls' parents' occupations in their country of origin appeared to influence the type of migration channel and their class status in the UK. Of the three parents who held professional occupations in their country of origin and came to the UK as economic migrants, two had maintained this status here (Gargi and Vrinda), and continued to practice their profession. For Gargi's family, her mother's profession as a nurse gave them access to the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme. Her mother continued to practice as a qualified nurse, but as the follower migrant, her father had not found work in his field and moved from being a mechanical engineer to a supermarket cashier. Deskilling was also the case for Raani's father who had been a mobile phone engineer in Pakistan and was working in a supermarket in the UK. Those who had migrated as asylum seekers had experienced either being deskilled or unemployed. Having been skilled professionals in their country of origin, they were either in receipt of incapacity benefit or working in lower skilled jobs in relation to what they had been doing previously (e.g. Zara and Meena, Asanka).

My data suggest that social class was an unstable and shifting social category in the context of being a migrant (Ali 2003; Anthias 2012). The girls' families' migratory histories appeared to be important drivers the shifts and continuations in social class position. I have chosen not to present their characteristics by socio-economic status categories or 'cultural' dimensions of class, the reasons for which are two-fold. Drawing on Anthias's (2012) work on translocational positionality I argue that firstly, parents' shifting occupational status across borders reflect the problems of defining class and the fluidity of categorisation, because of transnational structures and processes. Secondly, by not focusing on the 'cultural' and performative aspects of class that have been employed in much sociological work on the topic over the past 20 years (e.g. Skeggs 2005; Reay 2005; 2010, Savage et al 2005), I wish to avoid an analysis that is rooted in ethnocentric or Eurocentric notions of how class is conceptualised.

Furthermore, class performativity may not be translatable for all groups and may be performed differently across societies, making cultural ‘tastes’ in different locations difficult to articulate (Anthias 2012). My findings suggest that traditional understandings of social class are problematic to use in intersectional analysis when super-diverse migration is involved, and positioning models of social class do not sit comfortably for this group of heterogeneous girls. Their migratory paths disrupted more traditional conceptualizations of social class (e.g. working class, middle class status). In addition, other issues cited by the girls appeared to influence their wellbeing and daily negotiations because of their migratory histories. For those that had migrated as dependents of refugees, there were stories of mental ill health, and economic hardship as the family survived on incapacity benefit (Zara and Meena). The parents who did not speak English relied upon their daughters to act as language brokers, for instance, at the doctors and at school (Raani, Jamila, and Nasreen).

Therefore, my data suggest that the girls’ positions were influenced by income, poverty, and trauma of migration in addition to the social structures of ‘race’, gender and the temporality of class (Anthias 2012). Their diversified migratory positions were an important aspect of the girls’ ‘everyday’ experiences, but did this eclecticism and translocationality feature in the day-to-day multicultural context of the school?

7.2 Processes of Othering in the ‘everyday’ multicultural context

This section attempts to unpack how ‘everyday’ multiculturalism in the school was experienced by the girls. My main argument here is that ‘everyday’ multiculturalism was highly contradictory. On the one hand, it was commonly interpreted as ‘warm’ and welcoming, but on the other, the girls’ experiences indicate that this was also exclusionary and based on processes of Othering. The girls’ narratives of ‘everyday’ multiculturalism mirrored the ‘happy’ discourse surrounding ethnic mix and the consumption of different cultures, where constructions of multiculturalism as a ‘gift’ were taken up (Ahmed 2009). But as racialised subjects they negotiated ethnic allegiances to manage being excluded. In the absence

of a discourse on 'racism' and behind the façade of 'warm' 'everyday' happy multiculturalism, subtler versions of 'race' and racism circulated that mark the girls' 'everyday' experiences. I now to turn to explore these findings.

7.21 Multicultural 'warmth', embrace and promise

The idea that the school was multicultural because of its ethnic diversity was a strong and shared sentiment amongst the South Asian girls and the girls in the two mixed focus groups. The '*variety of cultures*' (Focus group 3), and '*all different backgrounds, religions, different cultures and ...different languages*' (Mixed focus group 1) were all taken to be indicators of multiculturalism. These understandings of the school's diverse student body reflect definitions of 'everyday' multiculturalism (Harris 2013; Wise 2014), what Gilroy (2004) terms the conviviality of multiculturalism.

The pupils in the mixed focus groups were largely positive about the school's diversity, which saw an asset to the school environment and their learning. One discussion indicated that pupils saw 'everyday' multiculturalism as reducing the likelihood of racism in the school:

VM: So do you think this school is multicultural?

Pupil 1: Yeah.

Pupil 2: I think it's a good thing, because you really get to learn about other people's backgrounds and cultures

Pupil 3: Also unlikely for racism. What's the word? OK, people are going to be less racist because there are so many different backgrounds, so it's not like a school that had one race and then a few different races (Mixed focus group 1)

Similar to some of the teachers' comments (Chapter 5), these pupils equated the school's ethnic diversity with progress to end racism. The presence of multiculturalism in and of itself was seen to stimulate people to get on, but also learning about difference was seen as a given sequitur to reduce racism. The school's ethnic mix gave these pupils a sense of 'warmth' and 'happy' school space (Ahmed 2009).

The South Asian girls individually and during the group discussions spoke about the welcome and promise of multiculturalism as a positive feature of their schooling. As Gargi explained, the promise of 'everyday' multiculturalism was a driver in her mother's decision to migrate the family to London. In the following extract, she contrasts the village feel of the Welsh town with a vibrant and multicultural London, the latter of which is seen as offering a better education. Her mother's perception of the multicultural city as progressive and offering more opportunities (e.g. a better education) was a strong factor influencing the family's decision to migrate:

My mum said – OK, I will bring you. But when she was in Wales she didn't brought me, because Wales is kind of villagey, so really there is not that good education, and moreover there wasn't any multicultural society over there, only British. So when she came here, in London, for a job in a nursing home, she settled herself here, and she called me and my dad (Gargi, first generation, India, Interview 1).

The 'promise' of multiculturalism was a door to opportunities and a better life. 'Everyday' multiculturalism for skilled migrant professional families like Gargi's was something to be consumed to be able to increase prospects and opportunities. The data suggest the girls bought into the 'ideal' of multiculturalism but their 'everyday' realities signaled something different.

7.22 Negotiating a shared South Asian identity through exclusions

Although not all the girls in this study would typically be classified as South Asian, the girls talked about their friendship groups predominantly as formed of 'Asian girls', and offered reasons for this based on experiences of exclusion from other students. Their stories were marked by experiences of tension and marginalisation based on 'race' and stood in contrast to their perceptions of benefits of 'warm' 'everyday' multiculturalism. This contradiction potentially signifies how 'everyday' multiculturalism as positive and welcoming is a discourse that the girls and the teachers 'bought into', but did not always reflect their day to day experiences. When I asked Zara who she was friends with, she replied:

Mostly my sister, Gargi and the girls from Pakistan like Nasreen and that's it. I don't hang around with white people cos they don't want me to hang around with them, so they just leave me. I prefer people that like me (Zara, Afghani, first generation migrant, interview 2)

Jamila similarly explained that she was not accepted by many of the other pupils, which led her to align herself with pupils 'like her'. Under more traditional approaches to ethnic categorisation such as in the census and most academic studies on South Asian groups, Jamila and Zara would not be classified as South Asian given that they both originate from Afghanistan. However, they aligned themselves to this group not just through a shared sense of culture, religion, but also experiences of being excluded by others. They strategically positioned themselves as South Asian and created a safety zone through a shared identity as a result of being excluded³⁹.

Friendship groups were formed as allegiances in response to cases of conflict and exclusion by other pupils and echoes findings from older studies such as Tatum's (2003) on black children in the cafeteria. Similarly, Pettigrew's (2011) ethnographic study of an ethnically diverse secondary school in the South West of England demonstrates that pupils were ambivalent about the persistence and significance of ethnic groupings. These pupils 'chose' their friends based on a number of factors, of which shared identity was just one, and would often group together in response to being excluded by others. Findings from Vincent et al's (2015) study on friendship amongst primary school children in super-diverse localities in London suggest that although inter-ethnic mixing (i.e. mixed ethnicity friendships in school) was common amongst 8-9 year olds, this decreased with age. However, mixed friendship groups were less evident outside of school because parents would organize outside school activities such as clubs and play dates. This

³⁹ During the first focus group, I also noted that the girls would refer to themselves as the 'Asian gang', and observed their same 'race' friendship groupings inside and outside of lesson time (e.g. lunch breaks).

suggests that pupils may experience 'everyday' multiculturalism through racialised exclusions, which increases with age.

Conflict and disharmony within 'everyday' multiculturalism has similarly been highlighted in Harris's (2013) study of young people in Australian cities. Harris suggests that multicultures are always incomplete, and that conflict and exclusionary processes between ethnic groups are part and parcel of 'everyday' negotiations alongside forms of mixing and hybridity (p143). Harris argues that such exclusions are inevitable as young people and teachers may absorb dominant discourses and delimiting ideologies on national identity and stranger-ness. Young people may also at times find the pull of singular inter-ethnic interpellations to be irresistible (Gest 2014), which results in friend/enemy divisions (Harris 2013). As my findings suggest, the South Asian girls at Hillside strategically negotiated racialised exclusions by forming their own ethnic allegiances, which in the process reified ethnic boundaries and created new, shared ethnicities (Hall 1996; 2000; Harris 2006).

7.23 Bullying, new migrants and the silence of racism

Processes of exclusion were also evident in the girls' experiences of being bullied. However, it was noteworthy how their stories were not articulated within the realms of ethnic categories (e.g. Pakistani, Indian) or being Muslim. Perhaps somewhat unexpectedly given the increasing anti-Islamic climate (Kundnani 2012; Hoque 2015), none of the girls spoke about being bullied because they were Muslim, or for wearing the hijab. For instance, Halima did not perceive herself to experience racism at Hillside. When probed further about whether wearing the hijab or being Muslim had made a difference in how others saw her at school, she similarly commented that being teased had not been related to her religion but about being shorter than others. This stands in contrast to what Shain (2003; 2010) found on the low achieving gang girls who displayed *resistance through culture* and positioned themselves in opposition to the dominant culture of the school, which they defined as white and racist. Their assertion of Asian identity through all Asian girl

groups stemmed from explicit racial bullying, being called 'black bitch', and 'Paki'. The girls in Shain's study were consciously engaged with the language of racism, whilst the girls at Hillside appeared not to be.

Instead, stories of bullying were predominantly related to being newly arrived migrant pupils. These girls recounted experiences of being bullied either during interviews or had documented them as part of a written exercise on their thoughts about school (Gargi, Jamila, Meena, Asanka, Zara, and Nasreen). This was reiterated by Annie, Casual Admissions Mentor, who also identified the problem of bullying newly arrived migrants rather than identifying bullying as racial. Similarly, Fazia, Health and Social Care teacher also saw bullying to be targeted towards different accents rather than 'race'. This suggests that being migrant within the school's super-diversity appeared, at least on the surface, to matter more than 'race' as an exclusionary category of difference. According to Jamila it was predominantly '*white (English) girls who would pick on the new kids who didn't know English*'.

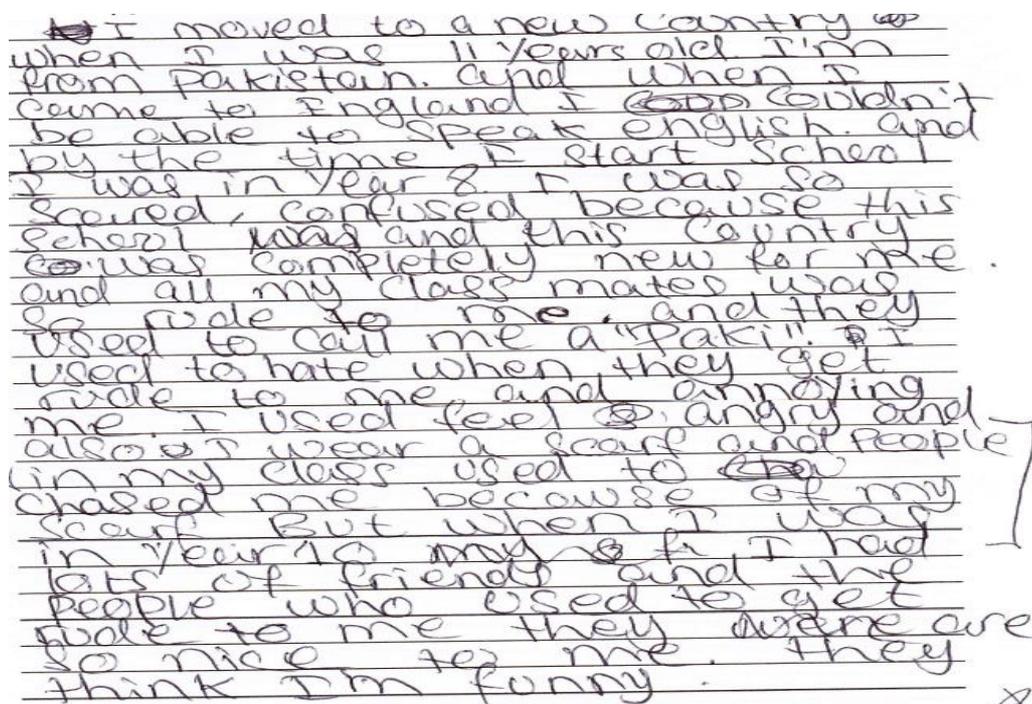
However, the following examples from Gargi and Nasreeen indicate that bullying was also laced with racialised and gendered connotations. Having had 'high' status amongst her peers in India, where she was seen as '*pretty and clever*' (Interview 1), Gargi spoke about how this status dramatically changed when she joined the school. In the following extract, she explained how she was frequently made fun of when she joined the school:

And so they used to tell me – you just came from India, how could you be in the top set right now? And then they used to ask me some silly questions, in English, when I was in the top set, there was this boy who was asking me – so you are in the top set...do you know where you live? Asking me these stupid questions. And also when I was in geography they were making fun of my religion, because they say, you know, the elephant god, he has got an elephant face, and they were making fun of that as well. I just remember one of the boys, he used to touch me wherever he wants, and I didn't used to like that, because I came from a girls'

school...so it was a bit difficult for me to get into this school (Gargi, Interview 4).

Like the others who arrived as new migrants, Gargi was teased in class for having a different accent. She also experienced having her learning abilities questioned, her religious identity ridiculed, and sexual bullying through touching and mocking of her physical appearance (i.e. curly hair). Her account suggests that she was victimised by other pupils primarily because she was a new arrival, which were fuelled by her embodiment of the intersections of 'race', religion, and gender (Mirza 2013).

Nasreen was also bullied as a new arrival, and her experiences appeared to be marked by racist and gendered taunting, (e.g. having her hijab pulled, being chased because she wore a scarf, and being called Paki:



I moved to a new country when I was 11 years old. I'm from Pakistan. And when I came to England I couldn't be able to speak English. And by the time I start school I was in Year 8. I was so scared, confused because this school was and this country was completely new for me. And all my class mates was so rude to me, and they used to call me a "Paki". I used to hate when they get rude to me, and annoying me. I used to feel angry and also I wear a scarf and people in my class used to chase me because of my scarf. But when I was in Year 10 I had lots of friends and the people who used to get rude to me they were so nice to me. They think I'm funny.

(I moved on to a new country when I was 11 years old. I'm from Pakistan and when I came to England I couldn't be able to speak English. And by the time I start school I was in Year 8. I was so scared, confused because this school and this country was completely new for me. And all my classmates was so rude to me and they used to call me 'Paki'. I used to hate when they get rude to me, and annoying me. I used to feel angry and also I wear a scarf and people in my class used to chase me because of my scarf. But when I was in Year 10 I had lots of friends and the people who used to get rude to me they are so nice to me. They think I am funny).

Nasreen went on to explain how she had retaliated against the bullies and often got into fights (Interview 2). In comparison to Gargi, she had lower levels of English language competency on arrival in the UK, which she cited as a reason for being bullied. These two examples highlight the complexities in articulating forms of bullying because of the girls' intersectional subject positions and the multiple ways in which they were positioned. There were clear elements of racial bullying through the use of language such as 'Paki' and ridicule of religion, but this was more pronounced on arrival because of their subject positions as new migrants. The girls did not articulate their experiences as racism or racist bullying, or indeed sexual bullying, which could be due to the ways in the bullying appeared to target multiple aspects of their identities.

In their study of young Somalis, Valentine and Sporton (2009) similarly found that racism was not articulated, but instead referred to as 'bullying', despite participants recounting being called 'black bastard'. They also adopted the language of 'everyday' warm multiculturalism to describe their 'everyday' encounters, where skin colour was unimportant. However, it also potentially signals what Harries (2014) sees as the increasing absence of a language to talk about 'race' and therefore racism, and how at Hillside, multicultural 'warmth' overshadowed racism. Such absence can be found in wider policy discourse, which she argues trickles down to the 'everyday' multicultural context in which subjects are no longer given the tools to engage with 'race'. Further, the silencing of 'race' and therefore racism is compounded in cosmopolitan environments characterized by warm, tolerant, and happy 'everyday' multicultural discourse.

My findings also suggest that translocational positions (Anthias 2012) within 'everyday' multiculturalism potentially complicate the naming of 'race' and racism. The girls articulated their experiences of racism in light of their positions as newly arrived migrant students, rather than because of racialised and religious differences. The girls appeared to see their migratory positions as important defining features of who they were and

key in defining their experiences of marginalisation. 'Everyday' multiculturalism in the school context was not characterised by rubbing shoulders and getting along, but by experiences exclusion and marginalization because they were new migrants.

This suggests that it was not only newly arrived South Asian girls who were bullied but implies that the targets could be from any racialised background. I recognise a limitation in my argument here, namely that I did not manage to explore whether all migrant pupils had experienced bullying in similar ways, beyond groups of South Asian and Muslim girls, or whether some groups of new arrivals were more likely to be bullied as based on hierarchical racialised categories of difference. However, it remains significant that the language for racism was minimised in the super-diverse 'everyday' multicultural school context, suggesting that the 'warmth' and celebration of diversity minimised the importance of racism and other processes of Othering. My analysis demonstrates that processes of Othering were instead embedded in girls' narratives of marginalization and exclusion through intersectional differences of 'race', migration, religion and gender.

7.3 Ethnic identification through intersections of 'race' and gender

The issue of South Asian girls' and women's ethnic identities has been explored a number of times (e.g. Shain 2003; 2010; Ludhra and Chappell 2011; Bhopal 2011). However, given the specifics of the context in which these girls were convivially 'thrown together' (Gilroy 2004; Massey 2005), and their super-diverse (Vertovec 2007; Meissner and Vertovec 2014) positions, it is an issue that requires some attention in this study. In this section, I shift the analysis from the contradictory 'warmth' and exclusions in 'everyday' multiculturalism towards exploring how their ethnic identities were constituted in relation to a number of further influences that emerged in their narratives. My data illuminates how the girls' sense of belonging were at the forefront of their discussions about ethnic and religious identities, and also contested and negotiated amidst intersecting

processes of Othering (i.e. through 'race', gender, 'culture', religion, and their super-diverse positions as migrants).

7.31 Multiple and shifting super-diverse ethnicities

The girls' ethnic identities appeared to be multiple and shifting, rather than static and essentialist, as in the teachers' narratives (Chapters 5 and 6). There were moments when the girls contested meanings of ethnic identity were linked to their multiple migration paths and histories. In the following extract, the girls born in Afghanistan disputed identification categories:

VM: so you see yourself as Middle Eastern
Zara: yeah
VM: what about you Jamila?
Jamila: Asian. But actually we are both from the same country but we find ourselves, I think they are stupid yeah cos Afghan, Chinese, Indian, they are all Asian
Zara: Afghan, Turkey, Lebanon, Arabic people, they are Middle Eastern
VM: so what makes them Middle Eastern?
Zara: It's the map. I saw it everywhere. Everyone wrote Middle East, the centre of Kabul blah blah blah
Jamila: yeah but that's based on the map
VM: what do you mean?
Jamila: it's basically the way the map is done...trust me, you know like north, south, east, west that's where all the countries belong to like
Meena: yeah, Middle Eastern (Focus group 2)

Zara's assertion that she self identifies as Middle Eastern because of the 'map' is contested by Jamila, who suggests that notions of ethnicity are merely down to how the map has been constructed. Instead, Jamila sees herself as Asian along with those of Chinese and Indian heritage who come from the 'East'. Ethnic identifications also appeared to shift between discussions. For instance, whilst this discussion was based on geographical maps, Zara's narrative in the extract below suggests that her super-diverse position, crossing multiple boundaries, was articulated in her various take up of ethnic identification:

Zara: I just remember when I played with my sister. We used to

have Barbies, and we used to play cards, we used to have it on the ground, there wasn't really a good surrounding for us, you just play as a child. No playgrounds. So now when I see it on TV, Afghanistan is just so scary for me to go there, because people say you might die if you go there, they might kill...especially when I see young soldiers die in Helmand Province. Because they are very brave, and they go to a certain country to make peace, but instead they get killed. For me that's just terrible. Especially when they say, I am an Afghan myself, I think – no, don't call me an Afghan because I feel ashamed.

VM: Because of all these negative images in the newspaper and on the news and stuff?

Zara: Yes. So I say I consider myself as Dutch.

VM: So define yourself to me. If I was to ask you what is your ethnic background, what would you say to me?

Zara: Dutch, because I don't know, because everything that happens in Afghanistan is just horrible and many people get killed there. I saw a woman getting really abused, some woman was burned with acid. Her face was burned because she didn't listen to her husband. I saw it on YouTube. And young children, they are six years old, seven years old, they get married, an arranged marriage, with another boy. Horrible as well. And the cops come to the house, they are very, when somebody does something bad they just punish them by slapping them, or abusing them, or swearing at them (Zara, Interview 1)

In this instance, Zara chose to label herself as Dutch as opposed to Afghan or Middle Eastern because of wider negative associations with the country. Zara's desire to distance herself from being Afghani appeared to be rooted in a number of negative Islamophobic racialised constructions that she derived from media discourses (Mirza 2013). Such negative images were tied to gendered disparities, that of women's and girls' oppression, and child marriage, as well as war and corruption. Her narrative suggests that when ethnic identities are tied to racialised processes that are simultaneously laced with gendered stereotypes, feelings of shame and the active decision to distance oneself from such forms of ethnic categorization may arise.

A further identity category was found in a later interview where she referred to herself as 'Asian' because of her positive interactions and shared understandings of culture with Gargi⁴⁰. Zara's narratives on

⁴⁰ It is noteworthy that Asian is also a census category in Britain (see Chapter 1).

ethnicity suggest how identities can be constructed in light of a number of factors that may stem from the family home, community, and wider discourses characterised by negative and positive constructions. In addition, such narratives may shift according to context and the topic of discussion (Begum 2008). Her articulations of ethnicity were multiple, reflected her varied migration history, denoting a number of belongings. Valentine and Sporton (2009) similarly found ambiguities in self-identifications amongst refugee Somali young people, many of which had similarly experienced multiple migration paths as the twins had.

Some of the girls in this study also appeared to relatively construct ethnic identity through racialised differences by defining what they were *not* in comparison to other students. These constructions were based on what they saw as positive characteristics of being South Asian as opposed to the negative differences they perceived to characterise other groups (Said 1978; Woodward 1997), denoting a form of reversed racialised Othering. Families featured as one defining feature of relative difference, and in particular, white British families who were seen negatively 'distinct' from Asian families. When I asked Asanka how her life was different to the other children she commented:

Because they (the English) have loads of, you know, they have loads of different fathers, different mums, I am really sorry to say this, because they have more than one mum, more than two dads, like that, and they have a lot of boyfriends as well, and everything with them is like that. But I have got one dad, one mum (Asanka, Interview 1)

Asanka's narrative suggests that English families are likely to be more chaotic because of parental relationship breakdowns, new partners and a higher number of partners before marriage. This is in contrast to how she sees her own family, as stable with 'one dad, one mum'. Similarly, Gargi talked about being raised differently to the English and also black (African Caribbean) children in the school:

I respect my parents and my culture. English students, English people, English kids don't. They don't respect no-one. Because we are taught in a way, we are socialised in a way that we should respect our elders, but these people don't, so that's the main difference between me and them. I am seeing very rare students who respect their elders... and the black kids, they are really aggressive. I am not aggressive. I have seen, all the black kids I have seen, are aggressive. Every time small things happen they just jump on fighting, they never think that we can solve a situation by talking, rather than getting physical. (Gargi, Interview 3)

Gargi perceives the main difference between herself and the English (i.e. white British) students as down to the latter not having respect for parents and elders, and their 'culture'. Both Asanka and Gargi's constructions of their ethnic identity suggest that subjectivity is formed through Othering, through distancing oneself from what or who they are not (Brah 1996; Hall 1999, 1996). These girls also took up racialised discourses of essentialism and in the process Othered English and black pupils.

Further, racialized positioning of Other groups worked in different ways whereby white students were defined through the girls' own cultural difference, and black students through biological difference. Gargi's narrative in particular highlights another form of perceived racialized difference when she positions 'black kids' as physically 'aggressive'. Whilst her understanding of English students' lack of respect is attributed to 'socialisation' (i.e. learned behaviour) Gargi's construction of the black child is one based on a physical, biological aggression. Therefore racialised and ethnic differences were talked about as social (i.e. learned behaviour) and also biological (i.e. naturally physically aggressive), depending on the 'race' of the subject (Gillborn 1990). Gargi's understanding reflects the historical positioning of African Caribbean males who have historically been constructed as naturally aggressive, and teachers' perceptions of black children's disruptive and overly physically aggressive 'nature' (Gillborn 1990; Mac an Ghail 1997; Rollock 2007).

Gargi and Asanka both articulated perceived features of being South

Asian that were largely positive. Their positioning of English families as dysfunctional because of remarriage, multiple parents and boyfriends was based on observations of fellow pupils but was also based on a racialized hierarchy of traits in which they placed their own family lives as superior. Their positioning of white families can be likened to Ali's (2003) assertion that culture is the basis for all forms of ethnicity e.g. language, religion, dress and clothing, but *'too can fall foul of the process of racialization'* (272). This suggests that culture is an assertion of self-identification, but is also located as a construction that is shaped and performed in accordance with processes of racialization. The girls' articulation of ethnic and cultural identity was similarly defined through processes of racialization, based on how they positioned themselves in relation to other students within 'everyday' multiculturalism and observations about others around them. They appeared to 'absorb' common sense racial constructions in the form of cultural difference in the context of the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism (Valentine 2008; Valentine and Sporton 2009; Harries 2014). However, it is noteworthy that such positive constructions of the family were not drawn on by the girls who were subject to violence at home, or who perceived their relationship with their family to be problematic. Three of the girls did not overtly refer to positive constructions of Asian family life as supportive and closely knit. Their cases will be explored in detail in Chapter 8 on 'gendered risk'.

7.32 Ethnic identification through family, gender and 'culture'

During discussion groups, the girls identified a number of shared characteristics with 'culture' appearing to be the most prominent. The term 'culture' was specifically used by all the girls and was referred to in relation to a number of the traits such as religion, language and celebrations. Commonalities included the celebration of religious festivals such as Eid and Diwali (Zara, Interview 3), religion and language (Asanka and Gargi, focus group 5):

VM: do you girls think you have things in common?

Lizzie: you are all from different countries

Grishma: we are the same religion. She is Hindu and she eats bacon!

Asanka: of course, I am Hindu Hindi! Hindu but not Hindi language

Gargi: even the people who are speaking Gujarati for example, the guy Jay, he is Hindu but he speaks a different language, but still his culture, my culture and your culture are the same

Vrinda: yeah Dipali and everything

Gargi: yeah celebrations (Focus group 5)

In addition to cultural and religious festivals as a shared marker of identity, the girls also referred to gendered expectations and its intersection with a shared 'culture'. For instance, stricter parental control was identified as a shared characteristic and resonated with the teachers' narratives (Chapter 6). However, most of the girls with the exception of Meena and Zara appeared to value stricter parenting in relation to some aspects of their lives such as boyfriends (see Chapter 8 for a fuller analysis), but not others such as socialising with friends (Nasreen, Raani and Halima). Parental control was seen as highly gendered as brothers and male cousins had different expectations placed on them (Nasreen, Halima, Zara, Meena). Cited examples included clothing, such as not wearing short skirts and going out. However, unlike the teachers, not all the girls clearly attributed these traits to a shared culture or ethnicity. In the following extract, Zara expressed confusion over locating the source parental control in relation to her interaction with boys:

VM: What sort of things do you (the group) think you share with each other?

Zara: I think culture, because they have Diwali, and we have Eid...Yes, and they can't talk to boys as well, and I guess, Gargi, my best friend, told me. And I don't know, why doesn't Hindu parents doesn't allow girls to talk to boys? Is it kind of religion?

VM: mmm, that's a difficult one isn't it? (Zara, Interview 3)

It is noteworthy how Zara does not attribute parental control to culture through her question *'is it kind of religion?'* Her query suggests that she struggled to make sense of what appeared to be similar experiences of parental control. My response was steered by a reluctance to engage explicitly with stereotypical and pathological representations of South Asians in the fear that I would perpetuate racist assumptions through

dialogue with the girls. It is a dilemma that as a researcher with a black feminist sensibility, I struggled to distance myself from. Similar to Zara, Halima saw the differential treatment of males and females as a shared characteristic between her and the others in the group:

Halima: Sometimes it's just weird that you just have to stay at home. It's not fair, because all the men, like, get to go out any time, and for the girl, yeah, you have to go out with someone older than you. Like if I was to go out I would have to take my mum or my dad.

VM: So you couldn't go out on your own?

Halima: Yeah, you can't go out on your own because they don't know what you get up to. So I find that weird, a bit, and it's not fair (Interview 2)

Both Zara and Halima's narratives on what united them as 'Asian' girls highlighted how gendered relations, which were attributed to a shared ethnic identity, was a source of disappointment. These concerns about unequal gendered relations appeared to be in line with the teachers' views (Chapter 5). Such experiences are seen by the teachers and were sometimes interpreted by the girls themselves to be a product of culture. However, as with familial culture, parental control was talked about as relative, (i.e. not English and in relation to more relaxed rules for boys) with the girls never expressing that they wanted as much freedom as the English girls (Basit 1997). Thus the girls appeared to be interpellated into constructions of differences between racial groups, which led them to make sense of their own gendered experiences as culturally specific. As racialized female subjects, the girls were interpellated into discourses that situate culture as a dominant explanation for differential gendered treatment (see Valentine and Sporton 2009; Harris 2013; Gest 2014 for discussions on such processes of embodying racialized discourses).

I am not suggesting that specific manifestations of gendered inequality and expectations within the family and wider community do not exist. Rather, these differences that mark groups as distinct were given further salience in the racialised context of the school, which fuelled their gravitation towards a shared identity. Culture as defined through religion

and parenting practice became the language to talk about difference and similarities. In addition, one could argue that the Asian girls only spaces that this research project also generated was conducive to the reinforcement, redefinition and search for racialised similarities. This space in which the girls searched for shared characteristics assisted in engineering the process of redefining 'being' South Asian. In these spaces such as discussion groups during PSHE lessons and Asian girl only trips (see Chapter 6), their understandings of gendered inequalities and shared culture were formed in relation to their racialized positions.

7.4 Muslim female identities and the Islamic Other

Six of the nine girls in this sample self-identified as Muslim, and meanings of being Muslim featured prominently during discussions and interviews. This stood in contrast to the other Hindu girls (n=3) who did not talk about their religion. The strong presence of a female Muslim identity was expected given the current climate in which wider attention on Muslim girls is particularly heightened (Chapters 2 and 3). In the context of the school teachers raised concerns about Muslim girls' attainment, behaviour and pastoral issues. Being Muslim was therefore a topical and a visible embodiment of difference, and because of spontaneous discussions about being Muslim, it appeared as if these girls felt they were expected to talk about their religious identity. Other studies have highlighted the complexities in Muslim identities by drawing attention to gendered expectations, and strategies to negotiate power within the family (e.g. Dwyer 1999, Ramji 2007; Shah et al 2010; Hussain and Bagguley 2014) and the effects of the mythical feedback loop in which girls take on negative wider discourses (Haw 2010, see Chapter 3). I found these issues present in Muslim girls' narratives. As with ethnic identity, my data indicate that the girls were actively negotiating their religious identities (Haw 1997, 2010; Dwyer 1999), their 'performance' of being Muslim, and were also negotiating their identities amidst wider racialising discourses on the Muslim Other (Housee 2004).

Being Muslim was practiced in a number of ways (e.g. Mirza 2013). Some would attend mosque regularly whilst others would pray at home. Some were allowed by their parents to listen to music and watch television, whilst others were not. The girls also appeared to attach different meanings to the performance of Muslim identity, one dominant symbol of which was the hijab. During the one to one interviews, the girls who wore the hijab explained their reasons for veiling, including displaying their modesty, to prevent boys from looking at their physical appearance (Focus group 1), and to feel secure and protected from 'boys looking' (Nasreen, Interview 2). The hijab was also cited as symbolic of being a good Muslim (Jamila, interview 1). Halima was the first in her family to wear the hijab. When I probed about her reasons for this, a narrative of identity assertion and bargaining her respected place within the family emerged. Her yearning to continue to wear the hijab was a site over which she demonstrated her staying power and commitment:

VM: So when did you start wearing the hijab?

Halima: I started as soon as my mum came back. I kept asking her – can I have my veil, can I have my veil? And she was – wait, wait, wait. And I was looking for it. But she wouldn't tell me where it was, but as soon as I got it I tried it on. My dad, my mum, obviously, she would just say to me – oh it looks OK – but I know she wouldn't mean it...I didn't listen to mum, I just listened to what my dad said. So I wanted him to feel proud of me, so now I wear it all the time.

VM: Yes, and do you think it's made a difference in the way that your dad sees you?

Halima: Yes. My mum said to me, yeah, you will wear it one or two days just to show off. But I proved them wrong. Because I wear it all the time now. Because some girls, when they just get something new they just do it once or twice, and then they don't do it another time. That's what they said to me – I know you are just showing off, yeah, because you are not used to it, and when you get bored with it, yeah, obviously you will just start to say oh, I am not bothered to wear it now.

VM: Does it kind of say something about the girl that you are?

Halima: Modesty. Yeah. And comfortable.

VM: In what ways do you think you feel more comfortable with it?

Halima: I feel normal with it. Because I wore it since primary, so I am used to it. I don't feel weird or anything, so I am happy wearing it. (Halima, Interview 2)

Halima asserted that wearing the hijab was a symbol of her strength of character to her parents, by proving her mother's scepticism wrong, and to gain respect from her father. Through Halima's performance of being Muslim by wearing the hijab, she bargains a higher position within the family by conveying her commitment to Islam (i.e. as a 'good' Muslim). This echoes Siraj's (2011) finding from Muslim women in Glasgow who used the hijab as a means to bargain empowerment, and enjoy the status and respect it brought them from their families and Muslim peers.

In contrast, the twins from Afghanistan, were of the view that the performance of religious identity was not attached to displays through dress and was instead described as something they felt inside, in the 'heart', not doing 'bad things' and praying (Meena Interview 3). As Zara explained:

Like me, I am meant to be Muslim as well, wear a scarf, like all conventional Muslims, that's why everybody asks me – why don't you wear a scarf, or why don't you pray? It's just I don't feel like it. I know you have to keep your religion and do whatever you need to do, but I mostly do some religious stuff at home. I don't show myself to the public and say – look I am a Muslim (Zara, Interview 1)

Whilst the girls may have displayed eclecticism in their meanings, practices and performances of Islam, my findings suggest that unlike ethnic identities that were more fluid and contested, their Muslim identities were not rejected. Muslim identities were prominent despite the girls originating from different countries and their super-diverse migration paths (Housee 2004; Hoque 2015).

Muslim girls in particular were under scrutiny and faced questioning from other girls in the group and teachers about their faith (see Chapter 5). One such symbol of Otherness has been largely denoted through the wearing of the hijab, which has become a symbol of Muslim women's oppression, radicalism, extremism and terrorism (Mirza and Meeto 2013; Harries 2014). Discussion amongst the girls about the hijab was

also prominent. In a focus group where a number of images of females wearing the hijab were shown (see appendix 9), the girls generated meanings that moved beyond individual negotiation with parents (Dwyer 1999). Their exchanges were laced with discourses on Otherness and undesirable femininity, which produced subject positions for the girls to take up, negotiate and contest. The girls appeared to be navigating different discourses between home, media representations, teacher concerns and challenges from peers within the school:

Nasreen: wearing the hijab, yeah, symbolises gangster
Meena: they have got bomb underneath! (lots of laughter)
Nasreen: some people think there might be a man in there
VM: what else? Why do you girls wear it?
Raani: because we are Muslim
Nasreen: because I like it and it's comfortable
Zara: you hide your ugliness!
Halima: modesty
Zara: no miss, in my heart I am Muslim. I am not showing it like her...they dress in pyjama! They say they wear the pyjama underneath!
(lots of laughter)
VM: what about this image? (I show them an image of an older woman in a hijab)
Halima: that's in Pakistan
Gargi: Is it a boy?
Halima: No it's a lady
Gargi: She has to do her eyebrows
Nasreen: hello. We are talking about the hijab, not her
Gargi: but why is she covered with everything?
Nasreen: that's what I did miss yeah, when I went to Pakistan yeah. This is me yeah, I was wearing the Shalwar Kameez (Nasreen wraps her face with scarf so can just see her eyes)
Halima: cos you have to cover yourself from the men over there
Nasreen: cos there yeah people look at me so I did it like that
Gargi: don't you feel hot in it?
Meena: no...head lice!
Zara: You smell your own mouth! Oh no, virus on my scarf!
Nasreen: and then I wear like long thing
...
VM: what do you feel about that one? (I show them another image see appendix 9)
Gargi: that's in Afghanistan ...
Nasreen: miss yeah some women in Pakistan they do the hijab like that as well
Zara: are these women hiding their identity?
Gargi: why are they hiding their identity?

Halima: from men! So you don't get stared at by other people
Zara: They might be not pretty!
Gargi: it's not like that. It's not about prettiness
Nasreen: They don't want to show their face
Gargi: It's not like the man will rape them in front of everyone is he?
Then why is the lady hiding? Cos now yeah when we three are
walking, there are three girls who wear like them only but are
covered everywhere and they become centre of attraction rather
than us lot. They are actually making themselves the centre of
something (Focus group 7)

The above dialogue contains a number of themes that relate to the wider negative discourses on the Muslim Other within, specifically as terrorists, dangerous citizens (Haw 2010; Kundnani 2012). As found in populist media reporting, the idea that the veil is used as a means to conceal terrorist identity, that the women have something to hide, was taken up by a number of the girls. Gargi insists that by wearing the veil, more attraction is being drawn to oneself, suggesting that she does not take up the girls' explanation that it is used to show modesty or act as a deterrent to male attention, but instead places them in a more vulnerable position to be Othered. She suggests that they place themselves at the centre of (negative) attention and actively mark themselves further as outsiders.

Parts of the discussion were also marked by notions of desirable femininity, which were based on religious and racialised difference. Veiled Muslim women were positioned as the Others of desired beauty and open to ridicule (e.g. she needs to do her eyebrows, head lice, bad breath and hiding ugliness). In spite of the humorous atmosphere during the discussion, it was noteworthy that critics of the hijab (Gargi, Zara and Meena) constructed the other girls who did wear the hijab as Others despite there being more girls in the room who veiled than those who did not. The girls who veiled were verbally challenged as potentially having something to hide, as terrorists or lacking 'desirable' beauty, and further suggests that there was a hierarchy amongst the girls based on veiling.

Constructions that are commonly found in dominant negative representations of Muslims in the UK were alive in the girls' narratives

and appeared to influence the ways in which the girls positioned one another within ethnic and religious groups. The girls disciplined each other in light of wider racialised and gendered stereotypes and expectations, keeping ethnic and racialised boundaries in check and reinforcing negative meanings attached to being Muslim.

7.5 Conclusions: South Asian girls' ethnic identities in 'everyday' multiculturalism

The data in this chapter presents a contrasting picture from the previous two chapters that focused on the teachers' perspectives on this group of girls. Rather than the homogeneity, I saw much heterogeneity in subject positions. Their constructions and negotiations of ethnic identity were not static, but appeared to be in process through contestations and shifts. The girls' ethnic identifications were fluid, in constant flux within the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism, changing and shifting even during the research process itself. The girls' positioning in 'everyday' multiculturalism was characterized by process rather than outcome (Harris 2013: 142). In other words, their sense of identity was shaped and reshaped through encounters, friendships, and disputes.

This chapter has drawn attention to the under researched area of intersectional identities in 'everyday' multiculturalism. My data suggest that the girls' ethnic identifications were negotiated through exclusions, bullying, negative media discourses and in dialogue with one another, in relation to intersectional positionings of gender, religion, migration and 'race'. In addition, as super-diverse migrant students, social class was temporal and shifting, which was the key challenge in intersectional analysis. This finding suggests that the concept of super-diversity in combination with intersectionality in illuminating manifestations of inequalities and social positions is very much work in progress (IRIS 2015).

However, the 'everyday' multicultural context for these girls was not synonymous with 'warmth' and respect for difference. It was imbued with

complex power relations that the girls embodied through 'race' and gender. Whilst the girls may have appeared to actively shape their ethnic identities, they did so within subject positions that were available to them (Valentine and Sporton 2009; Frosh et al 2002). They may have been super-diverse, but their bodies were interpellated into pre-determined racialised boxes (Phoenix 2009). For instance, the girls drew on aspects of their shared South Asian identity to articulate experiences of gendered inequalities within the family, and marginalisation and exclusion from other friendship groups. They negotiated ethnic and religious identities as a source of group strength amidst the exclusion they experienced. Their South Asian and 'Asian' ethnic identities were borne in moments of solidarity and resistance in the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism.

Although the girls' super-diverse migrant identities were minimized in the 'everyday' multiculturalism of the school, they were an important feature in shaping their experiences of exclusion. This was particularly evident in experiences of bullying that were primarily understood as a product of being a new migrant rather than it being about 'race', gender and religion. Therefore, whilst they drew on their migrant identities to understand their exclusion in the school, they were 'post race' subjects who constructed themselves as multicultural citizens, rather than as racialised subjects (Harries 2014: 1120). The discourses of warm and welcoming 'everyday' multiculturalism and the migrant and cultural mix that super-diversity brought, shifted the emphasis away from 'race' and therefore experiences of racism.

My findings raise a number of considerations about the need to situate 'everyday' multiculturalism beyond conviviality. They demonstrate how the 'everyday' is experienced through the intersections of 'race', religion, gender and class (Valentine and Sporton 2009) and is shaped by power relations embodied by young minority ethnic women (Mirza 2013). Teachers, policy makers and academics still therefore need to engage critically with the social construction of 'race' to negate its presence, whilst remaining sensitive to inequalities that processes of racialization

produce (Nayak 2006). Such continued consideration of 'race' is even more essential in the current climate in which there is a decreasing language for subjects to talk about 'race' and therefore racism (Harries 2014).

Chapter 8: South Asian girls, ‘between two cultures’ and relative empowerment in ‘everyday’ multiculturalism

The focus of this chapter is on the girls’ identities and explores their navigation of the ‘between two cultures’ discourse’. Given the prominence of this discourse in wider societal representations (Harris 2013) and its embeddedness in the teachers’ narratives, I address its significance through the girls’ social identities. I explore the girls’ negotiations in symbolic terrains in which they are commonly positioned to be ‘between two cultures’ by teachers. Therefore, this chapter sets out to elucidate if essentialist representations of the girls’ experiences are representative of and influence their day-to-day negotiations. The analysis is focused on two emergent themes: firstly, boys and relationships (section 8.1) and secondly, forced marriage (8.2). In the ‘between two cultures’ discourse, these two themes are commonly associated with heightened parental regulation and troubled home life, and were ‘real’ for the girls. However, contrary to what is commonly depicted in wider discourse, my analysis demonstrates that even within these constraints, the girls did not always position themselves as victims.

As discussed elsewhere, notions of resistance and agency often reflect Eurocentric or Westernised concepts of action that do not work for all young women in different cultural contexts who are often deemed as ‘weak’ (Chapters 3 and 6). Such representations have produced dichotomous relationships between white women as the ones who possess higher levels of agency, against South Asian women who relatively lack agency (Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003). However, the assumed lack of agency associated with practices such as veiling fails to reference patriarchal practice more generally for all women, and overlooks the disempowering effects of the sexualisation of Western women (Duits and van Zoonen 2006; Gill 2007). Similarly, female genital cutting can also be critiqued in relation to cosmetic surgery, which can be viewed as a mutilating bodily practice situated in systems that are driven

by desired constructions of white beauty (Walter 2010) and male control over the female body (Pedwell 2008).

To avoid dichotomous representations of Eastern and Western femininities, I draw on the idea of empowerment as 'relative' so that navigations and negotiations of the girls' pathways are understood through the intersections of 'race', gender, class and sexuality (Mirza 1992; Ramji 2007; Picher 2007). I draw on Madhok's argument (2013) that agency can be understood collectively rather than as the property of the individual, because agency is always exercised within constraints and located in power relations (i.e. formed through the intersections of race, gender, class and sexuality). Further, rather than agency being defined as resistance, I understand it to be the capacity to act and scope to influence their own paths and outcomes.

8.1 Negotiating constructions of 'good girls' and 'bad girls' in normative heterosexuality

In this section, I explore how the girls used racialized hetero-normative female sexuality to negotiate their position with parents and their relationships with boys/men. Here, compulsory heterosexual normativity affected the way they saw sex roles, relationships, and societal prescriptions for women (Rich 1980) but were also specific to their perceptions of racialized difference, and how they positioned themselves through a 'good girl' identity. As I discuss elsewhere (Chapter 2 and 6), teachers' perceptions of South Asian parents' restrictions over relationships with boys is often cited as symbolic of South Asian girls' as in between the East (home culture) and the West (British culture). The girls similarly spoke about parental restrictions and prohibitions over relationships with boys (Chapter 7, section 7.32). However, through the lens of racialized normative hetero-sexuality, I attempt to provide a more nuanced account of how the girls repeatedly performed racialized normative heterosexuality through their narratives on familial expectations and constructions of white girls (Butler 1993; Ahmed 2006). They too

were actively involved in processes of Othering and the racialization of white girls through discourses on desirable sexuality.

The subject of boyfriends was a prominent talking point for all the girls but their discussions were marked by significant variations in terms of their experience. This ranged from being engaged (Jamila and Asanka), to not showing an interest in relationships (Gargi and Vrinda), to being in relationships with boys in and outside of school (Narseen, Raani, Meena, Zara and Halima). It is noteworthy that all the girls were keen to state they were not sexually active with boys before engaging in any discussion about relationships, and this was without being prompted by myself. The assertion that they were 'good girls', a partial synonym for 'not sexually active', was therefore a significant feminine identity that appeared to permit them to have discussions about boys. My data also suggest that their take up of a hetero-normative 'good girl' identity acted as a catalyst for their negotiations of relative empowerment in a number of areas. These include educational success, the right to have boyfriends and forms of virtual relationships.

8.11 'Good girls' negotiate pathways to educational success through (non-white) sexuality

Gargi and Vrinda were high achievers and high aspirers. Both daughters of highly skilled and educated families, their confidence in their academic abilities and high attainment appeared to reflect their families' cultural and social capital (Shah et al 2010; Bhopal 2010; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). They held clear aspirations to attend high-ranking universities to study medicine at top universities, characterising the educational urgency of many minority ethnic groups, including South Asians (McRobbie 2007; Mirza 2009). Whilst these are important contextual factors, my data also demonstrates the intricate ways in which the girls navigated their pathways to educational success, which accompanied this, were based on a 'good girl' identity bound by ethnicity, racialisation, transnational identity and sexuality. These girls appeared to draw on a normative heterosexual 'good girl' identity also underpinned by racialized feminine constructions.

Similar to the Sikh boys in Bradford and Hey's (2007) study who strove to be educationally successful, Gargi and Vrinda perceived 'focus' to be a key determinant of achievement. To be focussed, they resisted having boyfriends who they saw as a distraction, and asserted their position by drawing comparisons between themselves and their peers who were *'more interested in boys than studying'* (Vrinda, Focus group 3). Gargi noted about the the twins from Afghanistan:

I love to be far away from them (boys), because right now I think it's a time to study. If I study well and I earn a lot I can get any boy, but why now? Because you know when you have boyfriends you cannot concentrate on your studies. Because I have seen my friends, like Meena and Zara, their studies are affected a lot because of their boyfriends (Gargi, Interview 4)

Gargi suggested that her strategy to be 'boyfriend free' would have long-term benefits and increase her 'choice' in future partners. This is due to the high status associated with educational achievement that makes her more desirable and potentially facilitates access to a wider and 'better' pool of partners to choose from (*'if I study well and earn a lot, I can get any boy'*) (see also Bhopal 2010; and Bagguley and Hussain 2014 on South Asian women acquiring social and cultural capital). These girls did not reject the inevitability of marriage, nor did they 'buy into' it as Shain's (2003) low achieving girls. Instead, through their 'good girl' identities, they negotiated their way towards educational success, which involved their plans to obtain a desirable (hetero-sexual) partner (Bagguley and Hussain 2014).

In addition, resisting relationships in order to maintain their focus on education appeared to be linked to the girls' perceptions of (white) British society as overly sexualised. They drew on their ethnic identities as a resource to assert their critical perspective and distance from 'hypersexualised' British society (Ringrose 2008; 2012). A discussion of teenage pregnancies that arose in light of the discussion about marriage and boyfriends in a joint interview between Asanka and Gargi highlighted the issue:

Gargi: In India an eighteen year old boy would still not know how to do sex. Trust me, trust me.

Asanka: Oh yeah, that's right.

Gargi: But here an eleven year old boy would know how to do it.

Asanka: Not eleven, even eight,

Gargi: There was a documentary on Channel Four. I saw that an English boy, he lost his virginity at the age of twelve. And then he had about eight or nine partners. And now he's seventeen.

VM: What about in Sri Lanka? Do you think it is different to how it is here?

Asanka: Of course, yes, it is actually like India...

Gargi: When I was here and I came to this new school, boys used to touch me. When I was in India a boy would only touch me if I allow him.

Asanka: Yes, same thing, same thing too.

Gargi: I used to have many friends who were boys in India, I used to have more friends who were boys than girls...And I never felt, in India, that they are looking at me or at my friend in that way. They just used to look at us as best friends. That's it. And I used to know them from six or seven years, last six or seven years, but they never touched me in that way.

VM: How do they touch you? Give me an example.

Asanka: Of course, they touch any bum.

Gargi: Yes, and who was the one who pinched me? Philip was the boy who pinched me once, and I slapped him, and from that day he respects me (Gargi and Asanka, joint interview).

By drawing on their collective transnational migrant South Asian identities, Gargi and Asanka positioned themselves outside of the discourse of British society as sexually heightened, with specific reference to early teenage sexual activity and sexual bullying. For instance, Gargi identifies a lack of respect from boys at Hillside (*'they never touched me in that way; In India a boy would only touch me if I allow him'*) to be a result of a heightened sexualised society, which was given further significance in the racialized 'everyday' multicultural context at school⁴¹. These findings contrast to the teachers' views that South Asian girls are more likely to be in need of 'empowerment' from restrictive practices. Instead, Gargi's narrative indicates feelings of disempowerment because of the wider British societal context rather than home environment, in which lack of respect from male peers led her to feel disempowered through bodily violation.

⁴¹ See Chapter 7 for an analysis of gendered and racialized forms of bullying in the 'everyday' multicultural context of the school.

Furthermore, my findings indicate that these girls were also involved in racializing 'white' British bodies by 'othering' white pupils and in so doing, asserted their position as 'good (South Asian) girls'. Gargi and Asanka were actively involved in perpetuating processes of Othering 'white' girls within their 'everyday' multicultural context. As Ahmed (2000) contends, multiculturalism in official but also everyday form involves 'welcoming' the 'stranger' but that such inclusion of difference also perpetuates processes of Othering, through contradictory incorporation and expulsion of different and differentiated groups. Like the the imaginary binary of the East/West created during colonial times (Said 1978), my findings demonstrate that racialized binaries were very much alive and in circulation amongst the girls in their 'everyday' negotiations in school. They positioned 'white' girls as 'strangers', whilst actively naming racialized difference and negative 'culture'.

8.12 'Clean girls' negotiating the right to boyfriends

Some of the girls spoke about being 'good, clean girls' (i.e. not sexually active) as a strategy to permit other forms of relationships with boys. For instance, Raani used her 'good girl' identity to justify her relationship with her boyfriend, a Pakistani student in the sixth form. During an interview, she explained how they met after school on the premises without her parent's knowledge. Other 'bad' girls, including the twins from Afghanistan were drawn on to define her own good girl identity to justify the relationship:

VM: So, what makes a bad girl?

Raani: Going out with the boys, the way she do, you know, the twins. I am not doing anything wrong, I'm not touching him, and he's not touching me, so I am not doing anything wrong...And you can tell there's too many girls, they are so bad and all that. They shouldn't do that, that's the way that's bad...They have to change they think, the way they think, I think this is bad...they are always showing off, some girls, in our school still...No-one likes them, no-one likes them. And they are so desperate. No-one likes them, seriously, trust me, no-one likes them. Basically boys use them...They just use them, they just kiss them and all that... and us, yeah (Raani and her boyfriend), but we were not doing anything wrong (Raani, Interview 3)

By positioning herself as a good 'clean' girl, Raani made her relationship acceptable given that she did not 'touch' her boyfriend and he did not 'touch' her. Her constructions of 'bad' girls were based on representations of 'loose' and promiscuous females who look 'desperate', unpopular (*'trust me, no-one likes them'*), and are used by boys. Raani therefore takes up the understanding of the deviant form of normative hetero-sexuality of the loose and promiscuous female (Hubbard 2000) with which to legitimise her own relationship. By doing so, she asserts another form of relative empowerment by self-defining acceptable forms of relationships through the rejection of some forms of physical contact. Similarly, Jamila used her 'good girl' identity to negotiate the right to go out with her fiancé in the evenings and weekends. She explained how she had negotiated this space:

VM: So how do you earn that trust? How do you earn the right to go out?

Jamila: Basically you have to go home on time, you have to, like, stay clean, stay away from boys, stay away from dirty girls.

Because if you hang around with dirty girls they are like, she is with the dirty girl next to her, she might even turn worse than that girl.

VM: So describe a dirty girl to me. What is a dirty girl?

Jamila: Basically dirty girls, like, not going to school, going outside of school, bunking, going with boys... (Jamila, Interview 2)

Jamila navigated parental expectations by demonstrating good behaviour (i.e. going home on time and not socialising with 'bad' or 'dirty' girls), therefore taking up desirable notions of hetero-normative femininity. As with Gargi and Asanka, Raani and Jamila's narratives imply that girls who are overtly or overly sexually active are dis-empowered rather than more progressive and liberated. These findings suggest that a reverse form of Orientalism was in action in the 'everyday' multicultural context of the school, whereby 'white British' culture was positioned as the problematic Other.

The girls whose relationships with boys had been discovered by their parents faced various consequences, highlighting the sexual regulation within the realms of parental and cultural expectations. For instance,

Zara and Meena had been physically punished and potentially faced being married to older Afghan men. Their stories were embedded in an on-going struggle to negotiate familial violence and I return to explore their case in the latter half of the chapter. For Nasreen, who had been in a relationship with a male student in her year, her parents' opted to move her to a neighbouring sixth form college to continue her BTECs. There, Nasreen could be monitored by her older sister, who was attending the same college:

They said you have to leave this school. We ain't gonna let you stay in this school now, because if you go with your sister then we know what you are doing, we know where you are, how long you have to stay and everything. I was like OK, but I was proper crying as well, in my room, and everything, I was, I don't want to but I can't do anything, because my parents have to decide (Nasreen, Interview 2)

On the surface, reasons for her parents' restrictions were based on their concerns about her relationship with the boy, and what could be popularly attributed to cultural expectations within some Asian and Muslim families. Yet, further into the conversation she explained that her parents' rationale for intervening in the relationship was a result of their desire for her to concentrate on her education:

VM: What about, have your parents talked to you about marriage and stuff?

Nasreen: No, they are like don't worry about your marriage, about boyfriends, just concentrate. They are not like, they are saying that girls get married so quick...My parents are like you don't have to worry about it, just concentrate on your education, you don't have to worry about your marriage, because we know what is best for you (Nasreen, Interview 1)

Nasreen's parents' desire for her to concentrate on studying rather than having boyfriends or marriage, resonates with Gargi and Vrinda's perception that relationships are a distraction. It demonstrates some of the complexities in identifying the motivations for parental scepticism about their daughters being in relationships, which may not be solely about 'cultural' norms (i.e. bringing shame or 'dishonour' into the family as commonly constructed in wider discourse), but may also be linked to

desires for educational achievement that are part of multi-faceted configurations of culture (Ludhra 2015).

8.13 Virtual encounters: negotiating an alternative space for interaction with boys through social networking

Social networking is an increasingly researched topic and has been identified as an important feature of young people's 'everyday' lives (Ringrose 2010; Munro 2011). In addition, it is a site where gendered sexual surveillance is experienced, predominantly from peers (Ringrose and Renold 2012). I found that social networking such as Facebook and Bebo, was another area in which some of the girls negotiated other forms of acceptable relationships with boys (Zara, Meena, Gargi, Jamila), signalling a newer area in which young South Asian women negotiate norms and expectations from home and school in light of a multicultural and super-diverse backdrop. For instance, many of the girls would use it to chat and befriend boys of similar backgrounds to themselves. These boys were both local and international, some of which they had never previously encountered, and resonates with Harris's (2013) finding that young people in multicultural Australian cities had a wide range of online international networks.

Some girls in my sample explained the importance of a collective ethnic identity as young transnational people in forming these normative heterosexual networks, based on transnational ties both previous and new. Jamila explained, "*Asian and Afghan boys added me*", (Interview 2). Gargi formed contacts with males based on perceived shared ethnic identification such as Indian, Asian, Hindu and so forth, which acted as an impetus for them to contact her. These girls appeared to exercise collective agency through their online encounters. Although resistant to having boyfriends, Gargi's 'virtual flirting', was described as an acceptable type of relationship as opposed to having 'real' boyfriends. These encounters were 'exciting' but also 'safe'. The girls created their own international and local networks of friends, including boys, to negate parental restrictions and carve out their own acceptable virtual space to interact with boys.

However, despite these strategic navigations, some of the girls did also face parental discipline and regulation, as reflected in teachers' concerns. Their navigations of racialized hetero-normativity in online relations were for some also bound by 'culturally' specific surveillance. For instance, my data suggests that social networking was also a site for regulation and control particularly by older male siblings, rather than by peers as suggested by Ringrose and Renold (2012). In such cases, it was their contact with boys that was under surveillance from older brothers. Halima and Jamila explained how their brothers would log into their accounts to monitor their interactions with boys. Zara and Meena explained using Facebook and Bebo to contact boys made them vulnerable to being disciplined. Their concerns were heightened because their older brother, a computer engineer, would be able to trace their online movements.

8.2 Navigating the forced marriage discourse: relative empowerment in racialized discourse

Conceptualising agency as relative empowerment assists in disrupting the dominant discourse that South Asian and Muslim girls are helpless victims of traditional practices and caught 'between two cultures'. In this section, I attempt to demonstrate this through the girls' navigations of the forced marriage discourse as relative empowerment. I highlight how rather than positioning the girls as helpless victims of familial expectations and practices, understanding their actions in light of how they relatively seek to protect and empower themselves within the constraints of home life, and their racialized and gendered positions provides a more nuanced account of the intricacies of agency. My analysis focuses on two girls in particular. The first is Jamila who teachers suspected to be at risk of forced marriage. Jamila had married sooner than she and her friends had anticipated. The second is Zara, one of the twins born in Afghanistan. Although she and her sister were both experiencing violence at home, I draw on data from Zara as she was the most vociferous of the two and spoke about their situation at some length.

Unlike Jamila, the twins sought help from the school for protection from potentially being forced into marriage.

8.21 Jamila: coercion or agency in resistance to the forced marriage discourse?

Two teachers, Patricia (Head of Inclusion) and Lizzie (Head of EMA), anticipated that forced marriage might have been used by Jamila's parents to discipline her unruly behaviour. However, when I met Jamila, she never explicitly talked about being 'forced' to marry her fiancé. Instead, she appeared to be similar to Shain's (2010) 'bad girls' who were loud and disruptive, challenged 'Western' norms, and appeared to buy into the inevitability of marriage. In addition, and in contrast to the teachers' views, her narrative on her future marriage was characterised by 'choice':

Jamila: You know I am engaged.

VM: mmm, you told me, yeah.

Jamila: Because it's not like an arranged marriage or anything, my parents were like if you want to marry him, then you can marry him.

VM: So he approached you?

Jamila: He came up to me and he was like – I want to marry you. He went up to my mum, the next day he's like – I really like your daughter. My mum was like – if you really like her, if you are a really good man, we know because he was like my dad's far relative. He lived in my house for two years, because he came illegally, and lived at my house for like two years, and he started liking me. He liked every step, everything I did, every step.

VM: So you are happy with the guy you are going to marry?

Jamila: Mm. Because you know, even four o'clock at night I could be with him. Stay as long as I want.

VM: And your parents are fine with that. So you can go out of the house with him and stuff, and hang out?

Jamila: Mhm. He has known my family since I was born. It's like I really like this family, I have to get one of the daughters.

VM: So how old is he?

Jamila: Eighteen.

VM: So when would you like to get married?

Jamila: After five years. This is my choice. Get married anywhere I want, any time, any day (Interview 1)

Jamila focused the discussion on the positives of her relationship, firstly by emphasising her 'choice' through the assertion that her future marriage

was not 'arranged', (or 'forced') as the teachers feared. She clarifies this in relation to how she was approached, to when and where the marriage would happen. Secondly, she refers to her 'fortunate' circumstance of marrying a man two years her senior, unlike many of her cousins who had married older men. Thirdly, Jamila sought to further clarify how her future marriage was not against her wishes because her parents were not taking her to Afghanistan. Instead, her story was told through her resistance to travel to Afghanistan to marry, as her sisters had done:

Do you know, I used to say that I am not going to my country, because my mum used to take all my sisters, get them married. I was like – I am not going – because I thought she was going to get me married. And then when I stayed in this country one guy actually found me. Because our engagement happened ... I don't want to go to my country because I thought I was going to get married. I stayed in England and you found me (Jamila, Interview 1).

Lastly, by being 'found' by her fiancé in the UK, she suggests that she escaped marrying someone against her will in Afghanistan, and was with someone with whom she was meant to be (*'I stayed in England and you found me'*). Jamila presented her story as a successful negotiation. By not travelling to Afghanistan to marry an older man, she worked through her desires in conjunction with her family, in which she played an active part in carving out an acceptable relationship for herself. This suggests that determining what constitutes coercion is highly blurred in relation to whether the marriage is forced or arranged.

Jamila may have been a potential forced marriage case, but her interpretation of events indicate that she exercised relative empowerment by negotiating and bargaining a more acceptable form of marriage for herself, based on what she saw as less traditional characteristics (Pichler 2007; Bhopal 2010; 2011a; Ahmad 2012; Bagguley and Hussain 2014). Her example highlight that what constitutes being 'forced' is a highly blurred concept. In legal discourse, it denotes lack of free will, but ignores how consent is constructed in the context of power imbalances and gendered norms, often in the absence of explicit threats (Anitha and

Gill 2011). Phillips (2013) argues forced marriage is difficult to define because identifying what constitutes coercion is complex. The only instance when it can be clearly defined by the state is when it is inscribed on the body, through physical force or movement to another country. It does not always involve young women being sent to their countries of origin to be married as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office approach implies. Jamila's marriage did not involve crossing boundaries, which on the contrary, she resisted.

Women and young people who appear to 'put up with' violent or coercive relationships also exercise a form of agency (Samelius et al 2014; Callaghan et al 2015). By remaining silent about or quietly navigating coercion, they also counteract danger by keeping themselves safe. As Jamila's case potentially demonstrates, minority ethnic women girls may seek alternative ways to navigate violent familial relationships, as the 'right to exit' model fails them on a number of levels (Gill and Thiara 2010).

8.22 Zara: racialised identification in the discourse on gender based violence

Unlike Jamila, Zara and her sister Meena stated that they had been subject to a potential forced marriage and had faced a number of episodes of violence at home. The twins were representative of a different case whereby the discourse on racialized forms of gender violence appeared to assist them in making decisions and navigating their pathways. In this section I draw on data from interviews with Zara⁴² to explore how she strategically positioned herself as akin to the dominant discourse of 'between two cultures', and how she took up the dominant 'exit' routes associated with ethnic specific forms of gender violence.

⁴² The violence against Zara and Meena was perpetrated by their older brother and father, and ranged from physical punishment, which consisted of being hit over the head, to significant beatings, and as emerged in the later stages of fieldwork, potential forced marriage. Some of the teachers were aware of the girls' situation at home (Patricia, Lizzie, Josie, Fazia, Annie). As a result of discussions with the girls, they had decided that these were 'isolated incidents' (Lizzie, Interview 3).

When Zara disclosed the physical abuse at home (Interview 2), I saw this as a plea for help⁴³. Following my research ethics protocol, I reported Zara's disclosure to Annie, Casual Admissions Mentor, with whom Zara and I met soon after. Post meeting, Annie explained that the school had decided not to take any further action because this appeared to be an isolated incident and because the girls had not wanted the matter to be taken further. After returning to school, the girls reported that there were further incidents of violence from their brother and father. As Zara explained:

My parents found out my sister had a boyfriend and I, also that I love this guy, cos I wrote a love letter and my brother found out. He got so furious and he slapped me, he basically physically abused me. It was a nightmare, I was shaking. He said I am not allowed to come to school anymore, both of us. My dad got angry as well and I felt so vulnerable. It was like something so big like I had killed someone, but for me it was something natural, like I had just fallen in love with someone. I kissed my dad's feet and my mum's feet, to say that I am really sorry. I think now I shouldn't have done it. It wasn't worth it – kissing their feet... They talked to my teacher (the Deputy Head, also Head of Child Protection) ...he said to him that I promise not to let my son hit my daughters any more, but after a month, he started to beat my other sister, my dad himself...It was physical, verbal abuse, and emotional too (Zara, joint final interview with Meena).

Though the violence was 'real', Zara navigated the situation by taking up wider discourses on gender violence in order to make sense of her experiences. Words such as '*he physically abused me...verbal abuse and emotional too*' indicate that she was aware of the dominant social terminology when talking about it with teachers and myself. This is particularly noteworthy given that English was not her first language, thus indicating that she had learned the official terminology.

⁴³ I responded to Zara's disclosure by asking her what she would prefer I do, but also made it clear that I had to abide by my research ethics procedure (see Chapter 4). I emphasized that I would have to tell a member of staff of her choice, to which she agreed. I also offered her further support by suggesting that I could attend the meeting with her to which she also agreed. I provided her with the details of support organisations that I had prepared in case such situations arose. I did not record the discussion as I felt this would be an insensitive intrusion on a difficult situation, but did make notes after the meeting ended.

It is also crucial that Zara appeared to articulate her experiences in a very different way to Jamila by positioning herself as 'between two cultures'. For instance, she describes falling in love as *'natural'* (i.e. based on love), which arguably sits in contrast to 'arranged' or 'forced', thus reinforcing the binary constructions in 'between two cultures'. Unlike Jamila, Zara did not talk about engaging in extensive negotiations with her parents. Her reflection that she should not have kissed her parents' feet to apologise for falling in love also potentially denotes a form of resistance and distance from familial 'norms' and 'expectations'. I found further evidence of her take up of the 'between two cultures' discourse during the third focus group, in which she initiated discussion about the 'honour' killing of an Afghani girl in Germany who had been murdered by her brother. She explained how a 16-year-old girl had been murdered because she wanted to *"integrate in German society...by wearing Western clothes and having a boyfriend"* (Zara, Focus group 3), thus suggesting that the young woman was experiencing a form of culture 'clash'. Zara's understanding of the 'honour' killing indicates that some young women may navigate their familial norms and expectations amongst negative media representations (Haw 2009; 2010; Valentine and Sporton 2009) because her interpretation of events appeared to largely mirror media reporting⁴⁴ (i.e. that because South Asian girls 'deflect' from one culture to another they are at risk of violence). The following extract from a written exercise on thoughts about school provides further indication of how she positioned herself as 'between two cultures':

⁴⁴ For example, see the case of Shafilea Ahmed (Gill 2014)

Schoo!!! hmmm... ☹️
School for me is a world of freedom,
challenges, knowledge and happiness,
because at home everything is so boring
and messed up.
I tried to run away from home but the
only thing that stopped me from running
away from home was school.
In school I can show people how I
am and I feel free to say anything
to anybody.
Particularly in English I try my best
to get good grades and do my home
work every single week, because
I ~~love~~ look up to my English teacher
he's a perfect role model for me
despite the fact that he is a male.

(Schoo!!! hmmm... School for me is a world of freedom, challenges, knowledge and happiness. Because at home everything is so boring and messed up. I tried to run away from home but the only thing that stopped me from running away from home was school. In school I can show people how I am and I feel free to say anything to anybody. Particularly in English I try my best to get good grades and do my homework every single week, because I look up to my English teacher he's a perfect role model for me despite the fact that he is male).

Zara sees school as representative of freedom and as providing the possibility for increased agency through her use of symbols such as knowledge and happiness. Her views are aligned with Ghuman's (2003) dichotomous model of home and school as she constructs notions of freedom by positioning her 'messed up' home environment against the progressive 'free' environment of the school.

By positioning herself as 'between two cultures' and therefore identifying with the specific racialised discourses of gender violence, Zara was able to take up the language and express her experiences in dominant terms. Her thoughts suggest processes of identification through the mythical feedback loop (Haw 2009; 2010), where she internalises the postcolonial discourse of racialised Otherness to understand and communicate the gender violence she experiences. This appeared to have 'real' consequences on how Zara went on to exercise relative empowerment,

after her parents' discovery that she had a boyfriend and were planning to marry her to an older cousin in Afghanistan.

Zara continued to negotiate her pathway to safety through dominant racialised discourses of gender violence and positioning herself as 'between two cultures'. Both she and her sister, Meena alerted Isabelle, Head of Sixth form, who liaised with external agencies including the Forced Marriage Unit (Zara, Interview 4, Lizzie Interview 4, Isabelle). The twins were subsequently put on the FMU's register and were monitored by the authorities. However, the 'right to exit' approach, modelled on women and girls who are willing to denounce their own families, communities, and associated traditions and cultures, was only an option for Zara and Meena because they were at some point prepared to distance themselves from their culture and traditions that were seen as harmful (Phillips 2007; Gill and Anitha 2011). They therefore exercised their agency and navigated relative empowerment, albeit rather differently to Jamila, within the confines of racialized discourse on gender based violence.

8.3 Beyond 'race' and 'culture': systemic constraints and gender violence

I found a number of other factors beyond 'race' and culture that prevented the girls from denouncing violence and navigating routes to safety. These factors also worked against professionals being able to safeguard the girls from violence and forced marriage. First, being in the sixth form and of post-compulsory school age meant that there were fewer resources available for pastoral matters. Neither the Educational Welfare Officer nor the Inclusion departments were formally available to the girls which resulted in the Head of Sixth form leading on matters like forced marriage. The twins found themselves to be at further risk because of an absence of these formal resources and any intervention was an additional responsibility for Isabelle and her sixth form team. This is unfortunate given that research suggests it is during the sixth form years that the risk

of forced marriage is particularly heightened, especially outside of term time (Kazmirski et al 2009).

Aware of this caveat in the system, Zara and Meena actively sought their own safety nets by volunteering with Connexions, an organisation that provides work based training, career guidance, advice on relationships with family and friends amongst other matters. They had developed a strong relationship with John, one the workers who offered them some form of protection from the violence at home. Meena explained they had arranged to alert John if they felt they were in danger:

My parents don't know that we go to Connexions. I really wanted to volunteer as I had a strong feeling that it may happen again and I could contact him (John). I wanted to be near him. So if anything happens over summer I have somewhere to go, cos I won't be at school....and if we don't go to Connexions John will call our home and ask us if we are ok. If we say we are having problem with our art work, he knows there is something wrong and he will call the police (Meena, final joint interview with Zara)

Connexions and more specifically, the staff within it, provided them a safe space of people who monitored their safety outside of the school context. However, under the coalition government, Connexions is no longer a coherent National Service and in many parts of the country had ceased to exist. Therefore, and second, the current financial climate under which public and voluntary services are being slashed may have far reaching effects on young women who seek alternative pathways to safety and empowerment across different spaces.

Third, some staff found the assistance from authorities to be patchy. In another case also involving a girl of post compulsory school age whose parents had taken her out of Hillside and enrolled her in a nearby college, Patricia, Head of Inclusion complained of a lack of response when she followed procedures and alerted the Forced Marriage Unit and Social Services. In Patricia's view this was "*a blatant safeguarding issue, child*

protection issue, a risk of forced marriage". The girl had never turned up for college and Patricia's concerns were not followed up:

We had to chase them, and we were told there was nothing they could do...They did nothing. We've no idea where she is, no idea...they (social services) are very patchy, the judgement is very patchy (Patricia, Head of Inclusion, Interview 1)

In addition, an over-emphasis on cultural forms of gender violence may simultaneously limit understanding and potentially obscure the visibility of other forms of risk generic to all women and girls, such as rape. For instance, Gargi spoke about her cousin who had been gang raped at a party, which acts as a reminder that violence comes in various forms that also transcend racialised boundaries (Dobash and Dobash 1992; 1998; Gill and Mitra-Khan 2010). There are continued concerns about coercion and staying safe, but the teachers' main concerns for South Asian girls were never articulated beyond racialised boundaries. There was an absence of teacher discussion about drugs, sexual coercion, or safely navigating social media for South Asian girls.

The prominence of 'culture' as the determining factor in teachers' understandings of violence against South Asian girls was evident in the case of Zara and Meena, when it was only the forced marriage discourse that was taken forward and used as a source of protection. This example arguably indicates that whilst forced marriage agencies and interventions may be useful tools for women fleeing coercion, it may also shut down alternative avenues for articulating other forms of violence. Young women may remain silent or are 'unheard' when they speak of other forms of violence in the run up to forced marriage. As Sharp (2013) observes, forced marriage is usually an end product on a continuum of violence, indicating that the racialization of specific forms of violence may sometimes act as a barrier to early intervention, and earlier experiences of violence obscured.

As teachers navigated the terrain of gender violence by recognising it in its 'culturally' specific forms in reflection of the dominant discourses on gender violence and policy interventions, this raises a difficult dilemma in terms of how teachers should respond. On the one hand, my data suggests that teachers need to look beyond racialized forms of violence towards not being culturally reductionist. Teachers should therefore be encouraged to develop a vision of risk for South Asian girls that looks beyond the familial context and towards wider risks that may be applicable across ethnic groups. On the other hand, they also need to engage with dominant ethnic specific paradigms of safeguarding to because they are obliged to keep girls safe, but also because some risks may fit the dominant paradigm (e.g. the case of Meena and Zara) and provide protection for those cases that 'fit' the discourse. Teachers therefore have to navigate a fine line between being cultural reductionist and being sensitive to specific manifestations of violence. I suggest that teachers and other professionals working with young women should be supported to develop more nuanced understandings to work with and beyond culturally specific issues. As I will discuss in the concluding chapter, there is a pressing need for CPD and teacher training that takes a more critical and sustained form than at present.

8.4 Conclusions: the 'catch 22' of racialized and gendered identities in empowerment

This chapter set out to contextualise South Asian girls' experiences beyond populist pathological constructions of them as subjects of parental control, and beyond their position as 'between two cultures'. In order to challenge the representations that were widely found in the 'everyday' multiculturalism of the school through teachers' talk and in interventions that appeared to be based on the 'between two cultures' thesis, this analysis has sought to demonstrate how the girls negotiated their relative empowerment both against and within the 'between two cultures' discourse in the school's 'everyday' multiculturalism, as well as familial, cultural and religious constraints. They were not hapless victims

as representation in dominant discourse would suggest, but skilful negotiators in constructing and negotiating their 'good girl' identities, and their routes to safety from violence and forced marriage.

The girls' strategies and negotiations took place within parental and wider familial expectations. In their narratives on boys and relationships, the girls drew on a gendered female heterosexual identity that stemmed from the influence of family and wider community, whilst simultaneously drawing on their racialized and ethnicised social identities in the 'everyday' multicultural school context. These identities were used as tools to mark their paths to educational success, and negotiate 'acceptable' forms of relationships. Similarly, when navigating the terrain of gendered violence, a reality for some, the girls drew on their intersectional identities of 'race', ethnicity, and gender to counteract their typical construction as victims. Their navigations through both examples of boys and relationships which featured as a more 'mundane' negotiation in 'everyday' multiculturalism, and forced marriage as an 'extreme' case subject to formal intervention, were racialised and gendered.

However, through the example of the forced marriage as a top down state discourse, I have shown how this intervention was taken up by and 'worked' for Zara only because she positioned herself as 'between two cultures', and as a 'victim' of culture and tradition. On the other hand, Jamila's case did not 'fit' the forced marriage discourse as she appeared to resist positioning herself as the racialized South Asian Muslim girl, 'between two cultures' and in need of saving. Her narratives were framed around other more complex notions of 'choice' that did not 'fit' the racialized Western model. The shifts in conceptualising agency that Madhok (2013) advocates are helpful in unpacking how the girls negotiated their agency amidst discourses of familial expectations, forced marriage and Western ideals of the 'right to exit'⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ There are also a number of other factors not captured in these cases that may influence young women's capacity to act, such as the lack of social and cultural capital due to migration status and class networks, which may limit their knowledge of the system, and the psychological trauma some refugee families experienced during migration (Anitha and Gill 2011).

My data suggests that 'between two cultures' was a dominant trope the young women deployed to negotiate their pathways to safety, and therefore existed in the 'everyday' multicultural context for these girls. Their capacity for agency and the 'choices' they made were shaped within racialized and gendered subject positions, but also that social identities of 'race', ethnicity, and gender were strategically taken to negotiate 'relative' empowerment. The girls' social identities were in essence a 'catch 22' as simultaneously constraining but also as negotiating tools to bargain and shift boundaries and expectations in the 'everyday', and their pathways towards relative empowerment.

Chapter 9: Conclusions and recommendations

9.1 'Doing' the PhD: Mapping my reflexive journey

Embarking on my PhD journey was not an easy decision. While I had been an academic researcher for many years, I purposefully delayed my doctoral studies as I was searching for the 'right' topic to explore. I was not sure what this topic was – I was only sure that it should be about Asian girls. I had a deeply embedded yearning, through my own identity struggles, to better understand how constructions of 'South Asian girls' are formed. I was influenced primarily by my personal experiences growing up as a racialized South Asian female in a white working class seaside town in the South East of England. My deeply personal experience of being seen by my majority 'white' peers and teachers as 'South Asian' (discussed in Chapter 1) lies at the root of my exploration of how identities are formed beyond the 'safe haven' of my home. For me, as a young girl, the site of my gendered racialization was predominantly my school.

My focus on identities in relation to 'everyday' multiculturalism developed not only because of my interest in the debates and controversies in scholarly literature on the subject, but also the wider dominant political discourse on the 'end' of multiculturalism. Although multiculturalism lost some of its prominence to revisionist assimilationist political discourses on 'social cohesion', at the time of my data collection it still had a strong presence in state schools' responses to managing ethnic diversity. At Hillside the enactment of multiculturalism had a significant place in the school's management of its diverse pupil body. It manifested itself in an 'everyday' form where it was interpreted, contested and negotiated amongst the teachers and the girls. While state discourse may have undermined multiculturalism as policy, pronounced 'dead' even, its trickling into everyday thought and practice remains. As my understanding of the persistence of 'everyday' multiculturalism evolved throughout my study, so did my thinking about how South Asian girls'

identities might be framed in relation to wider multicultural discourse and its enactments by the teachers in the school. As a result, the interplay between South Asian girls' identities and multicultural discourse evolved as a main focus of my thesis. My black feminist sensibility with intersectionality (discussed in Chapter 1) has enabled me to bring my story together of what multiculturalism *did to* and *for* South Asian girls in shaping their social identities. The intricate micro-processes of social positioning through intersecting identities and the categorization produced by teachers and the girls were played out in the vital site of the school. Whilst social class was a key determinant in social positioning, in that it situated the girls' wider circumstances through migration and ensuing poverty, it was 'race' and gender identities that framed the daily everyday interactions in the school. The prominence of 'race' and gender at the forefront of social positioning have been similarly found in black feminist studies (Chapter 2, e.g. Basit 1997; Shain 2003; Bhopal 2010; Mirza 2015b).

Intersectionality as both an ontological (i.e. a way of seeing the subject as constituted through intersecting social identity categories) and an epistemological tool, has enabled me to push the analysis a step further, to engage with the girls' multiple identities and the interplay between them. This has been explored in some detail in Chapters 7 and 8 where I have analysed how the girls' ethnic, religious, migrant and gender identities were constituted through their interaction with other identity categories, such as the 'good girl' identity, the 'between two cultures' discourse, negative media discourses about South Asians and Muslims, through exclusions, bullying, and in dialogue with one another. Through the complex interplay of home, familial expectation, and wider influence named above, I have presented my understanding of South Asian girls' identities. My telling the story of how the girls 'come' to be socially positioned as raced and gendered 'Others' by teachers, and in turn how the girls evolved their own agency in their 'resistant' co-construction of their identities, shed some light on my own personal journey on 'becoming a South Asian woman' (further discussed in section 9.6).

9.2 Framing the research questions

In my thesis I set out to explore *how cultural difference and ethnic diversity was understood and experienced by South Asian girls in a multicultural school context* (RQ1). In designing my research questions, I focused on discourses of diversity management that shaped the school's approach. I asked how school staff differed from one another in their management and response to ethnic diversity. I was also interested in the implications of the school's multicultural approach for South Asian girls and how teachers positioned South Asian girls and their families in light of approaches to managing diversity.

One thing that was clear to me was that little was known about how gendered risk for South Asian girls was understood and dealt with in a school context. There were many political and popular media discourses circulating on the dangerous cultural practices of South Asian communities, forced marriage and violence in the home. I needed to frame these research questions (RQ2) to enable me to explore and enhance an understanding of the forms of gendered risk school staff identified for South Asian girls; how teachers and the girls understood and managed such risks, both 'real' and potential; and lastly how teachers' responses were influenced by their understanding of cultural difference.

Finally, and importantly for me as a South Asian woman, I was concerned with how South Asian girls themselves construct, negotiate and contest their identities in the multicultural context of the school (RQ3). I wanted to inform an understanding of how the girls positioned themselves as religious, ethnic, and gendered subjects in an overwhelmingly white teaching environment. I wanted to consider the multiple positioning and complex backgrounds of the girls so I asked questions on how the intersections of 'race', migration and gender affect their social positioning in the school; in particular, and not least, I wanted to understand how the girls' intersecting social identities affect their scope for agency, which

formed a central core to my study (see Chapter 1 for the research questions).

9.3. Everyday multiculturalism and South Asian girls: key findings and contribution to knowledge

By focussing on 'everyday' multiculturalism, one of my main aims has been to shift the dominant focus on South Asian and Muslim girls' identities beyond the melodrama of the home and family as an over-emphasised determinant of identity making (Puwar 2003; Ahmad 2003). Instead of focussing on 'typical' South Asian issues such as marriage that have been previously explored (Bhopal 2011; Pichler 2007; Bhopal 2011a; Ahmad 2012; see Chapter 2), I have attempted to highlight how the multicultural school context contributes to the construction of racialized and gendered identities. My findings concur with identity literature which suggests that there are a range of identity categories and femininities subjects employ to navigate 'race' and gender, and that these influences lie beyond the home and in school (Dwyer 1999; Shain 2003; Bradford and Hey 2007; Haw 2010; 2011). However, I build on this body of work by offering my analysis of how the wider discourses on multiculturalism and its interpretation and enactment by teachers and the girls on an 'everyday' level affects how they are perceived by others and perceive themselves through 'race', gender and culture. I present my main findings through four key points.

Key finding 1

Multiculturalism as 'everyday': The teachers' enactments of diversity and inclusion policy in school (research question 1)

The multicultural policy backdrop offered a novel lens to see how identities may be constructed, negotiated and given meaning through applied policy discourse. I advocate an understanding of how multiculturalism as a macro state discourse is enacted in the micro everyday level of the classroom through the schools' institution of policies on diversity and inclusion management. School based policies and the

implementation of pluralist multicultural interventions (such as employing professional staff specifically to address the 'needs' of the school's diverse student body, instituting role models, 'race' matching, representation and celebration of ethnic and cultural difference (see Chapter 5)), constituted the range of the 'official' institutional approaches towards the girls, and ultimately shaped the boundaries of their experiences (see key finding 2 below).

Multiculturalism as 'everyday' was a fitting approach to unpack processes of how the girls were socially positioned. By 'everyday' multiculturalism I refer to its non-static, shifting meanings and the diverse and ad hoc enactments (Ball et al 2012) of multicultural discourse by teachers. I identify multiculturalism as 'everyday' because:

- 1) Teachers demonstrated eclectic ad hoc take ups of multiculturalism (i.e. conservative or critical multicultural positions), and anti-racist and community cohesion interventions. The ways in which these interventions were enacted by teachers were 'bitty' and disjointed, rather than a whole school approach. The school was therefore a microcosm of diversity in action, whereby diversity management consisted of diverse enactments of multicultural and other diversity management discourses. For instance, there were different enactments of multiculturalism from plural approaches that were aligned to the representation and celebration of difference, but how these were enacted related to the individual positions of the teachers. Teachers with critical multicultural perspectives were more sensitive towards the social inequalities of 'race' and class, whilst those with conservative multicultural perspectives tended to emphasise the hierarchy of difference, positioning white British values as superior.
- 2) The management of diversity and inclusion and its many 'enactments' was a constant site of contestation. While it was perceived as a top down policy, on the ground, the differing views on how diversity should be managed was particularly evident in the relationship between the EMA/Inclusion departments on the one hand, and the senior

management team on the other. In Chapter 5, I discussed a number of examples to demonstrate this point. There were for instance, perceptions of significant tension among staff about what multicultural provision should look like and do, such as recognition of racism, wearing of the hijab, and the significance of role models. Such tensions indicate how teachers spoke and acted from different positions from which they shaped, re-shaped and negotiated the school's disjointed multicultural approach as part of their everyday discussions and practices.

This study therefore offers a unique take on the concept of 'everyday' multiculturalism (e.g. Gilroy 2004; Harris 2013; see Chapter 3), as my findings indicate it should be understood in its more complex and diverse forms, specific to the institutional context in which it is enacted.

Key finding 2

Teachers' perceptions of South Asian girls: the racialization of culture (research questions 1 and 2)

I found that despite varied enactments and contestations of multiculturalism, the teachers overwhelmingly enacted multiculturalism through culture, and in the process used culture as a proxy for 'race' (Valentine 2009; Harries 2014). South Asian girls and their parents were typically and predominantly positioned as having a problematic and therefore inferior 'culture'. In Chapter 6, I demonstrated how teachers' concerns were predominantly about deficit South Asian parenting practices such as raising daughters who lacked independence, and the 'wrong' kind of learners. South Asian girls were also perceived as more likely to be susceptible to 'culturally specific' risks and danger in the familial home environment because of the belief in heightened community gendered regulation and surveillance (e.g. forced marriage).

As teachers positioned South Asian and Muslim girls as having cultures and norms constructed as inferior to British values, the interventions they developed continued to be underpinned by notions of negative

hierarchical Otherness, with the assumption of the Western white norm as the way forward (e.g. the 'right to exit' model for girls facing forced marriage, Chapters 6 and 8). Interventions such as Asian girl only trips and the facilitation of safe meeting spaces with boyfriends, exposed the limits to respect for cultural difference (Patel 2007; Phillips 2007; Beckett and Macey 2001; Dustin and Phillips 2008; Chapter 3; Chapter 6).

A further effect of the teachers' racialization of South Asian culture was a continuation of the long-standing discourse of the girls as 'between two cultures' of East and West (Said 1978; Ghuman 2003). Although this 20th century discourse may resonate as an outdated discourse in the 21st century, it continued to be a dominant trope employed by the teachers. This made South Asian girls highly visible to teachers *because* of their preoccupation with cultural difference (Modood and May 2001; Hoque 2015, Chapter 3), and skewed the type of 'problems' they picked up on in their concerns for the girls' safety and wellbeing (Chapter 6), whilst overlooking other potential risks⁴⁶.

Key finding 3
Deconstructing South Asian girls' intersectional identities (research question 3)

My Black feminist sensibility and intersectionality have both provided essential tools in furthering my understanding of the girls' social identities within the 'everyday' multicultural school context. This has worked on two main levels. First, Black feminism has informed my understanding of how power relations were played out and reproduced in the school, through my analysis of processes of racialized and gendered social positioning. It has offered me a valuable lens to remain mindful of the way that 'race' and gender continue to function in 'everyday' contexts like Hillside.

For these girls, I found the 'everyday' multicultural context to be characterized by power relations amongst students, which were based on

⁴⁶ Whilst it is important to be aware of risks such as forced marriage, the over-focus on culture and the family as the site of danger obscured other forms of risk that girls from all groups potentially face, such as rape and drug use. For instance, Gargi recounted a story about a cousin being drugged and gang raped at a party in London (Joint interview with Asanka)

racialized and gendered exclusions. As new arrivals, some experienced peer bullying which was often based on hierarchical notions of beauty. Gargi's experiences of being excluded as a new migrant were also articulated through racial and gendered verbal abuse on looking different and unattractive. Nasreen similarly experienced racial abuse, being called 'Paki' and having her hijab pulled (see Chapter 7). Through the girls' narratives on ethnic identifications it was evident that their shared identity as 'Asian' girls was in part based on exclusion by other students through lack of access to friendship circles, pushing them towards a shared 'Asian' identity (Chapter 7).

Second, intersectionality has enabled me to explore the girls' multiple identities on a number of levels, including the differences and hierarchies between them, and how they were active agents in navigating and negotiating pathways through their multiple and intersecting identities. My use of intersectionality has therefore provided a more complex understanding of the power relations. There were significant variations between the girls such as their country of origin, migratory pathways, and their 'super-diversity' from highly skilled migrant families to refugee families. For instance, Gargi and Vrinda as daughters of highly skilled migrants had higher economic status and higher educational attainment than girls such as Zara and Meena who also had highly skilled parents but migrated as refugees with trauma and mental health problems. Therefore, my data suggest that the girls' positions were influenced by income, poverty, and sometimes the trauma of migration in addition to the social structures of 'race', gender and the temporality of class (Anthias 2012; Chapter 7).

An intersectional approach has also highlighted how variations between the girls translated into hierarchies between them. For instance, Muslim girls who wore the hijab were positioned by the other non-veiling Muslim and Hindu girls as Others. The girls' narratives were laced with wider negative discourses on the Muslim Other within, as terrorists and dangerous citizens (Haw 2010; Kundnani 2012), and notions of desirable

femininity where veiled Muslim women were positioned as lacking desirable 'beauty' and open to ridicule (Chapter 7). Through such discussions, I found that wider racialised and gendered stereotypes and expectations functioned to keep ethnic and racialised boundaries in check and reinforced negative meanings attached to being Muslim.

Intersectionality has also facilitated my exploration of how the girls actively took up aspects of their social identities as a form of positive resistance to shift norms and expectations. These findings echo much of the identity literature on South Asian girls discussed in Chapter 2 that challenges the 'between two cultures' discourse, highlighting the fluidity, variation and agency in young people's identities (e.g. Shain 2003; Harris 2006; Valentine and Sporton 2009; Haw 2010; Harris 2013; Hoque 2015; Ludhra 2015), and the pressing need for educational professionals to move beyond reductionist categories. My study has similarly found South Asian and Muslim girls to be active subjects in navigating and negotiating their social positioning through their intersecting identities. For instance, their identities as transnational migrants, and hetero-normative racialized sexual and ethnic subjects were used to negotiate access to relationships with boys with their parents and to themselves. This could be seen through their take up of racialized and heteronormative identity constructions as 'good clean' Asian girls that were formed in relation to 'undesirable' white girls within the school's 'everyday', convivial multiculturalism. Although their heteronormative racialized identities were arguably constraining because they offered only a limited set of categories for the girls to construct their own identifications, they did offer the girls some space to utilize their social identities to further their own agency within the confines of gendered and racialized expectations. I further explore the issue of agency below.

Key finding 4
'Between two cultures' in South Asian girls' intersectional identities
(research questions 2 and 3)

An important focus of this thesis has been to explore the contentious 'between two cultures' discourse (Chapters 2, 6 and 8). My data

demonstrate that the teachers employed the idea of the girls being torn between 'progressive' western values and eastern 'backwardness' as a dominant trope to position them (see key finding 2). As discussed above, the girls' day to day negotiations of their identities show a more complex picture – that they are not merely 'torn between two cultures', but positively draw on their racialized and gendered social identities to negotiate and navigate their social relations (key finding 3). This is by no means a new finding and has been amply demonstrated in other studies (Shain 2003; Harris 2006; Valentine and Sporton 2009; Haw 2010; Harris 2013; Hoque 2015; Ludhra 2015).

The 'between two cultures' discourse is largely seen as passé, as an outdated description for the experiences of South Asian girls (Shain 2003; Bhopal 2010). However, I found that the 'between two cultures' was sometimes present in the girls' narratives. It appeared to be an active, but racist discourse that the girls interacted with and sometimes used to empower themselves. I am suggesting here that as scholars working to understand agency of South Asian girls, we need to engage with these reductionist representations if they are found to have resonance in daily life. We need to engage with the 'between two cultures' discourse, because the girls did too.

The girls employed 'between two cultures' as a trope to navigate terrains that were heavily racialized and gendered. I found this to be the case with discourses on specific forms of gender based violence such as forced marriage and honour crimes. For instance, through the examples of Zara and Jamila navigating gender based violence in the form of forced marriage, it was evident that they were interpellated into discourses on culturally racialized gender violence, and understood the violence they were experiencing within these realms. Therefore, where wider structural racialized positioning features in discourse, the girls' articulation of more complex identities remains limited. The 'between two cultures' trope retains its significance in some spheres, and should not be overlooked in

considerations of South Asian girls' agency as a powerful discourse that limits their articulations of their experiences.

9.4. Recommendations: 'safe' spaces for school staff and South Asian girls

Situating my analysis in 'everyday' and state multiculturalism has a number of implications for schools, their management of diversity and how they position South Asian girls. As my findings suggest, multiculturalism does still matter and therefore needs to be engaged with more critically. Teachers need space to develop their professional practice in line with a more complex form of multiculturalism to respond to the ever changing and 'super-diverse' pupil population that characterizes schools like Hillside. South Asian girls also need more complex interventions to better reflect their multifaceted identities and social positions. In this section, I address these implications by putting forward the following recommendations:

A 'complex' multiculturalism through 'safe' professional spaces

Although teachers were 'knowledge producers' who drew on and perpetuated negative cultural stereotypes (Gillborn 1990; Basit 1997; Bhatti 1999; Archer 2008; Crozier and Davies 2008; 2009), my findings suggest that there was also variation between them in their positions as professionals (particularly critical and conservative multiculturalists, Chapter 5). In light of this, binary explanations of the oppressor and oppressed fail to account for differences within groups, which implies that relations between teachers are complex, and that teachers are not intrinsically racist. These findings offer hope that ruptures of racist discourses and anti-racist positions such as those I report on in Chapters 5 and 6, can be applied in professional practice. But to do so they need to find 'safe' professional spaces to do so in an ever increasing neoliberal work place with immense bureaucratic pressures to perform diversity and measure policy outcomes (Ahmed 2012).

Current diversity management in schools is largely characterised by assimilationist approaches (Lander 2014). When contextualized amidst the previous Coalition and present Conservative governments' significant slashing of funding for minority ethnic students, (e.g. the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG))⁴⁷ (NASUWT 2012), the prospects for interventions beyond cohesion and assimilationist approaches remains bleak. I believe that these cuts have significant implications especially for super-diverse schools like Hillside, potentially obscuring the positives of diversity, and instead positioning minority ethnic pupils as the 'problem'. One consequence of these cuts is that there is less space to talk about 'race', or address diversity in any form, let alone through a more 'complex' lens. This is a potentially highly problematic given that teacher training needs to go much further in its work on diversity by working through the tensions of multiculturalism in the curriculum and practice (Race 2011; 2014; Lander 2014)⁴⁸.

There needs to be more research into how effectively diversity is currently managed in light of the cuts, significant changes in how schools are run (i.e. the increasing number of free schools and academies who have more autonomy), and the lack of teacher training on diversity. We need more focus in research on the management of diversity rather than less in order to learn from everyday perspectives of teachers and pupils, and to understand how the current climate is having an impact on fostering positive 'race' relations in Britain today, especially given the heightened racialized times for Muslims.

Being representative and inclusive is not enough to disrupt culturally racialized hierarchies of difference and inequality in our schools (Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2013; Chapters 5 and 6). Lander (2014) suggests that

⁴⁷ Whilst EMAG was ring-fenced funding, this money to support minority ethnic and EAL pupils has now been devolved to schools with no obligation on how this money should be spent (see NALDIC www.naldic.org). At Hillside, the EMA and Inclusion departments disintegrated shortly after 2011.

⁴⁸ There is less done in ITE now on 'race' and racism than there was in the 1980s (Lander 2014). The effects of such minimal content on 'race' in ITE is reflected in the results of a survey of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). Only just over half (54%) felt well prepared or very well prepared to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds (DFE 2012).

there should be dedicated lectures and seminars that challenge stereotypes, constructions of Others and teacher perceptions that privilege whiteness (e.g. in Initial Teacher Education and Continued Professional Development). Sessions could consist of a 'safe' space for debate and discussion facilitated by skilled scholars in the field. This would represent a positive step towards developing a 'complex' multiculturalism in which culturally racialized hierarchies are challenged and worked through.

One such area to be discussed and deconstructed in 'safe' professional spaces is the processes of racialization of groups of minority ethnic students that have been highlighted in this and a number of other studies (see Chapter 2). In light of the paucity of concepts available to address 'race' and therefore the acknowledgement of racial inequalities and racism that the British multicultural context has in part produced (Chapters 5 and 7; Harries 2014; Ahmed 2012), this presents as an even more urgent need. On an everyday level 'race' clearly does still matter, particularly given the current backlash against Muslims. But as a socially constructed concept, 'race' is one that needs to be deconstructed in professional training and practice. This will inevitably involve painful processes of educational professionals engaging with their own biases and experiences, reflecting on how they have arrived at their own perspectives and positions. As well as white teachers having to reflect on whiteness (Lander 2014), the perspectives and experiences of minority ethnic teachers are essential to understanding more about the complex multicultural enactment of diversity.

I do not wish to romanticise this space for dialogue. As past evidence suggests, minority ethnic teachers do not always feel comfortable occupying 'tokenistic' racialised positions as representatives of Others, and wish to be identified as educational professionals with a number of areas of expertise (McNamara et al 2010; Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2013). In this study, Fazia, the South Asian Muslim teacher, felt her voice was often lost because she was South Asian, and was expected to

perform roles because of her ethnic and cultural heritage (Chapter 5). Being in a 'safe' professional space is therefore likely to be fraught with tension. However, Fazia's perceptions are important because they highlight how the spaces in which we talk about 'race', actual or virtual, should also be sensitive about racial tensions between staff, in relation to how diversity should be managed and the experiences of minority ethnic staff. With more 'open' but also 'safe' ethnic specific spaces for input (Housee 2010), the critical knowledge of teachers like Fazia would have a platform to feed into improving practice.

In addition, dedicated spaces on 'race' and ethnicity in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continued Professional Development (CPD) would allow educational professionals to explore ways to engage with existing multicultural tools such as role modelling, race matching and representation underpinned by a more 'complex' multicultural approach. I discussed role models, race matching and representation in some detail in Chapter 6. Although this has been recognised as a flawed approach because of reductionist representations of ethnic Others (Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2013), my findings indicate that the girls responded positively to having same 'race' and gender role models. In addition, I happened to meet Zara at a London train station in late 2015. She greeted me affectionately, saying how important an influence I was in her decision to go on to university because I made her feel that it was possible for people like 'us' to 'progress'. I therefore struggle to reject such multicultural interventions outright because 'race' and gender do powerfully influence how identifications are, in part, made. Within these spaces, professionals could reflect on and discuss with colleagues and trainers – within organisations and also virtually - the hierarchies of difference that they may draw upon when devising strategies to intervene in 'cultural deficit', and if and how their interventions are empowering for South Asian girls. As Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2013) contend, we need to find ways of being representative and inclusive that consider pupils' identities beyond the fixities of 'race' and embrace more complex

locations (i.e. 'culture' and familial expectations, but also class and migratory histories).

Safeguarding South Asian girls in complex multiculturalism: the need for further research

I found that teachers' perceptions of risks for South Asian girls were culturally loaded, in that culture and familial expectations were at the crux of how they positioned them (Chapter 6). However, as my data suggests, the possibilities for teachers and other professionals to engage in more nuanced understandings of risk and the girls' agency is difficult amidst the backdrop of powerful racialized discourses on gender violence, and interventions devised to respond to 'cultural' specifics. This has been further intensified by the more recent concerns about Muslim girls and their recruitment into Isis. Muslim girls as both in danger and as dangerous are commonly focused on in the media and interventions such as Prevent⁴⁹ and as having chosen an identity that rejects 'British' values, regardless of whether or not they are well educated and coming from 'good stable families'. As Mirza (2015b) cautions:

Muslim young women are seen as a potentially threatening religious/ racialised group in the professional, public and political imagination. This marks a distinct departure from the benign cultural/ethnic categorisation of Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls that has long been the dominant tradition in multicultural educational research (ibid: 40)

If we are to safeguard Muslim and South Asian girls more effectively, there needs to be further consideration of how in the 'everyday' multicultural setting, these young women are exposed to wider discourses, and embody exclusionary and negative identity categories. As my findings suggest, the girls' hierarchical discussion on Muslims who veil and Zara's ethnic identifications were laced with references to negative wider discourses on Muslims, which the girls appeared to take

⁴⁹ Prevent is a government counter terrorism strategy to prevent people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

on and use to position one another (Chapter 7). Further research in this area could further an understanding about young women's processes of exclusion, lack of promise, and their need to feel part of society.

Addressing exclusion is particularly pertinent given that Muslim identities may be more appealing in a time of increasing exclusion on the macro level but also subtler and implicit exclusion at the micro level (Hoque 2015; Valentine and Sporton 2015). In their study of 'jihadi' brides, Saltman and Smith (2015) identify a number of push and pull factors such as feeling culturally and socially isolated (e.g. questioning one's identity and uncertainty of belonging within a Western culture); that the international Muslim community as a whole is being violently persecuted; an anger and frustration over a perceived lack of international action in response to this persecution; belonging and sisterhood; and a romanticisation of the experience. Schools as micropublics are in urgent need of evolving as spaces in which these issues can be tackled through more 'complex' multicultural approaches that do not demonise or Other Muslim girls, but include them in a British identity that speaks to inclusive, non-Eurocentric values.

However, the question here is, what form could a 'complex' multicultural intervention take to keep South Asian girls safe, and without being culturally reductionist? The argument for a move towards incorporating a rights-based approach within multiculturalism offers one way forward and has been made by a number of commentators. Kymlicka (2010) is for a move away from the culturalist 3S approach (saris samosas and steel bands) of multiculturalism towards emphasising political participation and economic opportunities rather than symbolic politics of cultural recognition. In particular, he argues for the prioritisation of human rights and individual freedoms over respect for cultural traditions, and building inclusive identities rather than recognising ancestral cultural identities. Similarly, Dahliwahal and Patel (2006) argue that multiculturalism requires better management and advocate a 'mature' multiculturalism that promotes principles of human rights as a unifying identity rather than

religious and ethnic identities that rely on the exclusion of others. Phillips (2007) and Gill and Anitha (2010) suggest that we still need multiculturalism but a version that dispenses with authentic notions of 'culture' and places individual rights at its core. For instance, a gender rights approach in cases of gender based violence could potentially help victims of forced marriage to achieve gender equality within their communities as opposed to the 'right to exit' their communities.⁵⁰

I agree with the above suggestions. Based on my findings, there were circumstances in which the girls would have potentially benefitted from a whole school approach that promoted a gender rights based approach to challenging violence (i.e. the right not to be a victim of violence or coerced into marriage regardless of culture, ethnicity, and religion), rather than understanding the phenomena as 'race' based. One 'safe' space to promote this would be in PSHE, where specificities of gender violence (e.g. cyber-bullying, forced marriage, FGM) may be referred to so that young people have concrete examples with which to identify, but that the wider cross-cutting issues of gendered coercion, exploitation, violence more generally, are highlighted. Such lessons could also include feminist input into issues of sexualisation, resistance, and the promotion of positive images of the body (Ringrose 2013) to reach out to all girls. In hindsight I would have liked to have probed the girls for their thoughts on how they would like to receive such lessons. Future research in the area could consider the views of young people to inform the formats and content of such lessons⁵¹.

Given that my findings also indicate that the girls exercise agency and navigate the forced marriage discourse in varied ways, this suggests that there is a need to develop more sophisticated ways to understand how young women negotiate violence on a 'everyday' level. By doing so, steps can be taken better to support them in navigating risk of violence.

⁵⁰Exploring what 'complex' multicultural training would look like was not within the original scope of the study. I suggest that there is a need for further research on developing training packages on multicultural interventions. I put forward what a 'complex' multicultural approach might look like for implementing role model interventions in Appendix 10, figure 1.

⁵¹ See Appendix 10, figure 2 for a suggested lesson on gender based violence for Year 11 girls.

Jamila and Zara were both potentially facing forced marriage, but they each read their situation differently. Zara explained her circumstances by situating herself as 'between two cultures' and sought help from the school, whereas Jamila narrated a more complex picture, offering examples of her 'choices' as a process of negotiation with her parents. In their own ways, these girls were both creating resilience and safe spaces to negotiate violence and build positive identities (Callaghan and Alexander 2015). Interventions could therefore be devised in light of how young people create such 'safe' spaces (Callaghan and Alexander 2015). This is a much under researched area, and a black feminist sensibility to the contextual specific manifestations of violence would be key here, so that interventions do not reinstate whiteness and move beyond cultural specificities. I suggest that in-depth research with girls and women who have experienced various forms of gender violence is needed to understand the complexities of 'choice' within the constraints of wider racialized discourse.

9.5 Reflections on the research process

Case study methodological approach

As discussed in Chapter 4, I opted for a case study approach that drew on interpretive ethnographic methods. One of the main criticisms of this approach is the lack of generalizability of findings that are specific to a given context (Yin 2009). In response to this, I do not claim that Hillside was a 'typical' school, although as Ball et al (2013) point out, defining a typical school is by no means a straightforward task. Instead, I present my reflections on the advantages and drawbacks of using a case study approach in this study, which focused on a specific group of teachers and South Asian girls not generally recognised as 'South Asian' but were similarly subject to processes of racialization.

As my access was granted via teachers who were atypical in that they were employed to improve the wellbeing and attainment of minority ethnic pupils, one would imagine that my data would be skewed towards the positive versions of the management of diversity. However, my findings

on enactments and approaches to diversity management were varied and contested. This indicates that the 'best case scenario' by no means guarantees a given outcome. Diversity management is contested and should be considered in its own context. From this viewpoint, a case study approach was well suited to addressing the aims of this study. In addition, not all the girls in my sample were typically associated with being South Asian, but given their intersectional positions, many of their experiences were similar to girls in other studies from the Indian sub continent. It was the processes of racialisation in the school's multicultural context that often caused them to identify with one another. Therefore, this case study approach has been an asset in exploring how girls who are not typically thought of as South Asian came to be positioned, and positioned themselves, as such.

Role of the researcher

One feature of conducting in-depth research through case study and ethnographic approaches is that the researcher necessarily has an impact on the process of generating the data. I discussed this in relation to role models (Chapter 5), where I argued that being a researcher and a role model through being seen as a South Asian female had an impact on the generation of data, my relationship with the girls and my subjective sense of responsibility. For the girls and their teachers, this role model positioning was underpinned by essentialised versions of ethnicity and shared culture. My culturally racialised identity was produced in the field, where I was expected to perform being South Asian but where I was also co-implicit in this process with Fazia in reinforcing and inscribing such identification categories.

I became emotionally as well as professionally invested in my performative South Asian female identity to meet my aims of completing this piece of research. It became much more than studying a group of girls. I was drawn into the life of the school, embroiled in its conflicts through my alignment with EAL and Inclusion, but also became drawn into advising the girls about boyfriends, parental relationships and studies.

As Ali (2006) argues, in ethnographic research, proximity and intimacy result in the development of personal relationships, which require even more complex negotiations of power. Although this was not a traditional ethnographic study, my embeddedness in the school gave rise to a number of scenarios in which I was expected to be an 'expert' on and for the girls (e.g. role modelling, as a friend and professional figure to the girls, participating in meetings and giving advice to teachers (e.g. on relationships with boys). These experiences reflected my sometimes blurred positioning as an insider/outsider (Perryman 2011). This is not a drawback of conducting case study research but what I see as an asset and essential in producing a piece of research that helps to illuminate the intricacies of an organisation's working.

Yet, the process of conducting interviews with the girls was not straightforwardly positive. In relation to Zara's disclosure of violence (Chapter 8), I was left with the feeling that I had somehow taken something personal from her and not followed her up as much as I would have liked to. After discussions with my supervisors as part of our 'off-loading' protocol whereby I could share information to help me navigate this difficult situation, I decided I would follow Zara up at a later stage in the fieldwork. On a positive note, Zara said that she felt better having had the opportunity to tell me what was happening at home as our discussions felt like a form of counselling. However, as I am not a counsellor, I could only offer her limited assistance and felt somewhat disappointed that as a researcher I had the privilege to tap into personal experience but did not possess the training or capacity to do more for the participants who shared their struggles (Huber and Clandinin 2002).

I would have welcomed the opportunity to feed my findings back to the staff at Hillside in person. However, by 2011 after a period of maternity leave, most of the staff I had developed the strongest relationships with, as well as others, had left the school (Lizzie, Patricia, Fazia, Heather, Isabelle). It would still be potentially possible to present findings to the

school and I will be looking into such avenues as I look to publish articles. In any case, I will provide the school with a written summary of the thesis.

9.6 Final thoughts

I hope that the findings from this thesis will further educational professionals' understanding of the complex locations of South Asian girls and encourage school staff, and other professionals to think about stereotypes of the girls as pathological victims of culture. This is particularly timely given concerns about forced marriage, FGM and female recruitment into Isis in the context of Islamaphobia. These issues are important and should be addressed as violence against women and girls. However, it is also clear that there are limitations in drawing on 'race' and culture as the dominant lens with which to understand experience. Given the current context in which schools operate, we need to seek ways to engage with existing multicultural tools such as role modelling, race matching and representation, underpinned by a more 'complex' multicultural approach, which would also inform pastoral interventions. This is not an easy task given that there is little scope for school staff to engage with diversity training. They need the space to reflect on the effects of racialized constructions of students so that they, with trainers and academic researchers, can work together to address the constantly changing landscape of diversity and difference, and input into teacher training on an ongoing basis.

This PhD journey has been a long and challenging one. Conducting the fieldwork, analysing the data and writing up part time whilst working and bringing up two children has been one of my greatest challenges to date. It has also at times been difficult on a personal level through my engagement with my experiences as a South Asian women and reflecting on these as I analysed the nine girls' stories and experiences. As I expected, the girls were varied within my sample and different from myself because of migration paths, generation and social class. However, doing this study has reinforced my understanding that the

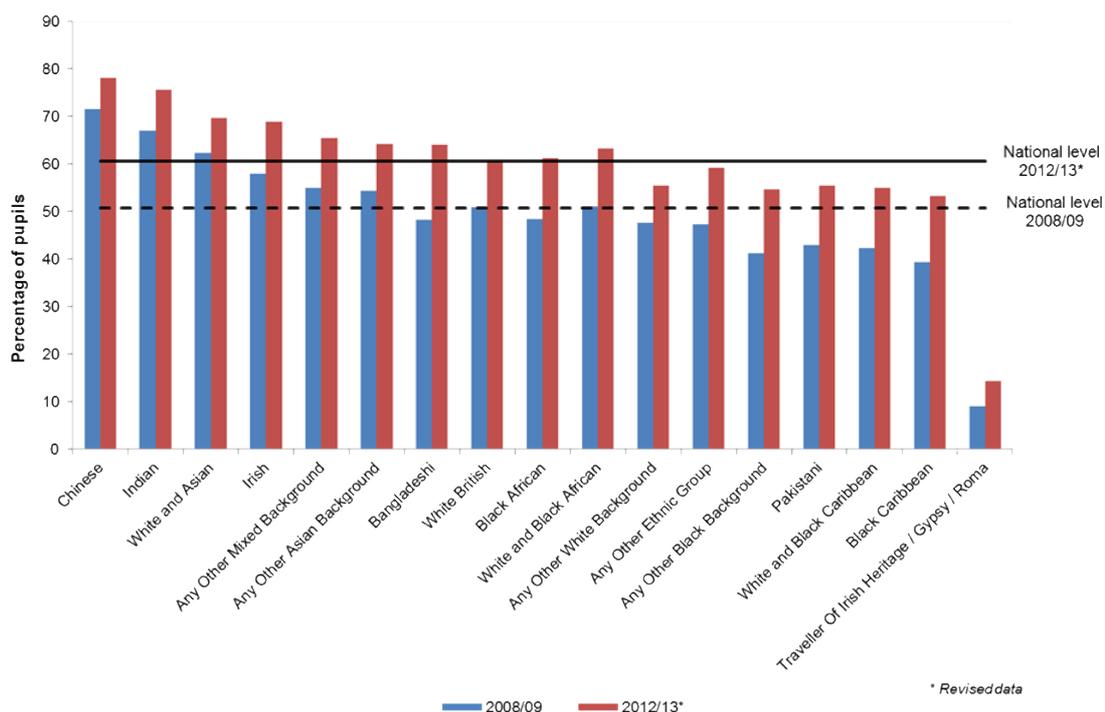
intersections of 'race' and gender continue to be powerful hierarchical positioning tools. We had shared experiences of being racialized through our gender, physical appearance, religion and sexuality.

Having gone through the process of doing this study, I would tell the girls that they can take ownership of their identities, but they should also be aware of the limits to this. As South Asian, Muslim or mixed race women they will be negotiating their identities amidst wider representations that do not always resonate with their experiences. They will also be negotiating expectations within and outside the family. Knowing that there are positions ascribed to us which we do not have ownership of is empowering because we can then challenge these social positions, collectively, but also individually in our daily lives. We are not just passive victims of familial pressure and expectations. We are far more than just 'Asian' girls.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C by ethnic group

(or equivalent including English and mathematics GCSEs or iGCSEs, 2008/09 and 2012/13).



DfE Department for Education (2014) *Statistical First Release: GCSE and Equivalent Attainment by Pupil Characteristics in England, 2012/13*, accessed 21/05/15

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/280689/SFR05_2014_Text_FINAL.pdf

Appendix 2: Topic guide for teachers

- Tell me about your role
- Describe the school for me
- What are the most pressing issues for you?
- Multiculturalism: what does this mean to you? In what ways is the school multicultural?
- What other ways of managing diversity are there in the school?
- Is celebrating difference always a good thing? Can it ever be problematic around celebrating difference? How is difference celebrated? Where is it in the curriculum? Do you think it is enough, what else should be done?
- Tell me about some of the South Asian girls in the school
- Do you think that the issues they face are usually culturally specific?
- Every child matters – what does this mean to you?
- Have you come across forced marriage guidelines?
- Do you think that the Asian girls face any specific issues?

Appendix 3: Topic guide for pupil focus groups

The following topics/questions were discussed across the seven focus groups conducted with South Asian girls:

- What do you think you have in common?
- What's different about you to other girls in the school?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Transnational links – do you go to your/parent's country of origin? How often do you go? What sort of things do you there?
- Media – what music, films do you like? Who do you admire? Why?
- Experiences of racism
- How is your life different to your parents?
- What makes a bad girl? What makes a good girl?
- What would you like to do when you leave school? What do you want to be? Why? What has influenced your choices?
- What's your dream job?
- What do your parents do?
- What do you see yourself doing in 10 years time?
- Do you think it is harder to get on if you are a woman, and Asian, does it make a difference?
- Do you see any obstacles, anything that would hold you back in pursuing your aspirations?
- Do you think life would be different if you were a boy? What's different for you compared to your brothers?
- The hijab, its meaning
- Any discrimination experienced when wearing hijab?
- What kinds of differences are there between you and your mothers/older sisters?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- What does multiculturalism mean to you? Is talking about our cultures/differences good/bad?

Appendix 4: Fieldwork Timeline

	2008			2009							2010					2011	
	Jun	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	Jun	Jul	Sept	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Oct	Jun	
Staff interviews	Lizzie	Lizzie (2); Josie (2); Barbara		Fazia				Fazia	Esther; Lizzie and Fazia (joint); Heather	Lizzie	Patricia (2)			Isabelle	Annie		
Focus groups and written exercises		South Asian girls (PSHE lessons (7))							Mixed group				Mixed group				
Observation				Media			Citizenship		End of Year event								
Pupil interviews				Zara (3); Gargi (2)	Halima; Gargi and Asanka (joint); Meena	Jamila (2); Halima (2)	Meena; Jamila; Halima; Zara					Nasreen (2); Raani (2)		Zara; Gargi; Asanka		Zara and Meena (joint)	

Appendix 5: Topic guide for interviews with South Asian girls

School

- Tell me about school (prompts: positive/negative feelings about school; teachers; friends, safety; differences between school life and home)
- What do you think of the other pupils in the school? (prompt: perceptions of being in an ethnically mixed school)
- What subjects do you like/dislike? Why? (prompts: PSHE, citizenship classes?)
- How did you feel about being the focus groups? (prompts: being with other 'South Asian'/ Muslim girls)
- Is it important for you to have other Asian teachers in the school?
- Where do you see yourself in the future, after school?
- What about boys/boyfriends?

Home

- Tell me about your family
- Migration history
- Translation for parents?
- Tell me about your views on marriage
- Any experiences of racism?
- How would you describe the relationships between men and women in your family? (prompt: wider community, extended family)

You

- Tell me about an experience that made you angry /happy/ sad
- Are you a good girl? Have you ever been in trouble?
- What are your likes and dislikes about being a young woman?
- What do you think are the stereotypes about young women in your school/neighbourhood?
- Use of social networking sites; How do you feel about your body? Your appearance?

Appendix 6: Written exercises

The following two exercises were completed during the last two PSHE lessons:

Exercise 1

Remember only I will see this. It will not be marked! Please bring your completed forms back to me or Miss X next week on Monday

You are free to write whatever you want and in any style you want – I am interested in your feelings and opinions and am not here to judge you on your writing ability or style.

Don't think about it too much – just start writing!

1. What did you like about these sessions?
2. What did you dislike about the sessions?
3. What do you think you have in common with the other girls in the group, if anything?
4. What more do you think the school can do for you or other pupils like you? e.g. better careers advice, more guidance on others about life in general
5. If you were not born in the UK and came to this school when you first arrived, what could have been done to support you more when you arrived? E.g. language support, understanding the school system

Exercise 2

Thank you so much for speaking to me over the last few weeks. I have enjoyed the sessions very much. You have many interesting things to say and I have learnt a lot from you.

As this is our final group session, I would like you to write a short piece for me about: **“Your feelings about school”**. **Only I will see this. It will not be marked.**

You are free to write whatever you want and in any style you want – I am interested in your feelings and opinions and am not here to judge you on your writing ability or style.

So don't worry about grammar or spelling mistakes – just write down what you can in a way that I can understand your experiences and feelings.

It can be about parts of school life for you, for example, friends, lessons, teachers, exams, other pupils. Don't think about it too much – just start writing!

Appendix 7: Hillside's student body by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Ethnicity Count	Ethnicity %
Any other Asian background	41	4.82
Any other Black background	35	4.12
Any other mixed background	38	4.47
Bangladeshi	22	2.59
Black – Ghanaian	21	2.47
Black – Nigerian	31	3.65
Black – Somali	34	4.00
Black Caribbean	198	23.29
Chinese	11	1.29
Indian	7	0.82
Information Not Yet Obtained	9	1.06
Latin/South/Central American	6	0.71
Other Black African	40	4.71
Other ethnic group	29	3.41
Pakistani	16	1.88
Refused	18	2.12
White	17	2.00
White – British	167	19.65
White – Irish	3	0.35
White and Asian	5	0.59
White and Black African	7	0.82
White and Black Caribbean	59	6.94
White Eastern European	21	2.47
White Western European	15	1.76
Total	850	

Appendix 8: Consent letters

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19th January 2009

Dear Parent/Guardian

Permission to conduct research at Hillside

I am a doctoral student at the Institute of Education. I am looking at multiculturalism in British Schools. In particular my focus is how multiculturalism shapes young people's identities.

I will be spending several weeks in the school for the rest of this term and next term, and would like to talk to as many pupils as I can and this will probably include your child. The law requires me to ask permission from parents/guardians for me to do this.

This research is important to inform government policies and as with most doctoral research will be published some time in the future. The school and your child's name will not be used to ensure confidentiality at all times.

In my experience as a researcher, children enjoy and get a lot out of talking about themselves. My work will not interfere with your child's daily lessons as it will mainly take place in association with a teacher.

If you are willing for your child to participate in a one to one interview, and your child is also happy with this, please can you both sign and return the bottom of this form to Ms X by Friday 23rd January. If I do not receive a response from you, I will assume that you are happy for your child to participate. Please do contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss the research further. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Veena Meeto

Multiculturalism and identities research

I agree to my child's participation

I do not agree to my child's participation

Child's name:

Class:

Parent/Guardian signature

Child's signature

.....

.....

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Member of staff

3rd November 2008

A study of multiculturalism and young people's identities

I am a doctoral student at the Institute of Education conducting research on how multiculturalism shapes young people's identities. I am particularly interested in identities of girls from diverse backgrounds and would like to focus my study on Key Stage 4 pupils (14-19). I have been in touch with Ms X, Ethnic Minority Achievement Officer, about the possibility of conducting some of this research at X School. My research involves pupil participation in discussion groups and some one to one interviews. I will also be speaking to the school head and some members of staff during the school year.

I can assure you that my work will not interfere with daily lessons, as it will mainly take place in association with Ms X and during lunchtimes.

This research is important to inform government policies and as with most doctoral research will be published some time in the future. The school, teachers and pupils' names will not be used to ensure confidentiality at all times. My work is being closely supervised by Professor Heidi Mirza and Dr Jessica Ringrose and has been approved by the university ethics committee.

I do hope that that research will be of interest to you and that you would like to work with me on this important and timely area. This will involve your participation in a one to one interview which will take approximately one hour. Please could you sign and date the form below and return to Ms X at your earliest convenience.

If you are happy to participate, I will contact you to agree a suitable date and time. I am happy to answer any questions and discuss the research further.

Yours sincerely,

Veena Meeto

.....
 I agree to participate in the research

I do not agree to participate in the research

Signed Date:

Print name:

Appendix 9: Images of the hijab





Appendix 10: Suggested lesson format

Before role model interventions are put into place, I suggest that there should be a space in which groundwork can be carried out in which the role models and young people have room for critical interrogation of shared identities and what they can realistically expect from having/ being role models. There should ideally be a session before implementation of the role model intervention, which includes:

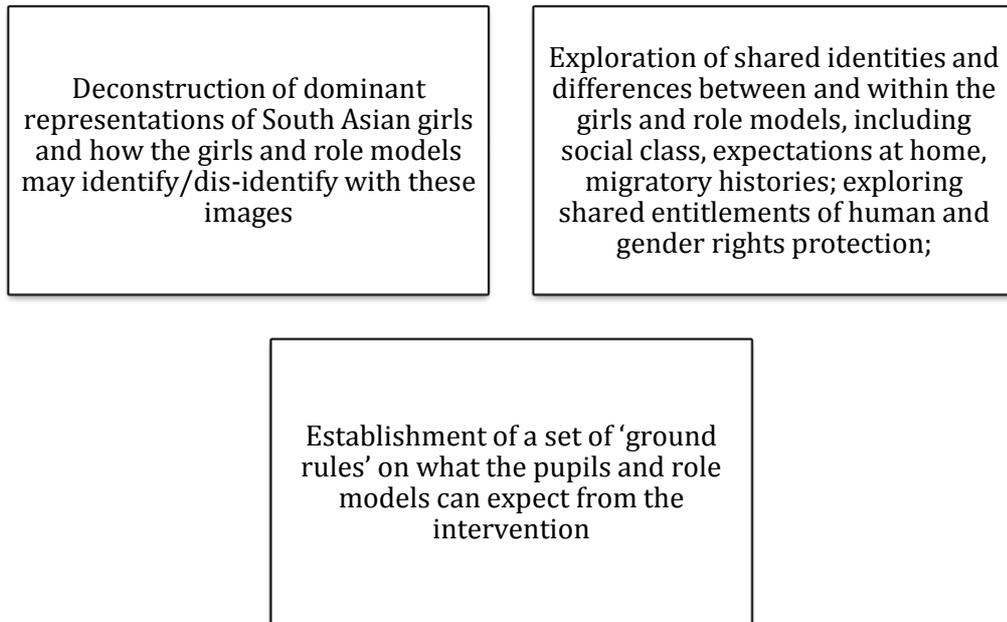


Figure 1: Implementing same 'race' and gender role models with South Asian girls

I suggest the following lesson content for Year 10-11 girls on gender based violence across ethnic groups:

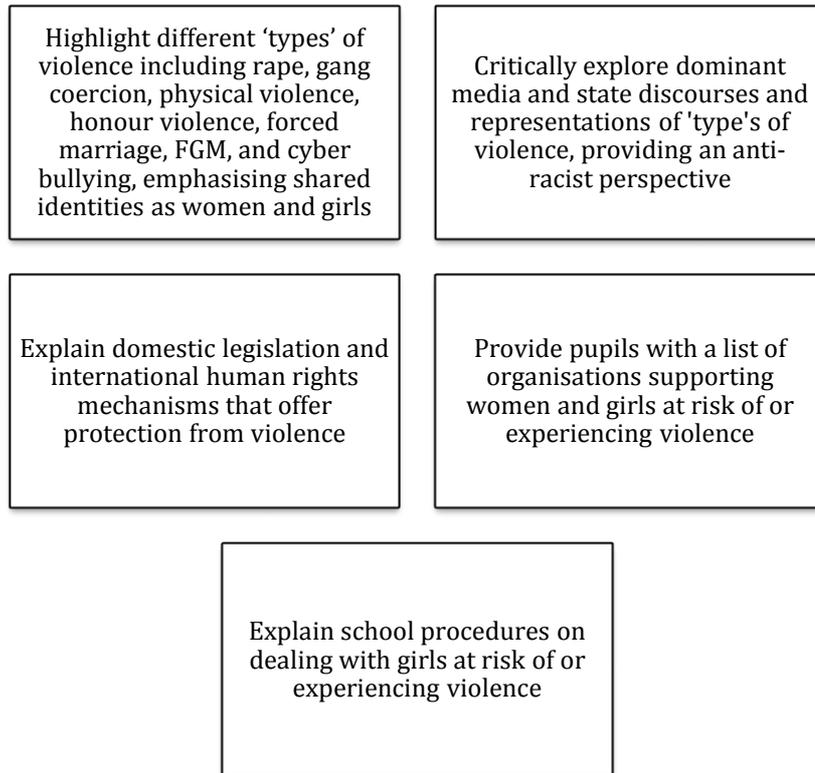


Figure 2: Suggested PSHE lesson for girls only on gender based violence (Years 10-11)

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