This important book draws together and integrates several strands in educational policy. It offers a perspective on the role of Britain’s increasing Muslim population, and the need for Citizenship Education for all school pupils which can allow young Muslims to integrate in ways which meet their legitimate needs for expression of religious values, and which fosters tolerance in both Muslim pupils and in their peers, as well as responsible participation in the wider democracy.

The book explains clearly the meaning of education and citizenship in Islam, and argues that the practice of Islam encourages its adherents both to tolerate other religions, and the societies in which Islamic minorities have settled. In this account, there is no logic, morality or theological support for violent acts against the state. However, increasing Islamophobia, misdirected against Muslim youth in Britain, has forced a reappraisal of identity. This combined with increasing dissatisfaction of Muslim parents on the failure of mainstream schools to tolerate the religious aspirations of their children, has led to the setting up of a number of Muslim schools in Britain.

Recent government actions to introduce Citizenship Education in all schools as a means of fostering tolerance and countering political apathy are evaluated in a study of five “best practice” Muslim schools, and five similar schools serving a wider religious population. Results show the general success of Citizenship Education in the Muslim schools studied, and support the argument that Islamic education can support Citizenship Education in socially productive ways.

While focussed on Britain, this book is an important comparative study of education, sociology and social policy, and deserves to be read by trainee teachers, undergraduates, and policy makers in the fields of education and social planning.
Citizenship Education: The British Muslim Perspective
Citizenship Education: The British Muslim Perspective

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and

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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DEDICATION

“My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.” (Qur’an 27:19)

All praise be to God and to His Prophets Adam, Noah, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa Bin Maryam and to the Final Prophet Mohammed, Peace be Upon Them, for inspiring us in the completion of this work.

We gratefully acknowledge the love and support of our parents, our wives Somia and Loretta, and our children Noor, Ammar, Michael, Daniel and Abigail during this study.

NADER AL-REFAI AND CHRISTOPHER BAGLEY
This is an important and interesting book, and I commend it to a wide readership. The authors have achieved a number of objectives. First, they offer a comprehensive account of the history of the Muslim community in Britain, and the aims of education which are inherent in Muslim belief and practice. Secondly, they give a clear history of Citizenship Education in Britain, and the problems of implementing this new aspect of the National Curriculum in both religious and non-religious schools. In their sampling of teachers and pupils in “best practice” Muslim and state secondary schools, they show both the difficulties and the achievements in implementing Citizenship Education in Muslim and state schools.

The results are very interesting, since they show that Muslim education can both improve citizenship lessons, and prepare students to be ‘good citizens’. This findings of this book are an important counter to those who argue that Muslim schools are divisive. On the contrary, such schools develop models of the good citizen, and show that Muslim schools do reach out to the wider world of education and society. Given continued Islamophobic pressures, it is logical to expect the number of such schools to grow. These schools should be ‘voluntary aided’, enjoying a similar status to that enjoyed by Anglican, Catholic Jewish and Hindu schools.

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AMS</td>
<td>Association of Muslim Schools</td>
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<td>CE</td>
<td>Citizenship Education</td>
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<td>CRE</td>
<td>Commission for Racial Equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfEE</td>
<td>Department for Education and Employment</td>
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<td>DfES</td>
<td>Department for Education and Skills</td>
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<td>ESD</td>
<td>Education for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>FOSIS</td>
<td>Federation of Students' Islamic Societies</td>
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<td>GCSE</td>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IEA</td>
<td>International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement</td>
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<td>INSET</td>
<td>In Service Teacher Training</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>LEA</td>
<td>Local Education Authorities</td>
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<td>MCB</td>
<td>The Muslim Council of Britain</td>
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<td>MET</td>
<td>Muslim Education Trust</td>
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<td>MS</td>
<td>Muslim schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>National Curriculum</td>
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<td>NIME</td>
<td>National Institute for Mental Health England</td>
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<td>NMEC</td>
<td>National Muslim Education Council</td>
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<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBUH</td>
<td>Peace Be Upon Him</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSHE</td>
<td>Personal, Social and Health Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualifications and Curriculum Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACRE</td>
<td>Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education</td>
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<td>SS</td>
<td>State schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIDE</td>
<td>Teachers in Development Education</td>
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<td>TTA</td>
<td>Teacher Training Agency</td>
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<td>UKACIA</td>
<td>The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs</td>
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<td>UKIM</td>
<td>The UK Islamic Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMO</td>
<td>The Union of Muslim Organizations</td>
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CHAPTER 1

PART 1

THE PROBLEM AND THE ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

INTRODUCTION

The coming years, along with the trends towards increasing globalisation, will affect the future state of citizenship within democratic and other political communities, with many implications for educational systems (Crick, 2000a and b; Lawson et al., 2000; Banks, 2004; Peters et al., 2007; Pitkanen and Kalekin-Fishman, 2007; Rizvi et al., 2007). The nature of citizenship in the democratic political communities of the future suggests a world where citizens (including migrant communities) enjoy multiple identities, and in which communities accept some of the general values of the state while preserving their own identity. Each person in any state may have to learn to become a 'cosmopolitan citizen' who is capable of mediating between rootedness national traditions and alternative forms of identity (Held and McGrew, 1999). For Muslim youth who have settled in Europe, the challenges to their traditional religious identity are strong. They seek empowerment, but at the same time many wish to retain a traditional set of Muslim values (Malik, 2006).

Mediation for Muslim youth and their parents encompasses a dialogue with tradition values, and a discourse with new challenges which should lead to an increase in the scope of mutual understanding. This view is elaborated by Professor Khurshid Ahmed:

As humanity enters the third millennium of the Christian era, waves of globalisation and floods of information are forcing human beings in almost every part of the world to become citizen of the ‘global village’. A need for mutual understanding and dialogue between peoples belonging to different religions, cultures and ideologies was never as great and as pressing as it is today. It would not be going too far to suggest that this is becoming a prerequisite for the survival and sustenance of human society. No one can afford to live in isolation. (Parvez, 2000, p. iv)

Educational and social institutions should have a role in developing the communities of faith, and they are challenged to give answers and solutions to the questions and problems arising in the communities, regardless of the particular nation state in which the person is born and brought up (Held and McGrew, 1999).
BRITISH SOCIETY AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

Britain has a large ethnic minority population due to its imperial history and its supposed reputation for social tolerance. This has led to significant immigration from former colonies; from the enlarged European Union; and from refugees and asylum seekers. Religious diversity has been a characteristic of British society for hundreds of years. This has been expressed primarily through different Christian denominations (Skinner, 2002).

The 2001 census indicated the ethnic and religious diversity of Britain with 87.5 per cent of the population giving their ethnic group as White British. London had the highest proportion of people from minority ethnic groups. But there are substantial ethnic minority communities elsewhere in Britain, particularly from Asian countries who have settled in Yorkshire and Humberside (2.9 per cent) and the West Midlands (2.9 per cent). Around two percent of the population are Indian, with Leicester having the highest proportion of Indians at 25.7 per cent. Bangladeshis formed 0.5 per cent of those in England and Wales, with the highest proportion in the London borough of Tower Hamlets, at 33.4 per cent of the total population. Around 1.1 per cent of the population are Black Caribbean, 0.9 per cent are Black African and a further 0.2 per cent are from Other Black groups.

The 2001 Census also indicated that there are 37.3 million people in England and Wales who gave their religion as Christian. The percentage of Christians is similar between the two areas, but the proportion of people who follow other religions is higher in England at 6 per cent, compared with Wales at 1.5 per cent.

In England, 3.1 per cent of the population stated their religion was Muslim, and 0.7 per cent in Wales, making this the most common religion after Christianity. For other religions in England and Wales there were in 2001: Hindus 1.3 per cent; Sikh 0.8 per cent; Jewish 0.6 per cent; and Buddhist 0.5 per cent. The Muslim population of Britain numbered 1.6 millions in 2001 - some 3.1 per cent of the total - but because this is a largely youthful group with many still in their child-bearing years, their proportion of the total population is likely to increase substantially (Peach, 2006). Sahin (2008) estimated that in the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland, Ulster) the Muslim population now numbers more than two millions, of whom 450,000 are children. Ten thousand of these British Muslims are now sterling millionaires; the number of Muslim children in Britain increases each year by some 50,000 due to the fact that most Muslims in Britain are aged less than 40 (Black, 2008). In the world in 2008 the number of Muslims increased to 19.2 per cent of the population, overtaking Roman Catholics as the world’s largest denominational group.

THE MUSLIM PRESENCE IN BRITAIN

Post-war migration to Britain has introduced new religious communities. There are now an estimated 15 million Muslims in Europe, constituting one of the largest and one of the most active religious minorities on the continent (Abedin and Sardar, 1995). Many Muslims in Britain are experiencing their first encounter of living as a
minority within a Christian majority and this poses challenges for all aspects of their lives. Muslims in Britain are not a monolithic community, but reflect the linguistic, cultural and racial diversity of their origins. Their presence in Britain is primarily a consequence of their role in the economic reconstruction of post-war Britain (Khan, 2000).

By choosing to live in Britain, Muslims to some extent lose out on aspects of their values and culture and in some measure have to yield to cultural, social and political dominance by a Non-Muslim majority. Living in the West introduced challenges for Muslims, typical of those faced by first generation immigrants. This often leads to the evolution of new concepts of identity and religion within their new mainstream society. Muslim communities’ reaction to the tensions of modernisation and life in urban, industrialised, secular Europe has characterised salient dilemmas for the second generation of Muslims immigrants (Abedin and Sardar, 1995).

Particularly during the last fifteen years, Muslims in Britain have become more involved in a number of spheres of social action and organisation. Politically, socially and culturally their presence has become increasingly apparent. There are a number of important factors central to the presence of Muslims in Britain, within the context of Muslim social and political mobilization, and subsequent state responses (Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003). Muslim activism has posed challenges to state policy on issues and areas of importance such as education, religion and political representation (Khan, 2000; Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003).

Ahmad and Donnan (1994) argued that a situation of conflict exists between the Muslim minority in Britain increasingly becoming concerned about its future, and the demands of a secular Non-Muslim society. The attitudes of Muslims to the British state and its cultural institutions are a reflection of their historic and contemporary experiences, which additionally provide the framework for religious, social and political activism in the British context. Ahmad and Donnan (1994) argued that Muslims should no longer be considered to be the products of exotic oriental civilizations, but as local and indigenous populations in Britain.

The situation of Muslim communities in Britain should be regarded within the context of an ongoing process of integration between minorities and the dominant mainstream. The Head of State, HM The Queen, recognised the positive contribution of British Muslims to the richness of modern Britain. She said in her Throne Speech: “A distinctive new identity, that of British Muslim, has emerged; I find that healthy and welcome” (HMQ, 1997).

INTEGRATION, ASSIMILATION AND PLURALISM WITHIN BRITISH SOCIETY

In the classic British literature on racial and ethnic relations a distinction has been made between integration and assimilation of minority groups. Integration occurs when a cultural, ethnic or religious group retains a distinct identity and certain ritual aspects of identity, expressed in forms of dress, diet, language spoken at home, patterns of endogamy, and religious observance. At the same time, these integrated groups observe the laws of their adopted country, work hard, pay taxes,
and foster the education of their children for upward advancement within the occupational system. They seek tolerance from the host society in return for this law abiding activity. Numerous groups in Britain seek this “integrated” status including Jews, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.

Assimilation in contrast involves the desire to be more or less completely absorbed in non-racist ways, within the host society, including its traditional religions. Intermarriage with the indigenous community is common. Many immigrants from the Caribbean seek this assimilated status (Bagley et al., 1997).

Problems arise when a large proportion of the host society rejects, for racist reasons, the aspiration of ethnic and religious minorities to integrate within society, despite the desire of these groups to be conformist in the spheres of work and of obeying laws. The racist majority of Britain demands that these ethnic and religious minorities “integrate” (by which they mean assimilate, abandoning traditional religious identities and observances). Ironically however those groups which do seek to assimilate are often rejected by the racist majority because of a chronic dislike of “coloured” people (Bagley et al., 1979). Recent studies suggest that racism in schools and in the wider society has not diminished (Wanless, 2006). Slack (2008) reports on a random survey of British adults suggested that at least half of those interviewed expressed racist attitudes concerning “immigrants”.

Pluralism in its ideal state exists when different blocs (religious, political, ethnic and cultural), of society are tolerated, and tolerate one another within the balanced political framework of the state. Britain aspires to be such a plural society (Verma, 1989), but forces of racism within British society which seek ‘subjugated assimilation’ of religious and ethnic groups prevent the fullest achievement of the plural society ideal (Bagley, 1973; Walford, 2001). In this ideal society, Islam (like other religious groups) should be an accepted pillar of the plural society, receiving state support for a variety of institutions such as education. We have described such an ideal in the case of The Netherlands (Bagley, 1973) but in Britain justice and equality for all ethnic and religious groups in society has not yet been achieved.

THE ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The educational system of any nation should meet the needs and requirements of its peoples. Accordingly, the English education system has traditionally been characterized by its diversity and involvement of various Christian denominations. In 1997 about a third of pupils within England and Wales were educated within religiously-based state-maintained schools. (Walford, 2000).

Although the English educational system is open to students of different backgrounds, many recently arrived ethnic minority groups and religious groups in Britain have established their own schools in order to meet specific cultural and religious requirements, since they have the legal entitlement under the 1944 Education Act to do this.
THE PROBLEM AND THE ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

Muslim education systems

It was estimated that there were at least 400,000 Muslim children of school age in England in the early 1990s (Sarwar, 1994). The number of such children has increased since that time, and is now increasing at the rate of about 50,000 a year (Black, 2008). In the early 1990s it was estimated that there were about 60 schools with a Muslim intake of 90 to 100 per cent and over 200 with over 75 per cent (Parker-Jenkins, 1995:86). There are now a large number of Muslim independent schools, founded by individuals and groups, which aim to incorporate Islamic ideals into the education system, thereby fulfilling many religious and cultural requirements of their children.

Faith, identity and citizenship

Faith, it is suggested, can make a positive contribution to identity, citizenship and the common good. Desmond Tutu, the South African Archbishop has observed:

When people tell me that religion and politics do not mix, I wonder which Bible they have been reading! (Stevens, 2002).

All the great world religions offer fundamental values and a world view for their members, values which should guide conduct in society. There is much more in common between these values than is generally understood or commented upon. The golden rules of some of the major faiths suggest the same fundamental attitudes to others, for example in Christianity: "In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets"; in Islam: "Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself"; and in Judaism: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah - all the rest is commentary." (Stevens, 2002)

Until the 1988 Education Reform Act and the introduction of a National Curriculum in the 1990s the British government had limited control over the content of the curriculum in English schools, especially with regard to religious education. Up to that time the Local Education Authorities (LEAs), individual schools and some teachers' associations, and a number of political associations, tried to promote Citizenship Education - but these efforts were largely unsuccessful (King and Reiss, 1993). Similarly, cross curricular themes were introduced as part of the whole curriculum in the late 1990s. While guidance was non-statutory, the themes were intended to address Section One of the Education Reform Act 1998, where notions of balance and breadth were seen to be important, alongside the requirement for schools to address the social, cultural, moral, spiritual and physical aspects of education. This was a statutory requirement of the formal curriculum. Following this attempt the then Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett, set up an Advisory Group on Citizenship which reported in 1998 (Blunkett, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 2001). The advisory group proposed the national programme of Citizenship Education for English schools in its final report ('The Crick Report')
which consisted of an outline programme of study and preliminary guidance (QCA, 2000). ‘The Crick Report’ has three main strands:

**Social and moral responsibility** - children learning from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other (this is an essential pre-condition for citizenship);

**Community involvement** - pupils learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community;

**Political literacy** - pupils learning about and how to make themselves effective in public life through knowledge, skills and values. (QCA, 1998 and 2000).

What assumptions lie behind the notion of citizenship?

As Britain has a diverse society in terms of ethnicity and religion, government has been working with minorities and mainstream society to answer the question of national identity and belonging; this is partly a response to the absence of a written constitution. However, there has been significant constitutional reform at the turn of this century, with devolution of government in Scotland and Wales and the introduction of the Human Rights Act 1998, which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law. The establishment of a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and the development of a new political settlement in Northern Ireland have led to increased interest and debate on what it means to be British. The introduction of a directly elected mayor for London marked a step towards the establishment of English regional authorities (Osler & Vincent, 2002).

These developments have caused individuals and groups to consider how citizenship is related to national and regional identities, and have encouraged the debate about the meaning of nationality, national identity and citizenship and the extent to which individuals and groups from both majority and minority communities feel a sense of belonging to the nation and state (Osler & Starkey, 2001).

Why do we teach citizenship?

According to the Crick report, there are two main reasons why citizenship is being introduced to schools. The main reasons are, firstly to counteract a widespread feeling of disinterest in the political process and in community life as expressed by a record level of voter abstention in elections; and secondly, to address social discontent and political alienation. The report states:

There are worrying levels of apathy, ignorance and cynicism about public life. These, unless tackled at every level, could well diminish the hoped-for
The government department responsible for education in England is the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Other key agencies are the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which provides curriculum guidance to schools, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) which sets out the basic teacher training curriculum, and OFSTED, the School Inspection Agency.

Until the 1990s, schools had considerable freedom to develop their own curricula. The Education Reform Act 1988 marked a significant change in the control of schools. Throughout the 1990s there have been a series of Education Acts which have transformed the context in which schools work, leading to schools having increased control over their own budgets but at the same time having much less freedom over the nature of their curriculum and its delivery. A National Curriculum for England was introduced in 1989 (King and Reiss, 1993) and has been subject to various revisions and reforms. The most significant new development has been the introduction of Citizenship as a statutory subject for secondary schools from 2002.

This new subject was introduced for the reasons outlined in the Crick Report, and as an attempt to deal with institutional racism, which became a serious concern of government and public sector workers after publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report and other research on the survival or racist attitudes in Britain (Home Office, 1999; Lawton et al., 2000). A survey of the attitudes of the citizens of the European Union towards minority groups shows that multicultural optimism is decreasing in the UK. According to Osler & Vincent (2002), only around 22 per cent of British people can be classified as actively tolerant and supportive of antiracist policies, while a further group 36 per cent are classified as passively tolerant. The remainder are actively racist, or are open to racist and anti-immigrant propaganda – proportions which have not changed since the 1970s (Bagley et al., 1979).

One of the challenges to the British educational system is to address the problems which cause young people from minority ethnic groups to perform scholastically, on average, below the standards of their peers. Examples of such effects of institutional racism within the education system have been well documented (Osler and Vincent, 2002; Wanless, 2006).

The Government has taken a number of steps to close the gap between pupils of different ethnic origins in terms of academic achievement, by introducing key policies, one of which is Citizenship:

The teaching of citizenship in all primary schools and as a statutory subject in secondary schools will develop and encourage pupils' understanding and mutual respect of each other's differences. (Home Office, 2002b).

The government has highlighted Citizenship Education as a key means by which education for racial equality can be achieved (Home Office, 2002b). Racism has been identified as serving to undermine democracy in Europe, and needs to be
addressed through programmes in schools and in teacher education (Council of Europe, 1985; Verma, 1989 and 2007). Citizenship Education in England is seen as a means of strengthening democracy and therefore of challenging racism as an anti-democratic force. The government sees Citizenship Education as a key means through which race equality initiatives will be developed in the curriculum (Osler and Vincent, 2002).

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) criticized OFSTED for its failure to monitor how schools are addressing and preventing racism (Osler and Morrison, 2000), something which it was charged to do by Government (Home Office, 1999), following the publication of the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry.

In 2000 the National Curriculum (NC) underwent considerable revision. The introduction of citizenship was the most significant new development. Citizenship became a statutory subject in secondary schools (years 7-11: ages 11-16) from 2002. On the other hand, although Citizenship is taught in many primary schools as part of the statutory requirement to deliver Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), it has no status as a subject in its own right.

The DfES also set up a working group on citizenship to develop a programme of Citizenship Education for those aged 16-19. The Learning and Skills Council for post-sixteen education and training includes Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in its remit.

At both primary and secondary levels, provision of Citizenship Education is to be monitored through the School Inspection System. The QCA has published guidance for schools on the Citizenship curriculum. In spring 2002 the QCA launched guidelines and an interactive website for teachers to demonstrate how schools might value diversity and challenge racism within the framework of the National Curriculum, which can be found at: www.qca.org.uk (Osler and Vincent, 2002).

**Muslim schools**

Muslims in Britain have a dual system of schooling. The first type is the supplementary educational system represented by weekend and evening schools. In this type of school Muslims use mosques, mainstream schools, youth organisations and even houses to deliver religious and cultural education. In these schools, Muslim children study how to read the Qur’an, and are given support in community languages. In some instances there is also support for a number of national curriculum subjects, for example, ICT, Science and Maths.

Full-time or day-time independent schools are the second type of Muslim educational system; these are also known as single faith schooling. This type of schooling is divided into two, in terms of the curriculum. The first are religious schools which do not teach anything other than Islamic Education. The second are schools that teach National Curriculum (NC) subjects alongside other religious and cultural subjects such as Urdu, Arabic, Islamic Studies and Qur’anic Science.

Although many Muslims in Britain and in the West generally have their own educational organisations and institutions, in most cases Muslim children attend
state schools. According to the Association of Muslim schools (AMS, 1997), it is estimated that approximately only two per cent of the total number of Muslim children attended full-time Muslim schools.

In the 1980s, the Muslim community in Britain began to set up Muslim schools. The first was in London, and now there are over 137 schools educating approximately 12,000 pupils. Some Muslim schools have now joined the maintained sector, but most are still making efforts to expand the number of ‘maintained Muslim schools’ as part of a drive to raise standards and increase diversity.

Arguments for and against faith schools

There are many opinions which support the establishment of faith schools and, similarly, there are many voices which oppose them (Gardner et al., 2005). On the one hand, it is claimed by many educationalists, professionals, and politicians that faith schools promote spiritual and moral values in their pupils, and improved academic performance. According to Gillard (2002) the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has made much of his view that faith schools do, indeed, foster positive goals for both the minorities involved, and for society in general. In addition to this, many Bangladeshi and Pakistani parents perceive faith schools as achieving better scholastic results; this is why they often prefer single-faith education for their children (Gillard, 2002).

On the other hand, there are arguments against faith schools. One suggestion is that single faith schools deny children the right to grow with and learn about people of other backgrounds and beliefs. A commentator in The Guardian argued that these schools may be divisive and prevent mixing of pupils of different backgrounds. She said:

Faith schools are by their nature divisive. In a mixed school children can see that their classmates are different, but they don’t see anything is wrong with that. - accepting that children should grow into accepting adults. Faith schools are normally of a better standard. Shouldn’t all standards be improved, not by dividing society further but by including everyone and raising standards for all? (Kate, 2001).

Teachers also have different opinions on faith schools. One of the teaching union leaders expressed his opinion on Muslim schools in claiming that supporting these schools is akin to supporting terrorism! This person declared:

Government support for faith schools means it would have to give state funding to the Osama Bin Laden Academy. (Woodward, 2002)

Criticisms such as these are by no means rare, but are based on bias or a lack of understanding. In contrast, a commentator in Bahrain stated:

I went to a school in Bahrain where, as a Christian, I got three hours of instruction in that religion every week... We were well integrated as a class and learnt a lot about each others’ religions and cultures through everyday interaction. (Gaya, 2001)
Faith schools although representing one religion in particular, seem to acknowledge the importance of educating their pupils about other beliefs and religions and even accepting pupils from other faith groups. The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, defended the role played by Church of England schools amid the controversy over whether faith schools undermine social cohesion and are “decisive by nature”:

... faith schools are making a “distinguished” contribution to education, and there is no history of Church of England schools excluding pupils from other faiths. (Carey, 2001)

In an interview on BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, he furthered this argument by suggesting:

We have a strong history, a long history of faith schools in this country. The Church of England was in education before the state. There has been no history of exclusion. We want inclusion, we want to include people. And indeed in many parts of our country we have a strong number of Muslims and other faith-based children who come to our schools. (Carey, 2001)

The establishment of faith schools has clearly highlighted a number of issues. The opinions for and against such schools remain topics of debate. There is, in our opinion, no reason why faith schools cannot continue to promote a particular religious group, at the same time, encouraging and educating their pupils about other faiths, as suggested by the White Paper Schools Achieving Success which observes:

We want faith schools that come into the maintained sector to add to the inclusiveness and diversity of the school system and to be ready to work with non-denominational schools and those of other faiths. (DfES, 2001b, p.45)

As a result of what Muslim children are facing in some state schools, there is an argument for allowing Muslim-majority state schools (e.g. where 90 per cent of pupils are Muslim) to be organised and led by Muslim organisations. Iftikhar Ahmad justifies this campaign by saying that:

British schools are not doing enough to tackle racism and promote race relations. Many teachers are unaware of racist attitudes amongst pupils. Schools have a responsibility not only to deal with racist incidents but also to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural and multi-racial society... The time has come for the Muslim community - in the form of Islamic charities and trusts - to manage and run those state schools where Muslim pupils are in the majority. The Department for Education would be responsible for funding, inspection and maintenance. (Ahmad, 2002)

Many Muslim parents believe that state schools will often not advance the spiritual lives of their children, or promote their religious identity. This is another reason why many Muslim parents have welcomed Muslim schools. Others too acknowledge
the role that faith schools can play in promoting the spiritual development of young people (Hewitt, 1996).

However, some feel that single faith schools deny children the right to learn about other cultures, considering that citizenship education is about developing a broad understanding of civic issues, a more cosmopolitan view.

The Muslim school is therefore perceived by many as a kind of refuge for pupils in order to practise their religion and to be removed from behavioural influences such as bad language, promiscuous sexuality and drug use which would be contrary to their beliefs. The reality of these threats is clearly identified by Bakhsh (2007), who shows that a significant minority of Muslim youth in the London Borough of Redbridge, educated in mainstream schools, have fallen prey to the temptations offered by both soft and hard drugs. Muslim schools in contrast do not provide an alien environment differing in almost every respect from that which the children experience at home. By making Muslim pupils feel more at ease at school in a protected environment, Muslim schools can have a positive effect on their outlook and academic achievement (Hewitt, 1996). This opinion is also held by Emerick (1998) who claims that living in Non-Muslim communities makes many Muslims turn to Muslim schools in order to preserve as best they can their communal identity and religious practices as Muslims.

Khan-Cheema (1996) asserted that one of the main reasons why Muslims have established a programme of self-help projects (supplementary/ Quranic schools) over the last thirty-five years is because state schools fail to provide enough awareness of spiritual and moral values. Other reasons include the absence of Arabic, Urdu and other relevant community languages in the school curriculum; and a lack of concern about single sex provision, either as separate schools or within co-educational schools (Al-Hawamleh, 2003).

Supporters of single faith schools suggest that these schools provide not only a greater understanding of spiritual and moral values, which are to some degree lacking in mainstream state schools, but also have a role in bridging the gap between the religious upbringing at home and at school, thus enabling pupils to better understand their religion and face the challenges of society. Therefore, single faith schools help mould pupils in their respective faiths, especially in an increasingly irreligious society. Gardner et al.’s 2005 edited book, containing 18 chapters written from different viewpoints provides a reasoned debate on faith schools. Clearly, community schools open to children of all faiths or none should remain, but so should traditional faith schools organized by Christian and other groups. And the state should continue to provide funding for these faith schools.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND FAITH SCHOOLS

Religious groups (Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists, Quakers, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Seventh Day Adventists) already run about a third of England’s state-recognized schools (Gillard, 2002). The New Labour Government under Tony Blair supported the current movement of establishing faith schools in society, due to the perceived
positive contribution of these schools towards society and their excellence in achievement. A new Prime Minister may not be so sympathetic however.

Nearly twenty years ago, Mr. Jack Straw MP, Labour’s Shadow Education Secretary, said in a lecture to a conference focusing on Islamic Education and Muslim schools and their relationship to British Society that:

No issue which I have dealt with as Labour’s Education Spokesman has aroused more controversy than that of whether the state should fund and support Muslim or Orthodox Jewish schools. I am glad to say that after considerable debate there is now widespread support for the position spelt out in the Policy Review, that on equity voluntary-aided status should be available to school foundations from Britain’s ‘newer’ religions - like Islam - on exactly the same basis as that right is currently enjoyed by Anglican and Catholic school foundations (whose voluntary aided and controlled schools together account for one third of all state maintained schools in this country). (Straw, 1989, p. 8)

IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Current affairs globally and nationally have played a role in crystallising some of the ideas presented in this book. Over the last decade, there has been increasing debate on a number of issues concerning Muslims in Britain and the national schooling system. Today, Muslims after Anglicans and Catholics are the third largest practising religious group in Britain. Many Muslims who are growing up in Britain, are having to face the prospect of defining their identity in peaceable, productive and law-abiding ways in a society that is increasingly Islamophobic (Sheridan, 2006). This question of identity affects second and third generation immigrant Muslims, who have to balance their religious upbringing with the demands of the culture surrounding them.

More than half of the current generation of young British Muslims have been born in Britain, compared with their parents who migrated here in the 1950s and 1960s. These young people are increasingly asserting themselves in various ways in society. For them, issues of race and religion are often fused, and growing racism in British society directed against Muslims (Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003; Sheridan, 2006) is forcing them into a greater sense of religious consciousness and social identity.

On the one hand, the fact that the rate of religious observance is relatively low among young British Muslims, means that for many of them integration into their host countries has actually meant assimilation. On the other hand, the renewed commitment for religious observance among a minority of young people has led to the creation of a number of independent Islamic schools. According to Ramadan (1999) the last twenty years, have seen a growing awareness of the need for a renewal of Islamic thinking in Europe, and a new kind of Islamic identity that integrates the old with the new. Young Muslims are now
Europeans and, directly or indirectly, they are asking questions which demand explicit answers about their identity.

Educational and social institutions have a role in developing communities in terms of belonging and citizenship. They should also provide answers and solutions to questions and problems arising in communities. There is a growing energy and commitment among Muslim schools and other associations to ensure that a cosmopolitan view is taught to pupils. They have to place greater value on civic education and citizen participation, which are seen as necessary stages in the acquisition of legitimate rights, and in the formation of duties and obligations within a co-operative social contract with the wider society.

Furthermore, the ongoing faith schools debate has opened up into various discussions, which focus on the implications and effectiveness of single-faith and multi-faith schools; the differences between single faith schools and state schools; and the importance and general effectiveness of independent Muslim schools. Thus, with an increasing number of independent Muslim schools being established in Britain, this book aims to discuss the ways that the subject of Citizenship is taught in these schools, as compared with state schools, and to assess the adequacy of such Citizenship teaching for preparing young Muslims for a productive and moral existence in a society in which religious groups recognize each other’s differences and strengths, and are able to live harmoniously with one another.

**Why is teaching citizenship important?**

Education helps to develop an individual’s understanding of various subject matters and prepares them to join society as a productive member. This requires identifying the proper balance and connections between personal and social education; knowing how to differentiate between independent thinking and indoctrination; what pedagogical methods are required; and at what ages are various types of education most apt (Heater, 1999).

Nobody can any longer assume that good citizenship is something that people learn to do spontaneously. However, the idea of citizenship is not a widely understood idea in Britain. Miller (2000) explains that that citizenship - except in the formal passport-holding sense - is a largely alien concept in Britain and people do not have a clear idea of what it means to be a citizen, as opposed to being one of Her Majesty’s subjects. According to the DfES the importance aspects of studying citizenship in schools are: that such education:

- Helps pupils to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights.
- Promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, making them more self-confident and responsible both in and beyond the classroom.
- Encourages pupils to play a helpful part in the life of their schools, neighbourhoods, communities and the wider world.
- Teaches them about our economy and democratic institutions and values; encourages respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities; and
develops pupils’ ability to reflect on issues and take part in discussions (DfES, 2005).

- In addition, according to Huddleston (2004), citizenship is important because pupils learn how to recognize bias, evaluate argument, weigh evidence, look for alternative interpretations, viewpoints and sources of evidence; above all they can learn to give good reasons for the things they say and do, and to expect good reasons to be given by others. Moreover, Citizenship Education helps to equip young people to deal with situations of conflict and controversy knowledgeably and tolerantly. It helps to equip them to understand the consequences of their actions, and those of the adults around them.

- From the National Curriculum point of view, Citizenship programmes are designed to provide learning opportunities for pupils, from the Foundation Stage, through Key Stages 3 and 4 and for students in the post-16 sector, to gain knowledge, skills and understanding.

WHY HAS RESEARCH BEEN CONDUCTED IN THIS AREA?

The present study took place in the North West of England in an industrial region where there is a high presence of Muslims who came to the country during the last century and stayed, despite the decline of the traditional industries to which they were originally recruited. The following paragraphs shed light on this area of England and also reviews the history of Muslim settlement in Britain.

The first wave of Muslim immigrants to Europe was as early as 710 when the first Arabs and North African Berbers landed on the Iberian Peninsula. In the 19th century, social and political reform movements in Muslim countries encouraged their rulers to send students to European countries for further studies. Since then, Muslims have had a constant presence in the large metropolitan areas of Europe.

The first waves of Muslim migrants to Europe were workers from North Africa, Turkey, India and Pakistan, and they were generally poor, driven to migration by economic necessity. Their level of education and the precariousness of their status made it unlikely that they would think in terms of a European Islam. The probable Muslim population in Britain in 1951 was about 23,000 according to Little (1948). The latest census (2001) showed that there are 1.6 million Muslims in Britain, and by 2008 this population had increased to more than two millions, largely because of the numbers of children born to young parents.

Migrants came from underdeveloped countries to work within an industrialized country to improve their way of living, eventually planning to return home. When their children went to schools it became very hard however to take the decision to leave Britain. Muslim ethnic groups lived in particular areas of different industrial cities, where they lived as small communities. They were not aware of their children’s educational needs at that time. But when the second generation grew up they became more aware of their rights in society. Education was often the first item in the second and third generation’s agenda. Gradually, this awareness led to the notion of Muslim schools.
The 2001 census identified the geography of the ethnic and religious diversity of the North West of England, showing that Blackburn had the highest proportion of Muslims in the North West (19.4 per cent) of Blackburn’s population. Pendle comes second (13.4 per cent), then Oldham (11.1 per cent), Rochdale is fourth (9.4 per cent), and Manchester is fifth (9.1 per cent). Due to the fact of Muslim presence in this area, many Islamic organisations have emerged to meet the needs of the new minority i.e. mosques, youth clubs, weekend schools and, later, independent Muslim schools. The natural increase of numbers of Muslim children has influenced the demand on Muslim educational institutions. There are 15 Muslim schools within this research area. Thirteen are secondary schools - seven of them are for girls-only, and five for boys-only.

This area has suffered from violence and riots between minorities and mainstream groups during the past few years. Exploring the pupils’ views on Citizenship of youth who belong within these areas should give a good description as to what the Government could do to harmonize relations between minority and mainstream cultures within society.

Political parties in England are very keen to control or benefit from the Muslim vote especially in city wards where Muslims are a majority. Only fairly recently did Muslims become aware of their political rights in Britain, and started taking part in the election activities of different parties. At the same time Muslim groups began lobbying for Muslim community benefits.

Objectives of the research and methodology employed

The key aim is to investigate differences between Muslim and state schools, contrasting ways of delivering Citizenship in Muslim schools, and examining the role of Muslim schools in preparing pupils for a role in British society by focusing on both Islamic education, and education for being a good citizen.

The study further aims to explore ways of delivering citizenship in Muslim schools, investigating the differences in teaching citizenship between Muslim and state schools, the attitude of pupils in Muslim schools towards the teaching of citizenship, the attitude of educational professionals, parents, and community leaders towards the teaching of citizenship; examining the role of Muslim schools in preparing pupils for a role in British society; investigating the relationship between Islam and citizenship; and demonstrating the possible contribution of Islamic Studies to the teaching of citizenship.

STRESS AND ADJUSTMENT IN ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

We end this book with a review which conceptualizes types of migration to Britain, and the stresses which adjusting to an often hostile culture entails. It is clear that although extended families within the Asian migrant community can be protective, in other ways they can lead to insularity and stress for family members (particularly women) who are cut off from mainstream society. Once again, we stress that Islam in general, and Muslim schools in particular, can help the children of migrants
develop a sense of identity and connectedness with the wider society, in ways which can maximise both their psychological health, and their effectiveness as citizens.

The material presented in the final chapter could form the basis of a PSHE unit within the citizenship curriculum, and could enable the young people involved be aware of different types of psychological distress within their community, and of the importance in helping such individuals cope with the stigma which a psychological illness often entails.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The literature in this chapter argues that British society has a large ethnic minority populations, not only because of its imperial history, but also due to its reputation for social tolerance. Religious diversity has been a characteristic of British society for hundreds of years. The Muslim presence in Britain has increased to two millions, representing about four per cent of the total population. Living in the West has introduced many new challenges for Muslims. They are facing a clash between their cultural values and those of contemporary Britain. Over the years, Muslims in Britain have become more involved in a number of spheres, politically, socially and culturally.

According to the literature considered, having a faith - any faith - can make a positive contribution to identity, citizenship and the common good.

The conclusions of this chapter suggest that the role of citizenship is not only to serve a political function by addressing worrying levels of political apathy, but also to try and deal with certain aspects of social discontent. The Government has adopted a number of measures to close the gap between pupils of different ethnic origins, in terms of academic achievement, by introducing key policies one of which was citizenship.

Muslims in Britain have a dual system of schooling - supplementary schools represented by weekend and evening schools; and independent full time schools. It is estimated that approximately two per cent of the total number of Muslim children attend Muslim schools.

There are many opinions which support the establishment of faith schools: these arguments are based on the fact that faith schools have the potential to promote spiritual and moral values, possibly leading to improved reasoning skills, and better academic performance. On the other hand, there are many voices which oppose faith schools. One suggestion is that single faith schools deny children the right to grow with and learn about people of other backgrounds and beliefs. However, most Muslim parents, in our experience, believe that state schools will not advance the spiritual lives of their children or promote their religious identity.

The discussion has also argued that educational and social institutions should have a greater role in developing communities in terms of belonging and citizenship. It is suggested that Citizenship Education could give answers and solutions to questions and problems arising in multi-ethnic communities.

The importance of teaching citizenship are: helping pupils to become informed, promoting spirituality, encouraging pupils to play a helpful part in everyday life,
THE PROBLEM AND THE ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

Teaching pupils about the economy, democratic institutions and values; encouraging respect for different national, religious and ethnic identities; and developing pupils' ability to reflect on issues and take part in discussions. Clearly then, in these arguments the importance of citizenship classes in both state and single-faith school is evident.

Before discussing the implications of citizenship amongst pupils, it is crucial to examine the background of single-faith schools, and in particular Muslim schools.
CHAPTER 2

PART 2
MUSLIM SCHOOLS IN BRITAIN AND MUSLIM EDUCATION

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Probably the first close contact that Britain made with Islam came about when the British Imperial rule began in India. Britain conquered Bengal in the second half of the 18th century (1750) and expanded in Baluchistan to Burma and from Kashmir to Ceylon by the middle of the 19th century (1857) (Frazer, 1908). Over the centuries, Britain's colonial interests in the Muslim world, including the Middle East, India and Pakistan increased. The British interacted with Muslims through various channels such as business, trade and exploitation of labour (Milner, 1907).

The period of history that is immediately relevant to the Muslim situation in Britain relates to British colonialism and the Commonwealth. Muslim migration and settlement in Great Britain is the result of a late imperial process common to all of Western Europe (Nielsen, 1984). Muslim migration and settlement in Britain dated from the middle years of the 19th century when Muslim seamen from Yemen, Somalia and South Asia came to settle in the ports of Cardiff, Liverpool and London (Collins, 1957). Cardiff is the oldest Muslim centre of the United Kingdom. In the 1940s it was estimated that there were 700 Arab males; 150 Somalis; and 1000 of their children in Cardiff. They ran their own mosque and school where instruction in the Qur'an was given to children under the auspices of a resident Sheikh and a small staff of assistants. By 1962 there were 7,000 Muslims in the Cardiff area, mainly from Yemen, Aden and Somalia (Ally, 1981).

During the Second World War, foreign seamen were employed at the same pay rates as British seamen (Little, 1948). With this concession, the Muslim seamen began to enjoy a greater degree of economic security and they began to concern themselves with a more permanent lifestyle. By this time it was not uncommon to find coffee houses and small oriental spice shops run by Muslim seamen opening up in port areas. The areas of concentration were mainly Cardiff and Tyneside where the number of Yemenis and Adenese reached 12,000 in 1960 (Dahya, 1965).

During this time, there were other Muslim groups arriving in Britain apart from the seamen. By the end of the Second World War the number of Indian Muslims in Britain had exceeded 30,000. In 1949, it was estimated that there were more than 43,000 Pakistanis, over 10,000 in London alone (Hunter, 1962). There were also Muslim students and professional men who came mainly from India. With the beginning of British rule in India and South Africa, Muslims from Africa and India
came to Britain to be educated at public schools and universities (Singh, 1963). Some of these students returned home after their education to enter the Indian Civil Service, politics and journalism, but some remained in Britain to practise law, medicine or politics. Many of these students and professional groups resided in and around London, but did not form separate geographical or social units. Some had their businesses or practices in Non-Muslim communities and became Anglicised. But significant numbers of those who settled in Britain maintained their Islamic culture and were instrumental in forming several Islamic societies during this period (Hunter, 1962).

In more recent times, due to the industrial growth of the 1950s and 1960s, large industrial cities such as London, Birmingham and Manchester have been attracting a rapidly increasing Muslim population. This period brought a large number of Muslim migrants to Britain from the Indian subcontinent. Muslims, particularly from the Commonwealth countries, found their way to Britain in connection with trade, commerce, education and services.

Muslim migration in the 1950s has many different characteristics in comparison to that which took place during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It differs not only in terms of the nature and size of the migratory movement, but also the geographical and religious backgrounds of the migrants (Ally, 1981; Clarke, 1988). Unlike the Muslim settlements in and around the dockland areas of the British seaports a century ago, it is characterised by a substantial Muslim settlement in the industrialised inner cities (Ally, 1981). After the war, due to rapid economic growth and post-war reconstruction, there was an intense shortage of labour in Britain as well as in Europe, and the colonies became the best recruiting market (Darsh, 1980; Clarke, 1988).

To this end, Britain was able to exploit its historical links with India and Pakistan (Rose and Deakin, 1969; Darsh, 1980; Shaw, 1988). Further, in the post-war period, due to the creation of the new independent states of Pakistan and Bangladesh, these countries were facing serious economic, social and political problems, which meant that more immigrants came to Britain (Ally, 1981).

The second largest Muslim community migrating were Turkish Cypriots. The strife between the Greek and the Turkish community was exacerbated in the 1950s when the Greek population began to seek political union with Greece, and many Turks decided to migrate to Britain. Many West and East Africans who were Muslims also came to Britain in the 1960s (Ally, 1981).

Geographically, the Muslim population is not uniformly spread throughout Britain. The majority of the Muslim population is resident in the largest industrial cities such as London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Bradford. The original pattern varies considerably from one Muslim nationality to another; for instance, while Bengalis are settled in East London, Oldham and Bradford, Turkish Cypriots live in North and Southeast London (Nielsen, 1992).

Historically, various Muslim communities have established themselves throughout Britain. However, when it comes to their actual practise of Islamic rituals there are many sociological differences. Different ethnic Muslim groups have brought to Britain their own culturally enriched interpretations of Islam, as well as their
sectarian arguments and divisions. These differences are present on a cultural and socio-political level, but the theological concept of the Ummah (the world-wide Muslim community) means that Islam is not attached to any one ethnicity, but is universal in outlook. Therefore, membership of the Islamic community is not dependent on ethnicity, but rather on a shared understanding and acceptance of the main ideals of orthodox Islam. Whilst Islam and the Qur’an talk of embracing all ethnicities, historically a cultural bias has developed. For example, in certain countries in the Middle-east Islam has an Arab focus which ignores the ethnic interests of Muslims of other cultures (Rippin, 1992).

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN ENGLAND

Rendall, (2002) has commented that the difficulty of unifying this group of immigrants gains greater clarity when we look at a sampling of the multitude of organizations which provide a loose and overlapping structure to the Muslim community. The vast majority of British Muslims are Sunni, although a few Shi’i groups do exist (including the Ahmadiyya and Ismaili branches). Within the Sunni community there are many divisions on several different levels.

Jorgen Nielsen (1995) identifies three different categories of community organization. The first level (starting at the grass roots) consists of community-related, local initiatives. The Deobandi and Breliwi are the two major divisions here. They are concerned with serving local needs and maintaining unique traditions related to community and mosque. The second category consists of two movements which trace their origins back to the Indian sub-continent. The Ahlul-Hadith are known for their separatist stance with regard to British culture. They promote their ideas within the Muslim community through large-scale literature and audio tape distribution as well as travelling speakers. The Jamaat-i-Islami is a movement which has become home to several organizations: the Islamic Foundation, the Muslim Educational Trust, the U.K. Islamic Mission, and Dawatul Islam. This movement has given impetus to research, publishing, education, development of mosques.

Elite national organizations comprise the third category. In the 1970s, Islam became more concerned with international organization and a couple of British groups emerged in the wake of such concern: the Muslim Institute and the International Centre for Islam Studies in London.

Nielsen (1995) also points out that the three categories mentioned frequently overlap and the development of “national umbrella organizations” illustrates this. The Union of Muslim Organizations of the UK and Eire has attempted to mobilize involvement in the political life of the nation, primarily through lobbying. The Council of Mosques and the Council of Imams and Mosques have attempted to link together the efforts of mosques; coordinating conferences and protest marches.
CHAPTER 2

A new generation

According to Nielsen (2000) there is a growing proportion of young Muslims who have been born and raised in Britain. A further number arrived while they were still of pre-school age. This makes for an increasing number who have been brought up in homes and communities dominated by parental cultures, and the pressures of living with new cultures in a strange environment, and attending schools which are part of the host environment (Nielsen, 2000).

A primary concern for many Muslim parents is the fact that their children soon begin to adopt English standards and ideas (Iqbal, 1975; Sarwar, 1983, 1994; Parker-Jenkins, 2002). According to Raza (1991) the community in general fears that their younger generation will become westernised, and will lose their cultural heritage and religion. Being educated in the generally secular atmosphere of British schools, in contrast to the prevailing religious atmosphere at home, Muslim children can often find themselves at the centre of cultural conflict (Hewitt, 1996). But as they grow up, they often resolve the problem by adopting some aspects of Western culture and behaviour while retaining many of their traditional values and attitudes (Hiro, 1971). A survey conducted by Anwar (1986) revealed that almost half of his sample of Muslim parents (47 per cent), and 41 per cent of young Muslims felt that Christianity influences children in some ways. Eighty per cent (of both parents and children) felt that there was insufficient teaching of Islam in schools. According to Parker-Jenkins (2002), for some Muslims who perceive themselves as struggling to define their identity in Britain, the education system provides a focus for academic success, but at the same time parents aspire to keep their children faithful to the tenets of Islam without support from the state educational system.

In this regard, many Muslim parents aim to provide an environment outside of school hours, where their children can become familiar with aspects of the Islamic faith. They wish to provide support for their children by educating them on general moral rights and responsibilities, with the desire of aiding integration both inside and outside of school.

Although it may be a concern that young British Muslims struggle to define their identity in Britain, many of the current generation of Muslim children are moving away from the ideals and attitudes held by their parents. Single faith schools aim to encourage integration, not only in terms of attitudes towards society, but also amongst the different British Muslim communities; these ethnically mixed Muslim schools are attempting to break the cultural differences inherent among the previous generation.

MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS FOR THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Due to their diverse ethnic backgrounds, the Muslim community in Britain today faces a number of problems determining its identity and establishing itself as a community (Gilliat, 1994). Possibly the biggest issue for Muslims in Britain, and one that concerns both national and local groups, is education. Muslims have felt
discomfited in the British school system (Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003), and have also struggled to gain funding for their own schools. In the 1960s the British school system was significantly restructured. Reforms included the removal of most single-sex schools, just when Muslim parents were beginning to look into them with interest. In the 1970s, England began to contemplate some practical concessions to make Muslims more comfortable with British education. They believed that a multi-faith approach to Religious Education (RE) would encourage Muslims to enrol (Rendall, 2002). It is estimated that there is an approximate population of 450,000–500,000 Muslim pupils in Britain of compulsory school age (5-16), and that figure is likely to increase substantially (Weston, 1989; Berliner, 1993; Sarwar, 1994; Black, 2008) – the large majority of these children are enrolled in state schools, including many nominally designed as ‘Church of England’ schools.

Although Muslims generally accept the British view regarding the basic purpose of education, for Muslims the idea of ‘good citizenship’ is also synonymous with being a ‘good Muslim.’ In this regard, Rendall, (2002) pointed out that Muslim parents want schools to produce children who are able to provide religious authority for their children. Muslims have pushed for many changes in state schools, including prayer rooms in schools with a large Muslim population, excused absence for children attending Friday prayers and major religious festivals, segregated swimming and PE lessons, and Halal provisions in school meals. It is argued that although these changes are specific to Muslim pupils, they are not intended to be divisive with other faith groups and, generally, implementing them bears little impact upon the rest of the school organisation.

Lewis and Schnapper (1994) indicated that these educational issues seem to embody the tensions which British Muslims feel in their new-found cultural context. According to the authors, the same freedom, tolerance, and multi-cultural attitudes that have allowed Muslims to live in Britain, may also impede their traditional religious interests and rights. Although these criticisms may be justified to some degree, it is important to mention that there are reasons in favour of Muslim schools, such as high levels of Islamophobia in society, and Islamic values being threatened by the British schooling system, which may explain why many Muslims feel exasperated by Western educational systems.

Reflecting these concerns, three types of Islamic educational institutions have developed. First, there are the mosque schools; second, there are schools that are run in private homes or in separate places; and, third full-time primary or secondary schools, such as Al-Isra Islamic College in Malvern, Worcestershire and the Islamic College in east London (Anwar, 1993).

The political side of the problem is that the Muslim community still lacks a significant influence upon matters at a national level. Most Muslims are much more concerned with local issues and tend not to get embroiled in national debates; this is despite the fact that the British government has begun initiatives that enable minority communities to be involved in the political process. Slowly, Muslims are becoming more active, and the first Muslim M.P.s were elected to Parliament in 2001 (Rendall, 2002). Nevertheless, have been for a considerable period many Muslim councillors and officials in local government.
CHAPTER 2

Marriage is another realm where Islam differs from Western contemporary practices. A strong family structure is central to Muslim social organisation, and therefore stable and enduring marriages are very critical.

How to get married, to whom, and when is a question that haunts and torments a majority of the young British Muslims. The threat facing this core institution is something that threatens the very nature and existence of the community. (Ad-Darsh, 1997, p.1)

Ad-Darsh explains that Islam and Muslims hold marriage to be an essential attribute of Muslim communities. In Britain today, one cultural rather than religious practice, which attracts controversy and reinforces prejudice is arranged marriage. Arranged marriages are often confused with forced marriages, which are conducted without the consent of one or other of the parties. Forced marriages are not viewed as valid in Islam and there is evidence of growing pressure within communities and from wider society to end this practice.

Discrimination and Islamophobia

Muslims have been the target of religious discrimination in Britain as well as persecution on grounds of "race" and colour. A number of areas of discriminatory behaviour by authorities can be identified in schools and in the workplace, such as lack of time-off for religious festivals; refusal to allow time off for daily prayers; difficulties in obtaining planning permission for mosques, schools and burial sites; conflicts about dress and language in a range of settings, especially the wearing of the hijab in schools and the workplace; and the refusal, despite legal statute, to provide financial support for Muslim schools (Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003).

Islamophobia, which is defined as dread or hatred of Islam and fear or dislike of Muslims was expressed in a number of ways immediately after the events of September 11th 2001. There were attacks on mosques and Asian-run businesses around the UK; firebombs were put through letterboxes; and death threats were made against Muslims. Sheridan (2006) interviewed a random sample of 222 British Muslim adults, and found that his sample reported a significant increase in abusive attacks since 9.11. At least a quarter had experienced some kind of abuse or attack, and many experienced an increase in fearfulness, anxiety and tension because of these attacks.

The media's widespread usage of words such as 'terrorists' and 'fundamentalists' and associating them with Muslims, perpetuates the stereotype that all of Islam and Muslims are violent and dangerous and also contributes to an Islamophobic atmosphere. In a survey of the coverage of Islam and Muslims in the British media before and after September 11th 2001, persistent stereotypes relating to Muslims were that they are 'intolerant', 'violent' or 'cruel', and 'strange' or 'different' (Sheridan, 2006). The use of terms such as 'swamping' in relation to asylum-seekers by the former Home Secretary, David Blunkett, or criticism of Muslims as 'isolationist' by Peter Hain, a Foreign Office minister, continue to create negative perceptions. These
Islamophobic perceptions are not a new phenomenon. Sir Alfred Sherman, former political advisor to Margaret Thatcher, said:

There is a Muslim threat to Christian Europe. It is developing slowly and could still be checked. But the policies of Western powers have done almost everything possible to help it grow. (Bright, 1998, p. 20)

Clare Hollingsworth, the eminent international journalist, issued a similar, Islamophobic warning:

Muslim fundamentalism is fast becoming the chief threat to global peace and security as well as a cause of national and local disturbance through terrorism. It is akin to the menace posed by Nazism in the 1930s. (Quoted in Stubbs, 1997, p. 10).

These perceptions were portrayed in the media both before and after 11 September 2001. The British Prime Minister Tony Blair, did however say that the events had nothing to do with Islam or Muslims per se, and he stressed that Muslims should not be targeted in any way. This demonstrated an understanding that, contrary to the stereotypical perceptions of Muslims, one of the most striking aspects of Muslims living in Britain today is their ethnic and “racial” diversity. This diversity challenges state policy on social and political issues, which is based on assumptions and stereotypes of Muslims as an undifferentiated community, and again highlights the need for issues such as citizenship and identity to be defined.

EDUCATION IN ISLAM

In Islam, education is viewed as a fundamental obligation of any adhering Muslim. In order to discuss its significance according to Islam, the Arabic language needs to be approached. Three terms are used in Arabic for education, each differing in connotation but embodying the various dimensions of the educational process as perceived by Islam. The most widely used word for education in a formal sense is the word ta’lim, stemming from the root ‘alima (to know, to be aware, to perceive, to learn), relating to knowledge being sought or imparted through instruction and teaching. Tarbiya, coming from the root ra ba (to increase, grow, to rear) implies a state of spiritual and ethical nurturing in accordance with the will of the Lord, Ar-Rabb. Ta’ dib comes from the root aduba (to be cultured, refined, well-mannered) and suggests the social dimensions of a person’s development of sound social behaviour. What is meant by education in Arabic requires a deeper understanding of the Islamic conception of the human being (Cook, 1999).

Reflections made by scholars discuss this definition. Al-Attas (1979) explained that ‘man’ according to Islam is composed of soul and body - he is at once spirit and matter. Man possesses spiritual and rational organs of cognition such as the heart (qalb) and the intellect (‘aql) and faculties relating to physical, intellectual and spiritual vision, experience and consciousness. His most significant attributes
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is knowledge which pertains to spiritual as well as intelligible and tangible realities.

Education, as envisaged in the context of Islam, claims to be a process which involves the complete person, including the rational, spiritual and social dimensions of the person. According to Al-Attas the comprehensive and integrated approach to education in Islam strives to produce a good, well-rounded person aiming at the balanced growth of the total personality through training Humankind’s spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses... such that faith is infused into the whole of his personality. (Al-Attas, 1979)

In Islamic educational theory the general objective of acquiring knowledge is the actualization and perfection of all dimensions of the human being. Man is intended to act as the representative of God, khalifat Allah who, in order to fulfil his divine duty, must submit himself completely to God, Allah (Abdullah 1982: 116).

According to Muslims, the ultimate aim of Islamic education is ‘perfection’, and this can only be achieved through obedience to God. While education does prepare man or woman for happiness in this life “its ultimate goal is the abode of permanence and all education points to the permanent world of eternity (al-akhirah)” (Nasr 1984: 7). Education is (or at least should be in Islam) inseparable from the spiritual life.

The Qur’an (the word of God revealed to his Prophet Muhammad) is, as the founder of the International Federation of Muslim and Arabic Schools wrote: The perennial foundation for Islamic systems of legislation and of social and economic organization. It is last but not least the basis of both moral and general education and the core, pivot and gateway of learning. (Al-Saud, 1979, p. 32)

In addition to the Qur’an, Muslims also take the example of the Prophet Muhammad, through the hadith, his documented sayings and actions, as indicative of how they should aspire to live their lives. The function of education in Islam is, as Al-Attas remarks (1985), “to produce men and women resembling him (the Prophet Muhammad) as near as possible”.

Parallel to this, the Seerah, or the life of the Prophet, provides Muslims with many examples of the multicultural and varying backgrounds of those people that followed the Prophet Muhammad. His associates included Africans, Persians, Romans and Israelites. The teachings of the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet constitute the spiritual pattern of an Islamic education system, which Muslims strive to implement in their lives.

Islamic education in the West

Since the beginning of their settlement in Britain, Muslims have had to face the challenges of adapting to a new social, cultural and economic environment, and also that of responding to the opportunities provided by the new environment. A particularly contentious challenge facing the Muslim community in Britain is within the field of education.
It is well documented that education is a leading element in the development and progress of any society. Indeed, Russell (1973) observed that education was the key to the development of the New World. In order to achieve the national objectives of any country, special attention must be paid to the content of education, socialization and training.

Ad-Darsh (1996) maintained that Islam as a system encompasses political, economic, and social imperatives. A study of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) reveals that his entire motivation was committed to societal improvement based on accepting God’s guidance as revealed in the Qur’an (Qur’an 30:30). For Muslims, this ideology is continued by educating each successive generation: it must be taught, understood and practised.

In the West, many Muslim parents are becoming increasingly concerned about the level of their children’s Islamic education, and are beginning to recognise the implications of their children receiving a secular education. In order for them to balance this, Muslim schools are claiming to provide an ‘Islamic’ alternative in addition to the state education system. Contrary to the modern view of religious affiliation where people are considered to be affiliated with the religious tradition that is historically prevalent in the land of their birth or in their ethnic group, whether they know anything about their religion or not (Yousif, 2000), Islam demands a minimum level of knowledge, understanding and practice concerning the world religion of Islam.

Educational concerns of British Muslims

It has been well established that there is psychological benefit in belonging to a stable cultural group with a coherent and enduring set of values. Margalit and Raz (1999) argued that cultural membership is vital because it provides people with meaningful choices about how to lead their lives, and also affects how others perceive and respond to them. Cultural identity, therefore, provides the basis for self-identification and secure belonging.

A variety of ethnicities, home languages and cultural traditions are present among Muslims living in Britain. These encompass South Asian, African, Arabic, Turkish, Persian and European ethnicities and cultures. While the faith tradition and its major practices remain the same for the majority of British Muslims, there are varieties of national cultures shaping the home language, dress and ceremonial activities of some Muslim groups. One should recognise the diversity of minority cultures existing in Britain, which involves an overlapping multiplicity of identities existing within the Muslim community. This means that British Muslims expect their children to be educated like other fellow citizens, in addition to having a grasp of their native language at home and being true to their faith. Other factors such as dress, marriage and schooling have been found to be important to Muslims; however, the foremost elements shaping the self and group identities of British Muslims are language and religion (Modood, 1997).

British Muslims are becoming more assertive in the way they express their religious identity. Modood highlighted the importance of religion in the self-
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identification of South Asian Muslims living in Britain when he reported that nine out of 10 Muslim respondents in his survey saw their religion as important to the way they led their lives (Modood, 1997). Mustafa (2001) reported that during the last two decades, the level of Muslim discontent with the state education system has become pronounced. There is a growing realisation amongst Muslim parents in Britain regarding the value of educational achievement the well-being of their children (Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003). Parents also recognise the need for greater emphasis on moral and spiritual education in schools - something which they feel is lacking within the education system.

Individuals initially learn social norms and attitudes within a social setting involving family members and friends. The school environment plays an important additional role in the formation of a child’s social values. It is therefore essential that values emphasised by family and community members are not contradictory to those taught at school. When such a contradiction arises, children may feel alienated from their environments, in school, at home, or both (Anwar, 1998; Bakhsh, 2007). Muslim parents have been voicing their criticism of the whole ethos of state schools, mainly because of their concern about the incompatibility between values taught at home and those at school (Halstead, 1995; Sarwar, 1995; Anwar and Bakhsh, 2003).

The 1985 Swann Report, which had argued against the idea of state support for separate religious schools, invoked a widespread response by Muslims concerned with issues of cultural and religious diversity in British society, and the implications of the diversity of religious experience in the education system. The Council of Mosques, UK and Eire (1986) published a detailed response containing the most comprehensive account of Muslim concerns about the report. The debate about the implications of the Swann Report on the education of Muslim children continued, with many valuable contributions, such as those of Halstead (1986), Ashraf (1986b) and Verma (1989).

Those Muslim educationists who subscribed to the Council of Mosques’ response generally commended the work of the Swann Committee in its clear, anti-racist stance and welcomed many of its recommendations; they reserved their main criticism for the report’s failure to recognise that religion is a way of life to a Muslim (Mustafa, 2001).

Learning about religion(s) in Religious Education lessons in state schools is considered by many Muslim parents to be inadequate. There is a serious shortage of authentic materials and trained teachers for the teaching of Islam in British state schools (The Islamic Society, 1986). While Muslims consider the provision of such faith-based education to be compatible with the aim of taking on the shared values of the wider pluralist society, Halstead and Khan-Cheema (1987) cited a wealth of sources on the lack of provision of any form of religious instruction in maintained schools, on the basis that in a multi-faith, pluralist society this instruction is deemed inappropriate and divisive. The survey of parents, pupils and community leaders from the Muslim community conducted by Awad and Bakhsh (2003) suggests that that state schools still offer inadequate or biased teaching about Islam.
The growth of religious observance among British Muslims is a recognised feature of their activity in the public sphere. Lewis (1994) described the Islamic disposition of South Asian Muslims living in Britain as ‘a communal consciousness that is far more religious than secular’. A significant majority of British Muslims attach special importance to their faith. The Policy Studies Institute survey showed that 73 per cent of Pakistanis and 76 per cent of Bangladeshis considered Islam to be fundamental to the way they live their life in Britain (Modood et al., 1997). Given that Islam has been a strong mobilising force among British Muslims, it is possible to discern its impact on their educational aspirations.

Thus, cultural identity is clearly demarcated for those of the Islamic faith. Language and religion are two of the most important elements in the process of enabling young people to shape their identities. Muslim parents feel that not only is there a possibility that the way their children are being educated in state schools may distort their Muslim identities, they are also concerned that the school environment may influence the values and attitudes of their children in ways that are antithetical to Muslim faith. The values of family and community are likely to be contradictory to those promoted in state schools, and this is one of the main reasons that a single faith Muslim school may be an option.

Ashraf (1993) argued that Religious Education should not remain a subject solely dealing with information about religions. He is assertive in his proposition that Religious Education should become:

> A central feature of the curriculum providing the curriculum planners with an integrated world view and a basic concept of human nature which includes its relationship to God and external nature. (Ashraf, 1993, p. 18)

Mukadam (1996) described the multi-faith approach to Religious Education as inadequate in that it did not provide for the spiritual and moral development of pupils. It is the assertion of many Muslim parents that multi-faith teaching is very superficial when it comes to the spiritual understanding of any of the religions being taught. In order to fully benefit from learning about Islam, Mukadam suggests that the spiritual aspect be fully explored.

Khan-Cheema (1996) added his support to the case for a Muslim act of worship and Muslim Religious Education in British state schools, maintaining that the demise of multi-faith education in schools is not in the interest of any faith community. He concluded that:

> Positive affirmation of a pupil’s faith within a non-denominational or even secular educational environment can help to enhance their motivation and commitment to learning. (Khan-Cheema, 1996, p. 7)

In some localities in Birmingham, the local education authority has been more supportive of Muslim needs (Al-Madaris, 2001; Hewer, 2001; Sahin, 2008). Nevertheless, despite accommodation in state schools to an “Agreed Syllabus” for instruction in world faiths including Islam, The Policy Studies Institute survey showed that the majority of Pakistani respondents (59 per cent) and a significant number of Bangladeshis (46 per cent) preferred single-sex schools for their
daughters (Modood et al., 1997, p. 323). The pattern of responses was somewhat similar for young people in the age group 16-34, where 48 per cent of Pakistanis and 37 per cent of Bangladeshis were in favour of single-sex schools.

British Muslims are becoming increasingly concerned about the values that underlie some current practices in schools, such as sex education. For example, a Muslim teacher stated in her address to a Muslim Education Conference that ‘One of the issues that Muslims perceive as a threat to their faith-based morality is sex education’. She also affirmed the view that there is no objection to the teaching of sex education when ‘it is done in a responsible, modest and decent way to promote family values’ (Amer, 1996). Schools should not use material which Muslim parents consider to be obscene and objectionable in sex education classes (Sarwar, 1994, p. 11).

This notion of single sex schools and segregated education seem to sit at odds with the educational aims of integration and inclusion, especially considering that citizenship education is an integral aspect of the agenda for social inclusion (Bagley and Verma, 2008). It can be argued however, that although there may be some negative link between segregation in schools and social inclusion, the school is not the only tool for integration. Other social groupings, such as friends outside school and family relatives, may also influence the child in more positive ways. Also, another important aspect is that academically pupils seem to perform better in single sex schools.

According to Cheema (1984), the basic issues and problems which face the Muslim children in schools within mainstream society are:

- The school’s religious assembly, where the parents should have the right to withdraw children from secular assemblies on written request and after consultation.
- Islamic festivals - Muslim pupils are permitted to take days off on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.
- Friday prayers - older Muslim children are allowed to attend the Friday congregational prayer (Jum’ah) at the Mosque. Alternatively, a room at the school can be made available for this purpose and ablution facilities made available where possible. Also in consultation with the Local Council for Mosques and the Directorate, at times an Imam is allowed to come into the school and lead the prayers.
- Swimming - single-sex provision is made with appropriate staffing and the girls allowed to wear swimming costumes which conform to the Islamic requirements. Shower and changing facilities should be separate and in single cubicles.
- School uniform - Muslim girls should be permitted to wear trousers, and the Shalwar Kamiz in order to conform to Islamic dress requirements.
- Curriculum - Muslim parents, after consultation with Head teachers, may withdraw their children from Music, Dance, Sex Education and any other activity which does not conform to the Islamic principles.

- School and community - good co-ordination and effective channels of communication must be established between the school and the community with
improved translation and interpretation services in appropriate languages. Information to parents about the school must similarly be appropriately conveyed. The other demand is for halal meals which has been met by Bradford but not by other educational authorities.

Cheema (1984) identified further problems which face the community, in particular the need for single-sex schools; an appropriate form of sex education which does not inform teenagers ‘how to’ perform sex, but rather provides them with information by which they can avoid sexuality and sexual exploitation before marriage; and the need for Voluntary Aided status for Muslim schools in which schools are financed from the public purse, but retain control of the religious and moral education curriculum as in, say, Roman Catholic schools.

Muslim voluntary organizations

Over the last four decades, a group of Muslim voluntary organizations has emerged which is characterised by its keen interest in the public education system of this country. Muslim voluntary organizations have been playing a key role in the educational debate pertaining to the nature of Religious Education, and the scope of moral and spiritual development in the school curriculum. In addition, these organizations have been active, through a process of consultation and collaboration, in providing educational services to state schools, local education authorities and government departments.

One of the first priorities for the new immigrants was the establishment of places of Muslim worship: the number of registered mosques in Britain increased from 18 in 1966 to 452 in 1990 (Nielsen, 1995), and today many more mosques have been constructed for Britain’s growing Muslim population. Mosques fulfil a social function, apart from being places of worship. The majority of mosques in the country are being used to provide supplementary classes for the teaching of the Qur’an and religious instruction to children.

In major cities, purpose-built mosques have made provisions for women to attend prayers and religious ceremonies. Small libraries, bookshops, and shops for selling certain products in demand by the masses have also been incorporated within the mosque premises. Hence, a form of social organisation has developed within these religious institutions. Youth clubs, women’s groups, funeral services, and supplementary evening and weekend classes offering instruction to children in English and Mathematics as well as Islamic Studies, have become part of mosque organisations in the East London Mosque, Regent’s Park Mosque, Birmingham Central Mosque, Victoria and Didsbury Mosques in Manchester, and Glasgow Central Mosque, to mention but a few (Mustafa, 2001).

Muslim community organisations were established to cater for the religious and social needs of Muslim groups on a national level. The UK Islamic Mission (UKIM) was one of the first organisations to commence its functions in December 1962. The Union of Muslim Organizations (UMO) was established in 1970 followed by a few others, including the Council of Mosques, UK and Eire in 1984.
Networks of Brelwi and Deobandi groups were also growing across Britain, but neither of these networks has a formal organisational structure (Nielsen, 1995).

**Muslim educational organizations**

In a community where the majority of its members are below the age of 25, education has emerged as one of the top priorities. Hence, another form of specialised organisation representing the educational interests of Muslims, began to emerge in Britain. This group of organisations is characterised by its broad interest in the public education system of this country and its impact on the education of Muslim children (Mustafa, 2001).

The establishment of the Muslim Education Trust (MET) in 1966 was the first initiative. MET is an educational organisation formed to cater for the educational needs of Muslim children in Britain. The Trust advises the Department for Education, local education authorities, and schools on education issues of concern to the Muslim community. The Trust’s publication of books and teaching aids covers many topics, ranging from Religious Education, collective worship, sex education, and music. The Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE) for Islamic Studies advises on standards for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level examinations taken by pupils at age 16 (Sarwar, 1994).

Muslim organisations sharing similar aims were formed to respond to what was perceived as the decline of faith-based worship in a multi-faith pluralist society (Cheema, 1996), and the decline in the education system of those spiritual and moral values so deeply rooted in essential humanity (Ashraf, 1993). The union of Muslim organisations formally set up the National Muslim Education Council (NMEC) in 1978, with the general objective to advance the education of Muslims in the United Kingdom. The Islamic Academy was established as an educational charity in 1983, followed by the IQRA Trust in 1988. The former worked closely with British educationists to promote research into educational provision for Muslims in the UK, while the latter worked mostly with local education authorities, schools, and teachers to provide information about Islam and offer training to teachers (Mustafa, 2001).

However, by the early 1980s Muslim organisations had reached a stage where they were beginning to be increasingly active at the local level. They were, in effect, successfully integrating into local politics and they began to demand access to the same facilities enjoyed by their counterparts of other faith groups. The first coordinated demands came from Bradford, a city with a large Muslim population of Pakistani origin. The Islamic school in the London Borough of Brent submitted a series of requests for recognition, and several other schools subsequently sought recognition as Voluntary Aided schools. But most requests, even when supported by Local Education Authorities (LEA) and civil servants, were been turned down, in contrast with requests from churches, and for the occasional Jewish school, often made at the same time and in the same district. This has caused a growing
resentment based on the belief that the government is deliberately opposed to the formation of publicly-funded Muslim schools (Nielsen, 1999).

Mustafa, (2001) claims that Muslim requirements for special provisions in schools have been met with varying degrees of tolerance and acceptance. Some schools and Local Education Authorities have yet to develop sound policies addressing issues such as prayer facilities for Muslim pupils, single-sex physical education lessons, time off during Islamic festivals, single-sex schools, Islamic dress for girls, and the right of withdrawal from collective worship and sex education lessons. Moreover, the fundamental concern of Muslims about the decline in moral and spiritual education in schools has not been addressed, which stimulates more support for the establishment of voluntary-aided Muslim schools. It is accepted that these schools will serve only a minority of Muslim children, whose parents are financially able and willing to pay for such education (Ashraf, 1986).

Even so, the case for the establishment of state-funded Muslim schools was justified, according to the AMS, for educational, social and moral reasons. The former director of AMS, Ibrahim Hewitt, described the ethos of such schools as one where the artificial divide of knowledge between 'secular' and 'religious' is non-existent. Such schools, he asserts:

Will be able to implement the National Curriculum envisaged by the Education Reform Act 1988 more successfully, because it will inculcate spiritual and moral aspects of R.E. (Hewitt, 1996).

Muslim schools are, therefore, regarded as providing a unique educational advantage in the provision of an integrated world-view, where the spiritual and physical learning experiences are cultivated to produce a balanced curriculum. (Mustafa, 2001)

What is a Muslim school?

Sarwar (1994) emphasised that Islam views education as a process through which a child’s total personality is developed in preparation for this life and the Akhirah (Hereafter). This affords an ethos to a Muslim school, in which all aspects of a child’s life are catered for, not merely the secular, but the spiritual aspects as well. Practically speaking, this means that the tenets of Islam influence every part of the curriculum, something not possible in a Non-Muslim school. This does not mean that some subjects are avoided if they contradict Islam or entail un-Islamic practice. Rather, Muslim schools’ curricula are modified to meet the requirements of Islam so that the pupils get the benefit of study without having to compromise on religious principles. Sarwar maintained that, apart from the academic value of this approach, it also boosts the self-esteem of Muslim pupils who are made fully aware of the contribution made by Muslim scholars in many subject areas (e.g. Science, Mathematics, Geography, etc.) over the centuries.

Hewitt (1996) points to another benefit of Muslim schools - such institutions do not provide an alien environment differing in almost every respect from that
experienced by children at home. Thus, by making the pupils feel more at ease at school, a positive effect is yielded in terms of their self-concept and academic achievement. Al-Hawamleh (2003) maintains that Muslims who are interested in the establishment of Muslim schools, argued that in the past there were many incidents where some educational institutions dealt with their children (due to the pupils' Islamic commitment and practice such as the Islamic code of dress, prayer and food) unfairly. Therefore, they suggest that a Muslim school can act as a kind of refuge for them in order to practise their religion and to be protected from unreasonable behaviour which might be encountered in some institutes. In the generally racist and Islamophobic society of Britain today the development of Islamic alternative schools, full or part-time, has an obvious logic. It should be noted that, according to Y uval-Davis (1992), in order to overcome the feeling of racism that some minorities were experiencing, the Labour Party had embraced the calls for separate schools in the name of equal opportunities and anti-racism. Living in Non-Muslim communities makes many Muslims turn to Muslim schools in order to preserve as best they can their communal identity and practice as Muslims (Iqbal, 1975; Gilliat, 1994). Hewitt (1996) maintained that Muslims attempt to revive the spirit of Islamic education throughout the school, to cover all aspects of the modern syllabus from an Islamic perspective and attempt to offer their pupils a solid grounding in their faith through study of Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic History, Urdu and the Arabic language.

Many writers argue that large numbers of Muslim families have witnessed their children distancing themselves from Islam. Their children have not abandoned their religion, but they seem to be reluctant to accept the teaching and principles of Islam and follow them (Iqbal, 1975; Zaki, 1982; Shaw, 1988; Gilliat, 1994; Bakhsh, 2007). Instead, they follow the dominant culture of the society that they live in. Even as the parents were discovering the worth of Islam, they failed to realise that Islam requires a personal realisation (Sarwar, 1994); thus, one is not born into the religion of Islam, and it is not an ethnically restricted religion. Muslim parents migrated from countries where the vast majority of people were adherents of Islam. But Britain offers many lifestyles and identity choices (Hewitt, 1996). And, consequently, Muslim-born children, unguided by Islamic practices often appear lost and de-motivated in many social settings (Bakhsh, 2007).

Muslim parents may opt for Muslim schools for their children if they feel they were treated unfairly by other institutions. The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA) reported in 1993 that there had been several instances when Muslim girls were sent home from school because they were wearing clothes required by their religious laws and traditions, but which contradicted rigidly applied local uniform rules. UKACIA indicated that there were cases of Muslim boys suspended from school for refusing to shower naked with other boys, a practice forbidden in Islam. Also, UKACIA cited a case of Muslim boys who were sent home by their school because they refused to shave off a fledgling beard (this was a school where other boys had punk hair styles, shaven heads, wore ear-rings etc) (Al-Hawamleh, 2003).
Another example of why Muslims parents may opt for a single faith school is that Muslim schools provide places for girls where they can perform their prayers in private, something that is not always possible in Non-Muslim schools. The sorts of problems encountered by Muslim girls who wear Islamic dress were well recorded because they made good copy in the newspapers in the past. The daily newspapers, as cited by Hewitt (1996: p.75), highlighted the case of the Alvi sisters who were banned from attending Altrincham Grammar School for Girls in 1990 because they insisted on wearing correct Islamic clothing - head covering, but without a veil.

Despite the financial and organisational hurdles experienced in establishing Islamic schools in Britain, according to supporters of Muslim schools such schools foster a distinct environment where there are no problems with drugs and alcohol (Emerick, 1998; Bakhsh, 2007). Supporters of Muslim schools claim that they provide for parents who feel their children are entangled in a situation of ‘culture clash’. In contrast, the whole ethos of British state schools and educational policy is seen as inconsistent with their mode of life (Al-Hawamleh, 2003).

Having discussed a number of reasons why Muslim parents may opt for Muslim schooling, it is also important to mention that there is growing pressure from many other such parents who do not want private Muslim schooling for their offspring. They do not wish to see their children’s education in ideological isolation and instead look to state schools to accommodate their needs (Skinner, 2002). For example, Bradford’s first Asian Lord Mayor is quoted as saying, “I don’t want separation in any form... what we want is accommodation of our cultural needs, especially in the education system” (Halstead, 1988, p. 52).

The faith schools’ debate

The issue of faith-based schools has generated much debate in the last decade (Parker-Jenkins, 2002; Gardner et al., 2005). After reviewing the debate about faith schools in the media today, one may find some links between what has been said during the last few years of the debate. According to Best, (2003) this could be summarised in a number of different, intertwined debates and these are:

- The debate between those who claim that there should be no place for religious nurture within education - since the two processes are conceptually different, and those who claim that everything of value has its origin in the Divine and therefore education must have religion at its core.
- The debate between those who point to the high standards of achievement and care in faith schools and argue that this should be made available to as many as desire it, and those who believe that such schools should not be allowed because they privilege some sections of society over others.
- The debate between those who would like to extend the right to establish schools to all faith groups (since it is patently unfair to allow some groups - e.g. the Church of England - to do so and not others), and those who regard such a policy as leading to the non-integration of the minority.
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- The debate about public funding: between those who argue that for the state to refuse to fund faith schools would be to discriminate against the faithful and deny parental rights, and those who say that, whatever the rights of parents to have their children educated in a faith context, there is no reason why the taxpayer should have to bear the financial burden.

The debates which appeared in the Times Educational Supplement and the Guardian newspapers centred around various aspects and concerns answering certain questions such as:

- Are faith schools a good thing?
- Is the promotion of a particular set of religious beliefs compatible with the aims of education?
- Should religious beliefs count as ‘knowledge’ and therefore qualify for inclusion in the curriculum alongside knowledge in Maths, Science, the Arts and the Humanities?
- Should the state encourage faith schools?
- Should public money be used to support and expand faith schools?
- Should every faith be permitted to open schools?
- Are faith schools necessarily divisive?
- Should all faith schools be obliged to accept a ‘quota’ of pupils of other faiths?
- Should faith schools be allowed (or prevented from) interviewing applicants to determine their religious commitment?

Best (2003) argues that the future of faith schools, within the context of a publicly-funded state education system is highly topical and extremely complex. There are critics of single faith schools who argue that faith-based schools in general, particularly Muslim schools, consist mainly of one ethnic grouping, and that such institutions would be socially and racially divisive (Swann Report, 1985). This argument however seems flawed considering the fact that Muslim pupils come from many different ethnic, linguistic and ‘racial’ groups. Similarly, arguing that Catholic and Protestant divisions in Ulster have their origins in a segregated educational system is also based on flawed arguments. The social unrest in Northern Ireland and elsewhere has more to do with poverty and other social injustices than with the religious foundations of schools (Best, 2003).

Many ‘common’ schools have huge concentrations of children of one particular faith. Demographically, due to patterns of immigration Muslim communities have tended to concentrate in certain areas around the country and there were, and still are, local state schools with enrolments of 95 per cent or more Muslim pupils (Parker-Jenkins, 2002). Faith schools may (and many do) claim to be open to children of other faiths and of none. For instance, some Muslim schools nowadays open their doors to pupils of other faiths such as the Islamia primary in Brent (Slater, 2002).

As for Muslim schools, they are faith-based drawing upon people hugely differentiated on grounds of cultural, socio-economic and linguistic background. Apart from the decision to award funding previously being contested erroneously
in discourses of race rather than of religion, Asian schools are already a reality in Britain (Parker-Jenkins, 2002).

Among the opponents of faith-based schools are the National Secular Society and the British Humanist Association (Skinner, 2002). But as the Humanist Philosophers’ Group (2001) concedes, arguments against teaching about God and Scripture are weak, since a great deal of what has been taught in schools cannot be proved to be ‘true’ knowledge (e.g. art appreciation), so a great deal of the curriculum would have to be abandoned if one were to insist on such an argument. All knowledge is to a greater or lesser degree socially constructed, and so the argument that faith does not constitute ‘genuine’ knowledge can hardly be sustained. It is true that the home and even the immediate local community may be the most important influence on a child, and in order to interlock with the family’s system of care and socialization, religious education should represent more than a simple package of rituals and dogmas (Rocker, 2000): it is a way of life.

Another significant issue in this debate is that critics of single faith schools claim that if Muslim schools are structured and operated according to religious instruction, this will affect the fostering of critical thinking and enquiry amongst pupils. Supporters of Muslim schools insist that Islamic principles do allow for freedom of thought. In fact, according to Hamza Yusuf (2001) a Muslim student must be able to think critically about the world he or she finds themselves in. So teaching students to think and critically analyse is of the essence of any serious Islam based curriculum. In addition to this Islam teaches the principle of ijtihad, or personal interpretation and reasoning, which Muslim students are encouraged to adopt when faced with problematic issues in their lives. However, there are religious guidelines as to when ijtihad can be implemented (Ramadan, 1999).

There are those who have argued that faith-based schools are efficient, and one finds within them social justice and social order which is not typical within state or secular schools. Therefore, funding and establishing such institutions by the government is a logical outcome of commitment to pluralism and should not be feared - but rather welcomed as a liberal and just response to diversity. According to Skinner (2002) such a view has been expressed most strongly by those defending the right of Muslim communities to receive state funding to support their schools (Halstead, 1988). More recently the liberal arguments in favour of faith schools have been presented by Parker-Jenkins (2002), and contributors to Gardner et al. (2005).

**Debate about Muslim schools and public funding**

The struggle by Muslim communities to receive funding for their schools spans more than 25 years. Applications for state funding were repeatedly turned down, sometimes for spurious reasons (Islamia, 1992; Mustafa, 1999; Parker-Jenkins, 2002), and sometimes primarily on practical grounds such as failure to meet planning permission requirements, or to meet the teaching requirements of the National Curriculum. An example of the latter is the private boys’ Darul Uloom College in Bolton which failed an inspection by the government and was
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threatened with closure (Skinner, 1998). An example of the former reason is the case of Bradford Metropolitan District Council opposing an application from five Muslim schools, stating in its report that “Muslim schools would risk becoming black schools... encouraging racial prejudice” (Cumper, 1990:60).

According to Lepkowska (1998) a letter of inquiry in 1983, followed by a formal application in 1986 by the Islamia School in Brent, was rejected in 1990. Judicial review of the case resulted in the Secretary of State being ordered to reconsider his ruling. The application was again denied, this time in 1993, on the grounds of a surplus of school places in the local area. The same reason did not apply to a Jewish school being granted funding in the same geographical area. Therefore, Muslims considered such a decision by the government as discrimination on the basis of religion. The UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs (UKACIA) stated in 1993 that Muslim schools should apply for what is undeniably their right - voluntary aided or grant-maintained (GM) status.

Fortunately there has been a change in the law which means that privately funded independent schools can apply for GM status (Reid, 1997). Therefore, Islamia School made further attempts in 1995 and waited three years for a response, which resulted in grant-maintained status being approved in 1998. According to Lepkowska (1998, p.18) and Parker-Jenkins (2002), prior to Islamia’s application being approved Muslim schools remained the only religiously based ones to have been consistently rejected for public funding.

Another example of Muslim schools which made their way through the relevant stages of the procedure is that of Al Furqan Primary School in Birmingham, which underwent a four-year struggle to satisfy the criteria. According to Lepkowska (1998), Al Furqan boasts long waiting lists and has struggled to survive, charging fees which have been one-third of the average private school. As such, the decision to provide funding serves as a milestone, as Muslims in Britain had seen their previous applications rejected in the context of increasing Islamophobia (Richardson, 1992) and fear of fundamentalism (Yuval-Davis, 1992).

Best (2003) indicated that state funding had been secured for four Muslim schools adding to an approximate total of 5000 Anglican, 2000 Catholic, 32 Jewish, two Sikh, one Greek Orthodox, three Quaker and one Seventh Day Adventist school, catering for 1.7 million pupils. Best also added that as of May 2002, proposals for 15 new faith schools were awaiting approval, including one Sikh, two Islamic, two Roman Catholic, nine Church of England primaries and one Anglican secondary school. By 2008 a total of seven Muslim schools were approved for some state funding.

However, state funding for minority faith schools is widely regarded as an issue of equality and a matter of principle (Hewitt, 1998). In addition to this, it has implications in terms of community relations. Denial of voluntary-aided status leads to, or reinforces, a sense of being ‘second class’ (Reid, 1997). This in turn may impact negatively on community relations between minority faith communities and the majority community. In the Times Educational Supplement (5th October 2001), under the heading: ‘Faith school opposition multiplies’, the general secretary of the Church of England Board of Education said that:
If the Government were now to turn back, the message to those of other faiths would be all too clear; you are not fully part of British life. Is it possible to think of any message to the British Muslim community more likely to put moderation and harmony at risk? (Mansell, 2001)

The government has demonstrated an increasing commitment towards faith-based schools. The Green Paper (DfES, 2001a: p.48) announced that the government wished to “welcome more schools provided by the churches and other major faith groups”. The government’s recent White Paper which proposed that “all schools should build a distinct ethos and be centres of excellence, whether as a specialist school or by some other means.” (DES, 2001a: p.6) This is another sign of encouragement for minority groups.

So the government has in theory at least, made it explicit that it supports the creation of more faith and other voluntary schools, explicitly welcomes decisions to increase the number of faith schools, and is embarked upon legislation and funding policies that will make it easier for Faith groups to establish their own voluntary aided schools, with significant support from public funds.

SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

It is clear that various Muslim communities have established themselves throughout Britain. The Muslim community in Britain is different and varied in terms of its cultural and socio-political constitution. The theological concept of the Ummah (world-wide Muslim community) means that although there are many nationalities and ethnic groupings that comprise the population of Muslims in Britain - the actual religion of Islam is not attached to any one ethnicity or ‘racial’ group, but is universal in outlook.

Having discussed Muslim schools, it can be observed that many Muslim parents aim to provide a separate environment outside of school hours, where their children can become familiar with the basic aspects of their Islamic faith.

It is additionally crucial to note that due to their ethnic and religious background, the Muslim community in Britain today faces issues and problems related to determining identity and establishing itself as a community. These include education, political sway, marriage, racial discrimination and Islamophobia.

The literature indicates that, according to Muslims, the ultimate goal of Islamic education is ‘perfection’, and this can only be achieved through obedience to God. Moreover, Islam stresses the importance of education through the understanding and implication of religious ideals as directed by God in the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet Muhammad through the hadith literature.

Many Muslim parents in the West are becoming increasingly concerned about the level of their children’s Islamic education, and are beginning to recognise the implications of their children receiving a secular education. British Muslims expect their children to be educated like other fellow citizens, in addition to having a grasp of their native language at home and being true to their faith. Other factors such as dress, marriage and schooling were found to be important to Muslims; however,
the most critical elements shaping the identity of British Muslims, on both a personal and group level, are language and religion.

Muslim parents who send their children to state schools feel that the education system is failing their children by not providing adequately for their special, but not separate, needs. They are becoming increasingly concerned about the values that lie behind some current practices in schools, such as sex education. They also face problems in other areas of schooling such as the school assembly, Islamic festivals, Friday prayer, swimming, school uniforms, and the curriculum.

With regard to the state funding for minority faith schools, the literature showed that for Muslims this is widely regarded as an issue of equality and a matter of principle. In addition to this, it has implications for community relations.

However, the government has made it clear that it supports the creation of more faith and other voluntary schools, and explicitly welcomes decisions to increase the number of faith schools. It has embarked upon legislation and funding policies that will make it easier for faith groups to establish their own voluntary aided schools with significant support from public funds.

Having discussed the role and background of Muslim schools, it is necessary to highlight the actual subject of citizenship. Only after analysing the concept of Citizenship and its implications for the educational curricula, can conclusions be drawn about the way that it is being taught in Muslim schools as opposed to state schools.