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The Experiences of Muslim Academics in UK Higher Education Institutions

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Declaration

I, *Ibtihal Ramadan*, declare that the Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled *The Experiences of Muslim Academics in UK Higher Education Institutions* is my own work. This thesis does not contain any parts that have been previously submitted to any university for the award of any academic degree or professional qualification.

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Abstract

The intertwining of political, economic, societal and global changes has resulted in accentuating even more so the ‘Muslim question’, both domestically and globally. Research has shown that the negative focus Muslims and Islam receive in the West is becoming increasingly mainstreamed, not only through the media, but principally through mainstream political discourse. This mainstreaming is within a global and local narrative of a ‘war on terror’. The former followed 9/11 at the outset of this millennium and the latter is represented in the myriad of ‘anti-terrorism’ initiatives recently augmented in the UK by the Prevent duty. This intensely hostile backdrop has nurtured ‘normative truths’ about Muslims / Islam. Although Islamophobia did exist long before 9/11, it has now become commonplace and, even, legitimised within the context of tackling terrorism, affecting the experiences of the majority of Muslims in the West and elsewhere in diverse ways.

British academia has opened its doors to non-traditional academics, including those from racial and/or ethnic minority backgrounds. Equality policies have been developed, particularly subsequent to the Race Relation Amendment (2000), which has sought to fulfil the recommendations of the Macpherson report (1999). Nevertheless, inequalities do permeate British academia and the experiences of non-traditional academics have been tainted by institutional racism, in both quantity and quality. Statistics attest the former, highlighting the underrepresentation of non-traditional academics in British academia, more particularly in senior leadership and professorial positions. Empirical research findings attest the latter through citing several factors, including career trajectory barriers and the double standards racial bias that operates in a subtle way within higher education institutions (HEIs).

These broader and institutional dimensions set the scene for this thesis, the aim of which is to examine the experiences of Muslim academics. The particular experiences of this group of academics have been ignored in previous research, as faith/belief matters have largely been overlooked in studies that explored the experiences of minority academics.

This thesis adopts a qualitative approach utilising theoretical bricolage that principally draws on Critical Race Theory (CRT). The notion of race in CRT is, however, expanded to include faith/belief. The thesis also draws on Post-colonial and De-colonial theories, Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' and Fraser's model of 'status recognition'. It explores the perceptions of Muslim academic participants regarding their own personal/professional identities and how Muslim academics negotiate their Muslim-ness in academia and considers how wider narratives have influenced how they speak about their 'Muslim identity'. The views of the participants are particularly important to examine the extent to which, if any, the 'normative truths' have penetrated academia. This thesis also examines the perceptions of the participants regarding their career experiences and considers whether the experiences of this group of Muslim academics corresponds to, or differs from, the experiences of their fellow non-traditional academics.

The Whiteness of the academy was an overarching theme, under which the participants' experiences of racism vis-a-vis job opportunities, career advancement and the multi-faced forms of epistemic racism were discussed. Exceptionalism seemed to be a pre-requisite of gaining a positive experience. Not only did exceptionalism temper perceptions of 'otherness', but being exceptional was an aspect that advanced the career trajectories of some of the participants. Silence was another major theme that recurred in various forms across the fieldwork. These silences appear to have been a consequence of the wider stigmatisation of the Muslim identity, which became evident in the ways some of the participants chose to go about interpreting, or declaring, their Muslim-ness in their workplace. While being Muslim created challenges and required some of the participants to exert substantive negotiations and efforts to fit in, it was advantageous for others, in terms of their career trajectories. Religious micro-aggressions were habitual to the participants with regards to their interactions with staff, and this was particularly acute for females wearing the hijab, where the religious micro-aggressions in HEIs took on a gendered aspect of the 'Muslim problem'. Silence also penetrated the narratives in relation to issues of institutional racism. Networking with other non-white academics was another main theme that featured in the accounts. Muslim

academic participants, like other non-traditional academics seek support and mentorship from other minoritised academics to be able to survive in academia.

The current study concludes by suggesting that there is a need for more consideration to be given to the aspects of faith/belief in HE policy and practice. This needs to be conducted within a framework that acknowledges the existence of religious microaggressions and the overwhelming normativism of Whiteness in academia.

Abbreviation

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CGT	Constructive Grounded Theory
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CT	Critical Theory
CSAMI	Centre for Studies of Arab and Muslim issues
ECU	Equality Challenge Unity
E&D	Equality and Diversity
EO	Equal Opportunities
FOSIS	Federation of Student Islamic Societies
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HSS	Humanities and Social Sciences
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MSA	Muslim Students Association
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SET	Science, Engineering, Technology
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine
TA	Thematic Analysis
UCU	The University and College Union
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WP	Widening Participation

1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the impetus of the current research, identifies the gaps in the existing academic literature related to the experiences of Muslim academics in Western HEIs and outlines the methodological choices made for the research, concluding with a brief description of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Researcher Positionality and Its Influence on the Research Topic and Approach

As the researcher, key to the impetus of this research topic and approach is my identity and personal experience. I am a Muslim female Palestinian refugee¹, who was born and raised in a middle-class family in one of the richest Arabian Gulf states. Regarding my belief, I grew up in a practising household with a critical flavour. Whilst the majority of Palestinian Muslims are Sunni and those who practise the faith generally follow the Shafi'i² doctrine, my parents have not had a dogmatic adherence to a specific doctrine and have been highly critical of, and upfront about, some of the cultural practices. As a family, we moved around to live in different Arab states, due to our instable political status as refugees. A few years post the Oslo Accord, we moved to the Gaza-Strip in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. My life journey prior to returning to Gaza exposed me to diverse societies with diverse interpretations of Islam and different cultural conventions. Experiencing the second Palestinian Uprising in 2001 and the Israeli attack against Gaza in 2008, let alone the daily bombing and killing, resulted in me becoming a different person. I would argue that my previous attachment to Palestine before moving back to Gaza was rather

¹ UNRWA has defined Palestinian refugees as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict (retrieved online from <https://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>). However, Palestinian scholars find that this definition is inadequate, as it links the issue of refugees with a specific period of time and with ‘conflict’. Thus, another definition of a Palestinian refugee is ‘any person whose normal place of residency was Palestine and who was forced to leave his place of residency either due to being intimidated or persecuted or due to external aggression or general breach to human rights in any part of Palestine, including his original hometown, and, as a result of this condition, he lost his property and possessions and lived in exile, whether within the borders of Palestine or outside Palestine. (Retrieved online from <http://info.wafa.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=3928> The Refugee According to the International Law)

² Shafi'i doctrine is one of the schools of Islamic Jurisprudence and was named after Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i.

symbolic. In Gaza, I became actively involved in different charities on a voluntary basis, whereby I had regular contact with people suffering from bereavement, people with different injuries, widows who had lost their husbands as a result of the attacks and so on. Consequently, I developed an intrinsic empathy for oppressed people and a deep anger over the injustice that has transcended the geographic space I was occupying.

I only began to reflect on just what being the ‘other’ means when I arrived in the UK to undertake my PG degree study. The discrimination I often face because I wear the hijab³, sometimes through verbal insults, has made the intersectionality of faith with gender identity prominent in this research, and has made me recognise how Islamophobia permeates the everydayness of those individuals with conspicuous faith identity.

Reflecting on my ‘otherness’ triggered a deeper realisation of how, at various stages of my life prior to arriving in the UK, I did have experiences of being the ‘other’, but in a positive, rather than a negative, way. Palestinians in the Gulf States are a minority group, but are deemed as the ‘model minority’. Growing up as a highly achieving child, I always received attention from all of my peers and teachers. Moreover, although sharing the same ethnic background with the citizens of that Gulf state, i.e. Arabs, we Mediterranean are phenotypically different. I had not realised how one’s ethnic background could create isolation, let alone the power of alienation brought about by a different dress-style, particularly the hijab.

Although I had previously worked in Palestinian academia and my PG studies were sponsored by a prestigious scholarship from the British government, I was still subjected to some comments and/or negative attitudes and assumptions that I

³ In this research I use the word ‘hijab’ to refer to the headscarf worn by Muslim women to cover their heads. Although this term is used interchangeably in the literature with the word ‘veil’, I sought to avoid using the term ‘veil’, except for when it corresponds to the face veil, i.e. niqab for the following reasons. Firstly, the word ‘hijab’ has an Islamic significance and extends the physical covering to influence the demeanour, which cannot be afforded by the word ‘veil’. Secondly, the word ‘veil’ carries negative connotations and stereotypes, as it denotes a simplification of the variety of approaches Muslim women in different regions and across history follow with respect to the concept of covering (Bullock, 2002)

possessed limited academic aptitude and/ or I was constrained/ oppressed by my cultural conventions. Such comments were made by, not only some academic staff members, but also some of my peers. I realised that these attitudes were triggered by my dress-style, which clearly indicates my Muslim-ness. I had thought that, in the Western academia, the hijab may, at most, raise some eyebrows and may, at its worst, be perceived as an oddity in the institutions that are the very location for enlightenment and critical thinking. These were the circumstances that triggered the idea for this current study. Additionally, the way Muslims and Islam are represented in both the mainstream media and political debates increased my curiosity about the lived experiences of Muslim academics in the UK higher education (HE) context. This study acknowledges Islamophobia as a live issue within the UK and that its presence can have an impact on the lifestyles and life opportunities of Muslims in Britain.

The notion of Muslim identity is germane to the possible impact of Islamophobia on Muslims' lives. On coming to the UK, I observed that visible Muslims fall into two general categories: those who are comfortable with this dimension of their identity and those whose Muslim-ness causes feelings of discomfort, perhaps not because of itself, but due to the negative climate in which Muslims and Islam are often 'othered'. This discomfort often leads to an alternation in their behaviour and/or attitudes and creates a tendency for them to code-switch and submerge their Muslim-ness in public, in spite of them having a conspicuous faith identity.

1.2 Muslim Academics' experiences: A gap in the current literature

Based on my personal experience, as well as my general observations, with regard to how Muslims conduct their Muslim identity on a day-to-day basis, I set out to explore the relevant literature on Muslim identities in the West, particularly in the UK (Asmar, 2005a; Lewis, 1994; Miskovic, 2007; Peek, 2005; Samad, 1998; Suleiman, 2013; Tyrer and Ahmed, 2006). Most of these studies have examined the Muslim identity of young Muslims, i.e. the second or third generation of Muslim migrants in the West, or Muslim converts. However, there is a dearth of published literature on how professionals from a Muslim background define their identities.

In recognising that diverse axes of individuals' social, personal and role identities may influence the ways in which they define who they are, I carried out a review of the academic discussions and empirical research on academic identity. However, this review indicates that this body of literature has almost failed to account for the ways in which non-traditional academics define their academic identities. Hence, difficulties arose in attempting to implement this body of literature to reflect how the majority of the participants understood and described their academic identity.

Moreover, although Muslims have been attracting scholarly interest in the West since the late twentieth century, to my knowledge the experiences of Muslim academics have yet to be examined. Furthermore, academic writings and empirical research on the experiences of BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) academics, the group to which most Muslim academics would belong in the UK context, is recent and rare. In this study, I sought to avoid the term BME, preferring, instead, non-white academics, see section 3.2. A review of the relevant literature in the UK and the US (e.g. Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; ECU, 2011; Jones, 2006; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007) highlights the limited amount of attention that has been paid to the possible influence of faith (religious) identity on the career experiences of non-traditional academics. The review also highlights that non-traditional academics continue to be disadvantaged under the processes, cultures and (in)formal practices of the British academia.

1.3 Research Questions and Methodology

I, the researcher, embarked on an empirical investigation located within a critical theory paradigm (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994, 2000), which draws from a theoretical bricolage framework (Kincheloe, 2005). A qualitative research design was utilised, which draws on the Constructive Grounded Theory (CGT) interview style (Charmaz, 2014), to address the following research questions:

1- How do Muslim academics conceptualise their identity (identities)?

2- How do Muslim academics perceive their academic career experiences?

I chose one recruitment criterion, being any academic who self-identifies as Muslim, and recruited a diverse sample of 26 participants, comprising of mixed gender, UK

nationals and non-UK nationals, of various ethnicities and of various levels of experience, and senior staff and ordinary lecturers across UK universities. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) was employed to analyse the participants' accounts, benefitting from critical hermeneutics, which locates individuals' accounts into a wider context engaging with the possible influence of issues of power and inequalities on the individuals' accounts.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two presents the societal background in which this current study takes place. The introductory section firstly provides brief demographics of the Muslim population in the UK according to the 2011 census data, along with a brief historical background of the presence of Muslims/Islam in the UK. It then moves on to discuss the most significant historic events in the late twentieth century that designated Muslims as a problematic minority. This negative positioning was culminated by the 9/11 attacks, which formally shifted the minority-majority relations from race (colour) to religion. The chapter continues by discussing how Muslims and Islam, including the notion of the hijab, have become central to political and public debates on multiculturalism. A detailed review of the findings from the empirical research that examined the Muslim identities of different Muslim communities in the UK, as well as the impact of the global 'war on terror', on how Muslim-ness has been defined follows. The chapter then presents the theoretical approach adopted in this study to conceptualise and define Islamophobia, as well as the category 'Muslim'. Furthermore, the findings from the empirical research on Muslims' employment rates in the UK labour-market, the experiences of gendered Islamophobia and the impact of the State Anti-terrorism Acts related to Muslim communities are discussed across the chapter. Chapter Two concludes with the findings from studies that analysed media representations of Muslims and Islam.

Chapter Three introduces the dilemma I, the researcher, experienced in trying to match the writings on academic identity to my findings, followed by brief statistics on the demographics of non-white academics. The current definition of institutional racism is then problematised, particularly within academia. This is followed by a review of the empirical research that examined issues of equality and diversity,

highlighting the silence that exists within academia in relation to intrinsic issues of equality on policy, as well as practice, levels. The chapter then briefly draws on the main themes identified from the review of the literature that examined the experiences of Muslim students in Western HEIs. Finally, the main themes emerging from the literature that explored the experiences of non-traditional academics in the UK and the US academy are discussed.

Chapter Four provides a detailed account of the methodological choices and issues, which include the philosophical stance, and the theoretical framework, which draws on several theories that have constructed issues related to minorities, power hierarchies and misrecognition. The chapter discusses in detail the issues of sampling, researcher positionality, reflexivity, data-analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter Five presents the findings related to the first research question. It explores how the participants defined their identity as being multiple, including how they defined their Muslim-ness and how they go about it in their workplace. The chapter then introduces both the notion of ‘faith capital’, as revealed in the accounts, and its positive influence on the participants’ experiences and academic excellence, as well as the commonplace of ‘Islamophobic micro-aggression’ in their daily interactions with colleagues and other non-Muslim staff members in the academia. This is followed by a discussion of the ways in which the hijab is located and perceived in academia. The challenges the participants face in order to fit in are also identified. The chapter concludes with the participants’ views of their academic identity and shows how, for the majority of the HSS participants, their academic identity has intertwined with, or has been underpinned by, the social and political activism that seeks to redress the injustices Muslims experience at the societal level.

Chapter Six explores the themes identified in relation to the second research question and is divided into three interrelated sections. The first section addresses the possible impact of Whiteness on the experiences of the participants with regard to recruitment, career progression, the knowledge they produce and the attitudes of White students towards them both in the classroom and beyond. The second section discusses the presence of some forms of silence across the accounts of some of the

participants in relation to the topic of institutional racism and/or Islamophobia. The final section presents themes related to non-white academics' networking.

The conclusion chapter, Chapter Seven, begins with the researcher's personal reflections on this PhD journey. It then summarises the most significant findings, explains the study's limitations and provides suggestions for possible future research vis-à-vis Muslim academics.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Muslims in the UK: Setting the Scene

Acknowledging that the ‘Muslim question’ in the West (including the UK) is multifaceted, this chapter focuses on the most pervasive aspects vis-a-vis Muslims and Islam in the UK. Drawing from both the theoretical and empirical literature on Muslims in the broader UK society, the chapter firstly introduces a brief historical background to the presence of Muslims in the UK, followed by a demographic profile of Muslims, drawing from the recent 2011 census. Next, the major public and political debates concerning Muslims (and Islam) are discussed, including multiculturalism, issues of British-ness, the hijab and the various existing definitions of the category ‘Muslim’, before pointing out how this current study defines ‘Muslim’. Following this is a deep exploration of the marked shift in the (global) discourse about Muslims and Islam in the twenty-first century ‘war on terror’ epoch, elaborating on the multiple faces of the notion of Islamophobia, its impact on Muslims and the effect of anti-terrorism legislations related to Muslims. The chapter closes with a brief section on the representation of Muslims and Islam in the British media. Introducing these matters is relevant in clarifying the wider societal and global contexts that constitute the backdrop of this current study and, more particularly, in which the research population exists.

2.2 Islam in Britain: Historical Background and Current Muslim Demographics

Whilst the Muslim presence in Britain tends largely to be perceived as a post- World War II (WW II) phenomenon, the history of the Muslim presence in the UK can be traced back to the beginning of the 17th century (Ansari, 2003). The 19th century not only witnessed the settlement of Muslim communities from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds, including Yemen, Morocco and Malaya, in the UK, but also the emergence of a native British conversion to Islam (Ansari, 2004) – (see *Islam in Victorian Britain: The Life and Times of Abdullah Quilliam*). After WW II, the volume and profile of the Muslim presence in Britain were shaped by the global economic context, with South Asians forming the majority of the Muslim migrants to the UK (Ansari, 2004). Most of them arrived as unskilled labourers and worked in

the industrial areas of the West Midlands and North-West England (Abbas, 2005). They were joined in the early 1970s by highly skilled, middle-class professional East-African Asians (Hansen, 2000) and rich Arab businessmen from the Levant and the Gulf (Ansari, 2004). In the 1980s and 1990s, Muslims migrated as asylum seekers and refugees, including not only Somalis, Arabs, Afghans and Kurds, but also Kosovar and Bosnian Muslims after the breakup of Yugoslavia (ibid). This brief outline shows the ethnic, cultural and socio-economic diversity of the Muslim migrants to Britain post-WW II.

Information about the religious affiliation of the British society was first collected through introducing a voluntary question about religion in the 2001 census. Whilst this was positively received by some, for example Stone and Richardson (2004) perceived it as a “significant step forward in Britain’s understanding of itself and towards recognising its religious minority groups” (p.28), others displayed concern that this question was a reflection of the government’s ‘anxiety’ regarding the British Muslim population (Kundnani, 2002).

According to the 2011 census, Muslims have formed the second largest religious group in the UK after Christianity (and Christian-related faith). Muslims constitute 5% of the population in England and Wales (ONS, 2013), 1.4% in Scotland (NRS, 2011)⁴ and 0.2% in Northern Ireland (NISRA, 2013). Although Christianity continues to be the religion of the majority, the census indicates a decrease in the number of people who self-identified as being Christians, from 72 % in 2001 to 59 % in 2011. The census also shows an increase in the number of people reported to have

⁴ While I could obtain estimates figures for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland for 2013, the Demographics branch of NRS do not produce any statistics on ethnic or religious diversity for their population estimates at all. Thus, the latest figures they hold come from 2011 Census. However, The Scottish Household Survey shows that in 2014, 1.4% of people in Scotland stated they were Muslim.

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid/Religion>

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/08/3720/2#f21>

no religion, from 15% in 2001 to 25% in 2011, and an increase in the number of people reported as being Muslim, from 3% in 2001 to 5% in 2011. This changing profile of the UK's religious affiliation, and particularly the growth of the Muslim population, has drawn increasing (negative) attention to the Muslim presence in the UK, to the extent that some people have expressed fears that Muslims are 'taking over' (see Kelly (2013)). More recently, the alarmism about 'Muslims taking over Britain', which was exacerbated by the 'refugee crisis', triggered a parliamentary debate in October (2015) (see Whitton (2015)⁵). Several factors have contributed to this growth of the Muslim population, including the increasing number of refugees from the Middle East and economic migrants, birth rates and conversion to Islam, and it may also be that Muslims engaged more in responding to the question on religion in the 2011 census than they did in 2001 (Ali, 2015, p.23). This, in part, corresponds to Gilliat-Ray's (2010) view that Muslims have become more willing to self-identify as Muslims, on account of the 'war on terror'.

The Muslim population, compared to other religious groups, has the youngest age profile: 48 % of Muslims are under the age of 25 (ONS, 2013, p. 2). Muslims are also ethnically diverse, with just 68% of Asian background, including 38% Pakistani and 15% Bangladeshi, and 32% non-Asians, including 10% Black ethnic groups, 11% other ethnic groups (ibid, p. 7) and 8% 'ethnically white' (Ali, 2015, p.16).

Additionally, the phenomenon of conversion to Islam has attracted both public and scholarly attention. In the 2001 census, Scotland added a question related to the religion of birth. Based on this, Birt (2003) used the Scottish data as a model to speculate on conversion and estimated the number of converts in 2001 to be around 14200, with 61% of them being native British (p. 20). Gilliat-Ray (2010), drawing on Birt's study, estimated that, in 2010, the number of converts would be 21,000. A

⁵ In the Mint Press News website (2015) , Whitton discussed how the petition entitled *Stop Allowing immigrants into the U.K*, received over a 100000 signatures and would be debated in the UK Parliament. The petition made several demands including "The U.K. government need to prevent immigrants from entering the U.K. immediately! We MUST close all borders, and prevent more immigrants from entering Britain. Foreign citizens are taking all our benefits, costing the government millions!" The petition continued to claim that "many of them are trying to change U.K. into a Muslim country!"

more recent study estimated that, between 2001 and 2011, 40,000 -80,000 individuals have converted to Islam, with 50% of these converts being native British (Brice, 2015). However, presenting an accurate estimate of the number of converts to Islam is not the focus of this review. The relevance of the phenomenon of white Britons' conversion to Islam to this review is that it is argued to challenge the othering of Islam and contributes to the 'indigenisation' of Islam in Britain, and challenges the commonly held othering of Islam in the West (Zebiri, 2008).

2.3 The Rise of Muslims as a 'Disturbing' Social Phenomenon

This section briefly outlines some key events argued to have stimulated local and global anxieties vis-a-vis Muslims. Firstly, Muslims' reactions to the publication of *The Satanic Verse*, i.e. The Rushdie Affair in 1989, triggered a turning point in race relations and polarised the British society (and indeed the global) over religion, i.e. non-Muslims versus Muslims (Abbas, 2005; Modood, 2005; Poynting and Mason, 2007). The official reaction interpreted their protests as an attack on freedom of speech and went on to 'inform' Muslims that their behaviour should correspond with the values of the British civilised society, according to Cruise O'Brein as cited by Khan (2000, p. 30). This affair was the litmus test of British multiculturalism, in that it examined the extent to which Muslims in Britain were publicly accommodated and their cultural and religious values were recognised and respected by a secular democratic state (Khan, 2000; Modood 2005). It also revitalised an Orientalist discourse of Muslims as being 'uncivilised', 'barbaric' and 'backwards'. The Rushdie Affair thus signalled the beginning of an era in which *Muslims qua Muslims* have become alienated.

Whilst anti-Muslim discrimination in Britain was common in the 1960s and 1970s, this form of religious discrimination was not recognised then, even by anti-racists, as the race-relation discourse in Britain was constructed around the colour/race line, Muslims were perceived as Asians (Modood, 2005). They were 'systematically ethnicised', 'placed at the bottom of the labour market', even below their white working-class counterparts (Abbas, 2005, p.9), and attacked in public through 'Paki-bashing' (Modood, 2005). Anti-Muslim racism then was underpinned by two

motives, as Modood argues, being their colour difference and what the majority perceived to be an ‘inferior culture’ manifested through “language, religion, family structure, exotic dress and cuisine” (p.7).

Moreover, Muslims’ protests against Britain’s participation in the coalition of the Gulf War in 1991 marked the second episode that spotlighted Muslims in the late 20th century, stimulating further othering of Muslims (Lewis, 1994; Poynting and Mason, 2007). The othering discourse shifted from the Orientalist tainted descriptors of Muslims as being ‘barbaric’ and uncivilised’ to a discourse that questioned Muslims’ loyalty: “ they were asked to demonstrate their allegiance and to prove whether their ‘loyalty’ lay with Britain or with their Muslim brethren” (ibid, p.69). The former form of othering, which draws from an Orientalist vision, was not tailored for ostracising Muslims then, as white Britons also participated in anti-war protests. The Othering discourse was, then, tailored to *exclude only Muslims* through questioning their loyalty. Muslims were then portrayed as the ‘fifth column’ and the ‘enemy within’. This triggered public hostility against them and attacks on mosques took place (Peace, 2015).

The 2001 urban riots in Northern England (Leeds, Burnley and Bradford), formed another milestone episode in the development of public hostility, both domestically and globally, against Muslims qua Muslims. The initial official response, mirroring a ‘populist law and order rhetoric about ‘thugs’ (Poynting and Mason, 2007, p.74), was supported by the media, which blamed Muslims for their ‘self-segregation’ and ‘unwillingness’ to ‘integrate’ and labelled young Muslims “as being ‘drug dealers or addicts, petty criminals [...] beyond the control of their community, disloyal subjects, Islamic militants” (Amin, 2003, p462). Nevertheless, it is argued that the riots were stimulated by a history of racism through economic deprivation, social deprivation and unemployment. (Amin, 2003; Kundnani, 2001; Sivanandan, 2001), as the comment below suggests

The fires that burned across Lancashire and Yorkshire through the summer of 2001 signalled the rage of young Pakistanis and Bangladeshis of the second and third generations, deprived of futures, hemmed in on all sides by racism, [...]. Their violence was ad hoc, improvised and haphazard. [...], it was the

violence of communities fragmented by colour lines, class lines and police lines. It was the violence of hopelessness. It was the violence of the violated. (Kundnani, 2001; p. 105)

These riots were the penultimate in a chain of events, the climax of which was 9/11, that have inaugurated an era in which the ‘securitisation’ of Muslims and Islam has become legitimated through changing policies (Cesari, 2009). This term refers to a shift towards a political discourse and global security agenda that emphasises the ‘lack’ of cultural and religious integration of Muslims, in the West, and perceives Islam as an ‘existential threat’ that should ‘be contained’. It led to a development of security concerns and anti-terrorism acts that, in effect, ‘compromise liberties and restrict Islam from the public sphere’ (Cesari, 2013).

The global ‘War on Terror’ vividly shifted the contours of racism from colour to belief (particularly Islam), making anti-Muslim racism the twenty-first century racism (e.g. Allen, 2005; Dunn, Klocker and Salabay, 2007; Modood, 2005). Several subsequent attacks, for example the 7/7 bombing, the Woolwich murder in the UK and the Paris attacks, Brussels attacks and German attacks, have been utilised to accentuate and entrench the two-faceted portrayal of Muslims. Firstly, they are portrayed as being incompatible with the West (Asad, 1993), due to their ‘social pathologies’, but more fundamentally to their propensity to ‘fanatism’ and ‘terrorism’ as a result of their affiliation to Islam, which constitutes a problem that needs to be addressed (Vakil, 2013). Secondly, and which perhaps results from the first, these events have stimulated a global ‘problematizing’ of Islam and Muslims (Sayyid, 2010). The following section deconstructs briefly the multiple factors that have contributed to the emergence of this negative picture of Muslims and Islam in the current era.

2.4 The Centrality of Muslims to Public and Political Debates

2.4.1 Muslims and Debates over Multiculturalism

[Integration is] not a flattening process of *assimilation*, but equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of *mutual tolerance*'.

Roy Jenkins, Home Secretary, 1966, emphasis added

We need a lot less of the *passive tolerance* of recent years and much more *active, muscular liberalism*

David Cameron, UK Prime Minister, 2011, emphasis added.

The official response to the 2001 riots, namely the Cantle report (2001), emphasised promoting community cohesion to combat 'self-segregation' and blamed Muslims for *their own segregation*, instead of discussing the socio-economic inequalities and suggesting a means to deal with racism (Kundnani, 2002; Bourne, 2007). Indeed, the report marked an official shift in multiculturalism discourse to what Parekh (2000a, p. 2) terms a 'multicultural drift': a turn of the state policies from an 'integration' to an 'assimilation' model (Kundnani, 2001). Meer (2010) argues that the report provided many commentators the 'licence to critique Muslim distinctiveness in particular and multiculturalism in general' (p.26). Three key aspects of the 2001 climate continue to be relevant to the 'Muslim question' today: the government was considering *an oath of loyalty for immigrants*; the emphasis on the *need to introduce English language tests*, as stated by David Blunkett, the Home Secretary then; and, third, John Denham's emphasis on the need to *identify with shared values*. These statements emphasised *Muslim difference*, (and overlooked their commonality with the rest of society) through depicting them as immigrants (and not citizens) who were potentially disloyal, lacking English proficiency and not sharing common values with the majority, which questions their British-ness.

The significance of these statements is that they have provided official (thus legitimate) grounds for the modern divisive discourse about Muslims' un-British-ness and unwillingness to integrate. Additionally, they continue to be deployed now and again, which has the effect of keeping Muslims under the continuous pressure of having always to prove their loyalty, when no other community has ever been

questioned in this way (Modood, 2010). However, empirical research findings revealed that Muslims are integrating well in Britain, which challenges this discourse. For example, Modood et al. (1997) found that Muslims used hyphenated identities, for example British Pakistani, and their identification as British was higher than other minorities, such as Caribbean. Recently, Nandi and Platt (2014) found that Muslims associated more closely with being British than white Britons, the Chinese and Afro-Caribbean.

This shift to an assimilative form of multiculturalism, though still clothed up in the integration mantle, is placing more pressure on Muslims to privatise their difference, as will be discussed shortly in the discourse about Muslim identities, and, particularly, wearing the hijab. Yet, scholarly views over British multiculturalism vis-vis minorities (and particularly Muslims) differ. Anti-racists have criticised multiculturalism for not redressing inequalities, due to its laissez-faire policies (see Bourne (2007) and Kundnani (2002)). Others claimed that British multiculturalism has allowed Muslims to make ambitious claims over the state and advance their own interests, for example Joppke (2004, 2009). To support his view, Joppke (2009) listed some of the gains Muslims have achieved in the UK that are not parallel to any Muslim minority elsewhere in Europe. However, Modood (1998, 2003, 2005) has long argued that Muslim claims are valid and could be incorporated in a 'moderate (not radical) secularism'. Modood (2009, p. 159) challenges Joppke's comparison between Muslims in the UK and in other European countries, as the context of the Muslim minority in Britain differs from that in other European states, such as different political cultures, different history of migration and, above all, different legal systems. For example, France does not espouse multiculturalism vis-à-vis its minorities, which makes direct comparisons less accurate.

The unpacking of the scholarly debate over the death of multiculturalism is beyond the remit of this literature review. What is at stake here is that, in a post 9/11 and 7/7 bombing era, multiculturalism has been severely attacked, as 'Islamic terrorism' was laid at the door of multiculturalism (see Kepel, G (2005), Pfaff, W (2005) and Danilin, (2013) for comments on the course of 7/7 and the Woolwich murder, respectively). Anti-racists hold that the securitisation of Islam post 9/11 has

necessitated the death of (integrationalist) multiculturalism (see Fekete (2009)). This short account on multiculturalism has attempted to show that, in the twenty-first century, debates about multiculturalism in relation to Muslims have shifted towards the ‘active muscular integration’⁶ model of forced assimilation. In this regard, Trevor Phillips, former chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, commenting on the results of a survey conducted by the BBC’s Channel 4 on *What Muslims really think*, concluded that Muslims were difficult to integrate and suggested the need for ‘active integration’. The survey results were challenged because of the highlighting of controversial aspects whilst concealing evidence of integration (Hussain, 2016) and for pandering to right wing politics (Sommers, 2016).

2.4.2 The Rise of Muslim identity

As outlined formerly, central to the discourse on Muslims is their ‘Un-British-ness’. Unlike other minorities, the discourse of British-ness is always juxtaposed with Muslim identity, allegedly incompatible with British values, because it is believed that Muslims’ attachment to Islam “commit them to values that are affront to the modern Western form of life” (Asad, 2000, p.12). Speaking about this juxtaposition of Muslim identity to European-ness, Asad remarks that the anxiety expressed about Muslim-identity is grounded in a narrative about Europe from which ‘Islam is excluded’ on two main levels. Firstly, this narrative necessarily denies the commonality between Islamic and European values, thus eliminating the notion that Islam has an ‘essence’ of its own, which can positively contribute to Europe from the outside. He argues that acknowledging an ‘essence’ to Islam might challenge the universality of European civilisation. El Fadl (2002, p.3) remarks on how the values perceived to be British (tolerance/ justice, democracy, freedom and the rule of law) are usually perceived to be absent in Islam. Secondly, and this has become apparent in the ‘war on terror’ epoch, the exclusion of Muslim identity in the West is justified through assigning to Islam an ‘ingrained hostility’ to all non-Muslims (Asad, 2000).

⁶ ‘Active Muscular integration’ is the approach to understanding the shift in the state approach from an integrative model to an assimilative model of multiculturalism, particularly with respect to Muslims. This approach has been explicitly reinforced by the former Prime Minister, David Cameron, notion on ‘active, muscular liberalism’ in his speech in Munich, February, 5th, 2011 about his policy towards multiculturalism, see Fekete (2011)

It is widely believed that ‘Muslim re- assertiveness’ has emerged as (and continues to be) a ‘reactive formation’ to the local and global political and social contexts: the Rushdie Affair, the 2001 riots, the Gulf wars, 9/11, 7/7 and the Danish cartoon Affair (Ansari, 2004; Gilliat-Ray, 2010; Modood, 2005). Muslim-ness has been “*reactively* constructed very much against a background of negative perceptions about who and what Muslims are. It is evolving as an identity of *un-belonging* in a *culture of resistance* and in contest with hegemonic British identity” (Ansari, p. 9, emphasis original). What is at stake is that the public and formal reactions to this revival has disenfranchised their British-ness (Amin, 2003; Poynting and Mason, 2007) and constructed Muslim identity as a threat to ‘British values’. It has, however, been recognised that there is a ‘lack of precision’ regarding the terms British-ness and British values (see Jack Straw as cited by Moosavi (2014, p. 8)). It seems that the only way to integrate Muslims, instead of looking for commonalities shared amongst different communities’ values, is by asserting that “Muslim societies need to be forced to abandon ‘their values’ in what Blair (as cited by Kundnani, 2007, p. 39) calls wars of ‘values change’.

2.4.2.1 Muslim Identity: Findings from the Research

Since the early 1990s, a growing body of literature has marked an upsurge of Islam as an identity marker amongst second and third generation young Muslims, largely of South Asian descent, who have a strong identification with Britain and less identification with their ethnic background compared to the first generation. While studies have attempted to outline a ‘common’ Muslim identity in the West, the category Muslim seems to be resilient to any essentialisation, including that rendered by academics. With regard to researching Muslim diaspora in Europe, Kastoryana (1999) noted that “the diversity of national identities among Muslims and their different relationships to states of origin, as well as to their states of residence, could be an obstacle in developing a ‘common identification’ (p. 192). This is relevant in the UK context, due to the diversity existing within British Muslim communities.

The review of the empirical research on Muslim identity is not limited to the UK context, as research in other contexts, notwithstanding different migration patterns

and states' migration policies, is insightful to the findings of this current research. With the exception of Asmar (2005a, 2005b), who adopted a quantitative approach, the studies discussed below are qualitative studies.

Some studies found that the upsurge in the Muslim identity was a politicising of their identity against the inequalities they were facing. For instance, Samad (1998) found that the increasing significance of Islam expressed by his young Muslim men and women of South-Asian background participants was more to do with the 'debate in the locale' and a "decline of interest in the region of origin". Additionally, it was not necessarily correlated with "an increase in religiosity" (p. 437). This is in accordance with the findings of Lewis (1994), who pointed out that the Muslim identity of young Muslims in Bradford was political, rather than religious, revival, due to identification with the global Ummah, to show solidarity to Iraq during the Gulf War. In the US context, Asmar (2005b), combining the findings from two surveys, pre- and post-9/11 with Muslim university students, noted the emergence of 'new activism' post-9/11, whereby Muslim students politicised their Muslim identity through educating themselves in Islam in order to engage with non-Muslims to raise awareness about Islam.

Others found that Muslim assertiveness was a religious revival and a conscious association with the religion. Almost all the participants in the research of Tyrer and Ahmed (2006) with Muslim women university students in England assigned salience to their Muslim identity above other dimensions of ethnic/national identity, and that they defined Muslim-ness in religious terms. For instance, a participant remarked: "Well, I'd say that I'm a Muslim first, for me that's the most important, my religious beliefs come first with me" (p. 25). Similar findings were reported by FOSIS (2005) and OPM (2009).

In the US, Peek (2005) interviewed second generation Muslim university students post-9/11. She described how, stimulated by the hostility against Islam, the participants had re-examined who they were; consequently, they became *consciously Muslims*. A participant explained this 're-examination' as follows: "Even though on

the exterior I was practicing since I was young, it doesn't mean necessarily that I was spiritually, thinking about God, into the faith. It doesn't really happen until you've become an adult, until you learn about the world” (p.227).

Others found that the cultural heritage was the prism through which their participants described their Muslim-ness. Knott and Khokher's (1993) research that explored the Muslim-ness of young Muslim South-Asian women revealed that complexity and diversity existed in how they articulated their Muslim-ness. It was sometimes subsumed under ethnicity. For example, it was found to be a matter of 'folk religion', which has more links to Pakistani cultural practices than the teachings of Islam, or being 'pious Muslims'. Yasmin, another participant, although she noted being agonistic, resolutely described herself as Muslim, connecting her Muslim-ness to her cultural background, hinting what Modood (1998) terms 'associational identity'.

[I'm a Muslim] because that's my origin... and I've been taught that I'm a Muslim because my parents are Muslims. I might not follow their tradition, but I'm a Muslim, like a lot of English girls say 'I'm Christian, but they won't go to church" (p.606).

Dwyer and Shah (2009) and Dwyer (1999) echoed similar findings. In both of these studies, the participants displayed different attitudes to Islam. For some, being Muslim meant a community identity, hence this identity was used interchangeably with ethnic identity; others framed it scripturally. Some expressed being confident with, and rooted in, their Muslim identity and others revealed ambivalence, in that they would wear the hijab within their communities but take it off in public. A few of the participants' in Ahmad (2001) challenged the normative characterisation of associating Muslim-ness with religiosity and, thus, self-identified as 'non-practicing' Muslims.

Additionally, the research highlights a gendered dimension to Muslim-ness amongst women. Young South-Asian women utilised the Islamic discourse to mobilise their gender rights in their communities, such as negotiating some cultural practices with their parents, claiming freedom in relation to education, marriage and career pursuit and to differentiate between 'true Islam' and the 'oppressive culture' (Dwyer, 1999; Knott and Khokher, 1993; Samad,1998). Additionally, Islamic discourse was used to

challenge gender stereotyping from peers and teachers (Dwyer, 1999) and to challenge ethnic or cultural practices that they viewed as 'un-Islamic' (Peek, 2005).

2.4.2.2 Arab-Muslim Communities: Different Approach to Muslim-ness

While British Muslims of South-Asian heritage have emphasised their Muslim-ness, in its various articulated forms, studies show that British Muslims of Arab heritage identify profoundly with their ethnicity, and less so with their religion. An online survey by the Atlantic Forum (2009) explored the views of 355 British-Arab participants regarding their sense of identity. 26.5% of the participants used the term 'British Arab' to describe their primary identity marker, while only 6.5% described their religion as being the primary identity marker, with a generational difference: the participants under 26 years old reported religion to be the primary identity marker.

Nagel's (2002) research with first and second generation British Arab Muslims in London between 1997 and 1999 revealed their negotiation of their 'sameness' and 'differences' with the dominant majority. She found that her participants had 'politically assimilated' to the majority culture, which was facilitated by "their middle-class status, their residential dispersal in prosperous areas and, in some cases, their advantaged position in the British labour force" (p.273). They placed prominence on their Arab culture and values, assigning little emphasis to religion. Attempting to draw as little attention as possible to their differences in the public sphere, they 'submerged' this difference to the private sphere, stressing that conformity marks being 'good guests', due to their awareness of the negative representation of Arabs in the media (even pre-9/11, when Osama Bin Laden had become a metaphor for the triad Arab-Islam-terror). They 'rejected' a politicised Muslim identity and 'shied away' from having a public Islamic identity, as that was stigmatised in the dominant discourse. This included females wearing the hijab, who ascertained that their hijab was a 'private act of faith' not meant to 'set them aside from wider society' and neither was it 'a political statement' (p. 275- 276).

These findings were confirmed by Nagel and Staeheli's (2009), who conducted research with 40 first and second generation British Muslim professionals of Arab

background, all of whom were highly educated and economically well-off. Although they contributed to various community activities, including charitable work and political lobbying, they preferred the term ‘British Arab’ and distanced themselves from ‘British Muslims’, as they felt it was ‘a synonym for South-Asians’, whom, some of the participants noted, they do not identify with (p.106). Additionally, they felt that this term was utilised as a ‘political identity’; a use they disagreed with, because it highlights a ‘politicising of Islam’, although most of them did participate in political activities. Moreover, while many participants regarded themselves as devout Muslims, they depreciated publicising Muslim practices and noted that Muslims in the UK need to privatise their practice in public, which, for them, was a sign of being good guests. The researchers highlighted the ‘complex and contradictory’ nature of the participants’ negotiation of their private religiosity, because, during their political activities, which they perceived as a means to ‘validate Islam’ and ‘educate’ the British society about Islam, they publicised their religious identities.

Perhaps some British Arabs, particularly those from the Levant and North-Africa, could ‘blend’ with the dominant majority more easily than British South-Asians, whose skin colour might point them out. British Arabs who can pass as being White, through privatising their religion, can shield their differences in public, consequently reducing potential prejudices. This ‘phenomenological bracketing’⁷ was also common in the narratives of Balkan Muslim immigrants to the US regarding their Muslim-ness post-9/11 (Miskovic, 2007). Some of the participants were ‘code-switching’ their Muslim identity according to the situation they found themselves in, which was facilitated by their Whiteness. Aldo, recalling an encounter with a colleague who tried to identify his religion, because neither his appearance nor his colour gave a clue about it, explained how he would not give people the chance to box him:

W: “Where are you from?”

⁷ By this term I mean an ability, facilitated by one’s colour of skin concurrently with not having a visible faith identity to bracket out one’s religious identity in public, hence pass on as non-Muslim, thus pure white.

Aldo: Bosnia.

W: “and what are you?”

Aldo: Is it really relevant?

W: well...’

Aldo: and I didn’t tell her. (Miskovic, 2007, p.534)

2.4.3 Muslim-ness: the Discourse over the Public-Private Divide

Conformity to the public-private divide, as expressed by some British Arab in Nagel’s (2002) and Nagel and Staeheli (2009) and white Bosnian Muslims in the US, could be explained through the prevailing ‘normative truths’ (Allen, 2010), which propagate top-down labelling of Muslims concurrently with the ‘security threat’ discourse that has classified Muslims into two opposing, mutually exclusive categories: the ‘good’ Muslim and the ‘bad Muslim’ (Mamdani, 2004). The former, an umbrella term for ‘nominal’ Muslims, ‘cultural’ Muslims, ‘westernised’ Muslims, or ‘moderate’ Muslims, designates those who have ‘integrated’ into the majority norms and values and forsaken active association with Islam. The latter, an umbrella term for ‘practicing’ or ‘religious’ Muslims, ‘anti-modern’ or ‘fanatical’, designates those whose religious practice might disrupt the public-private divide and they are labelled as ‘disintegrating’ and constituting a potential threat to the wider society. This divisive discourse has been argued to be rooted in the time of colonialism, as those who collaborated with the coloniser were the ‘good’ Muslims and those who resisted and fought were the ‘bad’ Muslims (Ramadan, 2010). The significance of this discourse was eloquently captured by Ahmad (2003, p. 54), who held that “labels have an all-assuming power to define and objectify, making real and potential tensions that exist within the labelled group”.

This discourse has serious implications for how Muslims negotiate their Muslim-ness in public, particularly to protect themselves from being conspicuous. Most of the empirical research has shed light on Muslim re-assertiveness in its various forms. However, little research has addressed the potential influence of societal (or global)

discourse on unassertiveness, self-effacement or the silencing of individuals' Muslim-ness, particularly due to the constant linkage between Islam, through its visible symbols, and radicalism and terrorism. In this regard, Mythen, Walklate and Khan (2009) interviewed young British Pakistanis in North-West England to examine the effect of anti-terror legislations' practical measurements on their identities. The participants revealed a range of reactions, including experiences of victimisation, disenchantment, infuriation and responsabilisation. The researchers detected the existence of

a contradictory trend of the entrenchment of faith-based identities alongside reducing willingness to visibly display Islamic identities in public. For most participants, negotiating conflicting modes of inner feeling and outward cultural display had become part and parcel of everyday life (p.749).

Similarly, Shamila Ahmed's (2012) research examined the impact of the 'war on terror' discourse on the Muslim identity of the UK born Pakistani and Kashmiri participants. Her findings indicated that a few of the participants, although stating that their Muslim-ness is prominent to them, felt that the influence of the demonising discourse was too strong to be resisted. Hence, they chose to suppress their Muslim identity, resulting in what she terms a 'negative reactive Muslim identity' (p.244). Therefore, they have 'assimilated' to avoid being ostracised and discriminated against, for example through stopping going to mosques and/or constraining their daughters' choice to wear the hijab. The young Somali women in the study of Phoenix (2011) disassociated themselves from public manifestation of religious symbols through taking up a 'modern' Muslim identity. Hopkins' research (2007) with young Muslims in Scotland found that visible Muslims who preserve their visibility might choose to isolate themselves from social activities to avoid Islamophobic incidents and/or stop-and-search incidents. British Arabs concealing their differences in the public sphere (Nagel, 2002; Nagel and Staeheli, 2009) could also be a means of blending and conforming to the security threat discourse, as also suggested by Ehrkamp (2007) in the study of Turkish immigrants in Germany.

It seems that the research focus on Muslim identity is underpinned by the motive of examining Muslim difference, as Islam is mainly examined as an alien religion (or the religion of immigrants) and is tainted by the discourse about security threats and

terrorism, as well as patriarchy and backwardness. Therefore, when examining Muslim identity with those born into a Muslim household, theorising about the positive possible influence of faith on individuals' lives, including answering existential questions, offering stability and countering uncertainties, is rare. It has been argued that, in post-modern societies, where religion is almost dismissed, the theorisation and writing of identity have neglected the (positive) influence of religion on identity (Gillespie, 1991; Verkuyten and Yildiz, 2007; Warner 1998). The possible positive influence of Islam features mainly in the research of the phenomenon of conversion to Islam.

2.4.4 White Britons' Conversion to Islam

Some studies have addressed this phenomenon (e.g. Kose, 1996; Moosavi, 2015a, 2015b; Suleiman, 2013), pointing out that converts choose Islam in the face of disenchantment with Western attitudes and morality. For example, some participants in Kose (1996) stated that they converted because Islam has a 'stabilising factor' for adherents, through providing rules that define and regulate human lives (p. 75-77). Unlike their Muslim-born brethren, whose emergence of their Muslim-ness has been perceived to result from having their British-ness questioned, Muslim converts are more able to reconcile their new religious identity with their British-ness. This became more important after the 7/7 bombing, when conversion was stigmatised in the media that associated converts with 'extremist ideologies' and portrayed them as a 'potential security threat' (Brice, 2010, p.14). The majority of the 70 participants Kose interviewed were quite selective in incorporating their new faith in their daily identities. They initially practised the "don'ts, e.g. abstaining from alcohol, rather than the dos, e.g. practicing the rituals of Islam" (p. 130). Additionally, the likelihood of them being 're-racialised' in the public sphere as 'not quite whites', or even 'non-whites', was found to be greater when they chose to have a visible Muslim identity, which might affect their white privilege (Moosavi, 2015a) and jeopardise their career – according to a few of the white female converts in Suleiman's study (2013, p. 63).

2.4.5 Defining Muslim

The diversity existing within Muslim communities in Britain challenges claims of homogeneity, as it reflects diverse ethnic backgrounds, diverse values, a diverse degree of adherence to the religious teachings, diverse cultural practices, diverse denominations and diverse approaches to define their Muslim-ness, as explained above. Thus, speaking of a single definition of Muslim-ness is far from being accurate.

However, before delineating this study approach for defining the category Muslim, it is important to state agreement with Ramadan (2004) and Sayyid (1997) that this diversity is an *internal diversity* and that there *is only one Islam*. Ramadan (2004, p. 9-10, 214-216) pointed out that Islam is a religion defined by fixed fundamental principles and that these principles are ‘clothed’ in the diverse forms of cultures in which Muslims exist, so long as the cultural practices do not contradict the unchangeable principles of their religion. After discussing the empirical and theoretical literature on Muslim-identity, used interchangeably in this current study with ‘Muslim-ness’, it is crucial to outline the notion of Muslim-ness this study relies on.

Etymologically, a Muslim is one who submits to the will of God (Bullock, 2002, p. 154). In Islamic theology, a Muslim is one who subscribes to Shahada (Muslim profession of faith), being the first pillar, that is there is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God, and performs the four other pillars⁸, but, as Bullock observes, “what Islam requires ought never to be read straight from what Muslims do” (p. 157). Put differently, being Muslim does not necessarily mean that an individual’s acts are framed by religious principles. Therefore, this current study agrees with Meer (2010), in that the scriptural, or doctrinal, definition of Muslim does not (alone) capture the diverse ways individuals *choose* to self-identify as being

⁸ The Five Pillars are: **Shahadah**: sincerely reciting the Muslim profession of faith; **Salat**: performing ritual prayers in the proper way five times each day; **Zakat**: paying an alms (or charity) tax to benefit the poor and the needy; **Sawm**: fasting during the month of Ramadan; and **Hajj**: pilgrimage to Mecca.

Muslims in social reality. This study, nevertheless, departs from Meer's view that "Muslim identification is related to a transformation of ethnic identity" (p.105). Following Modood (1997, p. 337), Meer defined the category Muslim as "a quasi-ethnic sociological formation. Quasi is used to denote something similar, but not the same as, because, on one hand, ethnic and religious boundaries continue to interact and are rarely wholly demarcated, hence the term ethno-religious". This definition, he argues, compared to a scripturally-framed one, is "less exclusive and a more valid way of operationalising Muslim identity, because it includes opportunities for self-definition", whereas the scriptural one is 'externally imposed' (p.63). I disagree with this view, because combining ethnicity with religion contributes to the 'ethnification of Islam' (Jeldtoft, 2009), which is less accurate, as it almost implies a one-to one correspondence between one's ethnicity and religion, thus indirectly supporting the perceived incongruence between, say, being white British and being Muslim. It also contributes, perhaps inadvertently, to undermining the universality of Islam and eliminates individuals' free will to break off their association with Islam, even if they have a Muslim background, a point Meer (2008, 2010) tried to clarify in his discussion of the difference between 'objective' Muslims, those who *involuntarily* associate with Islam, and 'subjective' Muslims, individuals who *voluntarily* associate with Islam. Thus, by intertwining Muslim-ness with ethnicity, Meer (2010) and Modood (1997) indirectly suggested what they meant to challenge: the essentialisation of Muslim identity through adhering to externally imposed identity.

However, two points warrant further explanation in this regard. First, I understand that this notion of the category Muslim as defined by both Modood and Meer has been formulated in an intellectual, social, political and legislative context, where the understanding of 'race' as a notion has paid little or no attention to address the religious hatred Muslim face due to the religious-related dimension of their identity. The legal and public policy framework then, principally before the most recent Equality Act 2010, that aimed at addressing racial discrimination issues have rested on a notion of race as an involuntary identity, that is protected against racial discrimination, whereas a religious identity, thus identifying as Muslim, is a

voluntary identity, thus voluntary association with a religion/ belief was seen as not deserving protection.

Moreover, there is no doubt that Meer's conceptualisation on Muslim identity could not be completely rejected for several reasons. First, findings from empirical research that examined individuals' self-perception of their Muslimness, see section 2.4.2.1, challenge the dichotomy drawn between racial (ethnic) and religion identities, and that being Muslim for some of the participants in these reviewed studies was not limited to an identification with Islam as a religion per se. More accurately, in some of these studies, Islam was not a prominent point of reference for individuals' self-perceptions of their Muslimness. In some cases, individuals were using Muslim identity interchangeably with ethnic identity or country of background, for example, in Knott and Khokher's (1993) where being Muslim was subsumed under ethnicity, highlighting Modood's (1998) notion of Muslimness as an 'associational identity'. Second, and perhaps more relevant to how anti-Muslim racism could operate, is how individuals could be discriminated against on grounds of the intersectionality of diverse characteristics, meaning their ethnicity and perceived membership of a religious group.

Put differently, individuals' phenotypical traits could be significant in how other make assumptions about the former affiliation (or not) to a religious group. Similar logic is applicable to how one's outward dress-code could be significant in determining their membership to a particular group. An example of the latter is best explained through wearing a hijab or a niqab by a female of any ethnicity or racial background; she will be undoubtedly perceived as Muslim. An example of the former, particularly whereby the aspect of choice (unlike wearing the hijab or the niqab where individuals have agency) is incomplete, is how individuals of (South) Asian backgrounds, whether they have Muslim background or not, are more likely to be perceived as Muslims. Take for instance the fact that empirical research findings, for example Allen and Nielsen (2002), showed that Sikh men with turbans became significant target for Islamophobic verbal attacks across Europe including the UK. Similarly, research shows that White converts experience 're-racialisation' by their family and friends when they embrace Islam, and being called as 'Paki' was not

uncommon in the experiences of both male and female converts in the studies of Kose (1996), Moosavi (2015a) and Suleiman (2013). Being identified as Muslims might altogether change how they are perceived by the White majority, which increase the likelihood of not only jeopardise their White privilege but also to associate them with other ethnicity, for example in the UK as ‘Paki’. That is one of the reasons why some white converts in these studies do not publicize their conversion, as they make advantage of the commonly held view about the incongruity between being Muslim and being White. Similarly, this explains why White Bosnian Muslims immigrants to the USA in the study of Miskovic (2007) avoided in public identification with their Muslimness

Therefore, while this study disagree with Meer’s definition of Muslimness, as “a quasi-ethnic sociological formation”, it grapples with the fact that the relationship between religion and ethnicity, particularly on a social and normative level, is complicated and they are closely intertwined and difficult to disentangle.

If Muslim-ness is not, then, restricted to a theological standpoint, neither is it accurately captured through conceiving it as being akin to an ethnic identity, how does the social reality of Muslims’ daily life outline the category Muslim?

Acknowledging the diverse approaches Muslims adopt to identify with Islam in their everydayness, which might change according to the context and result in emphasising this identity marker at times and toning it down at other times, it is difficult to coin a definitive definition of Muslim. Hence, a working definition of Muslim (as a social category and Islam in its lived form) would be: it is *an umbrella term which accepts diverse forms of self-association with Islam (not mutually exclusive), including political, religious, moral, spiritual and/or cultural.*

2.4.6 The Hijab: the Gendered Dimension of the ‘Muslim Question’

Few items of clothing throughout history can have been given more meaning and political significance than the hijab” (Robert Young, 2003, p.80).

Muslim women, representatives of the gendered aspect of the ‘Muslim question’, have been significantly present in the debates on multiculturalism and British-ness.

In the UK, as in other Western states, the hijab has a symbolic two-fold significance. Firstly, the presence of the hijab and other visible Muslim sartorial practices, for example the niqab (face veil), in the public space have been utilised in public debates to point out Muslims' 'radical otherness' (Meer, Dwyer, and Modood, 2010), thus are hindrances to 'integration' to multiculturalism (ibid; Werbner, 2007), which, we have been told, 'tolerates' visible diverse cultural and ethnic practices. For instance, Jack Straw, the former Home Secretary, published, in 2006, his reflection on the 'apparent incongruity' between the niqab, worn by one of his female constituents who came to his office for advice, and the signals that indicate *common bonds*, being proper English accent and British education, implying a disjuncture between veiling and being British. Meer, Dwyer and Modood (2010) viewed Straw's comment as a 'metaphor for Muslim non-integration' (p.98). Lewis (2007, p.433) argued that Muslim women's choices to adhere to a visible dress-style that challenges the 'accepted veiling regimes' in the UK have tested the 'sartorial limits of multiculturalism'. Additionally, multiculturalism opponents usually conflate, either intentionally or unintentionally, the hijab (and the niqab) with other alleged 'social pathologies' of Muslim communities, such as forced marriages and honour killings, to justify and intensify their attack on Islam as being 'incompatible with human rights' (Ahmad, 2013, p. 14) and, hence, the anti-thesis of modernity. Whilst such practices as forced marriages have no roots in Islam, lumping the hijab with these oppressive practices aims at highlighting the hijab as a metaphor for the 'evils of Islam' (Bullock, 2002).

The other symbolic significance of the hijab, and particularly the niqab, in the post-9/11 and post-7/7 era of a global 'war on terror', is that it has been linked to the discourse on 'security' and the anti-terrorism agenda (Werbner, 2007) (see, in this regard, the recent BBC comedy (2017) *The Real Housewives of ISIS*). Unlike in France, in Britain, the face veil has not yet been banned. However, it has been linked to issues of security. The calls to ban the face-veil were not only present in right wing politicians' discourse, but also in mainstream politicians' statements. For example, recently, the former Prime Minister, David Cameron, upon speaking about recent government measurements to combat young British Muslims' radicalisation,

announced that Muslim women can be banned from wearing veils in schools, courts and other British institutions (Dominiczak and Swinford 2016). Ofsted, following this announcement, warned that it will ‘penalise’ schools where the veil is worn by teachers or students, as it is perceived to ‘hinder interaction and learning’ (see (Espinoza, 2016).

However, whilst there does exist a common impression that women in Muslim majority societies face pressure to cover⁹, the resurgence in wearing the hijab amongst British-born, British-educated and Muslim women in the UK (and in the West) has attracted scholarly attention and has been found to be complex. For example, Dwyer (1999), Hassan (2015), Knott and Khokher (1993), Mirza (1989) and Sharif (1985) found that young British (South-Asian) Muslim women adopting the hijab (instead of the traditional loose head cover worn by South-Asian women) was due to a rise in Muslim-consciousness. Werbner (2007) argued that this resurgence is a way to associate with the Ummah. Moorti and Ross (2002) claimed that wearing the hijab is a coping strategy to maintain self-esteem, or a simple reflection of social custom. Khibany and Williamson (2008) argued that the revival of the hijab is a political defiance in the face of racism. It is argued that the persistent othering of Muslim religious visible practices under the Western gaze has underpinned decisions to wear the hijab amongst some Muslim women, to ‘rebel’ against Western pressures to ‘liberate them’ (Wagner et al., 2012). Afshar’s (2008) interviews with Muslim women revealed strong evidence to suggest that wearing the hijab is a pure choice, which states agency and is underpinned by a combination of ‘religious, political and personal choices’ for both ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ Muslim women (p.421). Their choices rather assert their search for their rights and align with feminists’ demands (ibid). Empirical research on the potential negative impact of the hijab in the labour-market and/ or in the public space is discussed shortly after addressing Islamophobia, as a notion and a phenomenon.

⁹ For a detailed analysis on the various reasons behind the revival of the hijab in the Middle East during the 19th and 20th centuries see Bullock’s detailed study (2002).

2.5 Islamophobia: Coming of Age post-9/11?

9/11 was the turning point that crystallised the formation of Muslims and Islam, not only as a ‘genuine threat’ to the West and its ‘democratic order’, but globally (Tamdgidi, 2012). Anti-Muslim racism has also become more overt (Allen, 2010) and justified. Noble and Poynting (2003) argued that 9/11 added an ‘ideological payout’ to the othering of Muslims that existed long before 9/11.

2.5.1 Islamophobia: A Problematic Nomenclature?

This current study uses the term Islamophobia, officially introduced in the Runnymede Report (1997), to mean anti-Muslim racism, acknowledging that both the term and the phenomenon it describes are contested. The use of ‘-phobia’ has been criticised, as it is related to irrational fear; such an accusation might lead to people becoming defensive, hence blocking mutual dialogue (Richardson, 2009). Using ‘phobia’ to describe this phenomenon also disconnected hostility towards Muslim from other forms of existing ‘-ism’, for example racism or anti-Semitism (Richardson, 2009). Halliday (1999) claimed the term to be a misnomer, since it gives the impression that Islam (and not Muslims) is the target of discriminatory practices; therefore, it hinders legitimate critique of Islamic practices. He conceives ‘anti-Muslimism’ as a ‘more accurate term’ (p.898).

The Runnymede definition, “unfounded hostility towards Islam [along with] the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs” (p. 4), has also been criticised for its indecisiveness. Shryock (2010) held that ‘unfounded’ is problematic, because it acts as an ‘escape phrase’ that legitimates hostility, not just to fundamentalists, but also to Muslims and Islam, that is founded hostility is legitimate.

Moreover, there are differing views on the presence (or absence) of anti-Muslim racism in the UK. Malik (2005) argues that Islamophobia is an exaggerated concept, as racism against Muslims (and other minorities) existed before the so-called rise of Islamophobia on grounds of race and social class, rather than religion, and still operates on these grounds. From a different perspective, Joppke (2009) claimed there

is an absence of structural racism in the UK, for example slavery, and that anti-Muslim racism has never existed in the UK. He argues that Islamophobia is a 'symbolic device' that has advanced British Muslims' claims. While it is true that chained slavery has never existed in Britain, it is documented that African and Asian immigrants arriving in the UK post WWII looking for housing were met with such notices as "No Irish, No Blacks, No dogs" (Holmes, 1988). The 'white flight' from the residency areas of South-Asian Muslims in the 1960s and 1970s was also documented (Abbas, 2005). Nevertheless, Joppke's failure to recognise that racism has been present in Britain (and in Europe) could be attributed to Hesse and Sayyid's (2008) view that the notion of racism is strictly associated in the minds of some Western liberal intellectuals with the Nazi pattern of racism (and restricted to this pattern). Thus, they disavow racism as a persistent legacy of colonialism. Others (Abbas, 2005; Modood, 2005; Poynting and Mason, 2007) held that anti-Muslim racism existed long before the introduction of this term; a view this current study concurs with. Indeed, hostility towards Muslims has mutated in relation to terminology and form, but not in essence.

2.5.2 Islamophobia: a Clash of Civilisation?

Islamophobia has been explained through different theoretical lenses, including Huntington's *Clash of Civilisations* (1993, 1996). Stressing culture, Huntington set out the civilisational incompatibility of Muslims and the West as the rationale underpinning the conflict related to the formation of a new world system, and underestimated the role of economy or ideology in this conflict. Huntington's thesis has been widely criticised with regard to its academic standings. Russett, Oneal and Cox (2000) and Chiozza (2002) systematically analysed the conflict amongst countries between 1946 and 1997, finding that civilisation disparity is not determinant in triggering a conflict, which questions the plausibility of Huntington's thesis. Brooks (2011) and Pippidi and Mineuda (2002) contested Huntington's ascription of a 'monolithic' culture to both Islam and the West, as well as his stagnant views about culture. Huntington's work also corresponds with the Orientalist discourse that has largely justified 18th and 19th century colonialism, as Said (1978) explained: the existence of the desperate need of the 'uncivilised' 'barbaric' Muslims

for the ‘civilised’ saviour, White man. Huntington thesis is also parallel with the modern ‘coloniality of power’¹⁰ (Quijano, 2000).

In this regard, the Bush administration invaded Afghanistan claiming to liberate Afghani women from Afghani men’s oppression, concealing the economic underpinning of the invasion (Grosfoguel, 2012a). It was just after this invasion that transnational oil and gas companies were immediately allowed to construct pipelines in Afghanistan (Rashid, 2001). Similar narratives exist around the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, covered up by the rhetoric of democracy, or the alleged WMD threat, while the privatisation of Iraqi oil was a strong impetus behind the invasion (Hurst, 2009; Muttitt, 2012). The history (of colonisation) repeats itself and Huntington’s thesis is largely used to blur the ideological and economic dimensions of modern coloniality. Therefore, utilising this thesis to conceptualise Islamophobia is “incoherent, inconsistent and false”, as it only “serves Western global/ imperial designs” (Grosfoguel, 2012a, p. 17).

Nevertheless, Huntington’s thesis is largely deployed by the media and is deeply ingrained within ordinary people and politicians to emphasise Muslims’ difference, using the ‘us’ and ‘them’ divisive rhetoric. For example, a poll administered by YouGov UK website in (2013) found that half of the respondents expected a ‘clash of civilisation’ between British Muslims and white Britons (Goodwin and YouGov, 2013). A recent speech by David Cameron, the former Prime Minister, about Muslim women being ‘traditionally submissive’ (Hartley, 2016) was viewed by several commentators as fuelling the narrative of us versus them, see Render (2016).

¹⁰ Quijano uses the term to mean the current global structures of Western power, control and hegemony over the world. These structures of domination are sustained through Eurocentred capitalism that gears the global economy. This domination has a racial axis which has a Eurocentric colonial rationale. Therefore, “the model of power that is globally hegemonic today presupposes an element of coloniality” (p. 533)

2.5.3 Islamophobia: A form of Xenophobia

Xenophobia is another lens through which Islamophobia is framed (see Fekete (2009) and Taras (2012)), particularly because the majority of Muslims in the West are economic migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Enoch Powell's 'the river of blood' anti-immigration speech in 1968 highlighted this phobia, although it then appealed to colour racism logic. While legislation in 1948 granted immigrants (including Muslims), who were former subjects of the Empire, full rights to take up British citizenship, the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act and the 1971 Immigration Act racialised the basis of the immigration system; citizenship was differentiated into 'partials' or 'native born' (Kepel, 1997, p.98- 100). Sivanandan (2001, p.2) earlier forged the term xeno-racism when discussing the racism Polish migrants face in the UK,

It is a racism that is not just directed at those with darker skins, from the former colonial territories, but at the newer categories of the displaced, the dispossessed and the uprooted, [...]. It is a racism, that cannot be colour-coded, that is directed as it is at poor whites as well, and is therefore passed off as xenophobia, a "natural" fear of strangers. But in the way it denigrates and reifies people before segregating and/or expelling them, it is a xenophobia that bears all the marks of the old racism. It is racism in substance, but "xeno" in form. It is a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white. It is xeno-racism.'

Fekete (2009) shows how xeno-racism has ensued from the EU changes of migration policies and legislation over the last few decades. Given that many migrants and asylum seekers have been of Muslim backgrounds, Sivanandan argued that "the immigrant is no longer a classical outsider but also a terrorist within. [...it seems] 'natural' to hold all Muslims suspect until proved innocent" (Sivanandan forward, viii-ix). In discussing the UK case (p.19-42), Fekete elaborated on how the Labour government 'managed migration' by adopting 'skill-based' immigration policies and criminalising irregular migration, which, in effect, has caused asylum seekers to be depicted as 'illegal immigrants' and portrayed as such by politicians and the media. Concurrently this anti-immigrant discourse has fuelled negative sentiments of the dominant society against Muslim communities (ibid).

Fekete highlighted how the Anti-Terrorism Act (2000) has targeted refugee communities. She exemplifies several cases in which Muslim UK citizens, originally immigrants, have been victimised under claims of posing a threat to ‘national security’ (see, for example, Fekete’s discussion of the alleged case of a ‘ricin cell’ in the UK in 2003 against 20 Algerian Muslims that has stimulated claims of its linkage to terrorist threats across Europe). Although the defendants were acquitted, as no case was proven against them, the “government did not stop its plans to deport the ricin defendants” (p.59-60). Moreover, the dehumanising of asylum seekers by politicians and the media is marked by the use of derogatory language when describing dispossessed people in terms of ‘environmental catastrophe’ as ‘mass’, ‘influx’ and ‘swarm’ (p.24) (for example see David Cameron’s remark about asylum seekers and refugees as a ‘bunch of migrants’ and ‘swarms’) (Elgot, 2016).

In recognising that racism is not a fixed phenomenon and that it mutates with the changes in social structures, political system and economy, Fekete held that this xeno-racism against asylum seekers resonates with the past. Jews under Nazism, blacks under slavery and ‘natives’ under colonialism were similarly dehumanised, perceived to possess mass characteristics that justified exploitation, victimisation and, lastly, genocide (p.24). [And] the targeting of refugee communities under the Terrorism Act 2000 mirrors the anti-Irish racism of the PTA emergency power (p.42).

I, the researcher, do agree that Islamophobia could be subsumed under the phenomenon of xenophobia, or xeno-racism, but not fully. This is because, on the level of nation-states, it falls short in explaining Islamophobic attitudes towards white British converts, who are neither strangers (outsiders) nor immigrants. It also does not explain the global problematising of Islam and Muslims, beyond the level of Western nation states (Sayyid, 2010).

2.5.4 Islamophobia: A Revival of the Crusades’ Narrative

The approach espoused by this study to explain Islamophobia is to locate it through the long history of colonialism, which was espoused by several scholars including

Allen (2010), Grosfoguel (2012a), Grosfoguel and Mielants (2006), Stone and Richardson (2004) and Weller [et al.](#) (2001). This study, while taking into consideration Said's (1978) *Orientalism*, which mainly addressed 18th and 19th centuries Western colonialism, traces Islamophobia to the Christian Crusades against Muslim forces in Palestine, followed by the 15th century Spanish colonisation of Andalusia. What needs to be stressed here is that tracing the current anti-Muslims, anti-Islam phenomenon to the Medieval Age *does not* mean that the current Islamophobia is exactly the same as the historic anti-Muslim, anti-Islam hostility of the West. It is rather more accurate to speak of *Islamophobias*, as Stone & Richardson (2004) put it

Hostility towards Islam and Muslims has been a feature of European societies since the eighth century of the common era. It has taken different forms, however, at different times, and has fulfilled a variety of functions. [...] It may be more apt to speak of 'Islamophobias' rather than of a single phenomenon. Each version of Islamophobia has its own features as well as similarities with, and borrowing from, other versions (Stone and Richardson, 2004, p.7)

A prominent similarity amongst these versions is that they have produced and reproduced an *ideological discourse* vis-à-vis Muslims and/or Islam, notwithstanding mutating according to the context, that has served (and continues to serve) Western superiority and control over Muslims and Islam. The ideological discourse in each era, as discussed next, constitutes, as Allen (2010) argues, a juncture, rather than a definite continuum, in the development of the current Islamophobia.

The considerable spread of Islam, in its threefold aspects, the religious, the social, and the political created from its outset a threat to the Catholic Christendom. It was perceived to pose dramatic challenge to Europe's political, social and spiritual stability (Allen, 2010). For instance, theologically, Islam is argued to supersede Christianity, but it was also from the outset a proselytic religion, demonstrating its ability to challenge the superiority and the expansion of Christianity (Allen, 2010). Its potential ascendancy to 'confine Christianity to the spiritual, theological and social wildernesses' was conceived by the Christendom (Allen, 2010, p. 26), which has felt the urge to counter this potential.

The early seeds of 'systematic Islamophobia' could be traced to the 11th century in Pope Urban II's speech to convince Christians of his expansion project (Othman, 2014). In this regard, Mastnak (2003) argued that the 'fundamentalist animosity' towards Muslims and Islam which has underpinned the official papal propaganda was not a response to a 'Muslim threat'; Muslims "gave no pretext to the Crusades" (p. 207). His Speech portrayed Islam as an 'anti-Christ' and a 'heretic belief' and Muslims as 'barbarics'. His animosity to Muslims features through alleging two 'inferior' characteristics, namely belief and culture, as he described Muslims as 'a people...alien to God', bent upon ritual torture and unspeakable desecration. [...] and savage foe [...] and asked them to release eastern Christians from 'servitude' (Asbridge, 2010). Portraying Muslims and Islam as a threat was just a necessary smokescreen to cover the political goals of Pope Urban II, to justify and uphold waging war (Othman, 2014). The military invasion of the Crusades was "an 'opportunity to reassert the supremacy of the Roman Church' in Europe as well as in the East (Allen, 2010, p. 27). While one of the propagated aims of the Crusades, according to Pope Urban II was to liberate Eastern Christians from servitude; the Crusades contributed, not just to massacring immense numbers of Muslims, but also Christians who were deemed by the Church as heretical (Allen, 2010). In addition to producing a discourse that presented Muslims and Islam as dangerous Other, the military invasion of the Crusades was coupled with early translations of the Quran to 'better understand the enemy', which were administered by the Roman Church (Allen, 2010). Having Islam as enemy to be their premise, these translations have succeeded in providing a distorted representation of Islam (Allen, 2010, Qadri, 2013).

Key to this discourse during the Crusades was that it was characterised by the absence of direct contact between Muslims and Islam on the one hand and Europeans on the other hand. This overriding subjective discourse was also common in the writings and representation of European elites of Muslims and Islam during the time of Crusades and beyond. The Crusades produced myths and folktales that 'reinforced the misconceptions and misunderstandings' already existing about Muslims and Islam (Allen, 2010, p. 27-28). This epoch was significant in the early constructions

of Islam and Muslims as the Other that have permeated much of the thinking, hence the knowledge produced, in Europe about Islam and Muslim world long after the Crusades (Allen, 2010). The Othering of Islam and Muslims was done through two principle facets: inferior culture and inimical religion. As for the culture, Muslims were depicted as fundamentally ‘saveges’, ‘barbarics’ through a scholarship that concurrently juxtaposed its superiority. Islam comprised a threat to Christianity. For instance, one of the common approaches through which Muslims’ ‘inferiority’ were juxtaposed to Christians’ ‘superiority’ was the way prophet Muhammed daily life was portrayed, in contrast with Jesus spirituality, as being ‘promiscuous’ and ‘licentious’ (Allen, 2010). These two facets continue to comprise, not necessarily combined, the grounds of Islamophobia as an ideology in varying levels, and according to the demands of each era. The Crusades were the starting point of the formation of Europe as a political entity and the shaping of European identity (Mastank, 2003). Thus, this formation has originated, even if conceptually, in opposition to Muslims and Islam, which would later explain the threat felt in the West by the resurgent of Muslim identity in the late 20th century as will be discussed in a few paragraphs.

The Spanish Reconquista of Andalusia in the 15th century provided another juncture of the development of Western anti-Muslim/ Islam hostility. The rationalisation that underpinned this re-conquest was similar to that used by the Crusades, as Christianity was then substantial to the Western identity. Muslims were constructed as ‘people with the wrong religion’ (Grosfoguel, 2012a, Grosfoguel and Mielants, 2006). Muslims were massacred, expelled, and those amongst them who were left alive inside the Iberian Peninsula were forced to convert to Christianity (Grosfoguel, 2012a).

The presentation of Muslims and Islam as a threat was also at its height during the 16th century Ottoman’s Caliphate expansion into south-eastern Europe which took over some of the Balkan’s peninsula territories. The Islamophobic discourse that was particular to this era has presented Slavs, Greeks, Albanians, or Romanians who converted to Islam as Turks or Asians, thus non-European (Taras, 2012). Thus, the

ideological discourse of this era was marked by the proximity of Muslims and Islam to Europe. This discourse presents the early seeds of portraying European Muslims as the ‘interior enemy’ (Taras, 2012). Mastnak (2003) analysed some of the writings of Erasmus of Rotterdam against the Turks. Erasmus portrayed the Turks as barbarians ‘calling them monstrous beasts, enemies of the Church and a people contaminated with all kinds of crimes and ignominies” (Mastnak, p. 215). He, who was widely praised for his ‘uncompromising rejection of war’, wrote letters to European rulers to urge them to wage a war against the Turks (ibid).

With the change of the context- the separation of the Church from the state- there was a clear shift in the ideological discourse from an intensity to criticise Islam as a theology, because the waning of the influence of Christianity in the state formal affairs, to a criticism of the culture of Muslims (Allen, 2010). Here, the discourse mutated from a focus on Othering of Islam to the Othering of Muslims cultural practices (that are influenced by Islam) through cultural lenses, to justify the Western colonialism against Muslim world during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries ¹¹.

Relevant to ‘Othering’ of Muslims in these centuries is what Said (1978) terms the Orientalists discourse. Said (1978) provides evidence to suggest that the Orientalist discourses in the form of intellectual inquiry about the Orient have provided an intellectual buttress to the colonialism, with a significant shift from the prevalent discourse during the Crusades. The Orientalists discourse has rather presented the Orient, and thus Islam and Muslims, in a more romanticised and fetishlike ways.

However, this should not disregard that a denigrating discourse continued to operate, though less significantly than that in the 11th century Crusades. For instance, Muhammed Buaben (1996) reviewed the Western biographies of prophet Muhammed as featured in the works of Orientalists during the 19th and 20th centuries, and found that despite the waning of the influence of Christianity in the Enlightenment discourse, the non-secular, un-objective, and pre-Enlightenment

¹¹ The Western colonialism of non- Muslim world , for example South or Latin America during the 15th and 16th century is beyond the scope of this review; however it was rooted in a comparable ideology, as indigenous people were portrayed as people with no religion when Christianity was paramount to Europe (Grosfoguel, 2012a)

discourse constituted a prominent feature of the writings of most Orientalists in this regard. In his review of Sir William Muir *The Life of Mohammed From Original Sources*, Muhammed Buaben argues that Muir though attempted to apply Enlightenment methodologies, he seemed to succumb to a Medieval discourse through emphasising "the falsity of Muhammad's prophet-hood, faking of revelations to justify evil acts, violence, sexuality, immorality and the like" (p. 42), whilst drawing little or no attention to significant junctures related to the prophet, such as the Madinan Charter (security treaty concluded with all the Madinan groups), or the peaceful entry into Mecca, as they do not sit well with the overall negative portrayal of the prophet.

Similarly, the French philosopher Voltaire in his *Fanatisme ou Mahomet le prophete* maintained pre-Enlightenment understandings and meanings through presenting the prophet as a model of barbarism, fanaticism, and sensuality (Allen, 2010). What has further established the Orientalist discourse, and hence the newly emergent meanings and understandings of Islam and the Orient, was that these scholarly positions were 'endorsed by the power of Colonialism' (Allen, 2010, p. 30), thus mainstreamed and normalised. The legacy of Orientalists continues to shape and frame the ways of presenting, the meanings, and understandings about Islam and Muslims (Allen, 2010; Said, 1978). Most of the Western produced scholarship regarding the Orient coupled with the 18th and 19th centuries Western colonialist project in Muslim world constitute another juncture in the development of the current Islamophobia.

The 'post-colonial' era, particularly the second half of the 20th century, has witnessed another form of an Othering discourse of Islam and Muslims, one which has the historical representations of the Crusades and Orientalists as its broader backdrop. The 20th century ideological discourse of Othering Muslims and Islam was focused on presenting a 'politicised' and 'militarised' thus 'fundamentalist' Islam (Allen, 2010). This discourse continues to be prevalent, though gained more intensity in a 'War on Terror' era. The first significant juncture was the Islamic Revolution in Iran, which, in the eyes of the West, meant the rise of Islam as a political ideology. This revolution has reinforced the old myth about the threat of Islam. The Revolution, Allen argues, "became both the source and the benchmark against which

contemporary negative and stereotypical representation Islam and Muslims developed. It was a contemporary watershed in the West's understanding of Islam and Muslims" (p.41). Key factor in the disseminating of this discourse was Western media coverage of the revolution, which borrowed from past discourses, for example, that Islam was being spread by the sword, and that Islam was portrayed as a manipulative and backward religion (Allen, 2010).

The fear of Islam that permeated the global political discourse then, found its way to the local, with the Satanic verse Affair. The reaction of Muslims to the publication of the novel, through their angry demonstrations, which was coupled with the Khomeini fatwa to kill Rushdie, has been addressed previously in section 2.3. This affair was another juncture, though local, in the vilification of Muslims and Islam in a reductionist and homogenising way in the political discourse and media representation. The formal political response was afflicted by the Orientalist discourse, as previously explained. Muslims, ever since, have been perceived as a disturbing social phenomenon; the rise of their Muslim identity was portrayed as being alien to the British values, as the resurgent of Muslim identity was juxtaposed to Western values such as: freedom of expressions, tolerance, and democracy. Moreover, the Cattle report, which was the formal response to the 2001 riots in England that took place before 9/11, has described the rioters as being influenced by the ideology of *extremist groups* that aimed at undermining community cohesion, see the report p. 9.

Thus, the discourse that unfolded with respect to the Islamic Revolution about the Islamic threat beyond the Western border has been applied to the local, and the threat has become within as well as beyond the Western geographical borders. Western media has also played a significant role in blurring the boundaries between the local and the global even before 9/11, as will be discussed in section 2.8. The attacks of 9/11 has provided the rationale to pronounce an ideological anti-Muslim, anti-Islam discourse, which was previously veiled in different cloaks and forms. 9/11 has been used to justify a global 'War on Terror' that operates locally and globally through legislation (Birt, 2010).

Some have declined this framing, for example Halliday (1999) contended that there have been times when the general antagonism between Muslims and the West has not drawn on negative views about Islam per se. However, I hold that the hostility in the West towards Muslims draws on negative assumptions about Islam, only when there is a political mobilisation of Muslims *qua* being Muslims (and, thus, they invoke Islam), but when Muslims do not invoke Islam in their politics, the hostility they experience is grounded in assumptions about their inferior culture. This reasoning captures the essence of Modood's (2005) thesis about anti-Muslim racism in Britain. Using 'cultural racism' instead of Islamophobia, Modood argued that anti-Muslim racism is underpinned by the dominant majority views about the 'inferiority' of the cultural practices and motifs of Muslims (largely Asians). These motifs include 'dress, religion, language, cuisine' and some practices like arranged marriages and specific gender roles (ps. 7 and 22). 'Cultural racism' (against South-Asians) is a 'double racism', as it operates on two levels: on grounds of colour and perceptions about inferior culture (ibid). He rightly pointed out the insidious nature of this racism, as it camouflages race, shifting the racism basis from biological race to cultural practices that inferiorise people. Nevertheless, I tend to disagree with subsuming religion under culture, as some cultural practices have not only been unjustly attributed to Islam, but were also used to vilify Islam and Muslims. Additionally, Modood's thesis is less likely to explain Islamophobic attitudes towards white Muslims, and particularly converts, who were found to be keen to preserve their cultural practices in concordance with the British culture in order to maintain their 'British-ness' (Ansari, 2004; Suleiman, 2013).

The previous paragraphs have attempted only to outline some of the diverse approaches and reasoning under which Islamophobia could be subsumed and highlighted the complexity of the phenomenon and its 'multiple faces' (Grosfoguel, 2012a). So, how should Islamophobia be defined?

Unsatisfied with the Runnymede Trust definition of Islamophobia, several scholars have proposed different conceptualisations of this phenomenon. Grosfoguel (2012a) traces the roots of Islamophobia to the Spanish Re-conquista, which forged the early marker of racism, being religious racism (people with religion, people without

religion and people with the wrong religion), to advance Western coloniality and hegemony. He defines Islamophobia as an ancient phenomenon that has continued to operate in the “the subalternisation and inferiorisation of Islam produced by the Christian-centric religious hierarchy of the world system since the end of the 15th century” (p. 11).

Marranci (2004, 115-116) claimed that “Islamophobia is a fear of multiculturalism and the transruptive effect that Islam can have in Europe and the West through transcultural processes”. Allowing an integrational model of multiculturalism, where Muslims are not constantly profiled or depicted as the enemy, will inevitably result in a healthy interaction between Muslims and the non-Muslim majority, which, in effect, allows mutual influence of diverse cultures in an environment of equality and respect, a result of which may be that the native British might willingly convert to Islam. Kose’s (1996) findings attest the ‘transruptive’ influence of Islam, in that more than 66% of his participants’ conversions were ‘affectionate’, through contact with Muslim friends and acquaintances who have impressed them more than the materialistic and individualistic society (see (p. 103-109)). The currency of this definition is that it touches the reality of the state of religion in Britain, as shown in the 2011 census results, in that one of the reasons for the increase in the Muslim population is conversion to Islam, although the estimated number of converts to Islam is not conclusive. Thus, a turn to a ‘mono-culturalism’, which represses cultural diversity, would help reduce what Zebiri (2008, p.1) terms as ‘the indigenization of Islam’

Allen (2010) holds that Islamophobia is an ideology which shapes the ‘normative truths’ of Islam and Muslims as being an ‘undeniable other’ on the individual, societal and global levels; therefore, it is not limited to any exclusionary prejudices or act of discrimination, . By ideology he means ‘meanings disseminated that subsequently shapes, determines and initiates actions, practices, discriminations and prejudices’. Like other ideologies, Islamophobia is “changeable, continually reinterpreting, reinventing, reinvigorating, and re-negotiating range of meanings to maintain contemporary relevance whilst simultaneously acknowledging the necessary transitory nature of both the ideologies and their associated discourses in

order that exclusionary practices can and indeed do emerge.” (p. 169). He holds that Islamophobia

sustains and perpetuates negatively evaluated meanings about Muslims and Islam in the contemporary setting in similar ways to that which it has historically, although not necessarily as a continuum, subsequently pertaining, influencing and impacting upon social action, interaction...shaping and determining understanding, perceptions and attitudes in the social consensus that inform and construct thinking about Muslims and Islam as Other” (p. 190)

Birt (2010) and Sayyid (2010) conceived that Islamophobia has ensued within a discourse of ‘moral panics’, as a response to the rise of Muslims’ political agency and the public expressions of symbolic Islamic practices by Muslims. Birt (2010) investigated the possible impact of Islamophobia on Muslims at the nation-state level and beyond through discussing the techniques used by the state to ‘govern’ Muslims (see Appendix 1). He argues that Islamophobia is both ‘*assimilative and exclusionary*’, which “*attempts to domesticate Muslims within the nation state by means of the contrast between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslims*, but it is also part of the neo-Orientalist discourse that is indispensable for the neo-imperialism project in the Muslim world (p119-121). He explained that combating extremism ideology has featured in the multiple anti-terrorism legislations on the nation state level, but is also used to justify wars and occupation globally. Additionally, the promotion of ‘liberal Islam’ has taken place locally through enhancing ‘self-regulation’ of Muslim communities, but also by supporting ‘pro-West’ political order.

This current study combines the views of Allen (2010), Birt (2010), Marranci (2004) and Sayyid (2010) in proposing a working definition of the current face of Islamophobia. *Islamophobia* is *triggered* by a Western fear of the ‘transruptive effect’ Islam can have through ‘transcultural processes’ in multicultural societies (in the West), but also through the rise of Muslim political agency beyond the West. This fear has *revived* an ideology that controls the patterns of thoughts and meanings, facilitated by a cyber-technology global world, on the individual, societal and global levels that informs a global consensus of Muslims (and Islam) as the ‘ultimate other’, which ultimately aims at domesticating Muslims. The *outward manifestations* of this ideology are diverse acts of anti-Muslim racism through societal exclusion, socio-

economic deprivation and anti-terrorism legislation that principally targets Muslims in the West, but also opposes Muslims' political agency in Western nation-states and beyond.

2.6 Islamophobia in Praxis: Empirical Research

This section aims at presenting empirical evidence of the possible impact of Islamophobia on Muslims' opportunities in the labour-market and on Muslims daily lives.

2.6.1 Muslims in the British Labour Market

According to the 2011 census, Muslims have higher levels of unemployment when compared to the overall population: the unemployment rate of Muslims, excluding students, is nearly double that of the general population (7.2% compared to 4%, respectively) (Ali, 2015, p. 58). While several factors could explain this rate, such as low skill levels or 'traditional' family values that might restrict the type of jobs individuals may undertake, a growing body of research attests to the presence of 'religious penalty', as well as racial discrimination against Muslims entering the labour market. Several studies have examined the possible religious penalties against Muslims in the UK (Modood et al., 1997; Brown, 2000; Berthoud and Blekesaune, 2007; Blackaby et al, 2012; Khattab and Johnston, 2013). The findings of these studies are based on quantitative analysis of representative datasets in the UK labour market.

Modood et al (1997) discussed the findings from the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNSEM), conducted in 1994, in relation to job level and earnings between different minority groups. Asian Muslims were found to be the most disadvantaged regarding employment situation and trajectory. Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani minority groups were found to be the most disadvantaged groups regarding upward mobility, when compared to Indian, Chinese and African-Asian. Additionally, when comparing the earnings amongst Asian minorities of different religious beliefs, the Hindus and Sikhs were much better off than the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. This was true for both men and women. Additionally,

while most of the minorities were found to be generally underrepresented in prestigious jobs when compared to whites, the most disadvantaged were the Bangladeshi, followed by the Pakistani and then the Caribbean. Similarly, Brown (2000), drawing on the same dataset, found clear differences in economic activity between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims within the Indian ethnic minority group, and that the Muslim penalty varied between different groups within the same ethnicity: Indian Muslims differed significantly from other South-Asian Muslims.

Berthoud and Blekesaune (2007), using a series of cross-sectional analyses of the General Household Survey (GHS) over a 30-year period from 1973 to 2003, including datasets from the 2001 census, examined ethnic and religious groups in combination and analysed religion in relation to employment rates. They found that Muslims face the lowest employment levels when compared to other religious minorities who also have relatively low employment levels, such as Sikh and Buddhist women. They also found that religion was more important among women than among men in predicting employment penalties. Blackaby et al (2012) analysed the Labour Force Survey (LFS) dataset from 2002 to 2007, when a question about religion became a part of the survey. In comparing Indian Muslims and Sikhs, they found that Sikhs had better employment than Muslims, with no gender difference (p. 44).

Khattab and Johnston (2013) examined the impact of both ethnicity and religion on (un)employment in Britain between 2002 and 2010, including the post-2007 recession, through analysing the dataset of the Labour Force Survey (LFS). They found “strong empirical evidence for the existence of religious penalties operating alongside colour racism, though they differ in subtle ways, e.g. differing experience of male and female first-generation and second-generation migrants” (p. 1370). The analysis also provides evidence of the intersectionality of race, colour and religion as a basis for discrimination. For example, Black-African Muslims were ‘more than twice as likely to be unemployed’ than the other groups, namely Indian, white British Muslims and Christians (p. 1369). Additionally, Christianity seemed to compensate for colour, in the case of Black Christians, as Indian Muslims were found to “have lower probability than Black-African Christians” to be employed (ibid). Moreover,

highly qualified Christians were largely immune from the unemployment that followed the post-2007 recession, unlike highly qualified second generation Muslims with higher qualifications who suffered higher rates of unemployment in post-2007 recession. The study also found a ‘relatively small’ gap between the unemployment rates of Muslims of the highest qualifications and Christians of no qualifications in the post-2007 recession. These findings are in agreement with Abbas’s (2010) view that, while the post 2007-recession affected all ethnic minority groups, who experienced higher rates of unemployment than the white British, Muslims, in particular, suffered a ‘Muslim penalty’¹² over the ‘ethnic penalty’.

The responses received from the field experiments conducted by the BBC (2004) and Wood et al. (2009) on behalf of the Department of Work and Pension (DWP) (2009) produced similar findings. The BBC and Wood et al. sent fictitious CVs showing similar qualifications for job applications, using Muslim-sounding names, African-sounding names and white-sounding names. The CVs with Muslim sounding names received the lowest rate of invitations for job interviews.

Qualitative research also provides evidence of a religious penalty on job opportunities and in the workplace. The Centre for Studies of Arab and Muslim Issues (CSAMI) conducted qualitative interviews in 2014 with British Arab Muslims, examining their experiences in entering the labour market and in their work place. The participants felt that their Muslim-sounding names had a detrimental effect on them in not being invited to job interviews, with some of the participants even expressing that they had considered ‘whitening’ their CVs.

Public identification as being Muslim, wearing a hijab, having a beard or observing the rituals, also had negative impacts on job opportunities and in the workplace. Women with western-sounding names would also perhaps face discrimination when they attended an interview wearing a hijab. For example, Sara, an unemployed

¹² Muslim penalty refers to an identifiable net difference in the labour market experience of Muslims, as compared to non-Muslims who are similarly qualified. (Young Foundation Report, 2008, p. 65)

participant in the CSAMI (2014, p.14) with a European-sounding name, recalled her experience in this regard

The first stages of the interview process were a telephone interview. The person on the other end was receptive and warm [...] Then I turned up for the interview in my hijab and they were almost not sure whether I was 'Sara Baker' and asked me repeatedly 'Oh you're Sara Baker?' and the person was the same one who conducted the telephone interview. She was really frosty in her manner towards me and it was all because my name didn't correspond to the Muslim woman in a hijab who turned up.

Some of the female participants in the CSAMI (2014) cited experiencing discrimination during job interviews and in their workplace due to wearing a hijab and they felt that this meant they were overlooked for promotions, despite their experience. Some reported taking off the hijab until they had completed the probation period, or that they wrapped it in a 'less conventional' manner to fit in (p.15). Bullock's (2002) research into Muslim women's experiences regarding the hijab in Canada reported similar findings. For instance, Elizabeth (a white convert), after taking up the hijab, expressed how she was discriminated against in her work place by her colleagues and clients, to the extent that she took it off (p. 78). In contrast, a few of the participants in the CSAMI (2014) reported having positive work experiences, particularly because their employers were accommodating their religious requirements, or because their religion and competency in the Arabic language were central to their occupation (see p. 19-20).

2.6.2 Islamophobic Incidents in the Public Sphere and 'everyday racism'

Research has examined the level of Islamophobic incidents, or daily micro-aggression Muslims experience in the public sphere, either as a central or a secondary topic, for example Bonino (2015a), Hopkins (2007, 2004) in Scotland, Moosavi (2015a), Suleiman (2013) with female converts to Islam and Allen (2014) with visible Muslim women. Hopkins (2004) examined Muslims' experiences of everyday racism in East Pollockshields in Scotland and found that racism was prominent in the participants' experiences, particularly at school, through 'racist remarks, bullying and fighting' (p.99). The young men in Hopkins' (2007) study remarked on being subjected to persistent racism, particularly by the police. Unlike

Hopkins' findings, Bonino's research with visible Muslims in Edinburgh indicated positive experiences. The participants remarked on the positive side of 9/11, in that the non-Muslim majority has become more inquisitive about Islam, more intellectually engaged with Islam and more curious to ask their Muslim acquaintances questions to gain a first-hand account, rather than listening to the media. Female participants in Bonino's research felt their visibility, through wearing the hijab, could be a way to engage positively with the non-Muslim majority and, thus, felt they had the opportunity to correct the misconceptions about Islam. However, Bonino remarked that there could have been bias in his sample, as most of the participants were middle-class Muslims.

Moosavi (2015a), based on his findings from qualitative interviews with 37 white converts, argued that Islamophobia occurs through the 're-racialisation' process they experience, whereby they undergo an 'otherisation', which jeopardises their Whiteness. Moosavi uses the term 'subtle Islamophobia' to discuss the participants' negative experiences. For instance, their social circles accepted their conversions negatively, to the extent that they may exclude the converts or even reject them. Some converts even felt they had to 'subdue their Muslim identities' in front of their families. These experiences included the 'racist jokes' converts are subject to from their family members associating conversion with terrorism. Similar findings were reported by the female participants in Suleiman's report (2013). Allen (2014) examined the impact of 'street-level' Islamophobia on visible Muslim women. He found that most of the incidents were 'low-level', such as verbal abuse, spitting, harassment or having headscarves removed. These incidents have become 'normalised' in the lives of the participants.

The above studies highlighted the extent to which Islamophobia affects the daily lives of Muslims, particularly visible Muslims, in the public sphere and Muslims' job opportunities and career trajectories in the wider UK society.

2.7 Muslims and State Anti-Terror Legislations

“Prevent¹³ has become, in effect, the government’s Islam policy’ (Kundanani, 2009, p.8)

In the aftermath of September 11th, the UK government introduced the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) (2001), followed by several anti-terrorism acts, including the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2005), introducing control order, the Terrorism Act (2006) post-7/7 and, most recently, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015). Although discussion of these acts is beyond the scope of this review, the possible impact of these acts on Muslim communities in Britain is introduced shortly to explain how Islamophobia may be enacted through these legislations.

Several scholars have examined counter-terrorism legislations in praxis in relation to ‘community engagement’ (Spalek and Imtoul, 2007; Spalek, Muḥammad ‘Awwā, and McDonald, 2009; Spalek, McDonald, and El Awa, 2011), Prevent Funding (Kundanani, 2009) and their impact on communities (Choudhury, and Fenwick, 2011). While there does exist a real threat of terrorism in Britain, particularly post-7/7, which involved British born citizens, the way anti-terrorism legislation has been implemented has been criticised by civil liberties organisations for violating the human rights of Muslims and values of democracy (see the Liberty Britain website critique of control order). It has also been perceived as a form of ‘state Islamophobia’, according to Garcia, the solicitor of two Muslim detainees under the ATCSA, as cited by Stone and Richardson (2004, p. 37). Statistics reveal that less than a seventh of those arrested under the Terrorism Acts between 2001 and 2008 have been convicted (Travis, 2009).

¹³ Prevent is the British government anti-terrorism policy to prevent people from being drawn to terrorism. for further information on the prevent duty , see Prevent strategy (2011) downloaded from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

While ‘community engagement’ with the police has been promoted as being central to tackling extremism, Spalek and Imtoul (2007) argued that the ‘harder’ approaches to community engagement were found to undermine the ‘soft approaches’, and that the emphasis on Muslim communities’ responsibility to tackle extremism draws the attention away from the wider picture of discrimination/racism that Muslim communities continue to experience. Additionally, the ‘community engagement’ framework is defined by government top-down imperatives, in which minority communities, including Muslims, take no part in the decision-making (ibid). Spalek, McDonald and El Awa (2011) conducted semi-structured interviews with Muslim youths from London and Birmingham and police officers, as well as community groups and local authorities’ representatives. The findings provided evidence that Muslims strongly felt that such initiatives targeted *them* mainly, thus stigmatising them in the whole society, which affects the trust between Muslim youths and police officers.

Choudhury and Fenwick (2011) conducted small-scale in-depth interviews with Muslims and non-Muslim residents in Birmingham, London, Glasgow and Leicester to elicit their views on the anti-terrorism legislation impact. The Muslim participants expressed feelings of anxiety and vulnerability, in that they might be arrested without grounds on suspicion, particularly as statistics show that the majority of terrorism-related arrests did not result in convictions. The non-Muslim participants were unaware of, and unaffected by, the anti-terrorism measures in their neighbourhood. The authors suggested that Muslim and non-Muslim communities live ‘parallel lives’ with regard to state counter-terrorism measures. They also found that the use of the Schedule 7 stops at airports has affected the trust between Muslim communities and police forces, as some participants felt this was based on religious profiling. The Muslim participants in the study felt that anti-terrorism has been given priority by the police over combating serious issues of racism, and that counter- terrorism measures were contributing to the wider hostility against Muslims.

Additionally, Muslim research participants (Mythen, Walklate and Khan, 2009; Spalek, McDonald and El Awa, 2011) expressed concerns with regard to the s44¹⁴ of the Anti-Terrorism Act (2000), under which any police officer could stop and search anyone or any vehicle within a specific area. The participants in these studies felt that they were disproportionately targeted by police under the s44 stop-and-search. Walker's review (2008) of the published Metropolitan statistics on the s44 stop-and-search between 2001 and 2006 points out that "since 2001, there has been an increase in the use of this power, a low rate of consequent terrorist arrests, a higher rate of non-terrorist arrests, a disproportionate impact on Asian ethnic minorities and uneven geographical delivery" (p. 283).

Kundnani (2009), using semi-structured interviews with local authorities in England and with 'Prevent' programme workers and managers in local authorities, examined the ways the 'Prevent' funding is enacted. Similar to Spalek, McDonald and El Awa (2011), he found that 'community-led' initiatives were not evident in the 'Prevent' implementation; the government decided on the 'Prevent' funding and local authorities were pressured to accept the funds. The defining criteria for the beneficiaries of the funding were found to utilise a divisive discourse of Muslim identity within Muslim communities. Moderate Muslims, largely belonging to the 'Sufi' tradition, were perceived to be allies of the government, or 'legitimate' Muslims, thus receiving funds. 'Illegitimate' Muslims, however, those belonging to the 'Salafi' tradition, were perceived to be 'radical' and, thus, 'extremists' (Kundnani, 2009), although the notion of 'radicalisation' has not been defined by the government (Spalek and Imtoul, 2007, p. 197). Muslim organisations that refused to accept 'Prevent' funding and/or criticised the government policy were 'regarded with suspicion' (Kundnani, p. 23). The government image of a 'good' Muslim is one who works as an active informant to police officers of any behaviour perceived to be suspicious within their community. Kundnani found evidence to suggest the

¹⁴ The s44 authorises any constable in uniform to stop and search vehicles (including the driver, the passengers) or pedestrians and whatever they carry, see <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/part/V/crossheading/power-to-stop-and-search>

existence of government expectations of local authority organisations' recipients of funds to act as 'providers of information to the police' (p. 28). He argued that 'Prevent' had been utilised to 'establish one of the most elaborate systems of surveillance ever seen in Britain" (p.8).

Thomas (2016) mainly focused on the impact of Prevent in educational settings, argues that "Muslim youth are viewed as both a risk to society and at risk of catching the terrorist disease" (p.1). He noted that the implementation of Prevent and the Channel programme did not encourage a healthy environment for democratic citizenship education and, hence, it violates British values and suggests the need for a Police Counter Terror Unit 'step back' if building youth resilience in a 'non-stigmatising' manner is to be fostered (2015). Moreover, it is argued that anti-terrorism acts, particularly the Prevent duty, aim at 'depoliticizing young people' (Kundnani, 2009, p.6), 'silencing' any religious, political or dissenting views and 'curtailing' the democratic participation of Muslims (Ameli and Merali, 2015). This is engineered through instigating individuals to embrace a means of self-governing that shapes individuals' behaviour in a way that conforms to a set of predefined norms that achieve a certain goal (ElShimi, 2015).

In this regard, a recent meeting held between Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and Mr David Anderson QC independent reviewer of Terrorism Legislation as documented in MCB (2015) discussed the flawed implementation of Prevent duty at schools. The document discussed several case studies shared with MCB where Muslim school teenagers were suspected of radicalisation and referred to the Channel programme when and if they discuss issues related to international conflicts, for example if they speak about boycotting Israel or possess 'Free Palestine' badges, and of college students who were reported by a lecturer to senior management for having 'concerning behaviour' because they made way to two female students and lowered their gaze. Where religious affiliation data was collected, from 2007-10, 67% of those referred were Muslim and in 2012-13, 57% were Muslim (their percentage in the population being 5%). It is argued that the application of the Prevent duty is discriminating against Muslim students, see, Adams (2016) on how the National

union of Teachers have backed a motion in their annual conference in 2016 to reject the Prevent strategy.

This environment of ‘state Islamophobia’, which targets Muslim communities through acts of stop-and-search, surveillance and policing, has encouraged several scholars to draw parallels with the Irish and argue that Muslims have replaced the Irish as a British ‘suspect community’, for example Hickman et al (2011), Kundnani (2009) and Thomas (2016). Poynting and Mason (2006) pointed out that this targeting offers the wider society a ‘permission to hate’ and provides an ideological and moral licence for racist anti-Muslim hate crime” (p. 367).

2.8 Media: Shaping the ‘Public Consciousness’ of Muslims

The media has a significant role in shaping our views of the world. With regard to the portrayal of Islam, the media has contributed to the framing of Muslims as enemies, and Islam as a threat to liberal democracy and British values. There is little doubt that the Western media is the *apparatus* through which the *cultural consciousness* of people in Europe and the US in relation to Islam is formed (Said, 1981). Hall (2006) observed that the discourse generated in the West (including the media) about the rest cannot be void of ideology and neither could it be ‘innocent’. In the ‘Spectacle of the Other’ (1997a), Hall pointed out that the ‘racialised regime of presentations’ is dependent on stereotyping, which is underpinned by an ideology, and assists in maintaining social and symbolic order, that is Muslims as the ‘ultimate other’ and Islam as anti-modernity and anti-liberalism. To assume that journalists’ representations of Muslim/Islam mirror their own prejudices is unsatisfactory; media representations must be viewed within wider economic, cultural, political and ideological contexts (Poole, 2002). Drawing on Hall’s views, this ideology plays out in the media representation of Muslims diversely: firstly through setting and reinforcing the boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims, ‘them versus us’; and secondly through emphasising Muslims’ ‘difference’ to justify their demonising, because it depicts them as ‘outsiders’. Through these perceptual messages, the media reinforce the image of a ‘clash of civilisation’ in the readers’ minds and, thus, such an ideology resonates with a ‘particular form of global order’ (Dahlgren and

Chakrapani, 1982, p. 62). Such representations become difficult to challenge or change, because they are ‘naturalised’ in the minds of people to the extent that they become common sense (Ferguson, 1998; Said, 1981). The following paragraphs review some of the studies conducted on media representations of Islam and Muslims in the British context and highlight the media role in fuelling Islamophobia, long before 9/11.

Prior to 9/11, Poole (2002) conducted a content analysis of the daily coverage of a representative sample of two broadsheet newspapers, namely *The Times* and *The Guardian*, between 1994 and 1996, and then a discourse analysis of dominant meanings associated with Islam in the same newspapers during the period 1994-1997. Poole found that the coverage of Islam and Muslims addressed global and local issues, consistently linking the negative images of Islam (globally) to local Muslim communities, which helped to problematise the Muslim presence in the UK through insinuating sameness. She found that the topic of education in relation to Muslims had the highest frequency of coverage at the local level; this included issues of Muslims’ faith schools, their responses to sex-education and daily worship. A subtheme that emerged from her analysis of the articles was related to blaming Muslim beliefs and cultures on their ‘failure’ to fit in. Additionally, Islamic ‘fundamentalism’ (even before 9/11) was the third highest frequency of coverage, and was mainly linked to covering ‘political refugees’ and immigration matters in the UK and to discussing the role of local Muslim communities in supporting fundamentalists. ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ was also associated with the status of women in Islam and the conflict between Muslims (beyond the West) when covering events in the ‘Third World’.

By linking the turmoil in the Muslim majority states to Jihad and Islam, Poole argued that the media does not *misrepresent* Islam; it presents a *reductionist* image of Islam tainted by an Orientalist discourse. Poole concluded from her analysis that, while the discourse that problematises other minorities continues to exist in the British media, “explicit hostility has shifted to Muslims in the current political epoch”, and that media coverage of Muslims and Islam seems to “fall into an international relation perspective heavily coloured by Western/US foreign policy dictates” (p. 250, 252).

Said (1981) analysed the US media coverage of the siege of the US embassy in Iran in 1981 and underlined this monolithic coverage. He emphasised that its significance resides, not in its inaccuracy rendered through the removal of the contextual backdrop of the event, but in its representation of Iran as a symbol of the Islamic world, thus linking Muslims to militancy.

Elgamri's (2008) findings are comparable to those of Poole and Said regarding the monolithic image of the media representation of Muslims and Islam. Using discourse analysis, Elgamri examined the coverage of *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times* between 1989 and 2001. Elgamri mainly focused on four key events regarding Muslims in the West and globally, being the Khomeini fatwa (religious dictum) against Salman Rushdie in 1989, the rise of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan in 1996, the Luxor killing of foreign tourists in Egypt in 1997 and the 9/11 attack in the US. He chose the three quality broadsheets to determine if the portrayal of Islam differed between the left-of-centre and the independent press on one hand and the right wing press on the other. He did not find a significant difference between these three broadsheets in their representation of Islam and Muslims. He observed that "the media focus lies basically on representing a single monolithic Islam, ignores the demarcations between militant, moderate and liberal versions of Islam" (p. 214). The analysis revealed a tendency to report fragmented, de-contextualised stories and that the typical portrayal of Muslims is that of radicals and extremists, without any differentiation between mainstream Muslims and radical Islamic groups. Such negative portrayal is likely to instigate Islamophobia. Elgamri blamed the media for 'fanning the flames of Islamophobia, and for hindering Muslim integration into the social fabric of the country and, thus, encouraging anti-Muslim discrimination' (p. xi).

However, I, as the researcher, recognise that these studies are dated and that there is currently an obvious tendency within *The Guardian* to lean to the left, be more critical and depart from the monolithic representations of Muslims/Islam. Sian, Law and Sayyid's (2012) study revealed this. This study found that *The Guardian*, when compared to *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun* and *The Independent*, "was the only paper that offered a more critical and balanced account in representations of Muslims and the

war on terror, thus can be seen to represent a counter-hegemonic discourse...[it] was the most impartial and inclusive of all the papers analysed”(p.244).

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed at providing a contextual background of the research population. It reviewed, therefore, academic writings and empirical research that examined issues related to Muslims in the West, particularly in the UK. The review highlighted several main points.

Firstly, it presented the historic events that took place in the late twentieth century that triggered the rise of Muslims as a disturbing social minority in the West, including the UK. These included the Satanic Verse Affair in 1989, Muslims protests against the Gulf War in 1990 and the Northern England 2001 riots. Throughout these events, the politicians, the police and the media profiled Muslims and treated them with discrimination. The 9-11 attacks were the turning point that shifted the discourse about majority-minority from colour (race) to faith/belief. More particularly, they marked the legitimacy of anti-Muslim racism and the securitisation of Islam through a myriad of local and global ‘war on terror’ legislation.

During these events, and on a local level, there were several developments, which, in effect, further alienated Muslims. Firstly, Muslims became central to the public and political debates about the British multiculturalism model; the Cantle report (2001) marked the beginning of a more assimilative model of multiculturalism, where Muslims’ difference was perceived to be problematic and Muslims were pressurised to assimilate to the majority cultures and values.

Secondly, an upsurge of Muslims’ identification with Islam was perceived to be a form of ‘reactive identity’ that emerged in the face of the societal and state discrimination against them. Empirical research indicated that the revival of Muslim-identity in the West challenged any sort of fixed or definitive framing. Muslim-ness, for some, meant an increase in religiosity, for example Asmar (2005a); others perceived it as a spiritual consciousness that goes beyond the mere practice of the rituals, for example Peek (2005); for others, being Muslim meant being proud of one’s cultural and religious heritage, for example Knott and Khokher (1993); and, in

Samad (1998), it was a politicised identity. Muslims of Arab background, unlike their South-Asian brethren, disassociated themselves in public from identifying as Muslims, thus conforming to the discourse about the public-private divide, for example Nagel (2002). Similarly, white converts to Islam, for example Kose (1996), and white European Muslims migrants, for example Miskovic (2007), benefitted from phenomenological bracketing in public and were found to be able to easily blend with the majority, as long as they did not take on a visible Muslim identity.

Thirdly, research also examined the possible impact of the ‘securitisation’ of Islam, which classified Muslims into ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ Muslims (Mamdani, 2004) on Muslim identities. The research found that some Muslims constantly negotiate their Muslim identity and strive to protect themselves from being identified as Muslims in public. This features through self-effacement and a silencing of their Muslim-ness in public, for example Shamila Ahmed (2012).

Fourthly, the intersectionality of faith identity and gender identity makes female Muslims who wear the hijab central to the public and political discourse about Muslims. The hijab (and more particularly the niqab) has been utilised to mark Muslims’ radical otherness, expressed in their different dress-style, and, thus resistance to ‘integrate’. The hijab was assigned significance in the post-9/11 and post-7/7 eras through associating it with the ‘security threat’.

This chapter also presented the disparate views regarding the term ‘Islamophobia’, the phenomenon it represents and the existing theoretical lenses through which this phenomenon could be explained. I explained my approach to this phenomenon and the working definition this current study adopts in this regard.

Empirical research showed that Muslims receive ‘religious penalty’ in the UK labour market, when compared to other religious minorities, in addition to the ethnic/racial penalty they share with other minorities, for example Khattab and Johnston (2013). Research also highlights that taking a visible Muslim identity has a negative impact on job opportunities and career progression, for example CSAMI (2014), as well as in experiencing Islamophobic incidents in the public space, for example Allen (2014). Studies have also suggested that Muslims bear the brunt of the Anti-terrorism

Acts in praxis, when compared to non-Muslim UK citizens, for example Choudhury and Fenwick (2011). Discourse analysis of the representation of Muslims and Islam in the British media revealed that the media contributed to the profiling and othering of Muslims long before 9/11, through a monolithic negative representation that is parallel with a hegemonic Eurocentric ideology.

The following chapter reviews the empirical research and academic writings related to the experiences of minority academics and Muslim students in Western HEIs.

3 The Experiences of Non-traditional (students) and Academics in UK HEIs

3.1 UK HEIs' Context: A Backdrop

During the last few decades, the HE sector has witnessed significant structural and policy changes (Henkel, 2000). These changes have included cuts in state funding for universities, an increasing tendency within universities to rely more on short-term temporary contracts, the separation of funding for research and teaching and the introduction of selective research funding criteria, that is Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) formerly and Research Excellence Framework (REF) subsequently. Also included in the changes are the introduction of home-student tuition fees, particularly in England, and the replacement of student grants with student loans. These changes are argued to be responsible for creating a culture of consumerism, whereby universities have to seek the satisfaction of their customers, being students (Brown, 2015). Scholars have critiqued these policies on grounds of their detrimental impact on academic identity and its common values (e.g. Archer, 2008; Ball, 2003; Clegg, 2008; Davies and Petersen, 2005). Additionally, the various government-led initiatives of widening participation (WP), aiming at increasing access for people from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds to HEIs, have led to significant changes in the make-up of the student body.

The admission rates of previously excluded groups, being women, the working class and minority ethnic students (including Muslims), have increased significantly (Jones, 2006). However, these policies have disparate outcomes in the recruitment of non-traditional staff members (including academics), largely described as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). It is to this group of BME academics that the majority of Muslim academics would belong. This changing profile of students and staff members stimulated the need to address equality issues and led universities to develop race equality policies to ensure fair and just treatment of their students and staff members.

Whilst BME academics continue to be under represented in academia (ECU, 2011), BME students are under-represented in the elite universities and over-represented in post-1992 universities, and are more likely to achieve lower academic attainment than their white counterparts (Alexander and Ardy, 2015; Dean & Robert, 2011; Leslie, Abbot and Blackaby, 2002; Richardson, 2010; Runnymede Trust, 2010; Shiner and Modood, 2002; Weekes-Bernard, 2010). Some studies have revealed the presence of discrimination within institutional admission practices, for example Shiner and Modood (2002), or have suggested that the increase in BME students' participation has not been characterised by parity in terms of the educational outcomes (Richardson, 2010).

3.2 A Note on Terminology

Although commonly used in the UK literature, I sought to avoid the term BME in my writing, for the reason that I find it problematic, as it lacks nuance in that it groups all non-whites together, which gives the impression that their experiences are similar. When 'White' is capitalised in my writing, it does not refer to skin colour, it rather denotes an ideology that secures racial superiority, unearned privilege and the domination of white people (Leonardo, 2004). More importantly, this binary grouping, being whites versus BMEs, rightly, although perhaps inadvertently, differentiates between whites, as the recipients of *unearned privilege*, through the policies they produce and implement in a manner that sustains their privilege over non-whites, who are consequently disadvantaged. Therefore, I will use the term non-white instead of BME to stress that this division, even in terminology, indicates hegemony and domination.

3.3 Academic Identity Literature: Little Relevance

As my research population is a group of Muslim academics, a minority within the larger minority of non-traditional academics, I initially intended to draw from three main bodies of literature that I felt would provide insights of the experiences of Muslim academics. The review included the experiences of Muslim students, as well as the experiences of non-white academics in western HEIs and empirical studies and theoretical writings about academic identity. However, it is important to emphasise the increasing difficulty I faced in trying to utilise academic identity literature in

analysing my findings. I found it to be less relevant, with some exceptions, for example Archer (2008) and Colley, James and Diment (2007), to how my participants conceive their academic work and academic roles. Archer and Colley, James and Diment acknowledge that individuals' personal identities, for example their race/ethnicity or gender, are indispensable to their professional (academic) identities and trajectories. This is because personal identities are influential in how individuals are located and perceived in academia; this positioning ultimately shapes and constrains the "extent to which they are able to perform success" (Archer, p. 385). This acknowledgement might serve to question the extent to which the celebrated values of academic identity, being equality, autonomy, meritocracy and collegiality (Henkel, 2000), have been equally enjoyed by non-traditional academics.

The invisibility of non-traditional academics' perspectives in the literature relating to academic identity may be because most of the perspectives, writings and theorisation on this topic have been shaped through a White, middle class prism; hence, they have intentionally, or unintentionally, overlooked non-traditional academics' conceptualisation of their academic role and professional identity. Postcolonial, Decolonial and CRT scholars have challenged the mainstreaming of the epistemologies of, and knowledge produced by, Whites, which concurrently disregards, inferiorises or silences the epistemologies of, and the knowledge produced, by non-whites. For more details on the various approaches utilised by non-white scholars to combat this 'apartheid of knowledge' (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002) see, for example, Said's (1994) notion of Western 'cultural archives'. In proposing his contrapuntal approach to comparative literature studies, Said persuades us to make visible the experiences of others who were rendered invisible by the dominance of colonialism. I have genuinely found that much of the writings regarding academic identity fail to explain and analyse the ways the participants in my research understood their academic identity.

Germane to this discussion are the findings of empirical research related to the experiences of non-white academics in the USA, which revealed a counter-narrative to the normalised notions of academic work, academic commitments and academic life (Y Muhs et al., 2012; Stanley, 2006; Urrieta and Mendez Benavidez, 2007;

Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). For example, the participants in the studies of Stanley (2006) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014) stressed the value of ‘community support’ to academics and the sense of gratification that results from such community engagement and from supporting non-white students. Additionally, in the Australian HE context, Asmar and Page (2009, p. 387), based on the findings from a nation-wide study that examined indigenous Australian academics’ experiences, concluded that “the sources of personal and professional satisfactions- as well as stress- of indigenous academics appear *qualitatively different* from those commonly associated with academic work” (emphasis added). Bhopal’s comparative study (2015) of the experiences of non-white academics in the US and UK HEIs found that their experiences were influenced by their intersectional identities, which “positions them as ‘outsiders’ in the White space of the academy” (p.4).

I would use a key theme from academic identity to highlight the tension I have encountered in attempting to utilise it in my analysis. While it has been acknowledged that academic identity “lacks precision in terms of description and cannot be summed up in a few sentences” (Quigley, 2011, p. 21), it is generally believed that there are three main factors that influence its formation: the discipline, the institution and the profession (Henkel, 2000). Henkel proposed the significant influence of the discipline in constructing academic identity, as academic departments cultivate academic disciplinary identities through collaborative and unified culture. Disregarding the effects of discipline, Winter (2009) defined academic identity as “the extent to which an individual defines themselves primarily in terms of the organisation (and their position of managerial authority) or as a member of a profession” (p.122).

The participants in my study, nevertheless, when discussing their academic role and work, rarely mentioned their discipline, or their organisations, except when remarking on the makeup of students and staff members. Those who described their roles through a professional lens were mainly those who had gone through a career change, for example teachers who had joined academia following working experience in schools. Several of the participants, particularly those in HSS, noted

that they do not consider their presence in academia as a pursuit of an academic career. Instead, they described it as a form of ‘community service’ or ‘social and/or political activism’. This is in accordance with the findings of Stanley (2006) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, (2014), as cited above. Others undermined the impact of discipline on their academic career and stressed their successful scholarship as being thematically focused, that is addressing Muslim-related issues. Therefore, the mainstream theorising of academic identity fails to capture how some non-white academics conceptualise their academic role. The following quote from Dilawar, an HSS participant, explains how he conceptualises his career change into academia through an Islamic prism and disrupts the mainstream discussions of academic identity.

I was in a cushy job... but meanwhile the narrative about Muslims in Britain was developing very rapidly in the mainstream, in the media ... watching what is happening disconcerted me quite considerably ... basically I felt in a sense incapacitated ..I felt unable to shape the discourse, I felt I was a bystander in a debate which I was also a central participant. [...] And I realised that in order for me to actually make a difference, try to help shift narrative, I need to be able to equip myself with the tools to be able to do that competently in a way which has long term meaningful constructive impact. [Speaking of his career change]. I believe that the key debates that are happening regarding Muslims in Britain are happening in academic circles and we [Muslims] need to have an effect. [I think] this is really the intellectual jihad [strive] of the time ...is in the academia... and I think the real Mujahid of today are the people in the universities that have the courage and the fortitude to deal with the challenges. These are the real people, the real rijal [men], of the day!

Additionally, whilst managerialism has been a key element of policy change in HE, emphasising its benefits to the state, in that it helps ensure public accountability, manage resources and measure performance (Henkel, 2000), it has been argued to cause pernicious effects on academic life (Ball, 2003; Clegg, 2008). Managerialism has been blamed for creating a culture of ‘othering’, managers versus non-managers, thus affecting collegiality (Henkel, 2000; Winter, 2009). Managerial positions have become more likely to attract rewards than research and teaching positions (Clegg, 2008). Nevertheless, one might wonder how this relates to non-white academics, who continue to be scarce in senior managerial positions; according to the HESA (2017), non-white staff members comprised 9.73% of manager, director or senior officials’ positions in HEIs, compared to whites, who comprised 90.265%, during the

period 2015/2016. A breakdown of the ethnicity within the non-white group shows that 2.65% were Asian, 1.68% were of mixed backgrounds and 5.31% were of unknown backgrounds, with no Black academics within this group. Perhaps one aspect of managerialism relates to the experiences of non-white academics, *though adversely*, in that it has empowered managers', predominantly whites, stimulated dominance and created an opportunity for 'cronyism' (By, Diefenbach and Klerner, 2008). Therefore, this unprecedented empowerment allows academic managers considerable discretion, which might, in effect, disadvantage non-white academics and normalise bias, favouritism and, ultimately, discrimination.

These were some of the tensions I encountered in endeavouring to utilise academic identity literature in my analysis. In closing, I draw on Simmonds' (1997) description of her feelings of being 'out of space' in the White establishment. Her metaphor lends itself particularly well to make an analogy between the impact of structural and policy change on the situation of White academics' struggles and potential 'identity crisis' and that of non-white academics in the ivory tower. White academics are likened to sea fish, which have to react to a changing sea that has roughened, while non-white academics are likened to fresh water fish that swim in seawater. The latter has to devise many survival strategies, whilst the former continues to be located in its natural habitat.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five main sections. First, a general picture of the demographic changes in the staff profiles in the UK HEIs is introduced. This is followed by a discussion of the notion of institutional racism generally, as well as institutional racism in HE, and the extent to which academia has actively examined its institutional racism. The third section explores the literature that examined equality and diversity (E&D) in HEIs. Due to the absence of published studies on the experiences of Muslim academics in Western HEIs, the fourth section draws on the main themes that emerged from reviewing the research on Muslim students' experiences in Western HEIs. The last section presents the themes emerging from the literature that explored the experiences of non-white academics in the UK and in the US, as the relevant literature in the UK is scarce and recent.

3.4 Demographics of Non-White Academic Staff Members

Although Muslim academics could belong to any ethnicity, race, and nationality, they are most likely to be included in the group of non-white academics. Previously, estimates about religion/belief were founded on ethnicity and, thus, were less reliable (Woodhead, 2010). Although HESA and HEFCE have recently started to collect information on students' and staff members' religion/belief, some people may be unwilling to disclose such information, due to fear of discrimination (AUT, 2004; Weller, Hooley and Moore, 2011). Therefore, there are no exact figures on the population of Muslim academics in HEIs. However, drawing from official statistics on academics' ethnicity and posts might highlight their situation.

Statistics show that the progress in recruiting non-white academics has been generally slow. Regarding the recruitment of non-white academic staff members, more progress has been made in recruiting non-UK nationals than UK-nationals. The proportion of non-white UK-national academics in HEIs has increased from 4.8% in 2003/2004 to 6.1% in 2013/ 2014, while the proportion of non-white non-UK national academics has increased from 5.6% in 2003/2004 to 7.2% in 2013/2014 (ECU, 2015a, p. 220-222). 15.2% of the non-white academic staff members working in HEIs in 2014/2015 were in full-time posts, whilst 13.9% were in part-time posts (HESA, 2016). In breaking down their ethnicities, the lowest percentage of academics from identified ethnic backgrounds were Bangladeshi, being 2%. Academics of Chinese background represented the highest percentage of identified non-white ethnic background, being 23.3%. 18.5% were British Indians, 4.6% were British Asian, 3.1% were Black British Caribbean and 7.8% were Black British African (HESA, 2016) (for a detailed picture, see appendix 2).

As for the proportion of non-white academics in professorial roles, they comprised 7.3%, compared to 92.7% of white academics for the academic year 2013/2014 (ECU, 2015a, p.316). As per gender, 21.7% of the professors were females; however, the proportion of white female professors, 19.4%, was greater than the non-white male professors, 6.2%, and non-white female professors comprised the lowest proportion, being 1.4% (see appendix 3).

Additionally, there exists a pay gap between White and non-white academics for both UK nationals and non-UK nationals, with white academics earning more than their non-white counterparts across the UK HEIs. Among the UK academic staff, the median salary for white staff members (£45,053) was higher than that for non-white staff members overall (£43,434). Among the non-UK academics, the median salary for white staff members (£40,040) was higher than that for non-white staff members (£36,661) (see ECU, 2015a, p. 349-350). Moreover, the UCU (2012) conducted research drawing on the HESA 2010/2011 figures, to identify whether there was any significant gender or race pay gap in the professorial levels and found that in spite of the legislations on equal pay, there existed a lack of pay transparency and there was anecdotal evidence that a “pay gap exists even within the professoriate” (p.20).

ECU (2015a, p. 503-504) presented some data on the staff (academics and non-academics) religious affiliation, with Muslims comprising less than 1% of the population. However, this data should be cited with caution, as the returned data was not representative, as, out of the 109 institutions who returned data on religion/belief to HESA, 42 (38.5%) returned data for over 80% of their staff members and 75.8% of the staff members had not answered this question (see appendix 4).

This disparity within the employment mode, level of seniority and average pay between White and non-white academic staff members in the UK HEIs highlights aspects of institutional racism, which is the focus of the following sections.

3.5 The Irresistible Nature of Institutional Racism in Academia

The following paragraphs evaluate the concept of institutional racism generally, and then in relation to HEIs. Following this, the influence of the changes in equality acts on E&D measurements in universities is explored.

3.5.1 The Official Definition of Institutional Racism: A Commentary

The publication of the Macpherson report (1999) signalled the first official recognition of the presence of institutional racism in all UK organisations, including

educational institutions, and instigated institutional reconsideration of policies to protect disadvantaged individuals. The report defines institutional racism as

the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. (p.49)

This definition has been criticised on fundamental grounds. Murji (2007) explained how it evolved as a ‘product of a power game’. Bourne (2001) asserted that, despite recognising the ‘collective failure’ of an organisation to address the issue as the core of the problem, this definition does not situate this failure in the structures and functioning cultures of an organisation. These structures and operative cultures include not only the processes, practices, policies and procedures, but also the outcomes, as well as the power relations they produce. This failure, thus, helps draw the attention away from the beneficiaries of the existing cultures and structures. Moreover, it creates confusion between structural and personal racism, through ascribing the ‘collective failure’ to individuals’ attitudes that do not deserve harsh blame, as the words ‘unwitting prejudice’ and ‘thoughtlessness’ indicate (ibid).

Hesse (2004) argued that attributing institutional racism to aberrant individual behaviour has two substantial effects. Firstly, it contributes to drawing the attention away from conceiving the historical continuity between institutional racism and Western colonialism. This continuity is characterised by a ‘coloniality of power’ (Quijano, 2000), whereby race-relations between Whites and non-whites have always been regulated, during the era of military colonialism and beyond, according to a hegemonic hierarchical order that superiorises Whites and inferiorises non-whites. Secondly, being a consequence of the first, it denies the systematic structural outcomes, largely benefiting Whites, of institutional racism. Thus, as Sayyid argued (2010), by toning down structural factors through confusing them with individual factors, the solution to racism would be “individual reform rather than structural transformation; because racism is what racists do, one can stop racism by educating racists” (p. 12). It also places individuals who show racist behaviours outside of

institutions, “thereby severing rules, regulations and procedures from the people who make and enact them, as if it concerned qualitatively different racism, rather than different positions and relations through which racism operates” (Essed, 1991, p.36). Moreover, and regardless of the fact that the Macpherson definition has not resolved the institutional/individual responsibility, removing intentionality from acts of racism through using the word ‘unwitting’ renders institutional racism as partly excusable, hence less serious, and contributes to the denial of enduring inequalities and racism.

3.5.2 Institutional Racism in Academia

Despite its fundamental inaccuracy, scholarly discourse has not done much to provide a more accurate definition of institutional racism, particularly in academia. For example, after discussing some of the criticism this definition has received, Pilkington (2011, p.10) proposed that

We could decide later whether [the definition] was a sensitising concept that helped to illuminate our exploration of higher education or alternatively whether it was a muddled notion that proved to be of little analytical utility. Nonetheless, I do think that it is helpful at this stage to provide a working definition, even if the question of its analytical utility perforce needs to be addressed later.

Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007) argued that the absence of a definitive notion of institutional racism “is partly because of its complexity”, but also reflects the fact that there have been few studies into the processes that constitute institutional racism, as well as a dearth in studies on how minority ethnic groups experience their treatment in institutional settings” (p. 147). Another reason for this absence might be that race equality has never been part of the institutional agenda, due to several internal barriers that hinder critical debates on race issues, which might trigger race equality progression, as discussed in the following section.

However, I adopt Wright, Thompson and Channer’s definition of institutional racism, as it centralises how power dynamics operate to benefit Whites at the expense of non-whites. Institutional racism is

A set of subtle ways in which racism is institutionalised; in particular, the way in which power appears to be naturalised in the body of the white male. It can be argued that through this mechanism, processes are produced in

organisations which disadvantage members of minority ethnic groups (2007, p. 147).

Institutional racism manifests itself through two aspects: 'institutional culture' and 'routine practices' (ibid). The first is evident through a culture that is neither ethnically inclusive nor active in challenging the daily microaggression that non-white staff face at both professional and personal levels of interaction and which involves the unfair distribution of services and resources between White and non-white staff members. The second is discernible through inequitable practices regarding recruitment and career progression.

3.6 Equality Policies in HEIs

In exploring the extent to which universities have actively addressed inequalities, two main aspects need to be discussed: universities' response to the state race equality regulation and the effectiveness of HEIs' policies in undoing inequalities, that is: how minority groups perceive the outcome of these policies. While the Parekh report (2000b, p.74-75) identified ten components of institutional racism, stressing that institutions need to use them as a yard stick in examining their structures and practices, the initial response (which continues to be prevalent in the sector) was characterised by inertia (Law, Phillips and Turney, 2004; Jones, 2006).

The Macpherson report underpinned an amendment to the Race Relation Act (RRAA) (2000), which placed a general duty on public organisations, including HEIs, to address issues of direct and indirect racism and to develop race equality policies by May 2002. However, the audit surveys highlighted incomplete adherence to the legislations by universities. An HEFCE survey, conducted in 2003, found that, while all institutions were making appropriate progress regarding race equality policy development, only one quarter had developed an 'exemplary' policy and more than a third were 'seriously deficient' in meeting the requirements of RRAA (John, 2005, p. 593). A year later, HEFCE carried out another audit, which showed that some 20% were making only 'limited progress' (Crace, 2004). Although I do recognise that these references are dated and that all universities have already developed E&D polices, the findings from several studies that analysed Equal Opportunities (EO) policies formerly, currently E&D, strongly suggest that the

presence of the documents does not necessarily mean that issues of inequality were properly tackled (Sara Ahmed, 2007, 2012; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; Deem and Morley, 2006; Pilkington, 2011, 2012, 2013; Tlili, 2007). Gillborn (2008) reminded us that there is no such thing as innocent policy discourse and that policy is but a form of power exercise; “policy is fundamentally a political issue; it is one of the means by which power operates. [...]. It embodies strong continuities with the past, while it simultaneously reshapes contemporary priorities, actions and beliefs” (p.70-71).

Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005) carried out six case studies with HEIs across England, Scotland and Wales to examine the staff experiences relating to EO policies in practice and they conducted a critical discourse analysis of these policies in the institutions involved in the study. The critical discourse analysis revealed that the policies mixed several genres, namely the legal genre, the memorandum genre and the promotional genre, which “poses some ambiguities and questions as to the status of the policies, and how and to whom they should be related” (p. 40). Mixing the legal commitments with the promotional genre can “reinforce the perception that E & D policies are primarily part of the institution’s management of its public self-image” (p. 40). Furthermore, the views of senior management disparate significantly from those of the staff members in relation to the effectiveness of these documents. The former felt that the policies had started to produce positive practical results; the latter reported experiences of discrimination and felt that the policies had not brought about positive changes.

Sara Ahmed’s (2007, 2012) research with equality practitioners at UK HEIs echoed these findings. Her findings revealed that E&D policies might camouflage inequalities and that equality work could be a form of compliance with the public duty and function as ‘acts of speech’ that do not do what they claim to do. She further argued that “the politics of diversity has become what we call ‘image management’; diversity work is about generating the ‘right image’ and correcting the wrong one (2007, p. 605). Several of the participants in her study reported feeling that diversity work was mainly a ‘paper exercise’ and described the institutional

resistance to diversity work by using the metaphor of “banging your head against a brick wall” (2012, p.37).

Other studies (Pilkington, 2013; Turney, Law and Philips, 2002) have also provided evidence of institutional resistance to the E&D agenda. This resistance featured in what were termed ‘attitudinal barriers’ amongst staff members, through their defensiveness to take actions when presented by data that indicated disparity in treating different ethnic groups. Such barriers include undermining the seriousness of racism using the notion that universities are liberal environments to rationalise their dismissal of racism, or citing reasons, other than racism, to explain the disadvantageous position of non-white academics. For instance, when provided with figures on the lack of non-white people in senior posts, the senior manager participants in ECU (2011) responded by displacing responsibility, through claiming that non-white people do not apply. Additionally, the meritocracy myth has been commonly utilised to blame the victims of racism and backlash any claims of inequality (Osterling and Wong, 2008). Pilkington (2013, p. 236) observed that

What is evident at Midshire is an extreme reluctance, even among senior staff to develop recruitment or other targets relating to any of the equality dimensions. While the rhetoric continues to refer to mainstreaming, the reality is more mundane, with no progress made in the incorporation of (race) equality targets into the strategic plan.

3.6.1 Equality Policies: Lack of Proper Monitoring

Moreover, studies have found that, generally, within HEIs there is an absence of collecting equality data with respect to race/ethnicity in employment practices, such as shortlisting, recruitment and promotions. Pilkington (2013) reported the absence of such data at Midshire University, the site for his study, between 2002 and 2008. He argued that the failure of HR to produce such reports impedes conducting an equality impact assessment of HR policies and practices, which highlights that racial/ethnic equality issues, in terms of recruitment/promotional practices, are not given high priority

What is disturbing is not only continuing evidence of adverse ethnic differentials but also the paucity of monitoring and the lack of action to address such differentials. Despite the obligation under the Race Relations

(Amendment) Act to publish on a regular basis pertinent information on the position of different ethnic groups, appropriate monitoring reports were not routinely produced on recruitment and also retention, promotion, staff development and complaints, grievances and disciplinary incidences. And even when reports are produced, they did not invariably lead to appropriate reflection. (p.230)

In a similar vein, UCU (2012) sought information regarding the gender and ethnic identity amidst senior lectureship posts, including applications, short-listing and appointments, in an attempt to explore career pathways for women and non-white academics and to determine whether the lack of promotion to senior lectureship for these groups could result in their under-representation in professorial levels. Out of the 72 universities contacted, only institutions that employed 52 or more professors were included, only six provided full data. A remarkable point was that

a significant number of institutions were unable to provide the requested data as they do not collate or retain the equality data requested [...] Nine institutions refused to provide any of the data either because of the alleged cost involved in collating the data and/or on Data Protection Act grounds.” (p. 10).

Furthermore, while there is a dearth of research that monitored E&D in HE and an absence of statistics on grievance, the few published studies suggest that universities are inattentive to monitoring the effectiveness of their policy documents. For example, John (2005) conducted a follow-up with a year and a half to two years of the action plan with some of the institutions that were found to have exemplary EO policies, which revealed that “those Institutions had done very little to translate their first class policy into meaningful action” (p. 593–94). Abbott, Sapsford and Molloy (2005) found that, although some institutions collected EO data, it was neither analysed nor used to identify problems, that is, the data was collected for filing. These findings indicate the complacency within a significant number of universities, in which inequalities were dealt with, but they underline the paradox within universities in asserting scientific rigour and evidence-based knowledge whilst simultaneously failing to ensure that their E&D documents and measurements are evidence-based.

Whilst race/ethnicity appeared to be neglected for over a decade in the praxis of these policies- interestingly, ECU has only recently, in January, 2016, introduced REC (Race Equality Charter), and the evaluation of its impact is expected to take place in 2020, the polices show significant improvement in gender equality (Pilkington, 2012). The Athena SWAN charter, which was introduced in 2005 by the ECU, has significantly transformed the underrepresentation of women in STEMM subjects at senior posts (Bhopal, 2015).

3.6.2 Silence within the Establishment

There does appear to be a recurring theme of absence of data and silences within the academia on matters of racism and racial equality. Law, Phillips and Turney (2004) suggested a possible connection between this silence and the rarity of research into the historical involvement of the British academia in slavery, colonialism and imperialism. This silence is evident in various aspects. Firstly, there is a lack of evidence to support the assumptions about the effectiveness of E&D policies (for example Sara Ahmed, 2012; Pilkington, 2013), as discussed above. Secondly the meritocracy myth (Gillborn, 2010), the belief that White academics are liberal-minded intellectuals (Beck, 2004) and the presence of equality measures on papers are jointly utilised to, at worst, silence claims of racism and, at best, to uncritically dismiss them. Thirdly, most of the scholarship exploring racism inside academia tends to ‘water-down’ its seriousness. This is done through sanitising the academic language, that is, avoiding use of the term racism (Bouattia, 2015), using instead more acceptable terms, such as ‘bullying’, ‘harassment’ and ‘inadvertent’/ ‘unconscious bias’, which partially absolves perpetrators and, more importantly, removes the role of race/ethnicity in such ‘bullying’. The question remains: How has the researcher determined the absence of intention to discriminate and that it was just an ‘innocent bullying’?

In challenging assumptions about this ‘innocent’ unconsciousness’, Dr Josephine Kwhali, as cited by Hunt (2016), stated that, “after years of anti-racist debates, policies, strategies, universities banging on about increasing diversity ... if it still is unconscious, there really is something worrying about what it will take for the unconscious to become conscious”. Fourthly, the active changes regarding equality

were gender-oriented (and not race, ethnicity or religion), with (White) women forming the principal beneficiary group, as shown by the statistics in Appendix 3.

Fifthly, even if non-white academics utilise the existing complaints procedures to raise a complaint, there is evidence (for example Bhopal, 2015; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007), as will be shortly illustrated, of the detrimental repercussions of formally reporting negative experiences on the complainant's well-being and career trajectory. This has resulted in containing the research on racism in academia and discouraging a scrutiny of racism within academia. Indeed, Puwar (2004, p. 56-57) asserted that, "in this context of denial, there is an aversion, firstly in seeing racism, and secondly in confronting colleagues and superiors. [...] those brave enough to speak of racism among their colleagues risk being labelled as unprofessional, uncollegiate whistle blowers".

3.7 Muslim Students in Western HEIs: Main Themes

There is increasing scholarly interest in the presence of Muslim students in Western HEIs, particularly due to: 1- their visibility as a religious minority in secular spaces (Asmar, 2005a); and 2- the rise in their admission to HE, both home and international students. According to Universities UK (2015), over the periods 2004/2005 and 2013/2014 the largest increase of non-EU students in UK HEIs was from the Middle-East (predominantly Muslims), increasing by 126%. (p.16). Due to the absence of literature on Muslim academics' experiences at Western HEIs, this section draws briefly on the critical issues that surfaced from the studies that explored the experiences of Muslim students in Western HEIs- including the UK.

Some studies explored Muslim students' needs, as part of the service provision in an era of internationalisation (e.g. Asmar, 2005a, 2006). Other studies focused on the experiences of Muslims, both males and females, international and home students, and UG and PG (for example Asmar, 2005b; Cole & Ahmadi, 2010- in the US; Asmar, 2005a in Australia; FOSIS, 2005; Hopkins, 2011; OPM, 2009 in the UK context). Some studies had a gender focus on Muslim women students' experiences in HE (for example Khosrojerdi, 2015- in the Canadian context; Ahmad, 2001; Tyrer

& Ahmad, 2006 in the UK context; Asmar, Proude and Inge, 2004- in the Australian context; Cole and Ahmadi, 2003; and Rangoonwala, Sy and Epinoza, 2011- in the USA). Studies also focused on Muslim identity (Peek, 2005). These themes are:

- **The assertiveness of Muslim-identity**
- **Experiencing discrimination on campus and attributing it to Islamophobia**
- **Political Activism on campus and beyond**
- **A negative effect of the hijab on Muslim Female experiences**
- **Challenges Facing Muslim Students**

The first theme is not discussed below, as its findings correspond to the findings presented in section 2.4.2.1 about Muslim identity in the wider society, in that Muslim students have reported different approaches through which they relate to, and identify with, Islam.

3.7.1 Islamophobia and Experiences of Religious-based Discrimination

Generally, the review shows that 9/11 was a turning point regarding Muslim students' experiences on campus in relation to anti-Muslim discriminatory incidents; however, Muslim students reported incidents of discriminatory practices and social exclusion even before 9/11. For example, some of the participants in the studies of Asmar (2005a, 2005b- the first part, pre-9/11 studies in Australia and USA, respectively) recalled being 'put-down' by their lecturers and attributed this to religious discrimination. However, there appears to be a disparity between home and international students' views, with the former being more critical about their immediate academic experience and the institutional services.

The participants in post-7/7 studies in the UK context reported experiencing discriminatory incidents, with some attributing the grounds of these incidents to Islamophobia (FOSIS, 2005; NUS, 2012; OPM, 2009). A tendency of the victims not to report such incidents was also reported (NUS, 2012; OPM, 2009). More than half of the Muslim student participants in NUS (2012) expressed concerns about being subject to religious-prejudiced abuse; hence, some of them tended to change their daily behaviour to avoid potential abuse, for example changing their dress style or

their beard. The majority of the participants in Tyrer and Ahmad (2006) and OPM (2009) felt that Islamophobia was the most tolerated kind of discrimination in their institutions. Nevertheless, Tyrer & Ahmad found that those who perceived that Islamophobia was entirely intolerated were those who reported receiving positive pastoral care. This suggests that, when students experience an actual gesture of care, their positive encounters are more likely to formulate the way they interpret their experiences, which could tone-down the negative aspects.

Studies also revealed the presence of some religious (Islamophobic) micro-aggression in classroom settings and on personal interactions with lecturers and non-Muslim students (Asmar 2005b- in the US; Khosrojerdi, 2015- in Canada). For instance, some of the participants in Khosrojerdi (2015) reported feeling that their professors showed a lack of respect to their faith in front of the class.

The professor was talking about how you have to be prepared when you are having a business in another country to respect the cultural values of that country [he said] if I was in Saudi Arabia I wouldn't give my car keys to a woman [...] because she cannot drive. Then he looks at me, and he is like 'oh, the Quran is pretty forward thinking, isn't it? 1400 years ago for whoever wrote it to say that women cannot drive'. Then I said 'nowhere in the Quran does it say that; they didn't even have cars 1400 years ago, I don't even know where you are coming up with that' and he's like 'oh, of course it says' (PG participant- Khosrojerdi, 2015, p. 134)

There is no published empirical research on the impact of the recent Prevent Duty on Muslim students in HEIs, although studies have highlighted the impact of Anti-Terrorism Acts on Muslim communities generally, and Muslim students at schools, for example Choudhury and Fenwick (2011) and Spalek, McDonald and El Awa (2011), and MCB (2015) on the depoliticising effect of Prevent on Muslim school students, as discussed in Chapter Two. This might be because the new Counter – Terrorism Act (2015), known as the new Prevent duty, came into effect in HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales in September, 2015. But even before its enactment at universities, the 'Nottingham Two Case', which took place in 2008, suggests that Islamophobia has penetrated HEIs long before the enactment of the new Prevent. Sabir and Yezza, a PG student and a Muslim tutor, respectively, were arrested after

being reported by their university for being ‘potential terrorists’ (see Gallagher (2011) and Townsend (2012) for more details on this case).

Furthermore, views have suggested that the implementation of the new Prevent at HEIs does have negative impact on the freedom of speech as well as academic freedom, and may particularly be legitimising discrimination against Muslim students, through normalising Islamophobia. The reactions to the enforcement of the new Prevent duty at HEIs showed general dissatisfactions and oppositions amongst academics, educators, and student organisations. For instance, over 350 academics co-signed a letter to *The Independent* in July, 2015, expressing their opposition to the approach of the new duty because it “conceptualises ‘radicalisation’ and ‘extremism’ is based on the unsubstantiated view that religious ideology is the primary driving factor for terrorism” . The letter also highlighted the chilling effect of prevent on open debates, free speech and political dissent. Additionally, a coalition amongst several organisations: National Union of Students (NUS), the NUS Black Students’ Campaign, Federation of Student Islamic Students (FOSIS), the University and College Union (UCU) and Defend the Right to Protest has launched a national campaign in April 2016 to oppose the Prevent duty at HEIs, known as *Students not Suspects*, which has initiated Students not Suspects Tour across several universities, and arranged a conference entitled, *Preventing Prevent National Conference* in 2016. For more details, see their website. Subsequently, the NUS Black Student Campaign has produced a Preventing prevent handbook.

Analogous to its impact on ‘depoliticising’ Muslims on the societal sphere and silencing any dissenting views to mainstream thinking, both Bouattia, the former NUS president, and Hassan, FOSIS vice-president, as cited by Ullah (2016) spoke about the chilling effects of the new Prevent duty on Muslim students. Bouattia and Hassan, described how Muslim students, particularly those in Medicine and Medical-related department fear the possible jeopardise of their political activism during their studies on their future careers. This is because some of the measures included in the bill was to create an extremist register to allow employers to check potential employees background, which might bar those deemed extremist to work with children and vulnerable people. This has resulted in some Muslim students steering

clear from ‘doing anything political’ (Ullah, 2016). Furthermore, Internet filtering policies as well as monitoring and recording students as well as staff emails, were introduced by universities as part of their compliance to the Prevent duty. This has also created a climate of fear and intimidation amongst students, see for example, Weale (2017), particularly who are Muslims and politically active.

With respect to the possible effect of the new Prevent on issues of academic freedom, a report prepared by Perfect (2016) , which distilled the views of the invited commentators, comprised academics, independent researchers and members of student organisation, trade unions as well as Prevent coordinators. The commentators had disparate views amongst them about the impact of the new Prevent on academic freedom. Some participants argued that “there is a growing climate of self-censorship constraining what academics can teach and research”, and that researchers of ‘extreme content may come under unwarranted suspicion” (p. 14). The case of Umar Farooq provides a good example of how the implementation of Prevent could threaten academic freedom. In September 2015, just after the new Prevent was enacted, Umar Farooq a PG of counter-terrorism at Staffordshire University, was accused by his university of being a terrorist whilst reading a book on terrorism in the university library (see Ramesh & Halliday (2015) for more details). However, the views of academics who are Muslims and politically active on the possible impact of the new Prevent on the content and/ or the direction of their scholarship has yet to be investigated.

3.7.2 Muslim Students Political Activism

Things are making me more political. We can’t ignore what’s happening. Muslims feel the need to explain their religion to others now.”

(A participant in Asmar 2005b, p. 148)

Studies have shown that the post-9/11 hostile climate stirred the emergence of Muslim students’ activism in their institutions. Asmar (2005b) remarked that the development of Muslim students’ ‘new activism’ served as a recalibration to the upsurge of anti-Muslim attitudes and sentiments. However, it has not been limited to a reactive stance; instead, it has a proactive nature. Asmar discussed five dimensions of Muslims’ New Activism (p. 148)

- An upsurge in individual activism in classroom settings and beyond through having conversations about religion and politics with students and teachers.
- Building collaborations with non-Muslim students who adopt left wing politics
- Students' tendency to gain knowledge about Islam, to be able to educate non-Muslims.
- Re-aligning gender roles: Muslim women wearing the hijab have become representatives of Islam, due to their visible identity, thus the flagship in defending Islam.

Some of these dimensions have been identified in other studies. For example, the participants in the study of Khosrojerdi (2015) reported their active and constructive engagement in challenging stereotypes through educating non-Muslims about Islam, particularly through conducting themselves in a way that represents a good image of Islam. Mubarak (2007) explained the important proactive role of MSA in Western universities in campaigning for the provision of Muslim students' faith-related issues at campuses and also on debates associated with Islam, such as terrorism and human rights. Mubarak asserted that, "where Muslim students have failed to rise to the occasion and contribute to the debate, they have become marginalized" (p.3).

This activism corresponds with the development of political assertiveness within Muslim communities in the societal scope (Meer, 2010). Indeed, Elshayyal (2015, p.188) asserts that one of the 'silver linings' of the nature of the world's reactions to 9/11 is that it brought about "a more accurate understanding of [Muslims'] exact place in the wider scheme of things. [...] it meant that they had to 'think on their feet', all practically simultaneously"

Nevertheless, and analogous to its impact on 'depoliticising' Muslims on the societal sphere and silencing any dissenting views to mainstream thinking, both Bouattia, the former NUS president, and Hassan, FOSIS vice-president, as cited by Ullah (2016) spoke about the chilling effects of the new Prevent duty on Muslim students. Bouattia and Hassan, described how Muslim students, particularly those in Medicine and Medical-related department fear the possible jeopardise of their political

activism during their studies on their future careers. This is because some of the measures included in the bill was to create an extremist register to allow employers to check potential employees background, which might bar those deemed extremist to work with children and vulnerable people. This has resulted in some Muslim students steering clear from ‘doing anything political’ (Ullah, 2016). Furthermore, Internet filtering policies as well as monitoring and recording students as well as staff emails, were introduced by universities as part of their compliance to the Prevent duty. This has also created a climate of fear and intimidation amongst students, see for example, Weale (2017), particularly who are Muslims and politically active.

With respect to the possible effect of the new Prevent on issues of academic freedom, a report prepared by Perfect (2016) , which distilled the views of the invited commentators, comprised academics, independent researchers and members of student organisation, trade unions as well as Prevent coordinators. The commentators had disparate views amongst them about the impact of the new Prevent on academic freedom. Some participants argued that “there is a growing climate of self-censorship constraining what academics can teach and research”, and that researchers of ‘extreme content may come under unwarranted suspicion” (p. 14). The case of Umar Farooq provides a good example of how the implementation of Prevent could threaten academic freedom. In September 2015, just after the new Prevent was enacted, Umar Farooq a PG of counter-terrorism at Staffordshire University, was accused by his university of being a terrorist whilst reading a book on terrorism in the university library (see Ramesh & Halliday (2015) for more details). However, the views of academics who are Muslims and politically active on the possible impact of the new Prevent on the content and/ or the direction of their scholarship has yet to be investigated.

3.7.3 The Hijab’s (negative) Effect

“I KNOW I am treated differently to non-Muslims, especially as I wear the hijab, as I only converted 1 year ago, so I can feel the difference I receive in all aspects of the university, and in outside areas. We are not treated equally,

and *I sometimes feel we are despised*” (a participant, Asmar, Proude, and Inge, 2004, p. 57, emphasis original).

Generally, Muslim females not wearing the hijab were less prone to discrimination, as they were able to ‘blend in’; their choice not to wear the hijab made it difficult for people to identify them as Muslims (Aslam, 2011; Asmar 2005b; Asmar, Proude and Inge, 2004; Cole and Ahmadi, 2003; Khosrojerdi, 2015). However, female students wearing the hijab expressed feelings of being socially excluded and treated with hostility by some non-Muslims on campus, even pre-9/11. The participants in the research of Asmar, Proude and Inge (2004) in Australia pre-9/11 felt they were ‘unwelcome’ and ‘treated differently’ by their colleagues and staff members. This included being excluded by peers from group work participation, due to discriminatory assumptions that they would not be able to ‘actively participate’ because they are ‘restricted by their beliefs’.

Cole and Ahmadi (2003) in the US context in a pre-9/11 study reported similar findings. Their participants felt that the hijab was perceived as a hindrance to interaction in the Western norms, thus leading to male colleagues becoming distanced, as they perceived females who wear the hijab as ‘too religious’. Some peers even viewed it as an ‘exotic cultural dress-code’ (p.57). The hijab has stimulated diverse reactions from non-Muslims on campus, including laughing and staring. The social exclusion experienced by some of the participants was emotionally detrimental, to the extent that it triggered reconsideration of the hijab and they ultimately unveiled to fit in. Notwithstanding that these negative experiences have become more common post-9/11 (for example Khosrojerdi, 2015; Tyrer and Ahmad, 2006). Some female students wearing the hijab noted that discrimination had not been present in their experiences, as they had either “chosen to ignore its existence’ or they had ‘limited interactions with non-Muslim students’ (Khosrojerdi, 2015, p. 137).

3.7.4 Challenges Facing Muslim Students

Research has revealed several challenges facing Muslim students in Western HEIs that make them feel excluded from the wider campus environment. These include:

- 1- Indirect discrimination features through the centrality of alcohol drinking to most social events; they feel that their universities do not accommodate their needs (e.g. Asmar, 2005a, 2005b; Hopkins, 2011).
- 2- They feel that the presence of anti-terrorism legislations have promoted a general climate of suspicion around Muslim students, and legitimise and demand constant monitoring and watching of Muslim students (Hopkins, 2011).
- 3- Muslim students who practice the faith reported the difficulty in maintaining their faith identity simultaneously with integrating in their universities (Asmar, 2005a), particularly females wearing the hijab, whose visibility made them more prone to exclusion (Aslam, 2011; Khosrojerdi, 2015; Tyrer and Ahmad, 2006).

3.8 The Experiences of non-white Academics in HEIs

The lived experiences of discrimination damages individual lives, suffocates talent [...] Institutions cannot continue practices and cultures which damage the career development, aspirations, and life chances of some racial groups for the benefit of others (Prof. M. Cleary's forward - ECU(2011) *The Experience of Black and Minority Ethnic Staff in Higher Education in England*)

This quote sheds light on the entrenched institutional racism in British academia. Concurrently, it implies, *without stating*, Whiteness as the substantive rationale for racism in the academy. Much of the research in the US context on the experiences of non-white academics has utilised a CRT lens (e.g. Muhtaseb, 2007; Solorzano, 1998; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Villalpando and Delgado Bernal, 2002) to name and problematise Whiteness. Corresponding research in the UK, relatively recent, with the exception of the work of Carter, Fenton and Modood (1999), has tended to focus on the disadvantaged position of non-white academics, asserting that their experiences are laden with racism (Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011; Gillborn, 2010; Jones, 2006; Law, Phillips and Turney, 2004; Pilkington, 2011, 2013; Runnymede Trust, 2015; UCU, 2012, 2016; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). The literature review draws from both contexts, recognising that employment structures and equality regulations in HEIs differentiate in the two contexts.

3.8.1 Non-white Academics' Experiences Regarding Routine Practices

3.8.1.1 Recruitment Practices

Getting a job is often based on who you know, and if [...] your face fits and they like you, you will be the one who is offered the job" (Bhopal, 2015, p. 113)

Some of the participants in ECU (2011) expressed the view that discrimination is less likely to occur at the initial academic recruitment, particularly for junior academic posts, and more common at the level of senior posts. However, the participants of Bhopal (2015) and Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005) generally held that 'favouritism' and 'having your face fitting' were the principal grounds for recruitment.

CRT scholarship challenges the emphasis given to the 'pipe line' problem, being that the under-representation of non-white academics in academia is due to the lesser number of non-white students in doctoral studies compared to whites. This emphasis, as argued by Villalpando & Delgado Bernal (2002), draws the attention away from other serious structural issues. Ramino, a Latino academic participant in the research of Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014) noted his experience as being the only non-white recruitment panel member: "Every single minority in the pool was eliminated even when some had better CV's than some of the faculty on the committee!" When he protested about this elimination, "he was verbally reprimanded by a white female colleague who said: 'We are not just going to hire anyone to meet our diversity quotas, we want someone who is talented'" (p.11). His quote highlights two aspects: the influence of the applicants' identity, identified through their names, on their career opportunity; and the assumption held by White panel members that non-white academics' lack proper qualifications and their presence in academia is an act of compliance with a legislative burden. The ECU (2011) respondents, in remarking about how their White colleagues perceive them, raised this point.

Research has found that recruitment decisions during interviews are impacted by the subjective views of panel members that are more likely to draw from the stereotypes and prejudices about the group to which the interviewees belong (Jackson, 2008;

Pilkington, 2013; Villalpando and Delgado Bernal, 2002). These subjective views, Mertz (2011) argued, are more favourable of White candidates, due to perceptions that they are a better ‘fit’ for jobs, hence exclude those who are different. Tooms, Lugg and Bogotch (2009, p.96) discussed how the personnel decisions about the ‘fit’ of a candidate in a department are used to “perpetuate hegemony and the social construction of what a school leader is”. This means that the multiple identities, such as race, gender or religion, of interviewees’ in academic interview settings influence their chances of securing the job, which questions the widely held belief that hiring decisions are colour-blind and exclusively merit-based.

Given the level of discretion recruitment panels enjoy in academia, Rangasamy (2004) asserted that Whiteness is displayed and maintained within interactive settings, for example job application, job interviews, job promotions and disciplinary hearings, when “there is a level of control over the destiny of non-whites” (p. 28). This control could also feature in the salary offered or negotiated with successful non-white candidates, as reported by some participants in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013) who were appointed on a lower starting salary, whilst White colleagues with a lesser qualification were appointed at the top of the scale. These participants reported gaining accidental access to this information years after their appointment.

3.8.1.2 Promotional procedures

There are blockers here... Too many people with too many agendas – it’s very much the old school – been there for 20 or 30 years... There were blockers – oh, get this one in – not that one... It’s word of mouth I never got through faculty... [they are] more comfortable with me sweeping the floors than teaching, I’m sure. I see myself as a pro vice-chancellor, while they see me as a toilet cleaner, that’s the difference. (Female academic, ECU, 2011, p. 33)

Non-white academic participants in previous research highlighted career progression and promotional opportunities as being the most problematic aspects in HEIs. The statistics formerly mentioned about the rarity of non-White academics in senior posts have been widely used to stress that racism continues to be pervasive in British academia (see Shilliam (2015)). Previous studies have found that data on promotional applications, short listing and appointments was either not collected or not monitored (Pilkington, 2013; UCU, 2012).

Non-white academics cited being ‘blocked’, either directly or indirectly, in their institutions from development opportunities required for career progression through diverse ways. For instance, some perceived they were given less access to research opportunities compared to their white colleagues, through being allocated a heavier teaching workload and more managerial responsibilities (Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011; Jones, 2006; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). Mayra, a participant in the research of Wright, Thompson and Channer spoke about how the dean had blocked her from development opportunities that had been previously agreed and enjoyed by her White peers.

So I said, if I’m going to become a lecturer, then it will have to be on these terms [...] and I’d have to be given the opportunity to develop my practice as a Barrister at the Bar. Orally she agreed to all of these things. [...] One day I bumped into her coincidentally coming from Court one day, I was prosecuting, and I had my blue bag, all Counsel carry bags, and she said, where are you coming from with your blue bag? I said, Court, she said, you haven’t asked me if you could go to Court. I said, with all due respect, Dean, I do refer back to our conversation when you and I agreed on the terms on which I would teach, anyway to cut a long story short, she hauled me up over the coals. (p. 156).

Moreover, the lack of clarity in guidelines for promotional criteria was cited by non-white academics as being an obstacle for career progression, as this opacity allows promotional panels, predominantly White, to make subjective judgments (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). Latino/academic participants in a study conducted by Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014) felt that these guidelines were ‘purposefully vague’. For example, the participants recalled experiences where the panel members undervalued their research area and /or the publishing venues they chose for their scholarship (ibid). The panel members would, perhaps, also decline, or delay, non-White academics’ promotion if their scholarship was committed to challenging the canonised knowledge (Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). Some of the participants of Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez “had been *advised* through very direct remarks that their research could hinder their prospects of getting tenure” (p.9, emphasis original). The

study of these participants was related to Latino communities, but principally challenged the privileged scholarship regarding these communities. This led some to self-censor their political and critical views in classroom settings, or in their research outputs (ibid). Villalpando & Delgado Bernal claimed that this act is part of the Western ‘apartheid of knowledge’: a means to “separate the research, teaching and scholarship faculty of colour often produced from mainstream scholarship through ignoring and discrediting their epistemologies” (p. 253). These findings suggest that the lack of transparency in promotional processes and procedures operates as a powerful means to control and manage knowledge production and invalidate non-Western epistemologies. While it could be argued that White academics may well have similar experiences, promotion does, nevertheless, provide a venue for control.

Additionally, Villalpando & Delgado Bernal (2002) argued that the opacity of promotional criteria serves as a means to allow changes to be made to ‘fit’ a preferred candidate. This shifting of the goalpost is well-captured in the account of a participant in the study conducted by Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005), as the quote below suggests

[the guideline] says ‘preferred qualifications’. Well someone went and got told that they could climb the ladder, and he says ‘Well I can’t because I haven’t got the qualifications’. And the management says ‘Well what it says there is that it’s preferred, but if you haven’t got them and you can do that job, that’s okay’. So, they can reword something to suit themselves. That’s the nearest one that I’ve managed to think of. It’s rewording things and making things fit to suit you. (p. 55-56)

The axiom that promotion is principally about ‘who you know’ rather than ‘what you know’ sheds light on the importance of ‘networks of knowns’ (Mertz, 2011) to career progression. Opportunities for networking come through formal and informal mentoring (Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). Non-white academic participants in previous studies remarked on the lack of actual mentoring in their experiences compared to their White colleagues (ECU, 2011; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; Jackson, 2008; UCU, 2016; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). Academic writings emphasise that mentoring is also

an arena for control. A provision of proper mentorship, hence access to important networks, for non-white academics is more likely to occur when they assimilate to the majority culture.

Indeed, Puwar (2004, p. 56) asserted that race relations in academia are strongly impacted by “likeness or social cloning in comportment, manner, social connection, theoretical persuasions and politics”, suggesting that non-white academics have to put in extra effort in negotiating their identities to be afforded access to these networks and, more importantly, ‘approved’ by White academics (Mertz, 2011). Additionally, the research suggests a strong correlation between ‘social cloning’ and a successful career trajectory (Deem, Morley and Tlili,, 2005- p. 62; ECU, 2011). A ‘network of knowns’ might indirectly withhold important information needed to facilitate career advancement from those who are not ‘members of the club’ and concurrently provide members with ‘proper’ support (Bhopal, 2015; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005). For example, in ECU (2011, p.24-25), some of the participants noted being excluded from gaining access to important information for their career progression, due to such information being commonly disclosed in informal socialising settings that include alcohol drinking, which are not a common choice of some academics.

In a similar vein, the majority of the participants in the research of Bhopal (2015), ECU (2011) and UCU (2016) reported neither being fully informed of how to apply for promotions nor being encouraged to apply. Research findings have suggested that successful promotions strongly correlate with *who is encouraged to apply* (Bhopal, 2015; ECU, 2011). This discussion shows how the informal cultural processes through mentoring and networking might subtly exclude non-white academics.

Furthermore, previous research has found that, for non-white academics to be considered for promotion and to have their scholarship recognised, they need to achieve more than their White counterparts, in terms of teaching and/or research (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Carter, Fenton and Modood, 1999; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002). This

‘higher threshold’ that operates for non-White academics that indicates the presence of ‘double standard racial bias’ (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002) has become, on one hand, part and parcel of non-White academics’ calculations, particularly adamant to achieve their tenure, in the USA, or to progress in their career. A professor participant in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013, p. 12) remarked that, “If we take racism seriously, and we know it’s there, you have to do better. And it’s an extra burden. And it is unfair, but we live in an unfair world. It is just part of your calculations”. On the other hand, it has created a group of exceptional non-white academics, who are paraded by the institution in citing evidence of its fair system (ECU, 2011; Gillborn, 2010).

This unlevelled playing field has caused the non-white faculty to experience ‘fear, uncertainty and distress’ (Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014), in that they would constantly be pushing themselves harder to achieve their career goals. Nonetheless, research has indicated that promotion is not everyone’s ambition and that some non-White academics may choose not to seek promotion, because they want to have a work-life balance (ECU, 2011).

3.8.1.3 Workload Division

Some of the non-white academic participants in previous studies noted that the workload distribution in their departments might be used to keep them away from other responsibilities that are essential to career advancement (ECU, 2011; Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; Jones, 2006; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007).

Although I recognise that workload is a real issue for all academics, both White and non-white, the nuances of allocation might favour some academics at the expense of others and be influenced by networks, as line-managers, who are predominantly White, are solely responsible for dividing the responsibilities. The ECU (2011) findings revealed that “there appears to be no transparency in the allocation of particular roles and duties, and this could lead to unequal allocation of work between BME and White staff” (p.20). On one hand, those who were recruited under hourly contracts complained about being allocated the least number of hours, when compared to their White colleagues under similar conditions (Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). On the other hand, those employed on permanent contracts spoke

about being overloaded with mundane responsibilities to ‘keep them busy’. This this distracted them from focusing on their academic development or conducting research, which indirectly excluded them from participating in the RAE, as suggested by a participant in the study of Wright , Thompson and Channer.

Our work loading never seems to be on an even keel, we’re usually quite low in staff which means that you’re doing all the mundane stuff, you know, the admissions and the placement visits and don’t really have time to do the thinking and the reading and stuff like that, that’s a frustration. (p. 154)

Additionally, some non-white academics reported being commonly involved, or were expected to be involved, in supporting non-white students, undertaking diversity related work and/or serving on committees, being work that was less likely to be ‘rewarded’ or recognised as part of their work credit (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; ECU, 2011; Jones, 2006; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). Whilst some enjoy being role-models for non-white students, or being the ‘diversity face’ of their department (see Bhopal and Jackson, p. 5), others resisted this ‘pigeonholing’ of roles (Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011).

3.8.2 Institutional Cultures: Unfavourable for non-white academics?

This literature review highlights that the broader atmosphere of academia is unwelcoming towards non-white academics. This unfriendly atmosphere features through three main aspects. Firstly, it is hostile towards the knowledge they produce, through the devaluation, or lesser regard, ascribed by their colleagues on their scholarship, particularly in the field of race and ethnicity. Secondly, it is hostile towards their presence, including such practices as hyper-surveillance by their seniors and daily microaggressions through interactions with staff members. Thirdly unwelcoming features in the negative reactions and feedback of students.

3.8.2.1 Attitudes towards their Knowledge

Non-white academics reported feeling that their departments, at worst, devalued their scholarship, which addresses aspects of race, diversity and equality, and, at best ‘tolerated’, but not ‘respected’, it, particularly those who challenge the normative scholarship on race (Bhopal, 2015; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). This, they hold, was because their white colleagues “were unfamiliar with, unwilling to

learn about and, at times, dismissed their research” (ibid, p. 7). Even when their white colleagues accepted their research expertise, they still considered it ‘personal research’ and, thus, questioned their objectivity and academic rigour. However, the scholarship of White academics with equivalent areas of interest is duly recognised and ‘profiled’.

I think there’s an assumption that Black academics are not as academic as white academics, we’re not as worthy, our work isn’t as important. Many of us are working on issues to do with diversity and equality, and whilst that is deemed high status for white academics, for Black academics it’s often seen as a hobby. And until academia accepts the fact that it is a serious academic pursuit for all academics Black and white we will always be getting the crumbs from everybody else. (Veronica, a participant in Wright, Thompson and Channer, p. 152)

Race is devalued as a study in academia because it is Black people who study race. There are some White people study race, but their work on race is more valued because they are White (Farida, a participant in Bhopal, 2015, p.117)

Indeed, “It is ironic that “white-on-white” research is afforded legitimacy, but “brown-on-brown” research is questionable and challenged at the same time that many white social scientists are establishing their professional careers as experts on minority issues” (Jackson, 2008, p. 1015). This aspect highlights the influence of one’s racial or ethnic identity on the way their scholarship is judged in academia. This ‘double standards’ racial bias’ in considering non-white academics’ knowledge is a form of the ‘apartheid of knowledge’ central to western academia. Thus, when non-white academics conduct research on their communities, this apartheid is channelled through accusation of a lack of objectivity in the research results or having their methodological choices questioned by their seniors (Solórzano, 1998). Additionally, ‘typecasting’ (Turner, Myers & Creswell, 1999) has also been identified as an attitude within academia that assumes that non-white academics have a natural propensity to teach/research on race and ethnicity. Thus, they might be under pressure by their departments to work on these areas.

Germane to this discussion are the several recent initiatives of both non-white students and non-white academics questioning the privileging of Eurocentric

perspectives in Humanities and Social Science subjects that show less regard to other perspectives on these subjects. Examples of these initiatives include the NUS Black Students' campaign at UCL (2014) 'Why is My Curriculum White?', 'Rhodes Statue Must Fall' in Oxford in January 2016 and the 'Black Studies Movement' (Andrews, 2015). The aim of such drives was to open spaces of perspectives of knowledge other than the Eurocentric ones and to decolonise the academia. While in the USA non-white scholars have been succeeding in opening spaces for different epistemologies since the late 60's, such as the African-American, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Asian and Indigenous studies programmes (Grosfoguel, 2012b, p. 81), the British academia continues to resist the urge for other scholarships, which is another lacuna of the unfulfilled diversity in the British academia. It seems that there has been a positive response to these drives (long overdue!), as a UG Black Studies programme at Birmingham City University will commence in September 2017 (Andrews, 2016).

3.8.2.2 Attitudes towards their Presence: Questioned Authority and Daily Micro-aggressions

Non-white academics recognise that they are 'space invaders' (Puwar, 2004) in the ivory tower. Because they are not the 'indigenous' inhabitants, their presence continues to be questioned and constantly challenged. Non-white academics in several studies (Bhopal & Jackson, 2013; ECU, 2011; Jones, 2006; Pilkington, 2013; Solórzano, 1998; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007) reported feelings of being closely watched. This hyper-surveillance was felt to be not only a reminder of their outsider status, but also an indicator of the presence of 'lower expectations' in relation to Chicano/a scholars (Solórzano, 1998). This hints to the residue of the pseudo-scientific discourses that made claims to the intellectual inferiority of non-white peoples. Although largely discredited, such beliefs, as Jones (2006) asserted, "continue to impact on black people, and not a few BME academics have experienced the indignity of having their knowledge and abilities brought into question by colleagues and students alike" (p. 151).

Puwar (2004, p. 53) illustrates that, in such an environment, non-white academics "have to endure a burden of doubt from those around them" through close monitoring, which gives the impression that both colleagues and students "are more

likely to pick-up any mistakes and see them as signs of misplaced authority”. Close monitoring is but a means through which academic authority is normalised to Whites. Low self-esteem and self-doubt are more likely to result from such attitudes, as illustrated by Hazel, a participant in the research of Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007, p. 152), “they’re watching you, you know whichever meeting you go to, you’re being watched... you’re having to prove yourself, they don’t expect you to be any good, and you also doubt yourself a lot”. In the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013) several participants spoke about experiencing a lack of trust from colleagues “questioning their credibility – checking whether they were the lead contributor to an event or publication; querying whether their publication was a ‘real book’; or challenging their marking” (p. 7). An Asian female lecturer, a participant in Pilkington’s (2013, p. 233) study, described being patronised by her head of department

I felt like I was being watched. Every time I marked an essay...she’d come in and, you know, have you marked it? Can I have a look at your comments? So any little opportunity she had to exercise discipline, she would use it...And one day...she just said to me, I’m coming into your lecture.

Another form of hostility to their presence is manifested through incidents of micro-aggressions. Pierce et al (1978), as cited by Solórzano (1998, p. 124), held that micro-aggressions are

subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are ‘put downs’ of blacks by offenders. The offensive mechanisms used against blacks often are innocuous. The cumulative weight of their never-ending burden is the major ingredient in black and white interactions. (Pierce, Carew, Pierce-Gonzalez, and Willis, 1978, p. 66)

Delgado and Stefanic (1992, p. 1283) introduced some of “the code-words that convey racially charged meanings: ‘you people’, highly qualified black’ and ‘articulate’. Solórzano (1998) added to the list such phrases as ‘you speak such good English’, ‘you speak without an accent’, ‘you are not like the rest of them’ and so on. Other forms of micro-aggressions are racist or sexist jokes or comments, as well as ignoring the presence of non-white staff members through body language (ibid).

Solórzano asserted the need to ‘name’ racial and gender micro-aggressions as problems in academia, to document and analyse them in order to challenge them. The rarity of documenting daily micro-aggressions against minority academics could mean that such subtle racism continues to go unchecked and unchallenged (ibid). The fact that such micro-aggressions do not normally occur in public may underpin the little scrutiny they receive (Kennedy, 1989). These micro-aggressions on their various facets, for example racial, sexist or religious, were evident in the literature (Asmar, 2005b; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Corntassel, 2003; Deem, Morley, and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011; Weller, Hooley and Moore, 2011; Pilkington, 2013; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; UCU, 2016).

Asmar (2005b) noted how Muslim academics might be prone to Islamophobic attitudes of their colleagues, transmitted through jokes. “A newly tenured member of academic staff reported being jocularly greeted by one of his new colleagues with the remark: ‘I should probably run and close my door so you won’t bomb me’ (p. 145). In a similar fashion, Weller, Hooley and Moore (2011) examined whether staff members and students of beliefs (and no beliefs) feel they experience racism on grounds of their belief and noted some offensive religious-related comments. However, the report seemed to downplay the serious influence of these micro-aggressions, through describing them as ‘small talk or office banter’ (p. 82). For instance, a Christian academic described a time

when a student on a religious studies course passed a module on introduction to Islam, but had failed a similar module on introduction to Christianity. This was discussed and a [atheist] senior colleague around the table said [jocularly] that, in his view, anyone who failed the introduction to Christianity deserved a first class grade (p.83).

An example of gender micro-aggression was noted by a Chicano scholar in Solórzano’s (1998, p.131) study: “when I got pregnant and had a baby, my adviser, other faculty and some of my students felt that I wasn’t serious about graduate school or my professional career, since I brought this ‘burden’ on myself”. Singh, as cited by Hunt (2016), explained that micro-aggressions are substantial in academia and that they are “like death by a thousand cuts. When you experience them all the time, they have a cumulative effect”. Indeed, Espinoza (1990, p 1885) stressed that such

instances “leave a residue of self-doubt in the individual, no matter what their achievements”.

3.8.2.3 Students’ Reactions and Feedback

The final aspect that points to the exclusion and othering of non-white academics is manifested through students’ (negative) reactions and feedback towards their non-white teachers (Bhopal, 2015, Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Jones, 2006; Muhtaseb, 2007; Puwar, 2004; Solórzano, 1998). The presence of non-white bodies clashes with, and disturbs, the expectation of what a university lecturer looks like, as students, particularly Whites, are ‘normalised to White professors’ (Muhtaseb, 2007, p. 30). This is remarked by Puwar (2004) in describing her students’ ‘double-take’ when she enters the lecture hall. Veronica, a participant in the research of Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007), also noted that “Students might think that you’re not really the lecturer; you might be another student or some other person who’s just wandered into the space” (p. 151). Even when they succeed in moving on from the negative reactions that commonly occur on first sight, non-white academics might face discrimination based on their accent. Muhtaseb (2007) noted how some of her White students question her academic credentials without affording her the opportunity to prove her professionalism. For instance, one student once dropped her course after the first session because, according to the department secretary, Muhtaseb spoke English with an accent. A Chicano scholar in Solórzano’s (1998) study reported a similar experience, as some of his students just would not listen to him because he spoke English with a Spanish accent. Another facet of students’ questioning of non-white academics’ impartiality was that students’ *focus on the messenger rather than the message*, particularly regarding controversial topics in classroom discussion. Muhtaseb (2007) provided an example of how her students would accept the same message from a White colleague, for example regarding American mainstream media bias in presenting what is happening in Palestine.

Additionally, White students’ feedback to their non-white lecturers tend to be negative and perhaps unfair towards them (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Jones, 2006; Muhtaseb, 2007; Puwar, 2004). For example, some of the participants in the research of Bhopal and Jackson (2013) spoke about the discriminatory feedback

they receive from students that questions their credibility and they consider it a form of surveillance exercised by students

I feel a little discomfort when the student body is practically all white [...] Once, when I taught on a particular module...the comments were a bit snide ... I don't know whether it was my lecturing style, the content, and you can't tell. Sometimes, it all gets mixed up (Lecturer, p.11)

3.8.2.4 Misrecognition or Semi-recognition?

The previous sections highlight how non-white academics' multiple identities play a significant role in the way they are perceived and judged before being shortlisted for job interviews, during the interview interaction and by their colleagues and students. These identities were also found to be influential in relation to their inclusion (or exclusion) from networks of support necessary for career advancement. For example, some of the participants in the studies of Bhopal (2015) and Bhopal and Jackson (2013) discussed how they negotiated their identities and tended to construct a 'persona' through changing their dress-style or speaking manner to facilitate their 'fitting in' in the academia. This institutional attitude, according to Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014), suppresses the "racial, gender, ethnic (religious) and political way of being" (p.12) of the non-white academics. Given that some non-white academics, when entering academia, incorporate the presence of racism in their calculation for their career trajectory, they push themselves hard to perform better than their White colleagues, in order to be 'fairly' treated (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002).

This awareness of the structures and the cultures at play in academia has created a group of exceptional non-white academics who have achieved seniority.

Nevertheless, the views of some of the senior academics in the studies of Bhopal (2015) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014) illustrated the ambivalent attitude of academia towards them, mirrored through levels of acceptance (and non-acceptance) or inclusion (and exclusion) that are subject to several factors.

Acceptance, thus insider-status, is afforded through the size of grants they generate, familiarity of their scholarship and the extent to which their departments recognise this. These aspects emphasise their academic credibility. Non-acceptance, thus outsider status, is rendered by their otherness, that is their identities might negatively

affect their success, consequently affording them a “second-class’ membership” (Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014, p. 13).

Therefore, some of Bhopal’s (2015) participants who occupy senior leadership positions felt that they had to “constantly prove themselves to White colleagues” (p. 80). The essence of this theme is eloquently captured below

If there is a critical mass of other colleagues working in a similar area to you, you may be accepted, but you may still be an outsider because of your race. You might also be seen as not being accepted because of your research area. A level of acceptance happens in different ways and different forms (Black female professor, p. 72).

Camila, a Latina academic in the research of Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014, p. 12-13) spoke of the paradoxical treatment of inclusion and exclusion

You have to be prepared for this, no matter how much you accomplish you still are not going to be respected, and you might be respected, but you won’t be a member [...] You’re always still reminded that you’re not really, uh, an insider, so you just have to know that. ... just because you get tenure that’s not going to change.

3.8.3 Non-white Academics’ Response to Institutional Racism

In light of the generally negative environment of subtle multi-layered othering, though complex, exclusionary practices, and of having felt being penalised with their career advancement delayed if they did not perform better than the white academics, non-white academics have developed diverse survivalist strategies in response to the various barriers they encounter. These coping mechanisms are not mutually exclusive.

3.8.3.1 Deriving Support from Diverse Networks

The first coping strategy for racism in academia is to rely on several networks of support, both within academia and beyond. For example, non-white academics stress the importance of bonding with both a social community, such as family and friends, and a religious community (Bhopal, 2015; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007; Yosso 2005; Yosso et al. 2009- on Latino/a UG students) to derive the self-affirmation needed to maintain their resilience. Additionally, although there are not many non-white role-models in academia, non-white academics emphasised the

importance of developing their own informal support networks through seeking mentorship from other non-white senior academics, even beyond their universities (ECU, 2011; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). Non-white networks provide key information crucial to career opportunities and development (ECU, 2011) and help overcome the demoralising effect of stressful incidents upon opening up to trusted colleagues who might share similar negative experiences (Bhopal, 2015; Solórzano, 1998). Senior non-white academics also emphasise the importance of providing advice and being role models for junior non-white academics (Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). A non-white academic in ECU (2011, p. 30) remarked that ‘There seems a kind of hidden camaraderie between ethnic minorities... a sense of some injustice taking place.’ Latino/a academics remarked that they “have never made a major decision [about their career] without consulting their senior Latino mentors” (Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014, p. 14).

3.8.3.2 Overlooking Racism and Preferring Silence

It appears that non-white academics have recognised that, generally, the structures, the cultures and the processes and practices continue to disfavour them, subtly or otherwise. It has been argued that the vagueness around the implementation of E&D measurements, in terms of formal grievance, as well as the lived experiences of going through the grievance process, which might open doors for more victimisation, has created an impression that ‘complaints will not be taken seriously’ (Jones, 2006, p. 149). More importantly, this has led to reluctance amongst academics to discuss their experiences of racism; thus, they remain silent about discrimination (ibid).

The reviewed studies provide evidence that some non-white academics deliberately choose not to rationalise their negative experiences through the lens of racism and focus their energy, instead, on their career development. This is because “daily racial humiliations [constitute] a huge drain on personal resources. [Thus] women weighed up the pros and cons of how, when and whether they challenged and confronted those racisms” (Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007, p. 158), as Carmen put it

I am too feisty to recognize it as racism as such. I am not saying that it isn't racism. I just see everything that goes against me as intolerable. I don't stop

to deal with it. If I focus on it and call it racism, then I will have to spend time and energy having to deal with it (p. 158).

Participants in other studies reported similar reactions

We need to get the sense that we're part of the club instead of feeling like you're a token gesture, you not privy to private jokes and things like that. For me I try not to focus on it, I try to overlook it or look past it, it's my coping mechanism. (Professor, Bhopal and Jackson, 2013, p. 15)

I am often reluctant to revisit my experiences of racism in academia largely because 1, I don't want to be couched as a victim, 2, academia is in many ways a positive space for me, 3, I think negative moaners are a bore' (lecturer, Pilkington, 2013, p. 231)

3.8.3.3 Challenging Racism

Others confronted racism and made use of the existing policies. However, findings from the literature suggest this to be a thorny path, with detrimental effects on the complainants' well-being and career. In the research of Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005), some of the participants challenged the impartiality of HR in dealing with cases of complaints, as the following quote explains

Without trying to be overly negative about the people (Personnel and harassment advisors) who've taken it on, I think much of the design of what they've been invited to do is actually to dissipate the case rather than to actually take it forward. And I mean what you can't ever know is how many people have actually ever gone through that process and been discouraged from proceeding ... I have to say personally I know of no cases that come that route, that has then gone on (Academic trade union representative, p. 76).

Bhopal (2015, p. 89-91) delineated the experience of racism a Black Caribbean female senior lecturer, Martha, in a post-1992 institution faced from a White colleague who became her line-manager. Martha felt that he was constantly undermining her ability publicly. When she confronted him, he became upset, but did not improve his attitude or behaviour. Then, she escalated the issue and spoke to the head of department, who, in his part, dismissed the possibility of racism and suggested she was 'imagining' it. Meanwhile, she spoke with the trade union representative, who advised her that she needed evidence to file a racism complaint.

Feeling isolated and without any support, Martha went on sick leave for several weeks, and then left her university to go to another institution, accepting a lower post of a lecturer. Bhopal concluded that “Several respondents have similar experiences like Martha’s. But, in all of the cases, there was no official recognition that the bullying behaviour was attributed to racism or discrimination” (p. 91).

3.8.3.4 Leaving Academia

Leaving academia, termed the ‘revolving door syndrome’ (Bensimon, Ward & Sanders, 2000), seems to be another response to institutional racism. Some of the participants in the study of Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007) mentioned that, because they experienced racism in their workplace, they either entirely left academia or changed their career conditions to a part-time contract and found another type of employment that allowed them to ‘feel centred’. Jones (2006) also underlined that the lack of encouragement to non-white PhD students at British universities and the racism they faced during their PG journey might result in some of them considering working overseas, where they might receive recognition and respect. A recent study by ECU (2015b) set out to examine whether there is a discrepancy between the reasons behind the moving overseas of white and non-white UK national academics.

The general tone of the report seemed to downplay racism as a strong rationale for the non-white academics’ decisions. For example, the word racism was mentioned several times in the direct quotes of the participants, but very few times in the recommendation section. Additionally, the report tested for gender difference in the moves, but did not test for ethnicity difference. The report found that the non-whites ‘shared the *same reasons for remaining* in the UK’; it did not comment on whether there was a discrepancy in their reasons for *moving* from the UK. It also did not mention whether inequality, or discrimination, or White favouritism, or a combination of these factors were the reasons cited by the non-white academics for their leaving. However, to do justice to the report, it did mention that the likelihood of non-white academics moving overseas was greater than their white counterparts’. Different reasons cited for their move that might indirectly correlate with institutional racism, such as to secure full-time and/or permanent employment or to obtain respect for their research area, being around race/ethnicity. Bhopal, Brown

and Jackson (2016) found that the reasons behind non-white academics' moving were underpinned by barriers to career progressions, lack of mentoring, lack of transparency in promotional criteria and processes and going back to their own countries of origin.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter sketched out the UK HEI context concerning its non-white members, drawing from the main themes from the experiences of Muslim students and non-White academics. While issues of E&D are fundamental to these non-traditional groups, the discussion provided evidence that E&D has become a matter of producing the 'right image' and has marginalised righting the inequality in terms of race and ethnicity, let alone religion. The examined literature regarding Muslim students highlights the continuity of the experiences of Muslims both inside and beyond academia, for example the 're-assertion' of Muslim identity, the negative, though more subtle, way in which the hijab is perceived and the upsurge of Muslim students' political activism. The two cases of Umar Farooq and the 'Nottingham Two' demonstrate that Islamophobia has penetrated academia.

The evidence provided also shows that academia continues to resist scrutinising its own racism, which suggests that race equality, not to mention religious equality, remains to go undetected by the equality radar. This has, perhaps, led to non-white academics' reluctance to speak about racism or to challenge it, as the structures and practices seem to be unsupportive in this regard. It is not uncommon in such an environment for non-white academics' intersectional identities to impact on their positioning by White staff members and students, through both formal and informal interactions. This includes having their scholarship questioned, facing over-scrutiny and facing daily indignities of racial and gender micro-aggressions. Their identities (race, ethnic, gender), thus, are more likely to be actively influential on their networks' opportunities, quality of mentorship needed for career progression and the way they are perceived by decision makers, which are all substantial in opening (or closing) career pathways. To obtain professional treatment that is on par with White academics', non-white academics have recognised that they need to achieve more than White academics. Yet, even those in leadership positions revealed not being

fully accepted. Their academic excellence grants them entry to the club, but their racial/ethnic identity affects their 'full membership' to academia; thus, they have to constantly negotiate their racial identity to be able to 'fit in'.

Interestingly, the influence of a religious identity, and particularly the Muslim identity, remains a blind spot in the studies relating to non-traditional academics. Bhopal (2015) only referred once, on p. 103, to the possible impact of Muslim identity on alienation and exclusion. One of her participants reported feeling that his colleagues perceived his Muslim identity as a 'threat to them' and that such perceptions put him under pressure to *hide his Muslim identity*.

The negative dimensions of the experiences of non-white academics in academia that were discussed in detail asserts the view that, while there does appear to be a change, portrayed through statistics, intrinsic improvement has yet to be achieved. Indeed, "the doors [of academia] have been opened [for non-White academics] but the architecture remains the same" (Shilliam, 2015, p. 32).

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters highlighted the gap in the academic literature regarding the experiences of Muslim academics in the UK HEIs. This chapter addresses my philosophical stance, as the researcher, that influenced the choice of theoretical lenses and the research design. It then discusses the research design, data-collection method, sampling and fieldwork challenges. Subsequently, the issues related to trustworthiness are highlighted, followed by a reflective account of the potential impact of my positionality in conducting the research. Finally, the ethical considerations are discussed. Despite the chapter being divided into sections, the discussion makes apparent the interconnectedness of the sections.

4.2 Philosophical Stance: Nature of Ontology and Epistemology

The introductory chapter provided a glimpse of my background and how my ending up in the Gaza-Strip triggered my political activism. Both my background and lived experience, therefore, have informed my philosophical stance. Articulating the philosophical rationale of this study “provides insight into the assumptions on which it conceptually rests” (Berry and Kincheloe, 2004, p.8) and justifies the chosen methodology (Pring, 2000). This current study rests on the Critical Theory (CT) paradigm, as discussed by Guba and Lincoln (1994, 2011) and Kincheloe and McLaren (1994, 2000, 2011). Concurring with Horkheimer, as cited by Kincheloe and McLaren (1994), this study regards research not merely as a means for producing knowledge, but as a political act. Tracing its historical roots to the Frankfurt school of thought, Kincheloe and McLaren (1994, 2000, 2011) outlined broadly the common assumptions that exist amongst diverse versions of CT, acknowledging that CT is evolving through time. Broadly defined, CT holds that power mediates social, cultural, political and economic relations and discursive practices within institutions and societies, both domestically and globally. This power is entangled with issues of race, class, gender, religion and ideology. Such unjust structures have created, and continue to create, advantaged and disadvantaged/less advantaged groups or communities. Additionally, injustices are ‘reproduced’ through oppressed people accepting their oppression.

CT researchers aim to *critique* and *expose* how power, in its entanglement with these dimensions, operates amongst individuals, within social institutions and across nation-states and beyond, creating advantaged and disadvantaged/less-advantaged groups. Through critically exposing hegemony, CT seeks to *emancipate* the less-advantaged and ultimately to *transform* the structures across these dimensions to create a more just and equitable world (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Muslim academics are a religious minority within the larger minority of non-traditional academics in HEIs, and a religious minority in broader society. The CT paradigm is, therefore, ideal to gain an understanding of the experiences of Muslim academics, as it enables unpacking the entanglement of global, societal and institutional power dynamics with matters of faith, race, gender and ethnicity on their career experiences.

CT holds that reality is historically located, that is, the structures are rooted in ethnic, gender, racial, religious and economic inequalities that continue to shape the lives of individuals and societies (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Thus, different individuals and groups (or communities) experience different forms of inequalities. CT is, therefore, anti-essentialist, as it acknowledges that different histories of oppression and subordination, and/or different personal circumstances, bring about different experiences and, hence, different constructs of reality (Dunbar, 2008). In seeking to understand individuals' experiences, CT researchers attend to the complexity of the context (historical, social, institutional, as well as individuals' gender, faith, social class and so on) in which individuals exist, whilst simultaneously bringing into the focus the individuals' constructs of their experiences (Giroux, 1993; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Hence, it disagrees with the positivist and post-positivist ontological stances, in that there exists only one reality, but it also does not concur with a constructivist ontological relativism that claims that knowledge does not exist independently from individuals' own mental constructions (ibid). This current study considers that understanding Muslim academics' experiences "is connected to [each one's] past, present and future and is shaped by historical, social, political and economic experience" (Dunbar, 2008, p.86-87). It is, thus, expected that different aspects of the participants' characters, for example gender, diverse

conceptualisations of Muslim-ness, ethnicity or race, (previous) class and social background, the level of seniority and so on, will formulate different experiences.

In considering epistemology, CT researchers are central to the knowledge attained and their values and worldview mediate the conduct of the research from the design stage to the final presentation of the findings (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994, 2000). Thus, CT challenges the notions of neutrality, objectivity and value-free knowledge (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Some critical theorists argue that it is necessary for researchers (of colour) to ‘take sides’, for example Dunbar (2008), as claims of ‘neutrality’ and ‘objectivity’ are rooted in research practices that ‘reinforce social inequalities and racial hierarchies’ (Hylton, 2012). Additionally, such claims have largely privileged White over non-white researchers through labelling the knowledge produced by the latter as ‘particular’, whilst knowledge produced by the former is presented as ‘universal’ (Grosfoguel, 2012a; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Nevertheless, CT researchers are encouraged to clearly state their worldview and ideologies and to clarify the possible influence of their presumptions on the study, in order that “no one is confused concerning the epistemological and political baggage they bring with them to the research site” (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011, p.301). My assumptions and worldview, as the researcher, are stated in the introduction chapter and I have embarked on this research journey as a *partisan* and not as a *disinterested* inquirer. Clarifying my position necessitates reflexivity on its potential impact on the study, as discussed in a few sections.

Critical hermeneutics is central to how knowledge is acquired within a CT paradigm and how researchers attempt to understand a social phenomenon (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000, 2011). Hermeneutics holds that, not only are researchers’ descriptions of participants’ accounts or the examined social phenomenon are acts of interpretation (Denzin, 1994), but also that participants’ perceptions (about their experiences) are their own interpretations of their experiences (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000, 2011). Therefore, knowledge is value-laden (Denzin, 1994). Aiming at exposing and criticising power dynamics, critical interpretation moves beyond a de-contextualised mere description of the

participants' accounts; it, rather, locates their accounts within wider historical, political and socio-cultural contexts, through engaging in a 'back-and-forth studying of the parts in relation to the whole and the whole in relation to the parts'(Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011, p.294).

Of significance to critical hermeneutics is the influence of 'discursive practices' on how participants choose to represent their experiences; thus, it attends to how domination is performed through 'linguistic power', which 'regulates' the ways people use language to talk about things or experiences. Drawing from Foucault's discursive approach, Kincheloe and McLaren (2000, p. 284) defined discursive practices as a "set of tacit rules that regulate what can and cannot be said, who can speak with the blessing of authority and who must listen. [...]". Analysing individuals' constructs needs to attend to the way(s) the topics discussed by them are represented in the wider socio-cultural context, as it inevitably influences, through the 'cultural consensus', how individuals make meaning of these topics. CT researchers are encouraged to 'de-familiarize' the taken-for-granted and point out 'what goes without saying' (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011, p. 297).

Moreover, CT holds that final/perfect interpretation does not exist, as interpretation is always relative, that is: it is done "in relation to....", and is grounded in both the theoretical lenses applied to the inquiry, as well as the researcher's worldview. They, together, influence what is regarded as important, and, hence, highlighted, and what is not, and, hence, ignored (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Therefore, different theoretical lenses and/or different researchers (different ideological assumptions) might produce different findings about a specific social phenomenon. Consequently, CT rejects traditional forms of generalisation and deems that generalisation is possible only if the context to which the findings are to be applied is similar to that of the original study (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994). Section 4.8 below provides some examples of how the CT paradigm guided the analysis in this current study. Having set out my philosophical stance, as the researcher, I now move on to discussing the theoretical framework of this study and then the research design that fits into these paradigmatic assumptions.

4.3 Theoretical Framework

This study benefits from Kincheloe's (2001, 2005) notion of qualitative research as bricolage. Qualitative research as bricolage, Kincheloe argued, is underpinned by the assumption that it is difficult to unravel the complexity of social phenomena from one particular perspective, due to the interplay of a variety of factors in constituting any phenomenon. A researcher as a bricoleur, thus moves beyond 'methodological correctness', which restricts what constitutes 'scientific research' to through the lenses of traditional reductionist approaches.

In light of this, researchers, as bricoleurs, view that part of the complexity of the phenomenon occurs due to the 'intersecting' of the multiple contexts in which it is located. Whilst Kincheloe (2005, p. 335) explained five dimensions of bricolage, this study draws from *theoretical bricolage*, in that it has selected from the available variety of social theory to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon under examination. Including more than one theoretical angle provides a 'synergy' of multidimensional perspectives of the phenomenon and unpacks its complexity (Kincheloe, 2001). This current study has drawn from a range of social theory positions that have deconstructed the issues of minorities and marginalised individuals, viewed the inequalities and injustices caused by global hierarchies of dominations and analysed issues of structural (institutional) power and their intertwining with individuals' agency.

Each selected theory contributes to analysing aspects that may not otherwise be appropriately approached through another theory. These theories are the Critical Race Theory (CRT), 'Post'-colonial and De-colonial scholarship, Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) concepts of 'habitus' and 'capital' and Bourdieu and Wacquant's (1992) notion of 'symbolic violence' and, finally, 'status recognition' (Fraser, 2000). This study acknowledges, though, that Bourdieu's work mainly addressed class issues and gender issues (Bourdieu and Wacquant's notion of 'symbolic violence'). Additionally, whilst CRT was aimed originally at naming and recognising the forms of racism affecting Black people in America and, originating in Legal Studies, it has been expanded to include other marginalised groups, for example Latinos/as, and adjusted to other geographical contexts and disciplines. Other theories discuss global injustices beyond the nation-state, for example Fraser's thesis on injustices and de-colonial scholarship. They share a political

stance and generally contribute to agendas of transformation, mobilisation and the redressing of inequalities. Concurring with Ladson-Billings (1998, p.19), this current study aims at the “*deconstruction* of oppressive structures and discourses, *reconstruction* of human agency and *construction* of equitable and socially just relations of power” (emphasis added). Each theory’s main tenets are briefly discussed.

4.3.1 CRT

Although originated in the USA, CRT has recently gained currency in the UK context, particularly in educational research on policy and practice (see Gillborn (2007, 2008), Housee (2008), and Hylton (2003, 2008)). A remark on the difference between contours of racism in the UK and in the USA is warranted. While the US has a long history of slavery, the legacy of the British colonialism and imperialism renders a continuity of subordination of ‘post-colonial’ subjects, which is grounded in what Quijano termed ‘coloniality of power’ (see section 3.5.1). Therefore, issues of institutional and everyday racism are as pertinent and the key tenets of CRT apply to the UK.

CRT is premised on racism being ‘normal, not aberrant’ and embedded in societal structures (Delgado, 1995). CRT challenges the dominant White ideology. It argues that ‘Whiteness’ has always been, and continues to be, the principal impetus for racism (Leonardo, 2002) and that social structures and institutional settings, policies and practices are constructed to privilege Whites and preserve White racial domination (Gillborn, 2007; Leonardo, 2009). CRT emphasises the centrality of voice through using (counter) narratives and story-telling, because the stories of marginalised individuals provide insights into existing inequalities (Parker and Lynn, 2002) and function as counter-narratives to the normative hegemonic discourse that has largely silenced their views (Ladson-Billings, 1998). ‘Interest convergence’, defined as the advancement of African Americans’ civil rights, exists to the extent that their interests coincide with the interests of White elites. Put differently, the progression of policy vis-a-vis Black people occurs only when the changes lead to perceived benefits for White elites (Bell, 1980), which is another CRT principle. It facilitates examining the possible reasons behind the elevation of, or the positive experiences reported by members of minority groups, here Muslim academics, and particularly those in senior posts. Finally, the ‘intersectionality’ (Crenshaw, 1989) of

several grounds of discrimination, for example gender, or class, is crucial to unpack the experiences of Muslim academics, due to the diversity within this group.

Drawing from the argument that twenty-first century racism is anti-Muslim racism (Allen, 2005; Dunn, Klocker and Salabay, 2007), this current study argues to expand the notion of race to include religion, particularly Islam, in addition to the biological race, as race is a shifting 'social construct' (Parker and Lynn, 2002; Hylton, 2012). CRT, as the principal theoretical lens, has been employed to discuss the findings under the overarching theme of Whiteness (see section 6.1).

4.3.2 'Post-colonial' Theories and De-colonial Scholarship

This study has also drawn from 'post-colonial' theorisations on issues of colonial subjects' identities, for example Said's (1978) notion of the 'Other' and Hall's explanation of how colonised subjects *internalise* their *otherness*. Hall (1994) argued that this internalisation results from constant *othering* by means of powerful representations supported by dominant Eurocentric accounts of what constitutes knowledge (1994). Equally important are the concepts of 'veil' and 'double conscious-ness' (Du Bois, 1999). Du Bois used the 'veil' as a metaphor for the oppression, exclusion and alienation that operates at the personal level and institutional (social) level, via interaction (Winant, 2004). Therefore, Black people could understand life from within the veil and outside of it. Hence, the veil 'divides the soul' and renders the 'double conscious-ness'. It gives insights into how Muslim academics recognise how others (probably non-Muslims) perceive them, because of their 'two-ness'. Whilst, for Du Bois, the 'two-ness' is a combination of being a Black and an American, the 'two-ness' of Muslims is rendered by their 'Muslim-ness', however participants choose to define this, and being academics. These concepts are useful in analysing the ways in which the global problematising and securitisation of Muslims and Islam impact on how the participants may conceptualise their identity(ies) and, thus, negotiate their 'Muslim-ness' in academia. This current study also examines whether, impacted by the global climate, some of the participants have internalised their Otherness and have begun to think in Islamophobic terms, for example falling into the 'good versus bad' Muslim thesis (Mamdani, 2004) or blaming the victim. These notions have been used in analysing how the participants describe and perceive their identities, and how they are perceived and positioned by others in academia, particularly throughout the next chapter.

I place ‘post’ in quotes because I find the term problematic. The word ‘post’ suggests that the colonialism has ended and that we are currently dealing with its aftermath. This current study accords with de-colonial scholars’, for example Grosfoguel (2016), view that “the world is still very much a colonial world [...] and that the independence of ‘post-colonial’ nation states is not complete, even when the military administration of the colonisers has been dismantled”. De-colonial scholarship emphasises that coloniality, to differentiate it from 18th century colonialism, in the current global world-system is exercised through political control, through imposing: ‘democratisation’; cultural control, through imposing ‘modernisation’; and economic control, through a pre-defined global labour system (e.g. Grosfoguel, 2016; Bazian, 2014). De-coloniality holds that these new guises replaced, to an extent, the outdated practice of military colonisation. Modern coloniality has the same aim as both the 18th century and the 15th century colonisation (Grosfoguel, 2013). This aim is for a few countries to maintain power and domination within a ‘modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric world system’ (Grosfoguel, 2008, 2012a).

This study also draws from the concept of ‘epistemic racism’. Epistemic Racism is a ‘hierarchy of colonial domination’, whereby the knowledge produced by Western individuals, principally White males, is considered ‘universal’, ‘superior’ and ‘timeless’, and has been utilised to ‘inferiorize’ and ‘subalternize’ the epistemologies of the rest of the world (Grosfoguel, 2012a; Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou, 2014). This notion is approximate to how CR theorists discuss the canonisation of White’s knowledge and the relegation of non-whites’ knowledge. For instance, Ladson-Billings (1998) discussed the notion of ‘conceptual whiteness’ and how it is positioned as *the* point of reference. Swartz’s (1992) notion of ‘master scripting’ explained how Black American stories that challenge the dominant ideology are ‘erased and reshaped’ before allowing them to become a part of the master script. While ‘epistemic racism’ shares with CRT the concept of Whiteness as an underpinning ideology of inferiorising non-white points of reference, the former is viewed as being more relevant here, for two reasons. Firstly, it argues that the Western domination over knowledge has always been the very rationale of coloniality. Secondly, it links racism vis-a-vis non-white epistemologies and ontologies to its historical roots, starting from the 15th century colonisation, which exercised an ‘epistemicide’ (De

Sousa Santos, as cited by Grosfoguel, 2013). ‘Epistemicide’ used logic of ‘extermination’ of the ontologies and epistemologies of the colonised nations. Therefore, ‘epistemic racism’ is not a recent phenomenon, which accords with my working definition of Islamophobia (see section 2.5.4).

The notion of ‘epistemic racism’ has been utilised in section 6.1.9 to analyse the views of the participants regarding the knowledge they produce and the knowledge generally produced with regard to Muslims/Islam in the academia.

4.3.3 Bourdieu’s Habitus, Capital and Symbolic Violence

Germane to understanding the experiences of Muslim academics are Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘habitus’ and the various forms of ‘capital’, for example ‘social’, in HEIs (1986), as well as ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). As different forms of capital, particularly social capital through networking, are crucial to moving up the career ladder (Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007), this study has investigated the nature and sources of ‘capital’ Muslim academics, as a minority group, rely on, and the extent to which they (successfully) navigate these structures. Moreover, habitus helps us to understand how Muslim academics, as staff members, develop ways of thinking and behaviours that *fit within* the modus operandi of their particular institution, in other words, the impact of habitus in regulating the ways Muslim academics think and speak about their experiences or the conditions of Muslims in the wider society in conformity with the pervasive institutional/societal normativity. ‘Habitus’ and ‘symbolic violence’ have been principally employed when discussing silence (see section 6.2) and ‘capital’ has been utilised across several sections (see sections 6.1.5 and 6.1.6).

4.3.4 Fraser’s Model of Status Recognition

Fraser’s ‘status recognition’ model forms the basis of gaining an understanding of, and analysing, the participants’ conceptualisations of how their peers and institutions recognise (or misrecognise) their academic credentials and/or their membership of the academy. For Fraser, recognition moves beyond the free-floating discourse of the recognition subsumed under WP policies that assume that the presence of non-white staff in HEIs signals inclusive practices and, thus, fulfils recognition (Puwar, 2004). Recognition (or

misrecognition) is judged against the outcomes. If the cultural, racial or religious affiliation ‘difference’ of some groups/individuals in an institution triggers excluding them, or rendering them invisible, then they are misrecognised, which could affect their opportunities and career aspirations. Fraser’s model warrants considering the extent to which normative cultures and (in)formal institutional practices impede proper recognition. This notion has been adopted to analyse the subtle (mis)recognition that was present in the accounts, with regard to the reported forms of micro-aggressions (see sections 5.8 and 5.10 in particular).

The next section begins with the research questions and then delineates the research design, followed by a discussion of the selected method.

4.4 Research Design: Qualitative Inquiry

This current study aims to address the following research questions

- 1- How do Muslim academics conceptualise their identity (identities)?**
- 2- How do Muslim academics perceive their academic career experiences?**

Drawing on Guba and Lincoln’s (1994) tenet that the research design should be grounded in the philosophical assumptions that underpin a study, qualitative research seems to be consistent with the CT assumptions on knowledge and epistemology and its borrowing from critical hermeneutics. Moreover, with CRT as the principal theoretical lens, it is important to select a method within the qualitative design that affords the politics of CRT (Hylton, 2012) and interrogates power hierarchies and Whiteness (Dunbar, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

A qualitative design was chosen because it acknowledges that the researcher’s worldview and life history contribute to the knowledge produced by the study. Additionally, a qualitative design, within the interpretive tradition, affords a critical hermeneutics approach to analysis, unlike quantitative design that reduces the complexity of social phenomena through simplistic description grounded in linear causal relationships (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). For example, the ways Muslim academics conceptualise their identities that entangle

with race, ethnicity, gender, religion and class will influence the way they perceive their role as academics, as individuals' personal identity is not separate to his/her professional identity. Their own judgments about their academic role and the ways they perceive themselves tie into their overall view of their experiences. These views are situated in each participant's life history and societal and institutional settings.

However, as qualitative research is not restricted to one single theoretical paradigm, nor does it endorse one single method or way of presenting findings, there is no agreement on a definition of qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). Thus, this study draws on Denzin and Lincoln's (2008, p.14) generic definition of qualitative research, which captures its adaptability to paradigms that challenge positivism and post-positivism: "it is many things to many people. Its essence is twofold: a commitment to some version of naturalistic, interpretive approach to its subject matter, and ongoing critique of the politics and methods of post-positivism".

4.5 Data-collection Method: Interviews

As previously discussed, qualitative research is not limited to a distinct set of data-collection methods and does not privilege one method over another (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). For this current study, I selected a method that affords the politics of this study, being to challenge inequalities and highlight the voices of the participants. I will firstly discuss the principal data-collection method, followed by a brief discussion on why other possible methods were not utilised.

In this study, qualitative in-depth interviews were employed to generate its data, as interviews aim at understanding the world from the participants' standpoint (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). In-depth interviews facilitate the gathering of rich and detailed data about how individuals make sense of their experiences. As it follows the "form of conversation that has a structure and a purpose" (ibid, p, 6), an interview enables meaningful conversation to develop, as it can be tailored specifically to examine different individuals' experiences through probing and eliciting (Kvale, 2008). It is literally an 'interview' that intertwines the views of the interviewer and the interviewee (Brinkmann and Kvale, p.4).

The study used face-to-face in-depth interviewing within a semi-structured framework, with a topic guideline. While the guideline shaped the interview process, through covering certain topics that would help to answer the research questions, its open-ended structure allowed the participants' stories to flow throughout the conversation. Additionally, open-ended questions allowed the participants to present what they deemed crucial to their experiences, which opened a window to their unique social, cultural and economic background through which their experiences were filtered. This ultimately facilitated understanding the context in which each particular experience occurred. Nevertheless, the flexibility of 'sequencing and wording' the topic-guide has been criticised, as it is argued to cause major differences in the responses that could diminish comparisons (e.g. Patton, 1980). This study disagrees with this, as it recognises that the participants' experiences are 'situational' and 'unique'. A face-to-face style was selected because it provides insights into body language, for example verbal and non-verbal cues, and helps CT researchers capture the emotions and feelings of the participants that would be less apparent in a telephone interview. Some of the interviews were, however, conducted through Skype, due to some of the participants' busy schedules.

Interviews do have some disadvantages though. A topic-guideline framework can unintentionally neglect some important aspects that the participants consider to be relevant to their experiences (Patton, 1980), as it authorises the researcher to interrupt the interviewees and to steer the conversation, in order to ensure the listed topics are discussed. Realistically, this was rarely the case during my interviews, for two reasons. Firstly, I was aware that the participants may have different concerns or different aspects they wanted to accentuate during the interaction. For instance, some of the participants spoke about their time in school and their experiences in the broader society, as well as in previous jobs before deciding to join academia, and how the complexity of their (negative) experiences had influenced their personal politics and triggered their political activism. Others spoke about their engagement in voluntary work with third sector organisations. Although I did not raise these topics, I realised that the participants considered these aspects to be important to who they are and that they wanted to share this with me, which I appreciated. Their discussion of these aspects of their lives provided insights into how some of them defined their

academic identity, which challenged the mainstream discussion regarding academic identities, as discussed in sections 3.3 and 4.11.1.

Secondly, in some cases, when some digression took place and I tried to redirect the conversation, I was rarely successful and the participants would override my attempts. Fontana and Frey (2011) have discussed ‘gendered interviewing’, with regard to how male interviewers’ behaviour when interviewing females tends to curtail, or ignore, the participants’ concerns, and I felt that this aspect was present in some of my interviews, though inversely. I felt that being a female influenced the interview setting and its power dynamics, particularly with some (senior) male participants, “because the interview takes place within a cultural boundaries of a paternalistic social system in which masculine identities are differentiated from feminine ones”(*ibid*, p. 170). The fact that the interviewer was a student and the interviewees were academics, let alone some of the participants holding senior positions, did not grant me the ‘expert’ status that is commonly granted to researchers during their fieldwork, particularly those whose area of expertise is related to Muslims’/minorities’ issues.

For example, with regard to the topic of participants’ identity, which was investigated in relation to the first research question, I was interested in understanding how the different participants would describe their Muslim identity. One participant’s initial response to this question described the findings from the empirical research he had conducted on this topic, in remarking on the diverse identification with Islam that Muslims in Britain have. Furthermore, as this participant is one of the leading figures in this area, I already had some knowledge about his research in particular, and generally on the different approaches to Muslim identity, as identified in the literature. Although I endeavoured to redirect the conversation and to focus on how he personally felt about his Muslim identity, he remarked “this is quite a deep existential question Ibtihal, it is not something that can be answered in an interview”. I felt that I did not have control over the interview direction and, more particularly, I felt less powerful during the interview. I was also taken aback by how he authoritatively challenged the possibility of discussing this ‘existential topic’ in an interview when he, himself, had done this with others. He then began to speak about Muslims’ engagement in charitable organisations on the

societal level. Those topics, although related to Muslims in the broader society, were not relevant to my research topic. I realised later that some of the participants' responses to some of the raised topics were not very accommodating (see sections 4.9.2, 4.12.2 and 5.5 for examples of how some of the participants controlled the interview somewhat).

Finally, face-to-face interviews are criticised for being open to interviewees' 'self-deception', 'social desirability' and/or dishonesty (Punch, 2009). I would not conceive that my participants, who voluntarily gave their time, were dishonest, but I am aware that their participation may not be fully driven by a commitment to the topic of the study, and that they might have accentuated areas and avoided, or limited, the discussion of sensitive areas. However, as a CT researcher, I acknowledge that the potential tendency of individuals to close down the discussion of some topics may be triggered by the impact of the 'oppressive' aspect of linguistic power, particularly how 'discursive practices' regulate individuals' discourse and shape their consciousness (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). Indeed Hall (1997b), drawing on Foucault, elaborated on "how 'discourse', ways of talking about a particular topic or representing knowledge, 'rules in' certain ways of talking about a topic and 'rules out' and restricts others" (p.44).

The interview's style drew from Charmaz's (2006) *Constructivist Grounded Theory* (CGT). CGT advocates that both the data and the resulting theory are *co-constructed* through the interaction between the researcher and the participant. A CGT interview style occurs through a cyclic process of collecting and analysing data, and conducting more than one interview with each participant. It facilitates "adding new pieces to the research puzzle" (ibid, p.14), helps avoid the 'snapshot' effect of the one interview approach (Murray et al, 2009) and allows the building of rapport and trust with the participants. It sits well with CT, as it enables participants' concerns, which might not have occurred to the researcher, to be central to the continuation of the data-gathering and analysis. It is often difficult to reflect critically and analytically on the data through the interview setting and to press for elaboration. Thus, the first interviews were initially analysed before continuing with the remainder. The insights and hunches of the researcher, as well as the participants, were injected into the topic guide and guided the continuation of the data collection process through discussing them with other participants and/or in the subsequent interviews. For

example, some of the themes, such as epistemic racism, that had not occurred to me were raised by some of the participants, and then elicited from others. One interview would not have afforded the provision of such detailed and rich insights.

The interview questions were piloted twice, to enable a refinement of the topics and the interview format. ‘How’ and ‘what’ questions were posed before ‘why’ questions to provoke the participants’ critical reflection. Additionally, and due to my awareness of the loose nature of the open-ended questions, I tried my best to avoid asking leading questions, even during the probing, to reduce the impact of my predispositions, particularly pertaining to issues of discrimination. The interviews were audio-recorded, with the participants’ permission, fully transcribed and repeatedly read, in order to familiarise myself with the content of the conversation before the initial coding. My own insights and hunches, as well as issues raised by the participants, guided the continuation of the data collection process.

Two interviews were conducted with each participant. Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The interviews’ time span was from January 2015 until January 2016. The first interviews allowed for building trust with the participants through acquiring, in a less formal manner, a general view of their background and their routes into academia, but also covered as much as possible of the topic-guide. The second interviews took place four to five months after the first interviews to allow for analysis. They offered an opportunity to fill gaps, seek views on aspects that arose from other participants and to discuss the emerging themes from the early analysis for fine-tuning. In retrospect, this style helped some interviewees to reflect upon the possible influence of their Muslim-ness on their experiences, as some remarked that they never reflected on the possible influence of their Muslim-ness on their daily routine/practices in academia. It also encouraged some of the participants to overcome ‘ethnocentrism and dysconsciousness’¹⁵ (King, 1991), a tendency to comply with hegemonic claims of achieved equality. For example, a participant in his second interview remarked that the first interview had triggered a deep consideration of his

¹⁵ King (1991, p. 135) defines dysconsciousness as “an uncritical habit of mind (including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given

(negative) experiences in his department, and that he began applying to other institutions because he did not want to remain in that department.

4.6 Other Possible Data-collection Methods

Although focus-groups produce a large amount of information in a relatively short time, they were not chosen, as they generally seek to achieve ‘a collective’, instead of individual, view (Morgan, 1988), which diverged from the study’s anti-homogenising view that participants’ experiences might differ on grounds of different factors. Moreover, group dynamics and the participants’ personal traits may inhibit equal participation (Smithson, 2000) and, thus, neglect the voices of some of the participants. The sensitivity of the topics discussed suggested strongly that a plenary discussion would not grasp the differences across personal accounts. It might also obstruct disclosure of confidential information in front of other participants, lest they should be identified. Finally, arranging a time and a venue that would fit in with several academics’ busy schedules and consider their geographical location was impossible, as it would minimally require paying for their travel costs.

4.7 Sampling

With a ‘heterogeneous’ purposive sampling approach (Ritchie et al, 2013), the study aimed at recruiting any academic who *voluntary* and *consciously* self-identified as a Muslim. As explained in section 2.4.5, this study adopts an anti-essentialist approach to define ‘Muslim-ness’. Muslim-ness here is not limited to theological prescription. It is, rather, a ‘lived experience’, be it an identification with Islam as a mere background that does not influence daily practices, a cultural traditional, a historical tradition, a moral framework, a political identification or a combination of some/all these dimensions. This criterion was thought to be sufficient to validate any claims made about the sample, that is to avoid including academics who might be of Muslim background, as their ethnicity, phenotype or name might indicate, but consciously *do not* identify as Muslims. Nevertheless, the study acknowledges that the situation of this group might be challenging, as others (for example both Muslims and non-Muslims) might still identify them as such.

Due to the sensitivity of the research topic, which grapples with issues of inequality that might impact one's career prospects (Lee, 1993), a form of 'consequential ethics'¹⁶ guided the recruitment; thus, formal recruitment was avoided. The information sheet was widely disseminated to informal organisations and research networks that might work as gatekeepers for Muslim academics. Subsequently, snowballing was utilised, due to the difficulties faced in recruitment (Cohen et al, 2011; Heckathorn, 2002). A detailed account of the ethics followed through the sampling stage, and the drawbacks of snowballing regarding this study, is presented in section 4.12.2 below.

To capture the 'heterogeneity of the population' (Ritchie, Lewis and Elam, 2003) and allow analysis of the possible intersectionality of different dimensions, the study sought a diverse sample to map aspects of race (ethnicity), gender, discipline, seniority, nationality (UK nationals and non-UK nationals) and level of experience. Sampling targeted males and females, both who wear the hijab and who do not, to see the influence of a visible Muslim identity on the experience. It targeted both 'objective' Muslims, those who were born into a Muslim household, for example South Asian, Middle-Eastern and Black (African- or African Caribbean), and 'subjective' Muslims, for example (white) converts, to examine the influence of different conceptualisations of their Muslim-ness, as well as the influence of being 'raced' or 'de-raced', that is Whiteness, on their experiences. Thus, a diverse sample of 26 participants were recruited across UK universities in Scotland, England and Wales, comprising of mixed gender, UK nationals and non-UK nationals, of various ethnicities (races), of various levels of experiences and senior staff members and ordinary lecturers and researchers across different disciplines of Sciences and Humanities (see Appendix 5 for the general profile of the participants).

However, the voices of two subgroups were missing in this study, as the actual sample failed to recruit female academics who do not wear the hijab and Black (African) academics. Only one white convert participated. This caveat needs to be borne in mind when, and if, readers want to 'transfer' the results to other Muslims who belong to these subgroups. The recruitment challenges are discussed shortly. Moreover, five participants

¹⁶ Consequential ethics refers to Looking at the possible consequences of an action before making any decision (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012).

pulled out of the second interviews, either through not responding to my emails or phone calls or due to busy schedules.

4.8 Data Analysis

A critical hermeneutics approach to analysis is ‘situational’. It moves back and forth, from the part to the whole, aiming at understanding individuals’ accounts by locating them into the multiple contexts in which they exist (Ladson-Billings, 1998). A fitting analysis technique for CT research would be one that ultimately facilitates its ‘politics’ (Hylton, 2012). These include, as discussed earlier, exposing structural injustices, centring and legitimising the ‘experiential knowledge’ of marginalised people (Delgado, 1989) to challenge the normalised ‘colour-blindness’, ‘post-racial’ and ‘merit-based’ discourse. There are various techniques utilised to fulfil these politics, such as fictional chronicles (for example Gillborn, 2008) and (counter) story-telling (for example Delgado Bernal and Villalpando, 2002; Housee, 2008; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002). To attest the robustness of the analysis, CT researchers need to make explicit decisions about their analysis procedure and the influence of their assumptions on the data interpretation and final presentation (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). These two points are discussed below.

This study presents the participants’ accounts through quotations collated under themes, in other words thematically presented. This presentation was selected over the story-telling approach that is common in CRT, because the sample size was too large to use story-telling. The thematic presentation sits well with the study’s aims in presenting diverse constructs under each theme to pinpoint the intersectionality and heterogeneity of the individuals’ experiences. Additionally, since the study population is a minority within a minority, using the story-telling technique might increase the likelihood of the participants being identified by some audience or another. Hence, a presentation of quotations that illustrate analytical themes was thought to preserve the participants’ confidentiality better than other techniques would. Thus, any possible identifying cues were concealed, unless otherwise relevant to the point discussed.

In light of this, the study benefits from Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis (TA) framework, being “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting (patterns) themes within data” (p.79). Whilst qualitative analysis rests generally on ‘thematising’ (Boyatzis,

1998; Ryan and Bernard, 2000), Braun and Clarke argued that the TA framework is a self-contained flexible analysis method “independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches” (p.78). It also suits analysing under-researched topics, such as in this study, as it allows for using theoretical and/or data-driven codes (ibid). This study utilises data-driven, inductive, as well as theory-driven, deductive, codes, as explained in the following paragraphs.

Whilst Braun and Clarke argued that researchers using their framework need to choose between two levels of analysis, descriptive themes or interpretive themes, this study departs from this either-or approach. This is because critical hermeneutics holds that “not only is all research merely an act of interpretation, but [participant’s] perception itself is an act of interpretation” (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011, p.293), thus even description entails interpretation on the part of both the researcher and the participants. Moreover, because CT holds that the participants’ different experiences need to be ‘grounded’ within the larger forces that shape them (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994; Kivel, Johnson and Scraton, 2009) and that a rigorous CT analysis is one that contextually situates the part, a description of the ‘part’ should be interpreted within the ‘whole’.

This study, therefore, is not interested in merely presenting the participants’ views without a critical interpretation of these views. The participants’ views and perspectives will be presented and described, but will also be grounded in a contextual interpretation of the particular, for example trying to understand the different factors that shape this experience, including the possible impact of ‘discursive practices’ on the individuals’ views. For instance, see sections 6.1.1, 6.1.2 and 6.1.5, in which both the negative and positive experiences with regard to the themes of recruitment and career progression were discussed, with the support of a contextual analysis of the possible reasons behind the disparity in the accounts. Additionally, section 6.2, which discusses the theme of silence, exemplifies how ‘discursive practices’ within academia, and in the wider society with respect to Muslims, have shaped the participants’ consciousness and regulated their discourse.

Simultaneously, the interpretation is grounded in my own theoretical lenses and worldview and benefits from moments of ruptures and forms of silences. Drawing on Richardson’s (1997, p.92) use of crystal as a metaphor for analysis, “the text (crystal) reflects multiple

lights (multiple layers of meaning)”, the interpretation was performed through an enquiry tone that presented multiple layers of possible interpretations, without claiming finite analysis (see section 5.5 for an example of this).

This study utilised Braun and Clarke’s five-stage guidelines to take a head critical hermeneutic analysis. These steps, namely familiarising myself with the data, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and producing the report (p.78), were carried out in a ‘non-linear’, ‘cyclic’ manner.

Each interview was transcribed verbatim immediately after it ended. This provided me with a chance to familiarise myself with the data, but also annotate what I felt might be important to the analysis that transcripts alone would not capture. This included my feelings and any noticeable non-verbal cues, such as avoiding eye contact when discussing certain topics and a rise in the voice pitch, as they might indicate discomfort or anxiety. Immediate transcribing provided a quick evaluation and reflection on my interviewing skills, thus helping me to identify possible follow-up questions that I had missed, which formed ‘hands-on’ training on how and when to elicit an explanation. As the interviews went on, conducting immediate transcription provided opportunities for initial analysis and early comparisons between the participants’ constructs.

Each transcript was read frequently for initial manual coding. The coding drew from the theoretical lenses of the study and the participants’ own words. For example, during the conversations, some of the participants would hypothetically contrast their experiences with White academics’ without me asking about it, for example see the quotes of Sami in 6.1.1, and Adam and Aqeel in 6.1.2,. Such examples were coded with ‘whiteness’. Due to the large amount of data, for example an average of 26 pages per transcript, the coding units were sentences, but codes were also allocated to longer passages to determine the general message communicated, or the general tone, which helped later in comparing/contrasting the transcripts. For example, the code-switching of Hussain, the White convert, with regard to revealing/concealing his Muslim identity inside academia, as discussed in section 5.6.1, was captured through examining the whole interview, and the long presented quotation included several shorter remarks. Moreover, alternative readings were applied to each transcript, as the initial coding would ultimately reveal my ‘predispositions’ (Sipe and Ghiso, 2004, p.483). Discussing the early findings with other academics was beneficial, as

they suggested different interpretations that widened my horizons. For example, a revision of the initial coding provided a different approach to the analysis, which highlighted aspects other than discrimination, for example perseverance, and strategies of coping with challenges (see section 6.1.7) and how the accounts showed the participants' success in utilising the possible tokenising of minority academics in academia to push the equality agenda and to advance their careers.

An inductive approach guided the analysis, along with a deductive one, which rested on the theoretical lenses and the researcher's worldview and values. Indeed, themes do not simply 'reside' in the data, "if themes 'reside' anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them" (Ely, 1997, p.205-206). Taking Chapter Five as an example, several themes were inductive. These include: the possible impact of the wider context (section 5.6), the 'faith capital' (section 5.7), Islamophobic micro-aggression (section 5.8) and how their academic identity intertwines with aspects of political and community activism (sections 5.11 and 5.11.1). Deductive themes included the hijab: a misfit in academia? (section, 5.10) and their views on the REF (section 5.12). The first was influenced by my own personal experience and the second was discussed previously in the literature. Appendix 6 shows two examples of data-driven and theory driven themes, respectively.

While, initially, I aimed to use Nvivo and, thus, familiarised myself with *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*, Bazeley (2007), and explored it with one transcript, it was found to be less appropriate, hence it was not used for several reasons. Firstly, it mainly helps organising (not analysing) data, although it is commonly perceived as an analysis tool; it is a method for 'data management not analysis' (King, 2004). A strong rationale for its utility, as cited in the literature, is increasing validity and the reliability of analysis (e.g. Welsh, 2002); nevertheless, I could not find any empirical study discussing how its validity and reliability were boosted, except perhaps in terms of providing for a 'quick and accurate' search of the data. Secondly, perhaps one of its explicit limitations is that it does not cater for the various ways in which people express the same ideas, for example it does not identify synonyms during a search (Welsh, 2002). Finally, Nvivo is less suitable for an interpretive paradigm (Saillard, 2011). It is an asset in quantifying data, which is more relevant to content

analysis (Spencer, Ritchie and O'Connor, 2003; Welsh, 2002), as in content analysis the more the code recurs across the whole set of data, the more significant it is considered to be. However, the significance of the themes in this study was decided according to their relevance to answering the research questions.

Mind-maps were used afterwards to cluster the codes under potential themes and then more refinement took place to generate the overarching themes, which revealed a more 'abstract' form (Saldaña, 2009). The themes were reviewed for cohesion and sent along with the transcripts to each participant to ascertain that the initial analysis had captured the significant aspects of their accounts. Whilst described neatly, the reality of the coding, code-refinement, drawing of mind-maps, clustering of the codes under tentative themes and then re-clustering, is far more complex than sentences can describe. Saldaña pointed out that the coding process is "an exploratory problem-solving technique without specific formula to follow", which is attained through several cycles (p. 8) (see Appendix 7 for an example of the mind-maps).

4.9 Fieldwork: Challenges and Realities

This section discusses the difficulties encountered during recruiting the participants, and then the realities of conducting the interviews.

4.9.1 Challenges during Recruitment: Silences and Un-kept Promises

As previously mentioned, an informal recruitment of participants was followed to minimise any potential discomfort that formal recruitment might create. Although the information sheet was widely disseminated to informal organisations and research networks, of which Muslim academics might be members, only five academics initially accepted the invitation to participate, most of whom then decided not to participate. Seeking heterogeneity within the sample, (white) converts, females who do not wear the hijab and Black Muslim academics were targeted. I was introduced to six (white) converts, two females, one of whom wears the hijab, and four males, through snowballing and conference networking. Upon initial consent, the information package was sent to the academic who wears the hijab via her personal email address. However, after a few exchanges, she decided not to participate, saying 'Sorry, no-time!' The other, an eminent academic less likely to be

suspected of being a convert Muslim, sat silently beside me after attending a presentation I delivered at a conference. Later, a male participant informed me about her and thankfully facilitated initial contact with her to avoid the possible intrusion an abrupt email may have caused her. Her response was that, while she *converted over a decade ago, her conversion is not publicised; hence, she did not want to participate*. The male converts, three of whom had adopted an Arab-sounding initial, which reveals their conversion, did not respond to any emails, although they had initially accepted the invitation to participate.

Whilst not responding may have been because they were simply busy, the fact that this was a pattern, rather than an individual behaviour, allows us to make an analogy between their reservations and the general experiences of White Briton who convert to Islam in the societal context. For example, Moosavi's (2015a) empirical research with converts points out how their White privilege is very likely to be 'confiscated' by other (non-Muslim) Whites, which is largely influenced by the presumed incompatibility between Islam and White people. Simultaneously, they maintain their privileges in the Muslim community, which principally will 'parade' them as often as possible (Moosavi, 2015b). This complexity might lead to negotiations of when, where and amongst whom their conversion is revealed. Similarly, Suleiman's (2013) report, 'Narrative of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Female perspectives', describes their experiences as 'multi-faceted', comprising of a lot of complexity and, at times, it 'appears contradictory' (p.8). Suleiman found that "conversion to Islam by White women takes great courage to effect and to display in the public sphere" [...] because they are made to "feel 'non-British' [...] and may risk losing their career, especially if their work puts them in the public eye" (p. 4). This could also apply to academia, as a leading public institution, but also due to its overtly secular nature. Empirical research has shown that religious affiliation within academia might be explicitly 'ridiculed' by some academics (Weller, Hooley, and Moore, 2011). Perhaps, then, it is 'safer' for white academic converts to bracket their 'Muslim-ness' in the larger academic milieu to avoid compromising their privileges, amongst other possible repercussions. The complexity around Whiteness and 'Muslim-ness' vis-a-vis White academic converts to Islam is discussed in Chapter Five, section 5.6.1, remarking on how White converts, unlike non-white Muslim academics, could benefit easily from their race/ ethnicity, which facilitates bracketing their Islam and thus *pass as pure Whites and eliminate the risk of facing 're-racialisation'*.

The snowballing also identified a male Black African Muslim academic, who also revealed great concern regarding confidentiality and anonymity through exchanged emails.

Although I assured him that all identifying cues would be removed from the final report, he stopped responding to my emails.

The study strived to recruit females who do not wear the hijab and most of them were identified during conferences, whereby I handed them the information package after discussing the research topic with them and receiving their initial consent. Again, after some 'to-ing and fro-ing' via emails, most of them stopped responding to my emails. For instance, some gave a provisional first interview in the four months after the first correspondence, but then, when reminded prior to the interview date, they generally did not respond. One even responded saying that she has not received the information sheet and could not meet or talk to me and that she was not interested in participating. Interestingly, a potential participant was contacted through snowballing, whereby her male colleague suggested mentioning his name in the correspondence to encourage her participation. She responded that *she was not a practising Muslim*. I wrote back explaining that being a practising Muslim is not part of the sampling criteria. She responded *I do not consider myself a Muslim*. It is unclear whether my dress-style influenced her decision, as she might have asked her colleague about me prior to deciding. Nevertheless, the disparity between how she perceives herself and how her colleague perceives her is illuminating, as it points out the challenge academics of Muslim background who do not identify as Muslims might face in academia and the complexity of moving in and out of 'Muslim-ness'. It also alludes to the entanglement between ethnicity and religion, as both of them, the male participant and his female colleague are of South Asian heritage, which perhaps underpinned his assumption that she is a Muslim, when she does not identify as such.

However, a female Muslim academic who does not wear the hijab was interviewed, but perhaps re-thought her decision during the interview, as she then asked to take the whole interview off the record. She remarked, after finishing the interview, that, although she wanted to help, she had genuine concerns about confidentiality. Her concerns were respected and her account was not included in the final report. For example, during the interview, I frequently repeated to her that, if she felt that she had no wish to answer any

question, we would move on. When the topic of the hijab was raised, she was somewhat anxious, but responded candidly that she was used to wearing the hijab, but she took it off, and that she felt that taking off the hijab was a ‘strategic choice’, as it facilitated her academic career.

The topic of this research was the subject of an informal chat with a lady during a train journey to an interview. She mentioned that she was a Muslim professor and spoke about some instances of discrimination. She handed her business card to me before getting off the train and promised to participate. Accordingly, she was formally invited to participate. Emails of ‘to-ing and fro-ing’ took place; eventually she responded *I am not too bothered to participate*, but she said she liked me as a person and wanted to keep in touch with me.

These were some glimpses of promises that were broken, either consciously or unconsciously. It might have been that those who were contacted and did not participate were simply busy. However, as a CT researcher, I would argue these difficulties were tainted by the wider local and global context, in which Muslims are becoming more and more the objects of surveillance.

The research timing might also have affected some of the reservations or the unkept promises. Shortly after the start of recruiting the participants, November 2014, the Charlie Hebdo Attack occurred. This was followed by a number of events that reinvigorated the image of Muslims in the West as being the ‘ultimate other’, and they triggered some intense negative reactions against Muslim communities on the societal level. These events included the refugee crisis, Paris Attacks, Brussels Attacks, several incidents in the UK, for example the London underground stabbing, and the rise of far right parties’ publicity in Europe that presents Muslims and Islam as ‘real threats’ to Europe’s national and cultural identity (Allen, 2016). This climate is likely to have influenced the individuals’ choices to participate (or not) in the study.

The opting out might also have been triggered by the sensitivity of the research topic within HEIs, where issues of discrimination are not given due attention, as shown in Chapter Three. The fact that confidentiality was a major concern supports this view, as academics would calculate the potential risks their participation would entail. Therefore, perhaps ‘ordinary’ academics who experience (or have experienced) any form of racism would more likely opt out, whilst Muslim academics with degrees of exceptional merit, and those

who have secured tenure, would be more likely to participate, as suggested by the findings. Therefore, this study proposes that silence permeated the study from the recruitment stage. Silence, an overarching theme, is duly discussed in section 6.2.

It could be argued that the presence of silence lacks evidence. However, I would say that silence has been a common thread throughout several incidents, starting from the backstage of the recruitment stage; for example, the patterns of reservations and un-kept promises, as well as the reservations to openly engage with some topics during the interview, such as institutional racism/Islamophobia. Bearing in mind the influence of the ‘discursive practices’ within academia, silence, during the interviews, moves beyond literal silence and could be understood. Moreover, several incidents occurred during the fieldwork that, when put together, strengthen this proposition. For example, as previously mentioned, the information package was widely cascaded via personal contacts and networks. Potential participants would be contacted thrice over a period of a month. If they did not respond, it was assumed they were not interested in participating in the study. During the writing-up stage, after presenting at a conference, I was approached by a lady in the audience to discuss my presentation, which she positively received. Upon introducing her name, I realised that she had been contacted to participate and I inquired whether she had received my emails. She apologised that she was too busy, but started talking about her personal experiences of discrimination in her department. Later on, she sent me an email encouraging my spirit and remarking that the *only reason she accepted to chair one of the sessions was because she found my name in the list of presenters and wanted to meet me in person*. Perhaps her initial reaction through not responding was underpinned by a suspicion of the research agenda.

Another widely cited female scholar responded to the initial invitation via her personal email address by attaching a word document expounding on her experiences of discrimination in academia. However, she remarked in bold that *this was sent with strict confidentiality and should not be used for the writing up*. Pointing out concerns about confidentiality, she provided a general account separately that I could use for the writing up. Her confidential account was shocking and moving. Not only did my eyes well up with tears but I also cried my heart out. It would appear that the fear of retaliation could have underpinned the reservation of the latter possible participant. Y Muhs et al. (2012), editors

of *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia*, remarked that “a significant number of women decided not to contribute to the anthology for fear of retaliation. They believed that they would be penalised for airing their home institution’s dirty laundry in public” (p.11).

4.9.2 Fieldwork Challenges

Regarding the conducting of the interviews, acquainting myself with the participants’ academic profile was of double benefit. My first interviewee constructed his account in a jigsaw manner, and I felt he was leading the conversation, through interrupting my questions. Moreover, he was focusing on the positive aspects of his personal experiences and, when discussing issues of institutional racism, he would depersonalise his account and speak about matters that were more generic. For example, at the interview outset, he said that racism permeates academia, but when asked to attest this from his personal experience, he responded by talking either about his experiences of discrimination beyond UK academia, such as how he was treated when attending a conference in a Western European country, how he was discriminated against as a PG student or how non-white students do not cross over to become academics. Perplexity ensued on my side, as the possibility that his response was a form of silence and a result of the ‘discursive practices’ did not then occur to me. I felt I was unable to pose proper follow up questions, as, whenever I tried to focus on the particular, he would talk about Muslims in the wider society or Muslim students at UK universities, but not Muslim academics.

In similar patterns of responses, particularly when identity and racism topics were discussed, the potential of silence emerged. After that interview, I started to become familiar with the participants’ academic profile prior to the interview, which enabled manoeuvring and probing. Therefore, this approach helped to better understand their experiences, as aspects of their profile were used to probe for deeper conversation, particularly with the concise respondents. For example, some participants’ profiles included several projects they had led at different universities. This was used to probe for the reasons behind moving to different universities, which provided a space to discuss job opportunities, career challenges and so on. The by-product benefit was that it helped build significant rapport with them, as it gave them, as they revealed to me, the impression that I really appreciated who they were.

Additionally, some STEMM participants asked me to pose precise, rather than open-ended questions. For instance, Tariq remarked repeatedly “This is not a specific question ... I think perhaps because we engineers like to have specific, objective questions to work on [laughing], so give me a specific question to answer it”. Furthermore, initially, a great amount of time was needed to probe an identity topic, particularly with the STEMM participants, because I thought I should not influence their responses, so abstained from responding to their question on how I would respond to that question. Eventually, I decided to help them by offering them more than one approach to answering this question, as was done by other participants. Therefore, I think I gained more experience over time on how to conduct interviews.

While it might be argued that some of the STEMM participants had little awareness of the discourse on identities, it was interesting how some participants from Humanities and Social Sciences subjects, whose scholarly activities focus on minorities’ identity-related issues did not engage openly with the topic of identity(ies). For example, a participant remarked that “you always have the instinct to resist that question because they always try to place you”. Upon remarking that I felt as if he did not want to talk about it, he responded “My answer is that I don’t like to be asked about it, I think it is impertinent”. A possible framing of this closing-down is the wider climate that problematises the Muslim identity and projects labels on Muslims, for example ‘good’ or ‘bad’. He might not also want to trust me. This will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

Moreover, on some occasions, some of the participants at the interview outset seemed suspicious about the research agenda and tried to work out my position, an ally or a spy, before sharing their experiences with me. Hence, they would ask about the research rationale and my background. Their concerns were legitimate. Therefore, I consciously engaged in a ‘reciprocal self-disclosure’ (Bristow and Esper, 1988) through sharing with them instances of discrimination I, myself, had experienced and talked about how living in the Gaza-Strip has formulated my worldview. This self-disclosure built bridges and encouraged their opening up. Feminists hold that “the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when [...] the interviewer is prepared to invest her own personal identity in the relationship” (Oakley, 1981, p.41). Similarly, CRT affirms that

success in building rapport with participants is contingent on sharing with them ‘similar lived experiences’ (Dunbar, 2001; 2008). This approach also helped facilitate a dialogue form of interview, rather than an ‘act of interrogation’ (Oakley, 1981).

Furthermore, some of the participants challenged the research topic. For example, a participant questioned why the study was restricted to Muslims’ experiences and suggested a comparison between Muslims’ and Jews’ academics experiences. I explained politely the influence of personal experiences. Another participant in an off-the- record comment inquired whether I was serious about investigating this particular topic; perhaps the current climate is not conducive to this. Other participants challenged some of the interview questions, as explained in section 4.5 above.

4.10 Trustworthiness

There are varying views on how to ensure ‘quality’ in qualitative research, but also a degree of inconsistency regarding the provided terminology, for example external validity versus transferability, and the guidelines to follow to assure trustworthiness of a study, for example see Roulston’s (2010) discussion on this inconsistency. Drawing from CT, this research uses the term trustworthiness in discussing its quality, because it challenges the traditional conventions of ‘rigorous’ inquiry (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994). Kincheloe and McLaren proposed that CT inquiry quality is judged against the extent to which it locates the particular into the general and clarifies the possible influence of the researcher’s values in the conducting of the research conduct, as well as a critical examination of this influence. The study approach to these criteria is discussed in the following section.

In addition, the researcher adhered to a form of ‘member checking’, that is all of the participants were sent their first interview transcript highlighting the main identified themes and were asked to correct any possible misinterpretation on my part. A two-week duration was given for the participants to comment, notifying that it would be assumed they accepted the interpretation if they had not responded by the deadline. Some of the participants asked me to retract some parts of the interview, for fear of being identified, which I did. However, the majority either sent an email agreeing with the themes or did not respond. I chose to say it was a form of member checking, because I agree with Hammersley and Traianou’s (2012) argument that researchers should be cautious about the

extent to which they share their findings with their participants, as the latter might approach the data from a personal angle, whereas researchers apply a more holistic approach. This is why some CT scholars disagree with the notion of credibility in qualitative data. For example, Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) alluded to the credibility dilemma, agreement on the part of participants on the final report. That is to say, if researchers could detect the ‘effects of oppression’ in the participants’ construct, when they themselves have not recognised it or acknowledged it, agreement might not take place. Similarly, feminist researchers, for example Borland (1991), underline that privileging the ‘authorial intentions’ over researchers’ interpreting might restrict a richer understanding of the phenomenon and suggests the need to ground any story into the larger context.

Therefore, the final report will not be sent back to participants. I am aware though that the data could afford different readings from different theoretical standpoints. I have also kept an ‘audit trail’ (Robson, 2011) of the field notes that described my impressions about the participants and subjective thoughts of their accounts, along with an ‘analytic memo’ (Saldaña, 2009), which contained my hunches and reflections during the coding and analysis and the actual timescale of the data-gathering and analysis. Finally, as previously explained, this study rejects the traditional generalisability that is common in positivist and post-positivist paradigms. The study adopts an ‘anticipatory accommodation’, whereby readers need to assure the similarities between the original context and the context to which the findings are to be transferred (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994).

4.11 Reflexivity

Self-reflexivity for qualitative research aims at providing insights into “how the knowledge is produced”, that is, the influence of the researcher on the research process and the final report (Pillow, 2003, p.178). However, there is no consensus on what reflexivity means and how to apply it (see Roulston (2010)). The notion of reflexivity stems from the notion of reflection (Pillow, 2003). Dewey, as cited by Pillow (p.177), defines reflection as looking “back over what has been done, so as to extract the net meanings, which are the capital stock of intelligent dealing with further experiences. For Chiseri-Strater (1996), reflection “does not demand an ‘other’, while the latter [reflexivity] demands both an other and some self-conscious awareness of the process of self-scrutiny” (p.130). The study, however,

disagrees with this distinction, as it does not perceive the existence of an ‘other’ as a demand for reflection or reflexivity; the existence of the other might only be an asset. This study rather concurs with Ryan (2005), in that reflexivity entails a continual introspection of the present without ruling out the previous learned lessons, while reflection involves retrospect and learning from previous experiences, as defined by Dewey. The challenges delineated in the fieldwork challenges section show how, upon reflection, I have adapted the interviewing style, for example, through facilitating the conversation on identity(ies), by giving examples from other participants’ accounts.

Influenced by several views on reflexivity, for example Callaway, 1992, Hertz, 1997 and Davies, 1999, the study views reflexivity as the researcher’s ‘critical consciousness’ throughout the inquiry of the influence of their own personal interests, political stances, set of values and ‘self-location’, for example ethnicity and nationality, on the inquiry from the outset until the presentation of the final report. Nevertheless, several scholars have questioned the ‘methodological virtue’ of such ‘self-absorption’ on the research quality (Lynch, 2000; Patai, 1994, p.69). The following paragraphs deconstruct the influence of my position in the conducting of the research, discussing aspects of the insider/outsider researcher debate and finally reflecting on the power relations between the researcher and the participants.

4.11.1 Positionality

Pillow (2003, p. 193) argued that the ‘up-front listing’ of the researcher’s situated identities might obscure ‘honesty’, as this listing might be underpinned by the assumptions that readers will be able to unravel who the researcher is. However, I think that presenting a candid account of my ‘self-location’ for the audience is crucial to help them understand the usually unmentioned influence of this positionality on the decisions made and my personal interest in the inquiry. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, my personal life journey in several countries in the Middle East and then ending up in the Gaza-Strip has formed my worldview and triggered my political and social activism, as well as my deep anger over injustice.

My visible faith identity, represented in my hijab, has drawn my attention to my *Otherness*, upon arriving in the UK for my PG studies. The gendered Islamophobia I usually encounter

because of my dress-style has made my gender identity prominent to this research. Reflecting on this Otherness has stirred a recognition of how, at various stages of my life prior to coming to the UK, I have been the exceptional other. Palestinians in the Gulf States are an exceptional minority, due to being highly educated and securing prestigious jobs, when compared to other minorities. As a highly achieving child, I was central to my teachers' and peers' attention. Moreover, in spite of the common ethnicity amongst Palestinians and Gulf state citizens, that is Arabs, Palestinians are phenotypically different. However, it was not until I arrived in the UK that I realised how people's race (ethnic background) could side-line, or render, them as different, let alone the power of alienation people's dress-style might cause.

Moreover, the negative presuppositions featured through the comments made by some of the academic staff members and my peers about me having limited academic aptitude and being restrained by a 'backward' culture triggered the idea for this study. These comments made me realise that, in the British academia, the hijab might, at best, raise some eyebrows and, at worst, be perceived as an oddity. This is why I wanted to examine how female academics wearing the hijab feel about this in academia. A point made by one of my study's participants resonates this, when this participant questioned how HEIs could be "islands of tolerance in a sea of intolerance". Thus, my gendered Muslim identity is central to the research idea, as are the Islamophobic incidents I usually face. Indeed, Ezzy (2002) postulates that "the personal experience of the researcher is an integral part of the research process" (p.153). Nevertheless, I make no assumptions that this snapshot will enable the reader to decipher how much my background influenced this study.

I am aware, though, that some readers might disapprove of my mentioning my personal account. Rodríguez (1998) remarked that the reader's own ideology continues to impact on who they want the author to be and who they want to hear from. Similarly, in his *Permission to Narrate*, Said (1984) noted that people of power are those who decide for themselves what knowledge counts as valid and who has the right to speak.

4.11.2 The Insider/Outsider Debate

The debate on who is better able to research whom has generated diverse positions amongst scholars. Some scholars of colour advocate restricting researching particular communities

to insider researcher. For example, with respect to curriculum studies, Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez (2013, p. 84-85) advocated a politics of refusal, whereby indigenous communities refuse to allow outsider researchers access to conduct research in their communities. A moderate view is the one held by Delgado Bernal (1998, p.563) in her discussion of Chicano feminist epistemologies, who advocate ‘cultural intuition’ whereby researchers ‘deliberately employ’ the common identity they share with the researched community in the ‘interpretive’ repertoire of the research. She argues that Chicanos [insider researchers] have ‘unique viewpoints’ that enable them to attend and understand participants’ experiences through drawing from a ‘collective experience and community memory’. Others perceive that insider researchers are susceptible to producing low quality research, because they might be less critical of their biases.

In light of Rodríguez’s (1998) and Said’s (1984) views, this study holds that this debate is underpinned by epistemic racism. It also underlines the fear that an ‘ecology of knowledge’, a decolonial space of epistemic diversity where Western social sciences are not the only source of valid knowledge but one among others” (Sousa Santos, as cited by Grosfoguel, 2012b, p.84), poses potential challenges to Western ‘universalism’, which might threaten the modern/colonial global structure (ibid). This is because such arguments principally feature in academic debates, when researchers from racial (ethnic or religious) minority groups choose to research their own communities. Additionally, the common practice of White researchers researching their own communities or other communities has never been an issue (Serrant-Green, 2002). Kelsky (2001) argued that this debate aims at perpetuating ‘white privilege’. My position vis-à-vis the research subjects is discussed in the next section, covering the pros and cons of insider/outsider researcher, as discussed in the methodological literature.

4.11.3 Positionality: Partial-insider or Partial-outsider?

My position in this study could be located in ‘the space between’ the insider/outsider extremes (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Generally, the insider-status comes from the commonality of our ‘Muslim-ness’, which was clarified earlier to be a ‘lived experience’, rather than a restriction to the theological interpretation. It is a diversity subsumed under a unity. I chose to put it this way because, although I identify with Islam as a faith that

formulates an overarching framework for life, I am aware that this is not the case for other people, including some of my blood relatives, who identify with Islam as a social/cultural tradition rather than a belief system. This awareness has resulted from living with Muslims who associate differently with Islam. I personally choose not to get involved in arguments about how individuals interpret *their* Islam, particularly because there are diverse schools of thought in Islam, diverse sects and diverse practices amongst Muslims worldwide.

This is the very reason behind the unique sampling criterion this study followed, that is, any academic who self-identifies as a Muslim. It is a desire to be close to my participants, and to encourage potential participants with different interpretations of Muslim-ness to relate to the topic of research and to myself as a member of the group. I, therefore, consciously abstain from demarcating a definition of ‘Muslim-ness’, although I am aware that perhaps some of the participants, upon seeing my dress-style, have formulated an opinion about me being ‘too religious’ and, thus, were perhaps wary of me passing on personal judgments against them about ‘what a proper Muslim entails’.

I had this impression with some participants. For example, a male participant, who researches Muslims and minorities, when talking about his identity remarked “[...] and *I am a Muslim, but not particularly a good Muslim*”. I felt then that, in relation to that question, my dress-style had reversed the power relation to my side. I felt he formulated his opinion in relation to the impression my dress-style intimated. Being aware of that, I tried to put him at ease, by allowing the conversation to flow, asking how he defines a good Muslim. He then started to talk about how he focuses on the don’ts, but fails to commit to the dos. I responded by acknowledging that all of us are sinners. At that particular moment, I felt that I became an insider, because, just after that, he expounded on how Islam informs his personal politics and research choices and so on. He even continued to criticise some aspects of ‘religiosity’; we had a warm, lively and open conversation, where I think he ‘spoke his mind’.

In terms of reflexivity, I do not think that my response that put him at ease was principally instrumental for the sake of encouraging him to open up and, thus, obtain rich data. Rather, I genuinely believe that, as humans, we are imperfect and no-one is entitled to pass

judgment on others. With respect to the insider/outsider debate, I felt that I was an outsider when he initially responded to me, but I applied my 'cultural intuition' and drew on my sensitivity to how Muslims diversely identify with Islam. This removed, I argue, the possible barrier my dress-style insinuated. In hindsight, I think, during the discussion of the topic of Muslim-identity, I shifted from being an outsider to becoming an insider, and this insider/outsider dichotomy has fallen apart in relation to Muslim-ness, which was initially thought to be the common ground between myself and the participants. An insider status in practice, I argue, is attained when researchers can relate to their participants and empathise with them (and vice-versa). It is not a fixed position that brings about advantage, as has been argued (see Dwyer and Buckle (2009)).

However, sharing the same dress-style with some of the female participants did not give me the feeling of always being an insider. For example, I felt like an outsider with a participant who wears the hijab, principally because she dismissed the other participants' views regarding the possible negative ways the hijab could be perceived in academia. Initially, I could not relate to her views, although we both wear the hijab. Perhaps this was her actual experience, although she remarked that *she goes out of her way and puts in extra effort when she attends her children's school meetings, as you might be the only Muslim they meet and you need to give a good impression*. Thus, she was aware of how others might perceive her difference, but stated that, in her workplace, *academics do not have prejudice*.

A final remark on my dress-style is warranted here. It is less likely that the hijab, itself, is alien to anyone of Muslim background, as, even if it was not something they identify with, it would be common amongst their relatives, friends and so on. The apprehension it might have triggered would then mostly be tainted by wider views of the hijab and personal stances about it.

Bondi (2003) highlighted how the researcher's emotions could enrich the analysis of the qualitative research. Some of the participants shared with me, often off-the-record, blatant instances of discrimination, which were heart rendering. Not only did I cry when I left the interview venue, but also upon transcribing and reading and rereading. While I have not been through similar experiences, I deeply related to these participants, as these experiences fit into my wider picture about global oppression and subordination. These

experiences spoke directly to me, not just as a Muslim, but also as a Palestinian. With the exception of those shared with me off-the-record, these experiences are included in the final report.

In this regard, Dunbar (2008, p.90) rightly points out that there does

exist nuances that are best transmitted and understood when ... there is a common experience/understanding between those who ask and those who are being asked. They have similar lived experience. Similar insights provide a window with which to share views without speaking, where a sound seemingly inaudible to the unprepared ear, speaks volumes to a knowing listener, where the expression on one face tells the whole story or a simple nod says "I know where you are coming from"

Nevertheless, opponents of insider researchers have concerns about the latter's 'over subjectivity' if they were incognisant of their own biases and values, which might negatively affect the 'legitimacy' of their analysis (Kerstetter, 2012) and even the data-collection (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). However, this research concurs with Rose (1985, p.77), who holds that "there is only greater or less awareness of one's biases. And if you do not appreciate the force of what you're leaving out, you are not fully in command of what you're doing". This study agrees with Geaves (2014), who argues that both insider and outsider researchers should make apparent their own ideology, as there is no such thing as a 'disinterested' researcher, as this is hardly a human nature.

Due to the sensitive research topic, it might have been more difficult for someone who has not experienced oppression to gain access and/or relate to the participants' experiences. Even perhaps with some of the participants who identify with Islam as a faith, it might have been more difficult for a non-Muslim researcher to *understand, or even to sympathise* with these experiences. For example, incorporating my 'cultural intuition' (Delgado Bernal, 1998), with regard to some faith-related notions that were noted by some participants has assisted in understanding and analysing these accounts and helped to theorise the notion of faith capital (see section 5.7). Had the participants felt that the researcher was unaware of these notions, they would less likely have raised these aspects with an outsider researcher.

Unexpectedly, my Palestinian identity has been influential in allowing me access to participants, mainly through snowballing and building a strong rapport with participants. Although not mentioned in the information sheet, disclosing my Palestinian identity at the outset of the interviews was grounded in a 'reciprocal disclosure' approach (previously

noted) to facilitate trust. In considering reflexivity, this identity dimension facilitated an insider status more than my Muslim-ness did. This is because the Palestinian Cause is significant for Muslims and also human rights activists and anti-colonial proponents. For example, I interviewed a female participant in her house because she has an infant and, thus, some interruptions could occur. The recording was frequently interrupted so that she could, in my understanding, check her child. No sooner had the interview finished than the bell rang and a group of friends came in. I felt awkward and wanted to leave, but she insisted I stay and introduced me to them as ‘her Palestinian friend’ who is doing a PhD. It was a proper banquet. I realised then that they were invited and that, during the recording’s interruptions, she was preparing food. I spent around two hours over lunch and everyone was posing questions about the siege against the Gaza-Strip and the situation after the most recent Israeli massacre that took place in 2014.

In closing, this research practice attests Narayan’s (1993) view that the essentialised characteristics of group membership do not necessarily render the researcher an insider status. The few previous paragraphs point out how one particular dimension that is thought to be commonly shared, being Muslim, might move between those two seemingly binary positions. Additionally, while I thought that my Palestinian identity was peripheral to how the participants would perceive me, some of them fore fronted *this* dimension of who I am, and *chose* to relate to me through it, which facilitated trust. Thus, this study reveals that the insider-outsider status is neither static nor is it solely determined by the researcher’s pre-defined multiple-identities. It is a mutually defined status, where participants might choose to relate to certain dimensions of a researcher’s identity that appeal to their worldviews (thus making him/her an insider), while alienating him/her (thus making him/her an outsider), even if they share common grounds.

4.11.4 Reflexivity of Discomfort

This section discusses another layer of reflexivity, advocated by Pillow (2003), whereby researchers are encouraged to uncover the challenges they encountered and how they dealt with them. As some of the challenges were mentioned previously, this section covers how power relations operated during the conducting of the interviews. The balance of power underwent shifts, sometimes towards the researcher, and at other times towards the

participants. Unlike research settings where the researcher status signifies them as ‘experts’ in the field, this was not the case, because the participants had a more senior academic status than me. This, in itself, implied that most of the participants, particularly those in HSS, were more knowledgeable than me in considering social science theory. This was clear in the way some participants challenged my interview questions (see section 4.5 for an example of this).

These reactions made me feel uncomfortable and powerless during the interview. However, in retrospect, perhaps in some of these situations the power balance was in my favour. Perhaps their challenging was not intended to undermine me as a student, as I initially thought, and perhaps some of the participants who do not identify with Islam as a religion might have felt less powerful, due to my dress-style. Accordingly, this might have led them to challenge my questions and digress to avoid giving what they thought I might perceive as ‘incorrect’ answers and, hence, they apparently failed to engage properly with the conversation. Similar behaviour was found amongst the male participants regarding their roles in reproductive decision-making (Morisson and Macleod, 2014). Researchers have suggested that such behaviour serves “to shift the balance of power towards male participants and, frequently, to mask their uncertainty or inability to answer particular questions” (p.705). I found that the insider-outsider status influences whom power resides in. When the researcher experiences an insider status, the traditional hierarchical power can be disrupted, and the conversation flows smoothly, whereas, when the researcher experiences being an outsider or is labelled as such by the way their participants perceive them, the power is skewed in the favour of either the interviewer or the interviewee, depending on that particular moment.

Finally, I experienced a disappointment during the first few interviews (see the example given at the beginning of section 4.9.2 above) that triggered an impression that some of these accounts were void of ‘proper’ data. This was because some of the participants’ responses would not directly engage with the topic raised, that is, their responses included digressing, changing the topic, challenging that racism could exist and the empirical evidence I provided to attest that racism exists. I was dismayed by the pattern of not engaging with the topics discussed, which initially affected my confidence as a researcher. This was because I initially, and perhaps naively, thought that, as long as the information

package was clear, in that Islamophobia was the backdrop of the study, that institutional racism is a reality and they voluntarily accepted to participate, they would be willing to discuss and engage with the topic covered in this research, including the topic of institutional racism. It is important to state clearly that the study *does not assume* that each participant, or each Muslim academic, *is experiencing racism or has necessarily experienced racism*. In hindsight, naively, my reactions were driven by my deep anger over injustice and my thought was that, as long as the participants were given the opportunity to talk about their experiences and discuss these topics, they would disclose and/or openly engage with the topics. Later on, this ‘moral dilemma’ was resolved, when their accounts were located broadly within how ‘discursive practices’ modulate what can and cannot be said.

Digging beneath the face value, I started to look into the ruptures, the silences (literal), laughter (particularly when discussing a serious topic) and comments made off-the-record, which led to an understanding of these accounts in a broader meaning of ‘metaphorical’ silence (Mazzei, 2003).

4.12 Ethical Considerations

The methodological literature offers valuable guidelines regarding ethics. However, such guidelines can give the impression that ethical considerations are ‘standardised’ processes that apply to every social science research study, regardless of its nature (Shaw, 2008). Hammersley and Traianou (2012) stated that published ethical guidelines cannot, and should not, be perceived as ‘rules’; researchers need always to calculate and balance what is deemed as appropriate in a given context (ibid). Drawing from Shaw’s ‘three linked arguments’ (2008), the discussion of the ethical considerations of this research is divided into ‘design stage ethics’, ‘fieldwork ethics’ and ‘analysis and final report ethics’.

4.12.1 Design Stage Ethics

Drawing on a ‘consequential approach’ to ethics, the study abided by the British Educational Research Association code and took note of the ethical concerns raised in the educational research literature (for example Hammersley and Traianou, 2012; Punch, 2009; Robson, 2011). Due to the sensitive research topic, the information package fully informed potential participants about the study’s purposes (see Appendix 8 for a copy of the

information sheet, the topic guideline and the consent form). Additionally, formal recruitment through the HEIs emails was avoided to minimise an institutional detrimental impact on the participants. Initial contact was made through informal network organisations that might work as gatekeepers for potential participants. These included MBRN, MAB, BRAIS and UCU-black members, but also through my supervisor's networks and my personal contacts in the community.

Potential participants were assured of their right to withdraw at any stage of the research and were informed that the recorded data, if recording was permitted, would be retained for at most three years for purposes of academic publications. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured in the package. The interview topics guide was piloted twice with two potential participants, a male and a female academic, who are experts in the research area. Their comments and modifications were taken on board. Finally, as the participants might reflect on aspects of their lives that might trigger discomfort, sadness, and maybe anger, my insider position, as well as my personal experience and ethics, rendered an understanding and empathy when dealing with sensitive issues. Such situations, therefore, were professionally addressed, in order to put the participants at ease after any emotion-rousing question before taking the interview forward and/or ending the conversation.

4.12.2 Fieldwork Ethics

The consequential approach also influenced decisions regarding the challenges faced during the fieldwork. A feasible 'risk plan' was adopted during the recruitment stage. As was discussed in 4.9.1., the initial consent to participate was treated as provisional and recruitment went on. In hindsight, I think that the final sample size would never have been achieved within this duration without this plan.

Moreover, initially, I tended to refuse an interview over lunch, because I find it difficult to focus over a meal. I felt that this refusal disrupted trust and some of the participants were distanced due to my refusal, as they would keep renewing the invitation for coffee or lunch during the interview. Upon reflection, I started to accept their invitations, which was conducive to a relaxed conversation. Additionally, calculations about the researcher's safety followed a 'thoughtful practice' (Barbour, 2013). Whilst I did accept invitations to interview female participants in their houses, due to their family commitments, beyond the

working hours, I refused to interview male participants in their houses. However, although my safety concerns were not revealed to them, I politely remarked that I would prefer to meet at a public venue, which was respected by them.

Confidentiality was an issue for some of the participants. They often inquired about issues of attribution in the data presentation and asked for several extracts to be removed, which I agreed on to protect them and relieve their concerns. An example for that is the female who withdrew after the whole interview and asked for the interview to be taken off the record. Others asked not to state their exact discipline, or to conceal the context surrounding some of the accounts. All of their concerns were taken on board. The transcripts were sent to them and they were asked to annotate the changes and edit the aspects they felt might identify them.

Another challenge related to fieldwork ethics was how some participants reacted to the written consent form and the interview questions. Some participants highly critiqued the consent form, because it required a signature, whilst on the same page a self-declared profile was included. I tried to explain that this profile was optional and they did not have to complete it. One insisted that the consent form was ‘dodgy’, so I asked them to act upon their convenience, that is not to sign it if they did not wish to. Two did not sign the consent form, but I thanked them for their participation at the beginning of the interview recording, therefore, an oral consent was attained. Some participants sent me an email prior to the interview requesting the interview questions, in order to be prepared, so I sent them the topics to be discussed, as this may have been helpful for some to organise their thoughts.

The utility of snowballing also posed some ethical challenges, as noted in section 4.7, which has, perhaps, negatively impacted the quality of the data. A senior academic participant offered help through recruiting a junior academic in their department. However, it was evident to me during the interview with the junior academic that he might have accepted only to please him and that he had been ‘tipped off’ on how to discuss the topics ‘safely’. When arriving at their office at the agreed time, after introducing myself, they coldly remarked ‘How can I help you?’ After explaining politely that we had scheduled an interview for my research, they remarked in an unwelcoming tone, that they should not have accepted the invitation to participate because they were too busy. I asked them then whether they would like me to leave. They insisted I stay but started negotiating the

interview duration and suggested a duration that would not exceed 30 minutes. I suggested again that it might be appropriate for me to leave, but they insisted I should stay.

When the interview started, they were pre-empting my questions and closing down the prompting. Strangely enough, they initiated the discussion on the topic of discrimination by remarking that they were equally treated and had never felt being discriminated against. While this might have been the case, I find it difficult to imagine that a participant would anticipate the topics of discussion without a prior remark. On reflection, I felt they agreed to be interviewed to please that senior person, which might have created ethical issues with their consent, that is: a consent that is affected by power relations, and the quality of data they provided. After a considerable amount of thought, I decided that this interview would not be part of the final presentation. Interestingly, this participant did not respond to my three emails inviting them to participate in the second interview. They responded remarking they were too busy to the fourth email asking them to inform me if they had no intention of being interviewed for the second time.

4.12.3 Ethics during the Analysis and Final Report.

The analysis stage grappled with the possible consequences of reporting some sensitive themes for participants. Upon deliberation, these themes will be part of the final report and the participants' concerns will be highlighted, but safeguarding is ensured through revealing as little as possible about the participants' profiles and their exact discipline, position, and so on. This is why I provided a general, and not a specific, participants' profile (see Appendix 5).

Additionally, as this qualitative research has collected the participants' accounts of their experiences, it is crucial to minimise the ethical dilemmas that might ensue from the co-construction of knowledge. Mills (2002, p.109) remarks how the 'autobiography of the researcher' is intertwined with the 'biography' of the participants when analysing and reporting them. In trying to mitigate the influence of my worldview, and guided by CT, the analysis moved from the particular to the whole contextual, and from the contextual to the particular in a recursive manner (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2011). It presents the deviant cases, that is the people whose experiences were overwhelmingly positive (see section 6.1.5) and describes the general tenor of the perceptions generated under each theme

before conducting a deeper interpretation, which grounds the story into a broader social, cultural and historical context. Thus, it presents a contextual highlighting of the accounts, as discussed in detail in the analysis section.

The study will not share the final report with the participants, as they might disagree with the locating of their accounts into a wider context of oppression and subordination, as explained in the analysis section. Feminist researchers also reveal the tension between privileging ‘authorial intentions’ over interpreting participants’ accounts within an epistemological and ontological position, or legitimising researchers’ interpretations (Borland, 1991, Mills, 2002).

In conclusion, this study views good research practice “not sufficiently described either by technical competence or by grand ethical principles; it also subsists essentially in the moral character of the practitioner” (Clark, 2006, p.88). Thus, it concurs with Geaves’ (2014) view that subscribing to ethical behaviour is better informed when researchers behave as humans who would do unto others as they would like others do unto them.

4.13 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the methodological choices considered for this research. It highlighted the influence of the philosophical view and theoretical framework on the research design, the data-gathering method and the analysis framework selected to examine the experiences of the Muslim academic participants in the study. The chapter also expounded how, as the researcher, I attempted to fulfil the ethical practices to achieve trustworthiness during the research design, conducting and reporting stages. The realities of conducting this research presented challenges during the sampling and interview stages. The reflexivity section shed light on my researcher’s positionality and its possible influence on the study. It also underscored how I set off on my fieldwork, believing that my insider-status was granted through my Muslim-ness, whilst most of the participants chose to relate to my national identity. Although it was thought that fully informing the participants of the research aims would encourage open conversation and/ or disclosure, the research topic, its controversy, its sensitivity, as well as the powerful institutional structures, in addition to other unforeseen factors for me, might have been among the diverse reasons behind why

some of the participants reworked their accounts and/or side-stepped touching on the 'raw nerve' of racism.

5 Identity related Findings and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the themes in relation to the first research question, which aims to explore how Muslim academics conceptualise and define their identity (identities). The participants described their identities as being multiple, spanning ethnicity, gender, profession and faith. The majority assigned importance to one dimension or another, giving their reasons why. With regard to how they defined their ‘Muslim-ness’, diversity was present and an apparent reluctance to engage in this topic was captured in some accounts. The potential impact of the global Islamophobic context on the way they negotiated/spoke about their Muslim-ness in academia is also discussed. Then, religious (Islamophobic) microaggressions, which were part and parcel of the experiences of some of the participants, regardless of their level of seniority, are explored, followed by a discussion of the challenges some of the participants face in their workplace as a result of their faith-identity. The intersectionality of gender identity and a conspicuous faith identity, through wearing the hijab, and the ways the hijab is received and perceived are delineated. The chapter closes with the participants’ views regarding how they understand the meaning of being an academic and some of their reflections on the REF. However, some discussion on the concept of ‘identity’ is firstly warranted.

5.2 The Study Approach to ‘Identity’

‘Identity’ is a complicated and highly contested concept. There is little agreement on how to define identity in academic writings (Sokol, 2009). One reason may be that different research traditions have different approaches to this term (Fearon, 1999). For instance, in Psychology, influenced by Erikson’s theory, identity development is described as a lifelong process that extends beyond the adolescence period (Sokol, 2009). The social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) defines identity as individuals’ sense of themselves based on their membership(s) of social group(s). It illustrates how aspects of prejudices and discrimination occur between an ‘in group’ and ‘out group’, based on their memberships. A sociological perspective of identity

perceives individuals' identity (ies) as being mutually constructed by their sense of self and the societal structure in which they act and interact with others (Peek, 2005). However, within one discipline area, sociologists have different approaches to defining identity. For example, a postmodernist perspective defines the identity of a postmodern individual as being 'ambivalent', 'fragmented', 'fluid', and entity that is rootless, see Hall (1996a, 1996b). This 'de-centred' self is contested by other sociologists, for example see Gubrium and Holstein (1995), who recognise that individuals construct multiple identities, or multiple selves, in their terms that have 'recognisable sustainability' (p. 555). Fearon (1999) conducted a review of how the term is defined in different disciplines and concluded that it is currently used in two linked ways; a social category and a personal category. The former is defined, explicitly or implicitly, through one's membership of a social group, which is identified through certain characteristics. A social category would include, therefore, one's ethnicity, race, belief, nation and role, for example being an academic. The latter refers to aspects of one-self that one feels are essential to who they are.

My understanding of 'identity' draws principally on the personal category, but does not eliminate the influence of the social category. Thus, I perceive identity as an individual sense of self, through which prominence is given to aspects individuals feel are essential to who they are, be it their membership of a group, their role and/or their belief, and so on. I also benefit from Stryker's (1980) view that the (overall) self includes multiple roles or identities. Within these multiple identities, individuals may assign different importance to different roles and, thus, organise their multiple identities in a 'salience hierarchy' (Stryker, 1980). In other words, the more a person is committed to one dimension of their identity, the higher this role/ dimension is located in the salience hierarchy.

5.3 Multi-faceted Identities

In a professional context, I am a university lecturer. In a personal level, I am a father and a husband. In a national level, I'm??? [nationality]. In a religious context, I am a Muslim. If you want to label things this way, I can put all these labels on myself. But I would rather not label myself. Maybe for someone, I will be something, for another I will be another thing. People see me from different angles, but I am the same thing. Akbar- STEMM

Akbar selected and weaved between identities, depending on the context, describing who he is through the lens of ‘role identity’, what he is expected to do /perform at university and at home, as well as identifying with a social identity, through identifying himself with a nation and a belief. Whilst recognising and validating each dimension, Akbar did resist to ‘label himself’ and acknowledged the significance of the ‘other’ in defining who you are, whilst simultaneously asserting a holistic view of his identity; ‘I am the same thing’.

I am a Scottish born Muslim of Indian ancestry. I am born here, so I am Scottish. But the noun I use is Muslim. Scottish is the adjective... a description of that Muslim. And I don't neglect or overlook my Indian ancestry. My family is from India, so I recognise that my genetic makeup, my external appearance, is in keeping with an Indian.
Ali- STEM

I would like to define myself as a British Muslim, a practicing devout Muslim, who is also an academic and an activist researcher.
Aref- HSS

Unlike Akbar, Ali's description of his identity combined aspects of nationality, faith and ethnicity, but prioritised his faith identity, as suggested by the distinction he made between the noun, or the essence, ‘Muslim’ and the description of that essence, using the adjective ‘Scottish’. He also seems comfortable with his identity dimensions, including his ethnicity, as suggested by ‘I don't neglect...Indian’

The majority of participants were like Ali, as they described their identity through multiple dimensions. For example, Aref described himself in terms of his nationality, belief, as a practising Muslim, and an activist researcher/ academic. Section 5.11.1 discusses what he meant by activist researcher.

Ahmed and Hussain gave salience to their academic identity, as illustrated below

I would define myself primarily in professional terms as a scholar, as a researcher, as an academic intellectual, and my, kind of, ethnicity, and my, kind of, religious heritage, come behind that. [This is because] to me everything is about ideas, knowledge and conversation. And a professional identity allows you to have interaction in a way, which someone of an ethnic or religious identity kind of decreases circles. So, if you think about an intellectual conversation as overlapping with concentric circles, if you engage in that with a purely ethnic or religion identity, it seems that you are, somehow, limiting yourself and limiting others...yeah
Ahmed- HSS

I would define myself as an academic...first and foremost... that's professionally and also personally my first identity. Then, I am married and I have children, so my family is the second anchor in my life, and then I am a Muslim...but I can't say it's the most important thing in my life...I mean Islam is there as a backdrop, but not central to my personal identity...

Hussain- HSS

Both Hussain and Ahmed put their profession at the top of their identity hierarchy. For Ahmed, a professional identity is prominent because it frees him from the possible boundaries a religious or ethnic identification might pose. Hussain illustrated that he prioritised his professional identity because of his academic excellence in his field and because he is very confident about this dimension of his identity.

Despite the often confident tone in the way identity was described, the notion of 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1999) lends itself well to explain some of the participants' recognition of how their religious and ethnic identities might affect how others place them in academia.

W.E. B. Du Bois, in his theorisation about African-Americans' social identities explains African-Americans' ability, rendered through the 'veil' metaphor, to view both their own self-image and the way others relegate their citizenship status. This double consciousness, captured in the following quote, impacts on their psychology and everydayness.

the Negro is... born with a veil and gifted with second-sight in this American world, a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others [...] that look on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body... (p. 10-11)

Huda's following quote sheds light on this concept.

I'm Huda and I'm (academic post). [In terms of] my personal self, I have a repertoire of identity: I'm first and foremost a Muslim, I'm Pakistani, because of my parents' culture and heritage, and I'm Scottish[...]. I hope that people would

accept and appreciate all the different things that make me *me*. Visibly, they can see my ethnicity. Visibly, they can see my scarf. But I would like them to just see Huda for Huda! Do I need to get them to.... I don't know, I'd never thought whether I would like them to ... I don't think I think about my skin colour, I don't think I think about how I look. I am just Huda! Huda- HSS

The beginning of Huda's quote indicates confidence regarding her multiple identities, as suggested by using the term 'first and foremost'. However, there is a sense of ambivalence/uncertainty and possible cautiousness regarding the language she used when speaking about how others might possibly perceive her difference. The confidence tone regarding her multi-identities, including what makes her different, seemed to be toned-down near the end of the quote when she negated thinking about what makes her different.

Huda's account indicates a sense of 'two-ness': a personal feeling of belonging, obvious through being Scottish and an academic, that seems to be hindered by her visible difference, both in skin colour, which marks her Asian heritage, and faith visibility, marked through the hijab. It also reveals her hopes to be recognised and fully accepted as just Huda, who is both a Muslim of Pakistani background and a Scottish academic. Huda's quote reinforces the finding from previous research (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). The participants in these studies expressed views that there is a subtle exclusion in academia based on non-white academics' ethnic or racial background. Thus, being the 'other' could hinder full access to the academia. For example, a professor participant in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013, p. 14) stated that "In the psyche, the two are not correlated, being coloured and a professor. It doesn't fit easily into your minds. And there is a huge problem of acceptance that comes with that".

5.4 The Diversity of Being Muslim

The participants described their identification with Islam in a range of ways that reflect the 'heterogeneity' of Muslim-ness. Their accounts negated the reductionist and often essentialist portrayals of Muslims in the West. Most of the participants in this study accentuated their engagement in Muslim issues and their support and solidarity to Muslims, particularly the participants in HSS, who highlighted their intellectual engagement with Muslim issues. This is in stark contrast for the same

group regarding their silence within academia in relation to issues of institutional racism.

[My Muslim identity?] Certainly, I come from a Muslim background, my parents were practising Muslims, but then that's my background. In terms of my identity it has been shaped by the norms and values which are privileged as opposed to other norms and values in the society. So my association with Islam is through the cultural imprint of that upbringing and that creates a certain amount of feelings of solidarity with people from Muslim backgrounds, an interest with Muslim politics, and that obviously has implications for the shaping of my perspectives, and that brings in a broad agenda to my academic work.

Adel- HSS

Adel's understanding of his Muslim-ness rests on three dimensions: his background, the 'cultural imprint' of Islam on his upbringing and the influence of 'Muslim politics' on his research and academic interests.

Adel's quote represents one of the two broad categories that could describe how participants define their Muslim-ness. This category highlights a 'Muslim consciousness' that maintains political mobilisation, a transformative approach aiming at combating anti-Muslim discrimination in wider society (Meer, 2010). The participants belonging to this category identify with Islam as a cultural heritage and/or a historical tradition; Muslim-ness is a form of 'associational identity' (Modood, 1998). Several previous studies (Dwyer, 1999 –with British South Asian Muslim women; Lewis, 1994; Samad, 1998) highlighted the political dimension of Muslim-ness amongst young Muslims, which does not necessarily correlate with religiosity.

I guess the most important part of my identity is my faith...uhha, I think without that life would not make any sense to me. If there is no overarching narrative within which we live, ultimately I'd view it as rather meaningless. So the faith dimension is probably ... not probably, certainly the most important dimension for me.

Rami- STEM

[Islam] answers a lot of questions for me as a human...about why you are here, why you were created and where you are going afterwards [i.e. the principle of afterlife]. So, if I'm not a Muslim, definitely there would be (a) confusion. This is my view of course, yes?

Tariq- STEM

Rami not only accentuated his Muslim identity as being the most prominent aspect, suggested by ‘not probably, certainly’, but also identified with Islam as a faith/belief system that provides an ‘overarching narrative’- ontology through which he rationalises his life. Tariq agrees with Rami, since Islam for him answers existential questions.

[Islam] is natural...I see my Islam as just... I don't see it as separate to me...It is...Muslim is *me*...the way I behave, the way I think... it is all, that's all of me being Muslim. I don't have to think myself Oh I am a Muslim, this is how I should behave. It is just... it is natural. [...] For example, [...] my prayers are part of my routine. It's not something that is extra to it or that I have to *fit in* my routine (emphasis theirs). It is part of my routine the same way I give time to my work, time for my family and time for my hobbies.

Ali- STEMM

I am a Muslim, although not particularly a good Muslim. So I don't do all the things that I should do in order to be a good Muslim [practicing the rituals], but then I don't do any of the things that are forbidden. For me what is important about being a good Muslim is humanity. So I try to be a decent human being. My politics are quite important to me and they are informed by my faith...I am very concerned about inequality and discrimination in the west particularly [...].For me my faith it is really about moral human behaviour.

Aqeel- HSS

The quotes of Ali and Aqeel reveal that they both identify with Islam as a belief system. However, for Ali, Islam suffuses his entire life; it is indispensable from his thinking and behaviour. Aqeel, unlike Ali, did not describe himself as practicing the rituals. And, whilst his view highlights practicing the rituals as a benchmark for defining ‘good Muslims’, he eloquently validates a more holistic approach to being Muslim: having a moral framework that informs his behaviour. He also underlined the influence of Islam on his views on inequality, or personal politics.

The views of Rami, Tariq, Ali and Aqeel together represent the second category of how the participants described their Muslim-ness. Their views highlight ‘Muslim consciousness’, to which faith is central. Islam, for this category, is a belief system and an ontological framework through which they rationalise their lives and behaviours, whether they practise the rituals or not. This finding is consistent with

previous studies that explored Muslim students' identities (Asmar, 2005a, 2005b, 2006; FOSIS, 2005; OPM, 2009; Peek, 2005; Tyrer and Ahmad, 2006), where the students mainly talked about Muslim identity as corresponding to religiosity, which might have been the case, because the recruitment in all of these studies occurred via Muslim Students' Associations. The participants whose Muslim-ness intertwines faith with practice are in accordance with Asad's view that being a Muslim is a "way of life and death oriented by a religious tradition" (2000, p.24) and reinforce Hassan's (2015) findings that showed that practice was central to Muslim consciousness.

I think identity is something which is always evolving, but I don't really subscribe to the celebration of postmodern identity that it is constantly shifting and never really rooted anywhere. So as I'm getting older I'm very conscious of being a Muslim... it's very important to me because I'm reminded that I'm a Muslim regularly by society, and I feel Muslim, and I try to practise, and I'm conscious that [Islam] is a tradition that I... I want to know more about...and I want to pursue and live more.

Adam- HSS

Whilst Adam thinks that identity is not stagnant, he explicitly challenges Hall's conceptualisation about post-modern identity as being 'increasingly fragmented' and 'fractured' with a 'never-ending process of internal ruptures' and operating 'under erasure' (1996a). His quote indicates the centrality of Islam to who he is and reveals how he is getting closer to Islam consciously, but also unconsciously, through being 'reminded by society..'. Although he did not explain here how the society reminds him of being a Muslim, he mentioned elsewhere during the interview the discriminatory practices of police officers in his hometown, which contains a high proportion of Muslim communities, between Muslims and non-Muslim communities. Like Adam, the accounts of Ali, Aqeel, Rami and Tariq above would appear to challenge the view that identity is 'rootless'. Postmodern theorisations of identities have largely overlooked the galvanising role of faith in shaping, unifying and stabilising, individuals' identities. This might be because most of these arguments are situated within a secular vision of post-modern societies that have dismissed religion (Modood, 1998; Kose, 1996; Warner, 1998). The participants, in stressing their faith identity, implied the concept of 'ontological security' as stemming from faith.

‘Ontological security’ helps combat the threats of the physical, materialistic world, in that it can mitigate human anxieties and weaknesses through providing alternative ways, beyond their senses, through which they rationalise their lives and experiences (Ramadan, 2004; Ter Borg, 2009).

5.5 Muslim Identity: Shades of Silence

Ibtihal: In terms of your identity, who is Hadi?

Hadi: [...] I’m instinctive to resist that question, because, from experience, often people ask you this question because they try to place you. I don’t like to be placed by others, and I rarely ever answer this question... I guess, in the end of the day, I would always call myself a Muslim, whatever that means. So, I won’t particularly give the answer [...]

Ibtihal: So your answer is that you would not wish to speak about it?

Hadi: My answer is that I don’t like to be asked about this thing. I think it’s *impertinent*. (his emphasis)

Hadi was interesting; we exchanged emails for a few months and, although he initially agreed to participate, I repeatedly contacted him asking him to suggest an interview date and venue. More than six months on, he suddenly, at short notice, decided on a time and venue, to which I agreed. Despite receiving the information sheet in advance, thus being aware of the research structure, he was clearly uncomfortable, wishing not to respond to my research structure. Whilst the majority of the participants spoke openly about their Muslim-ness and/or their identity, some were, like Hadi, unwilling and/or uncomfortable to speak about it.

Hadi’s initial resistance to my question was due to his refusal to be pigeonholed or labelled by people. While mentioning his Muslim identity, Hadi limited further probing by saying ‘whatever that means’ and then entirely blocked the topic, somewhat discourteously.

Fatima’s response, a female participant in STEMM, also suggests her unwillingness and/or inability to engage in the question

Ibtihal: ...you remarked that being Muslim is part of who you are; could you tell me what it means to you to be a Muslim?

Fatima: [...] people will straight away know that I'm different; I'm a Muslim... I don't really know how to answer...so what is it you want me to say exactly?

Ibtihal: There is no right or wrong answer [...]

Fatima: No, I know, but just trying to understand. You must have something in your head in terms of what is it you would hope to come out with as a result of this question

Ibtihal: No...I mean I want to understand what being Muslim means for you.

Fatima: Uhh....(silence) .. I don't think I've... ummm.... I don't know. Can we come back to that question?

Ibtihal: Sure.

Fatima: [laughing].

Near the end of the interview, I reminded her of the question

Fatima: Ok, how would you answer for yourself?

[I talked about how I personally conceptualise being Muslim, stressing that different participants gave different responses, providing examples]

Fatima: I still don't understand your question... I mean I do...., I still don't understand your question, so sorry I can't answer. [laughing]

Fatima initially explained her Muslim-ness in terms of her difference, marked by her hijab. Then she frequently used the phrase 'I don't know'. She also asked me about my 'expectations' about her response; perhaps she wanted to provide me with the 'correct response'. She then deflected the conversation through asking to postpone this question and, then, turning the table, asked how I would respond. Even after providing her with diverse examples, she noted 'I still don't understand'.

There may be several reasons why Hadi and Fatima did not fully engage with the topic of (Muslim) identity or found my question uncomfortable. Firstly, it might be that they simply did not wish their privacy to be invaded or might have been fed up being asked about who they are. Secondly, it might have been simply that they find it difficult to describe their Muslim-ness, as was apparent in Fatima's account through her frequent laughing when discussing a serious question. Lickerman (2011) holds that 'nervous laughter' might be a way to deal with anxiety or stress, or to

show control. Additionally, and particularly for those with a conspicuous faith-identity, such as men having a beard, not engaging openly with the topic might be influenced by the contemporary negative discourse about Muslim identity, that is ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ Muslims (Mamdani, 2004), which associates aspects of religiosity, or practising the faith, with intolerance and terrorism. This possibility could be supported by my finding later on regarding the community activism of a participant in Scotland, who held that my question, which intended to elicit how he understood his Muslim-ness, was ‘an ideological question aiming at analysing who he was, thus he would not answer’. This also suggested that my insider status did not afford me the ‘in’ status I thought it would, hence some people did not trust me enough to disclose.

The methodological literature has discussed the difficulty within qualitative research in meaningfully addressing what is deemed, either by the participants themselves or due to the influence of the normativity, or the ‘discursive practices’, to be sensitive (Charmaz, 2002; Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000; Mazzei, 2003, 2007; Warin and Gunson, 2013). Mazzei postulates that participants would pass over some topics during an interview interaction using diverse discursive strategies, including acts of ‘avoidance, denial, deflection...’. She holds that such responses - she uses the term ‘veiled silences’ to describe them -are ‘neither inaction nor passivity, but, rather, a silence that was speaking without speaking’ (2003, p.363). For Mazzei (2003), silence could occur by the absence of words; equally, words could mask silence. She perceives “speech on a continuum between that which is voiced literally [...] and that which is voiced silently, or metaphorically’ (2007, p. 634). This concept is further explored in section 6.2. Meanwhile, I find this conceptualisation of silence useful to describe the responses of Hadi and Fatima, as both accounts suggest avoidance and deflection, respectively.

5.6 Muslim Identity: Impact of Wider Context

5.6.1 Submerging Muslim-ness

I define myself in terms of my profession. I see myself as (silence) ... I guess a BME staff. Religious-wise? No, no, no, I wouldn't put myself forward as a Muslim staff automatically. [the reason is] *Religion* comes into our domain in a number of sharp sensational headlines, what's

happening globally [...], the headlines about Muslims in this country. So schools have been run by extremists, right? Particularly, Pakistani men or Muslim Pakistani men, that's a key word! I will likely be a kind of, you know, child molester or whatever, right? Therefore, there's a kind of implied negativity when religion is mentioned. Yes, I do my prayers in my room, I just keep my head down and just carry on, and let them think, oh he is Asian or Arab or whatever background. Because that's safer, that's easier to identify with. Sami- HSS

Perhaps the possible impact of the broader 'normative truths' (Allen, 2010) has not only triggered veiled silence vis-à-vis Muslim-ness during the interviews, but has also tainted the way some of the participants negotiate their Muslim-ness inside academia. It appears that Sami thinks through an Islamophobic prism; his words betray the othering and ostracising he might receive if he identifies as being Muslim within academia. More particularly, his quote shows clearly, though inadvertently, the close intersectionality between Muslim-ness and ethnicity, particularly Pakistani in the UK context. He is conscious that his colleagues, influenced by the social consensus about British Muslims of Pakistani backgrounds might project the wider stigma associated with British Muslim Pakistanis in the broader society. It would appear therefore that by submerging his Muslimness, Sami thinks that he is able to protect himself from the negative package associated with British Pakistanis in the UK.

Sami alluded to two important incidents that stimulated nationwide disgust about, and further stigmatised, the entire Muslim communities: the Rotherham child abuse scandal in 2014 and the Trojan horse Affair in 2015. By toning-down his Muslim-ness in academia, Sami is detaching himself from the stigma attached to Islam and Muslims in the broader society. Identifying as a BME suggests his belief that BME is a safer badge than Muslim. The last three lines suggest the influence of the discourse on the public-private divide on his view.

Unlike Sami, Hussain, the only white convert participant, detaches his Muslim-ness through code-switching that is facilitated by his White ethnicity which creates little suspicion about his Muslim-ness.

Obviously I am not perceived automatically by my students or my colleagues as a Muslim.. and I don't really talk about it... and even with students I am very reluctant to talk about it ... if a student asks me: Are you a Muslim? I would say it's not your business. On a personal, not on an institutional level, some people have become a bit distanced towards me. A colleague assumed that I was agnostic and when I told her I was a Muslim, she could not quite cope with that and had become a bit more distanced, and this is not the first time to encounter this.. so I like to disassociate the personal from the professional... so I think being Muslim is irrelevant to the work I am doing....(silence) ...I mean, I don't say that I'm not talking about it..I mean.... I mean with colleagues I am a bit more relaxed, particularly with people who have a Muslim background ..or they display their Islamic identity, for example with a hijab... obviously their perceptions are very different.. but the concern is not necessarily about discrimination...but about being pigeonholed. I mean...I suppose ...the distinction is not very clear cut... and I can't say that I have a sort of clear understanding of how to approach it.... but I can't deny that I am quite strategic about it.... and again the challenge that you and other Muslim colleagues have is not to be able to separate your professional from your personal identity and not to be solely judged based on your professional achievements...so that's why I probably would have been more cautious. Hussain- HSS

This quote reveals clearly his perplexity in trying to work out his own approach to dealing with his Muslim-ness in academia, as suggested by "I can't say that I have a clear understanding of how to approach it". His code-switching is revealed through not speaking about it in classroom settings and he even dismisses students' possible inquiries about his faith, while concurrently he would be 'more relaxed' on a personal level, particularly with people of a Muslim background, or with Muslim communities when conducting his fieldwork, as noted during the interview, to establish trust and facilitate data-gathering. Thus, he neither entirely reveals it nor entirely conceals it. Being 'strategic' about revealing/concealing his Muslim-ness is not due to fears of being discriminated against. It is, rather, to avoid 'pigeonholing' and to safeguard his scholarship from receiving judgments that might be tainted by views about his Muslim identity. Clearly, his strategy regarding concealment his Muslim-ness within non-Muslim circles is facilitated by his Whiteness. Put differently, his ethnicity protects him against being labelled as Muslims, as it is unlikely for a White individual to be thought of as being Muslim due to the pervasive perceived incongruity between being Muslim and being white.

However, it would appear that his personal experience with some non-Muslim colleagues has had an impact on his decision to tone-it down with non-Muslims

inside academia, perhaps to avoid them becoming distanced. Hussein's strategy brings to him the best of both worlds. By disclosure during his fieldwork, Hussein assures being well-received and trusted by the Muslim community. By concealment, he assures his membership of the white majority, thus maintaining his white privilege in a workplace that is predominantly occupied by his mirror image colleagues, and successfully avoids the prejudices non-Muslims generally have about Muslims.

His quote clearly suggests the difficulty Muslim academics with visible faith identity experience in disassociating their professional from their personal, particularly in the way they are judged by others.

Hussein's attitude regarding his Muslim-ness was found to be common amongst white British converts to Islam, as illustrated by Kose (1996), Moosavi (2015a,) and Suleiman (2013). Toning-down their Muslim-ness was a means to maintain their membership of the majority, preserve their British-ness and avoid jeopardising their Whiteness. And while Hussain was not concerned about possible discrimination, research showed that white converts taking on an outward Muslim identity, or even revealing their conversion to family and friends, are more likely to be 're-racialised' for embracing a 'non-white' religion, thus becoming prone to subtle forms of Islamophobia, such as exclusion and isolation (Moosavi, 2015a).

Similar to Hussein, the ability to pass as 'purely white' through bracketing one's Muslim-ness was effective for the Bosnian Muslim participants in the study of Miskovic (2007), due to their white skin colour. However, it is questionable whether Sami, with his visible skin colour, which indicates his ethnicity, and Muslim sounding-name, could successfully block out his Muslim-ness and pass as a non-Muslim. The following quote suggests his little success. His colleagues make comments that teases him, but more importantly show that even when Muslims try to conceal those who are of Muslim backgrounds try to conceal their Muslim-ness, others might still perceive them as Muslims due to the common intanglement between ethnicity and religious affiliation. Sami's response suggests how uncomfortable he feels about this.

Sami: Sometimes at events people will say to me Oh there's halal food here and I am hahahahah you know what? I've got used to vegetarian food, that's a bonus. So turning that into a light hearted way, into dealing with it

The discourse regarding Islam and the public-private divide was evident in Zainab's reflection on her Muslim-ness inside academia. Zainab, in HSS, used the vegetarian metaphor to illustrate her separation of her faith from her profession within academia.

[being Muslim] permeates throughout my entire life, but at the same time it is highly personal. So a vegetarian would be a vegetarian in their entire life, but that doesn't mean to say every single discussion and every single interaction is about vegetarianism, because it isn't. [...] When I ate yesterday in the seminar, it was impacted by my religious belief, but that didn't impact on anybody else... so it's my personal choice.., and I think it's the same for prayer, [...]so it's very personal and doesn't impact on anybody else. Now I am teaching XX, which is very different compared to its Islamic dual. It's not going to be influenced by my religious belief; it is a university module. It doesn't mean I stop becoming a Muslim because I teach it. So, I would describe it as central to my life, but highly personal, so it doesn't mean that everybody has to recognise that!
Zainab -HSS

Sami's and Zainab's negotiation of their Muslim-ness reinforces previous research results (Ehrkamp, 2007, in Germany; Nagel, 2002; Nagel and Staeheli, 2009, with British Arab Muslims). The participants in those studies drew as little attention as possible to their 'difference' in public and submerged their Muslim-ness into the private sphere principally to 'de-politicise' their Muslim-ness. Interestingly, Nagel and Staeheli (2009) underlined the complex and contradictory nature of this negotiation, when female participants insisted that their outward manifestation of their faith, through wearing the hijab, is just a 'private act'. Therefore, it is intriguing, but also unclear, how Zainab, who wears a hijab, thinks that her colleagues would not recognise her Muslim-ness, as indicated by the last sentence of her quote.

There might be other contextual factors specific to academia that could help explain why Muslim academics choose to privatise their belief. Firstly, this may be influenced by the view that religion is incompatible with enlightenment, which is the founding principle of Western academia. Secondly, it may be because the secular culture of academia has afforded less regard to faith, to the extent that "criticising and mocking the religious may not be regarded as a violation of rights, or even offensive" (Modood and Calhoun, 2015, p.12). Guest et al (2013) hold that the apparent hostility towards religious belief in the British

academia correlates with the popularity and prominence ‘New Atheists’ have achieved in academia. Some Christian academics in Weller, Hooley and Moore’s (2011) study of belief at UK universities reported having their Christianity ridiculed by colleagues. If Christian academics reported encountering mockery, given the historical significance of Christianity in Britain, then it would be more important to reflect on how much more negotiation is needed by Muslim academics, given the current common disapproval towards Islam and Muslims.

5.6.2 The Rise of Muslim Identity

The ‘reassertion of Islam’, as expressed by Huda below, was not a ‘political’ identification with Islam in the face of the pressures on Muslims to assimilate, as suggested by Geaves (2005). It was, rather, a resurgence of a critical faith identity

My parents are very traditional parents. There was no real understanding of the message of Qur’an; we just did what our parents told us to do...I read the Qur’an for reading the Qur’an sake [...]. And I wanted to challenge my own self because we hear of all these extreme negative views. I wanted to find out what the religion of Islam is telling us to do. And so now I do it with the understanding. [...] I was now very comfortable with my identity. [...] that I often say, I am Scottish and Pakistani, and I am Muslim. And I’ve just turned the table around; now I am a Muslim Scottish Pakistani Huda- HSS

Huda, like some of the participants in Peek’s study (2005), prompted by the rise of Islamophobia in the societal context, embarked on a ‘spiritual journey’ to critically examine Islam. The outcome was that Huda has become consciously Muslim and has given her Muslim-ness salience, as suggested by re-ordering her identity dimensions.

Huda spoke about her divided self when she was adhering to the public-private divide since her early schooling, moving to her career as a practitioner, till the early years of joining academia, attempting throughout to ‘fit into the majority culture: “right from the beginning, there was very much: the world outside and the world inside my home. They were clearly distinguishing characters”. She spoke about how she has incorporated different identity markers in the two worlds, including her dress-style, the language spoken and even her name, which was not appropriately recognised by her teachers.

Huda then talked about the moment of resolution when she decided to end this division and to reconcile the public and the private, the personal life with the professional life, and quit the fitting in mentality.

And so when I wanted to make the decision of adopting the hijab, as I was now very comfortable with my identity. And that I thought it was at that part of my life where... I was not so bothered about fitting in anymore. I have the confidence to say well no, I know that I am very strong within my professional context, and I want what is going on in my personal life and my professional life to be together. I can't separate it. And so therefore, I took on the hijab

Huda's quote reveals that she has been aware that taking up a visible identity might pose a challenge to the normativity, as Allen (2014, p. 139) argues that "in today's Western societies- Britain included -the identity of Muslim women is both seen and understood to be problematic"; however, being confident about her performance in her career has compensated for the potential challenges she might face.

5.7 The Influence of drawing on 'Faith Capital'

Several participants expressed views that being Muslim has positively influenced their career success in diverse ways. The findings in this section allow me to expand on Yosso's theorisation and include some perspectives of Muslim academics, particularly what I term in this section as 'faith capital'. Drawing on Black- and Mexican-American communities, Yosso (2005, p. 77-81) speaks of six types of capital people of colour devise from in developing their cultural and social capital, but also in order to survive in environments that largely overlook their assets whilst celebrating White middle class notions of capital. These types are: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational and resistant capital¹⁷. Taking the participants' views together, faith capital refers to the knowledge and understanding of the faith and/or the conditions and sentiments of one's own community in a way that fosters individuals' success, alleviates their performance and provides them with

¹⁷ Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers. Linguistic capital includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language. Familial capital refers to the cultural knowledge nurtured among familia (kin) that carries a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition. Social capital is understood as networks of people and community resources. Navigational capital refers to the skills of manoeuvring through social institutions. Resistant capital refers to the knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behaviour that challenges inequalities (Yosso, 2005, p. 79-80)

resilience when they face difficulties. Faith capital, thus, fosters survival and career advancement.

There's a hadith about ... the procedure when you do the Zabiha [sacrifice] and it says, do it in the best way. There was an interpretation that says Muslims should always strive to do their best in everything they do ... even the tiniest thing in the world, they should be the most excellent person at it...they should always aim for the best, and I want to aim for the best. Sarah- STEMM

There are several reasons for my unusual success...I feel pretty secure in my identity, that helps [...] I try and work sincerely, but I don't feel I need to prove myself to anybody... I've got to prove myself to God that's all what I've got to do really..but to people? No...I don't really feel that. I'm inspired by the hadith about ihsan, I mean perfection... I aspire to that. Rami-STEMM

Sarah, a senior researcher, attributed her success to being inspired by the hadith that is the saying of the prophet Muhammed, about ihsan, as 'aim for the best' suggests. Rami, a professor, shared Sarah's view, but also noted that his 'secured identity', in which he highlighted its faith component to be the most prominent, see section 5.4, plays a role also in his 'unusual success'. The hadith they alluded to is:

Verily Allah has prescribed ihsan (proficiency, perfection) in all things. So if you kill then kill well; and if you slaughter, then slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters.

While the hadith describes the act of slaughtering animals, its notion has been extended to any act/saying a believer performs, according to Muslim Jurists. Thus, the success of both has been motivated by this concept. The fact that their excerpts did not illustrate what they meant by ihsan may be due to my insider status, as they may have assumed that I understood what they meant. The concept of ihsan needs unpacking to illustrate how it could positively influence individuals' success. Ihsan is a Muslim responsibility to achieve perfection/excellence in whatever they say or do. Thus, muhsins (perfectionists) are aware that God is watching them and, hence, this creates sole accountability to God, so they strive to perfect what they do to please God and meet this criterion. This perhaps explains why Rami commented that he 'works sincerely' and does not strive to prove himself to humans.

Whilst drawing from faith perspectives has motivated Rami and Sarah to achieve excellence, being Muslim for some of the participants in HSS whose area of expertise is associated with Muslims, irrespective of their faith perspectives, has facilitated their academic success

In the last 25 years, not being white, being Pakistani and being Muslim has also been very helpful to my career...because I think people found it very difficult once I began to break through to ignore what I was saying because I could say well, I am speaking from experience, where are you speaking from? So, my insider knowledge became an asset and helped my reputation. Fazel - HSS

I come from a sort of marginalised position, being an ethnic minority, being a Muslim and *knowing* how difficult life is ... made me able to be successful in this. I'm able to play onto funders' interests, like issues around super diversity and inequality Adam- HSS

The insider perspective of both Fazel and Adam has advanced their careers. For Fazel, it enabled the provision of an insider view about Muslims that granted him authority, which cannot be easily dismissed by others. For Adam, it facilitated addressing the intricacies of minority groups that are sought by funders.

A few of the participants mentioned that their faith perspectives help them filter out negative experiences in their workplace. Ali reflects on his philosophy in this regard, which helps him overcome negative experiences within his workplace (and beyond).

When I applied for an XX job... I was asked by the secretary to withdraw my application ..of course I didn't .. but I think she did it on behalf of the boss...who was the supervisor of the other person who applied...maybe they've felt that, because we were very similar, I could probably upset the applecart.... I got interviewed, but didn't get the job. [...] Now, I don't see harassment, or racism... whether it's racism or not, whether it's harassment or not... I don't get to hit up with it. Ultimately, I see it as an excuse by God to make a certain outcome happen. I mean naturally nobody likes rejection, but I always believe, as I'm a Muslim first, is that whatever happened as long as I've tried my part, and I haven't done anything that displeases God, I trust God and I'm patient that it's for my betterment, be it short term, long term, be it in a worldly sense or a spiritual sense. That's the philosophy I have; it's the only way I feel that I can deal with rejection or difficulty without it overcoming me. Ali- STEMM

While Ali is aware that his experience might be framed as harassment on the grounds of subtle favouritism to the other candidate, as suggested by ‘spoil the applecart’, his philosophy in dealing with difficulties and obtaining reassurance rests on the principle of ‘destiny’ and ‘tawakkul’ in Islam. Although he did not explicitly name these principles, his quote pinpoints them. Tawakkul means that believers have to exert all the legitimate means to achieve a legitimate end; concurrently they rely on and trust the will, knowledge and wisdom of God, with the belief that ends are decided by God. Thus, if they were unsuccessful in achieving their ends, then it is because God knows best and, thus, he prevents fulfillment of that particular aim, for their own good. That is why he does not further scrutinise what underpinned a possible (negative) outcome, even if it was discrimination or harassment. Through this Islamic philosophy, Ali frees himself from being overwhelmed by anxiety, despair or insecurity, which are common characteristics of modernity and are pertinent to the discourse about academic identity. This finding aligns with how non-white academics, such as the Cherokee, Latino/a and Black participants in the studies of Bhopal (2015), Corntassel (2003), Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014) and Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007) draw from their own spirituality and religious backgrounds, or religious communities, such as churches, to cope with discrimination in academia.

5.8 Racial, Ethnic and Religious Micro-aggression

[...] people were talking, but people were bypassing me. So this person said to the other, I think you’ve got that skill, you deserve the job, the other responded: I think you’ve got that skill, you deserve the job... and I was just like a spectator... and I am thinking... nobody is asking me what my strengths are, what my weaknesses are, so I kept quiet.
Sami- HSS

I was having coffee with a White colleague, and he said to me: What do you think about ISIS? Just like that.. and I was like khalas [that’s enough], this guy is finished. I didn’t talk. I said what do you think? He started talking.[...] I didn’t say anything because I know whatever I am gonna say he’s gonna use it against me... so I just didn’t give him any ammunition.. because they don’t have any criticality... they lack nuance.
Basim -HSS

A few of the participants reported encountering some racial/ethnic micro-aggressions in interpersonal interaction with staff members and students.

Sami’s experience, cited above, happened during a job interview setting when he was the only non-white finalist. Whilst waiting for the panel’s decision, Sami experienced

being rendered invisible in the eyes of the White candidates, who subtly excluded him from the conversation through ‘bypassing’ him. The quote indicates that the non-verbal snub he felt at that time insinuated that his presence was unwelcome by the rest.

Although it was unclear whether the micro-aggression, in the form of ‘othering’ through bypassing, that was experienced by Sami was racially or religiously motivated, the existing tension between the intersectionality of his visible ethnic identity, through his skin colour, and his possible religious background cannot therefore be ignored. Thus it is not inconceivable to argue that this type of micro-aggression is filtered through the intertwining between his visible ethnicity and presumed religious affiliation.

Basim’s experience is an example of pure religious (Islamophobic) micro-aggression. Basim’s response suggests that he got the impression that his colleague was ‘keeping tabs’ or trying to ‘suss out’ his views, in order to position/ judge him in a pervasive climate of anti-Muslim suspicion. Turning the table on his colleague was Basim’s approach to dealing with this subtle Islamophobic attitude. This excerpt was mentioned during the second interview with Basim, which took place just after the new Prevent came in effect. However, it is unknown whether this particular experience took place before or after the enactment of the Prevent. However, it is clear that Basim was unsure about his colleague’s intention of asking this question in an environment where Muslims are perceived as possible suspects. Having suspicion about his colleague’s attitude was suspected, Basim preferred to indirectly censor his view in order to avoid having it filtered through ‘security’ lens.

The moment something happens, like Charlie Hebdo or the Peshawar school attack, colleagues will want to talk about it *with me*...not necessarily with others. So, I’m kind of reminded that I’m implicated in these conversations
Adam –HSS

Someone says what do you think about all these Pakistanis that have been convicted of pedophilia? I might not want to be asked that question and I might think well why you are asking me that question. But I don’t think it’s unfair. People say they’re Muslims who’ve been convicted, or Pakistanis, and I say I’m a Muslim, I’m a Pakistani, so why should I be surprised when people ask me a question like that.
Fazel- HSS

The experiences of Fazel and Adam suggest that being Muslim means that they have to endure a sense of collective guilt, even though they might not like to be involved in conversations related to societal/global events that are related to ‘terrorism’, and, while Adam’s quote suggests he feels upset about being exclusively targeted, Fazel’s approach is more resilient. Additionally, Fazel’s quote shows his awareness of the how being of certain ethnicity, Pakistani, automatically is associated with being Muslim, thus any possible social pathologies that are associated with British Pakistanis are more likely to be associated with Muslims in general.

Islamophobic jokes were also part of the experience.

I organise a seminar series... I invite speakers [...], and a white colleague said to me in jokingly fashion... I said are you coming to the next seminar? He said no because you only invite extremists. Do you understand this language?

Basim-HSS

Basim mentioned that he invites well-known academics to speak about issues related to the Muslim question, whose scholarship challenges the ‘normative truths’ and defies the problematising of Muslims. However, his colleague expressed his lack of interest via a joke, which was laden with Islamophobia. This quote also suggest the possibility that the implementation of the new Prevent might create, even informally, a climate of suspicion amongst the colleagues of Muslim academics who contribute to academic activities that challenges wider Islamophobia.

Micro-aggression was not only present in interaction with colleagues, but also in the way security guards, or administrative staff members, treated them, as the following quotes suggest.

There was a lecture there and I was going to go in and the security guard wouldn’t let me go in. I complained, and the head of security then apologised to me saying there are too many people or whatever, but I’m sure if I’d been a White professor, I wouldn’t have been refused by a security guard... that’s the thing. I also had incidents like a security guard who’s tried to arrest me for going to university...thinking that I don’t work here ... and were very rude.

Hadi-HSS

The way in which I interact with administrative staff....some of them can’t accept the fact that there are academics who have a different skin colour for example, I’ve just completed a form of expenses, and there might be a query about it, you would see how they respond to you .. and if it’s a White

colleague they will obviously respond in a completely different way...I'll give you another example, I made a mistake with a student's mark...and when the results came, he came up to me saying I've got the wrong mark. So I went to my line-manager to sign it off, he was cool about it ...but the admin staff who was in charge of grades entry was giving me Oh this shouldn't happen .. I was like the line-manager doesn't have a problem, what's your problem? You're just supposed to go into the system and fix it... so you can see how those people work in different ways really. Jamal-HSS

The accounts of Hadi and Jamal, a professor and senior lecturer, respectively, suggest their awareness of how non-white academics are treated differently to White academics in equivalent positions. Although he received an apology, Hadi seemed to doubt the excuse given by the head of security and rationalised this experience as a form of misrecognition that non-white academics have to cope with, due to the normativity of Whiteness in academia, as suggested by 'but I am sure if I'd been a White professor...'. Moreover, having a conspicuous Muslim identity, that is a beard, meant that Hadi had to bear the consequences of the 'War on Terror' threat, manifested through the security guard's attempt to arrest him. Jamal's quote also points out the intersectionality of ethnicity and his faith in how others perceive and treat him.

These quotes highlighted some of the (b)latent forms of Islamophobic micro-aggressions. Other participants spoke about having their views overlooked at departmental meetings, hearing White students' slighting comments about their names or hearing jokes from colleagues insinuating that they might better excel in IT than in HSS, because of their South-Asian background. The quotes in this section presented only forms of micro-aggression experienced by male participants. Gender-Islamophobic attitudes and White students' acts of micro-aggressions are discussed later.

These experiences invite three thoughts. Firstly, academia is susceptible to the influence of the wider Islamophobic climate, as Ahmed in HSS eloquently put forward in his rhetorical question: *how can universities be islands of tolerance in a sea of intolerance?* Secondly, the clear message transmitted through those Islamophobic micro-aggressions is that Muslim academics' Muslim-ness adds a layer of exclusion to their everydayness, in addition to the common racial/ethnic exclusion cited by non-white academics in previous studies. Thirdly, the cited encounters

suggest the homogenising impact of Islamophobia. Being Muslim, regardless of one's walk of life or perspectives, means that Muslims have to deal with this collective guilt and bear the occupational hazards associated with a proclaimed Muslim identity.

These findings align with previous research findings regarding instances of subtle racial micro-aggression, as reported by non-white academics and students (Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Corntassel, 2003; Solórzano, 1998; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Yosso et al. 2009). For instance, a lecturer in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013, p.15) reported that “when people were talking in the corridor... their body language intimates that they are not welcoming you to participate. It would be that they quieten down when you are talking”.

The implementation of the new Prevent duty in HEIs, , Muslim academics, who feel coerced into informal discussions over ‘terrorism’, might have concerns that they are not immune from being viewed through ‘security lenses’, as Basim’s experience suggests. This might lead Muslim academics to ‘look over their shoulders’ and self-censor their critical views that might oppose the mainstream narrative about Muslims for fear of potential repercussions. There would appear to be a partial analogy between the conditions of Muslim students and those of Muslim academics. Muslim students reported feeling constantly surveilled as a result of the enactment of anti-terrorism acts in their campus (Hopkins, 2011). Additionally, the discourse around Muslim Students’ Associations being ‘conveyer belts’ for terrorism, for example see Patel (2012), seems to have influenced how Basim’s colleague imprudently rejected scholarship that challenges the normativity.

Furthermore, Islamophobic/racist comments in the form of jokes should not be framed as innocent expressions of good humour. This is because the ‘act of telling a joke is intentional’ (Yosso et al., 2009). Indeed, Essed (1991) holds that jokes are a site where there can be a ‘ventilation of racism’ (p. 257).

Most of the previous studies, with the exception of Asmar (2005b) and Weller, Hooley and Moore (2011), mainly discussed racial or gender micro-aggressions. The findings from this current study, therefore, take the discussion on micro-aggressions

further by introducing the concept of religious micro-aggression. This allows an expansion of the discourse on micro-aggression in academia to include religion and, more particularly, Islamophobic assaultive remarks and/or jokes. Religious (Islamophobic) micro-aggression is verbal abuse that takes the form of ‘micro-assaults’¹⁸ (Sue et al., 2007) that rest on the ‘normative truths’ (Allen, 2010) about Islam and Muslims and send messages indicating that Muslims are the ultimate other, not to mention their association with ‘terrorism’ and ‘fundamentalism’.

Finally, it is obvious that aspects of misrecognition were intertwined with the forms of micro-aggression discussed above. Fraser’s (2000) ‘status model’ of recognition lends itself well to explain the centrality of misrecognition to the various forms of micro-aggression, that is racial, ethnic or religious, within the experiences cited in this section. Fraser holds that misrecognition occurs when some actors within an institution are rendered, through the normative cultures and interactive conventions, as ‘inferior’, ‘wholly others’ or ‘simply invisible’ (p. 112). The quotes suggested how the participants were deemed as wholly others and/or invisible on the level of social interaction, be it through the way admin staff members and security guards treated them or the type of subtle assumptions embedded in Islamophobic jokes, or simply through being subtly ignored/excluded by their peers.

5.9 Challenges Perceived by Muslim Academics: The Need to Fit in

Some of the participants, whose Muslim-ness denotes faith perspectives, described some of the challenges they face in their workplace that are not linked to their academic responsibilities. The excerpts cited below suggest the diverse ways the participants employ to ‘fit in’, in order to progress and survive.

5.9.1 . Faith Identity and Alcohol

One challenge raised by the participants was the alcohol drinking culture at academic events and socialising norms.

¹⁸ Sue et al (2007, p. 274) in clinical psychology define a microassault as: an explicit racial derogation characterized primarily by a verbal or nonverbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behaviour, or purposeful discriminatory actions.

One area within academia is quite problematic...all the conferences offer evenings where alcohol is a dominant part ...and I'm not particularly comfortable with it. I tend to compromise. I don't drink, but even being around it is a compromise, but, to an extent, you have to play these things, yeah, I mean it's difficult. Rami- STEM

There was a time when a white female in my department would go for dinner with us, and she said to me I don't like when you come with us; I said why? She said because you don't drink alcohol and I don't like to be drunk in front of you...because I feel embarrassed. I was like, well, I am not gonna drink to please you. So it's not easy to exist in academia as a Muslim.

Basim- HSS

In terms of how people socialise, it gets a bit awkward because obviously I won't go to the pub. Like...after a conference, they all want to go drinking and then you feel a bit isolated because you obviously don't go.

Hiba- STEM

Whilst the quotes reveal the challenges these participants experienced, it would appear that the male participants were more willing to negotiate this aspect of their faith identity, 'compromise' and 'play the game', unlike Hiba and the majority of the female participants, who chose not to be part of such socialising and, thus, they felt indirectly excluded.

However, others did not perceive this socialising as being problematic

When they decide to go out for a meal in a pub, of course I can get into the pub and just drink a coke. Of course the pub isn't my natural environment, but ... it's not an issue either. Hasan-STEM

Previous research (ECU, 2011; Weller, Hooley and Moore, 2011) has considered the indirect exclusionary effect of informal socialising, to which alcohol is central, as indirect discrimination. This is because crucial contacts, recommendations and information could be shared through these settings, which means that those who do not attend would indirectly be disadvantaged. Research with Muslim students (Asmar, 2005a, 2005b; Hopkins, 2011) also reported feelings of exclusion, due to the centrality of alcohol to socialising norms at universities.

5.9.2 Recalibrating Conspicuous Faith Identity: The Effort of Female Academics

Some of the female participants revealed that they exert ‘extra effort’ in portraying a good image of Muslims amongst colleagues and students through going ‘out of their way’ to be sociable, delivering high quality teaching and/or conducting themselves in an appropriate manner. These efforts were meant to mitigate the common stereotypes pervasive in the broader society about Muslims.

I make an effort to be social, because there are a lot of perceptions of Muslim out there, and a lot of it is to do with the unknown, because people don’t know many Muslims. So, if I can at least be a Muslim that somebody knows, trying to conduct myself in an appropriate manner then at least I’ll be an example to somebody to say this is how Muslims behave. I don’t want to be withdrawn and uncommunicative or segregated. *I am making an effort* just to speak to people, even though it’s tiring. Sarah- STEMM- emphasis hers

I create this network. I *have to* put in the effort, yes. How I do that? I don’t know, I guess I joke, I talk along the corridors... to show them that I’m like any other person, I’m not... what you see or hear from the newspapers and the media. We’re normal people... so that, kind of, puts their defences down a little bit, knock their walls off around us. Sahar- HSS- emphasis hers

I never base my teaching on the available material by the course organiser, although my colleagues do. [...] I spend triple the time I’m teaching and, it’s nothing to do with payment because I’m paid anyway, but ... *for me* it’s a message that we have to pass it on to these people, because they come with a very bad attitude just because the teacher is Muslim. They’ve never done anything bad to me, but you can feel it from their attitude... and whenever they see me, they know I’m a Muslim. For them I’m not only their teacher, I’m a Muslim teacher... [laughing] so I always want them to trust me as a Muslim female, not just as a teacher [...] I want them to know that not all Muslims are bad, not all Muslims are careless, not all Muslims don’t perfect their job, especially because I wear the hijab. Muna- HSS- emphasis hers

The quotes suggest their implicit impression that they are representatives of Muslims, hence they feel morally obliged to put in extra effort, suggested by the second sentence of Sarah’s quote. Additionally, their views are filtered through Islamophobic discourse, as the ‘us versus them’ discourse is clearly detected in these quotes. For example, Sahar remarked that ‘we are normal people’ and ‘knock their walls off around us’. These participants try to defy stereotypes that are widely spread

about Muslims, such as being ‘segregated’, ‘uncommunicative’ and/ or ‘bad people’. The possible relationship between their ‘extra effort’ and their conspicuous identity is indicated by the last phrase in Muna’s quote. Perhaps this theme was restricted to the female participants, due to their awareness of the tension their faith visibility might create.

This aligns with previous research findings (Asmar, 2005b; Khosrojerdi, 2015). These studies showed that Muslim female students who wear the hijab engaged actively in clarifying the misconceptions about Islam through conducting themselves in a way that portrays a positive image of Islam.

Another challenge expressed was related to dress-code in academia.

I was worried how my colleagues might perceive this change..it’s the dress-code that’s changing... so I sent an email to the head of department and a couple of colleagues just saying [...] but I am still the same person. I don’t know why I thought the need to say it...I don’t know but I had to address it...I was concerned...I felt as if I...I don’t know, I felt as if I needed to offer an explanation...in order to perhaps answer their unasked questions... or actually they wouldn’t ask, but I know they were asking. I did the same with my students. When I first introduced myself in the class, I saw my students looking quite confused and I said can I just say hello, you might be wondering why I have a new hairstyle. Well, I’ve just embarked on a spiritual journey, but that’s a conversation to have another time. Huda- HSS

Huda’s quote reveals the challenges she faced on deciding to wear the hijab. It even appeared to be challenging for her during the interview to identify what exactly underpinned her ‘worries and concerns’, as suggested by the second sentence of the quote. Nevertheless, she felt impelled then to justify her choice, emphasising ‘she is still the same person’. This justification alludes to the perceived alienation of the hijab at the societal and the institutional levels. However, it is unclear whether, by stressing she is ‘still the same person’, Huda is trying to vindicate herself from the common charges attached to the hijab, for example a political standpoint that shows defiance, or the indirect linkage common in the media between the hijab and extremism, or how the hijab is perceived to represent the ‘evils of Islam’ (Bullock, 2002). Perhaps her justification aimed at seeking colleagues’ and students’ approval.

Previous research findings (Bhopal, 2015; Hernandez and Murakami, 2016) discussed the indirect pressures non-white academics and/or individuals in leadership positions express to ‘act White’ in their work settings, in order to be perceived as ‘credible’ by their White colleagues. They consciously do this by adopting the Western norms of professional dress-code. A Latina principal remarked “I am conscious of getting dressed in the hair, jewellery, clothing [...] I will wear! If I am considered a professional, I want to present myself as one” (Hernandez and Murakami (2016, p.10). Wearing the hijab, therefore, could pose hindrance to ‘acting White’. These accounts suggest the conscious, and also great amount of, negotiations Muslim academics with visible faith identity need to make in order to fit in and combat a pervasive narrative of othering compared to their Muslim colleagues with no conspicuous faith identity.

5.10 The Hijab: A Misfit in UK Academia?

Key to the gender identity of female participants was the hijab. The majority of the female participants do not perceive their hijab as posing a hindrance to their current, or future, career prospects, nor to their daily interaction with colleagues and students.

The findings show that the hijab triggers different reactions: neutral, unfavourable or positive. These reactions appear to depend on such factors as: the type of academic post they occupy, the staff members’ and students’ body, the (lack of) familiarity of the hijab within the city, and/or in relation to the discipline, hence the disparity in experiences.

Nobody has insinuated that there is a problem with me wearing the hijab.. so I don’t feel uncomfortable about it. Actually people tend to say Oh I like your scarf... It’s funny... people feel awkward about swearing in front of me..[laughing]. if they swear without thinking they apologise to me, they don’t apologise to anybody else...I don’t know whether that’s just...a sign of respect
Hiba -STEMM

With other teachers they joke, some jokes are unsuitable for me as a Muslim, but even as a female...I feel my students respect me as a female because of the way I dress more than my female colleagues who do not dress in the same way.
Muna- HSS

The experiences of Hiba and Muna were positive. Hiba, an early career researcher, felt that colleagues show more respect towards her (than they do towards other

colleagues) because of her dress-code, as suggested by ‘apologising’ when swearing. Similarly, Muna had the impression that her dress-style stimulates a framework of respectability, particularly with male students. The university she works at is located in a city with a considerable Muslim population, which is also reflected in the diverse students’ body at the university. The participants like Muna, who teach in disciplines related to Islam, for example Islamic Studies or the Sociology of Religion and/ or Arabic, cited positive experiences. Perhaps the familiarity of the hijab in the wider city and the impact of the discipline on students’ expectations about the possible identity of their teachers contributed to the positive experiences. Muhtaseb (2007) spoke of how both her visible Muslim identity, through the hijab, and her Arab ethnicity assisted her academic authority and credibility when she taught Arabic to white students.

Others, however, cited some occurrences that suggest that the hijab is an ‘outsider’, an ‘alien’ to academia and, more particularly, incongruent with being a fully-fledged academic. These experiences were cited by participants in senior posts, who attend conferences, who teach English or whose students’ body and colleagues are mainly white, as the following quotes reveal.

When I started wearing the hijab, I’d go into a colleague’s office, and then there was this picture of XX [a conflicted region in the Middle-East]; he said, you would be quite comfortable over there. I looked over and said Where is this place? He said: This is XX. I said: Why do you think I would be comfortable there? It’s so because women like you live there. OK? [...] I just left the office shaking my head, there is no point even explaining and I laughed it off. But I walked away feeling quite angry, nervous, upset and part of me was saying well, he’s not even worth explaining to him, because...he doesn’t realise. Huda- HSS

It is worth pausing to unpack three points in Huda’s quote. Firstly, her White male colleague’s view seems to be influenced by the biased representation of the media regarding Muslims. Poole (2002) found that the British media contributes to forming a negative image of the hijab, by subliminally linking the turmoil in the ‘Third World’ to the conditions of British Muslim communities. Secondly, his comment insinuates ‘gendered Islamophobia’ (Zine, 2006), a form of religious micro-aggression, as he othered Huda because of her hijab, that is ‘women like you’. This

subordinating comment included an unwelcoming attitude and misrecognition, vivid in his assumption that, because of her dress-style, Huda is better able to ‘fit’ in XX, suggested by ‘quite comfortable’ and insinuates that she might ‘less (or not?) fit’ in the UK and, by extension, in its White establishment. Thus, she is not perceived as a full member of the institution. Thirdly, while he expressed his view boldly enough to trigger a response, Huda not only did not respond, but also ‘laughed it off’ in front of him, although, afterwards, she felt angry. The intersectionality of several possible grounds of discrimination could also be detected here, gender and faith identity. As indicated in the previous section, a Muslim female who does not wear the hijab is less likely to receive such explicit inconsiderate comments.

Sarah’s experience below, was less blatant than Huda’s

I’ve been to so many conferences where I would present... I physically see people go like this (raising her eyebrow) because they hear a proper Scottish accent... and think, how on earth, like it’s not like an accent of a bilingual. For example, we had a meeting where I presented... at the end of it, a guy came up to me and said: So you are Sarah? And I’m like yeah hahaha..he’s like you have very strong Scottish accent... and I’m like, yeah hahaha., like as in *and?* I was talking with him where he lived... that kind of thing... and he still was staring at me like I can’t ... I can’t quite add up, your dress is like this, and you’re brown that you have a Scottish accent ... like I didn’t know that that was a possibility!

Sarah- STEMM

When attending conferences, Sarah’s visible difference usually triggers a ‘double take’ amongst the audience, who apparently juxtapose her academic credentials with her difference. This ‘double take’ is a latent form of micro-aggression, which reflects othering, as discussed in section 5.8. The colleague’s astonishment upon seeing her reveals that his expectations about her identity were not met. He juxtaposed the aspects that grant her an insider status, that is academic credentials and Scottish accent, with the aspects that do not sit comfortably well, in his view, with being an academic, that is skin colour and dress-style.

The presence of some unfriendly reactions towards the hijab suggests continuity between the finding from this current study and the findings from studies that

examined the experiences of Muslim females in relation to wearing the hijab, with university students and in the wider society. Asmar, Proude and Inge (2004), Bullock (2002), Cole and Ahmadi (2003), Khosrojerdi (2015) and Suleiman (2013) underlined the difficulties and challenges participants face. Gendered Islamophobic micro-aggressions in their workplaces or at universities during interaction with peers and professors were common in their experiences. For instance, a female participant wearing the hijab in the study of Asmar, Proude and Inge (2004) remarked

“I know I am treated differently to non-Muslims, especially as I wear the hijab, as I only converted 1 year ago, so I can feel the difference I receive in all aspects of the university and in outside areas. We are not treated equally, and I sometimes feel we are despised” (p. 57, emphasis original).

Additionally, Huda’s choice not to escalate it or confront her colleague about his racist behaviour concurs with research findings (Allen, 2014; Allen and Nielsen, 2002) on how the majority of female victims of gendered Islamophobia tend to avoid formal reporting of it. This tendency to remain silent was also common in HEIs across students (NUS, 2012) and staff members (Weller, Hooley and Moore, 2011) when it comes to discrimination on grounds of religion/belief, for fear of further repercussions.

The personal identities of Huda and Sarah, in which aspects of faith, gender and ethnicity intersect were central to how they were perceived and treated by their colleagues, which is a common thread across the accounts, as discussed in sections 5.3 and 5.8. This is in accordance with the experiences of non-white academics in Bhopal’s (2015) study, who reported that their personal racial/ethnic identities are brought to the fore in academic settings in a way that might disadvantage them. A Latina participant (p. 73) noted

People of colour are very conscious of the influence of background in academia [...]. and we have always been disadvantaged to some extent. So one’s background can and does influence the level of acceptance in the faculty, and, as a woman of colour, I feel that our acceptance is challenging and defined in terms that are different to the majority of our colleagues.

5.11 Muslim Academics' views on academic identity

[Being an academic] (silence). Well, I think, it's just...it's a kind of job, which has some enjoyment...particularly if you feel rewarded...of course, not everything is enjoyable. I teach, I do research and some admin work, so ...ok... first it's a job which brings income, so I can survive... that's one element ... teaching students and helping them to learn ... is actually satisfactory ... you feel you're doing something useful to others. Definitely, the research bit develops your skills ... solving problems scientifically actually improves personal and intellectual skills. When we publish, publications show how people evaluate your work, so it's satisfactory as well.

Tariq- STEMM

I think [being an] academic researcher is a personal achievement that has nothing to do with your identity, but it completes... it doesn't actually complete, it gives you honour, that's it. Your identity is who you are and I am a Muslim. I may change my career and have my own business...I will be then a businessman. So, it's a profession. Said- STEMM

Most of the participants' views about academic identity appeared to be only a little congruent with the normative discussions on academic identity, as shaped by the discipline, the institution and the profession (see Henkel (2000)). The majority of the STEMM participants described being an academic as a 'job' or a profession that has nothing to do with their identity. They discussed the responsibilities they carry out as part of this profession, as exemplified by Tariq's quote. He listed his responsibilities, for example teaching and conducting research, and emphasised that he enjoyed the intellectual stimulating aspect of 'solving problems scientifically', but also remarked that enjoyment is conditional to being 'rewarded'. His account revealed some negative experiences, as discussed in the next chapter. Said explicitly challenged the influence of being academic on his identity. The possibility of a career change meant that it is not essential to his identity; his identity seemed to be what is less likely to change.

I am not academic... I don't do any teaching; I am only a researcher...

Hiba- STEMM

I've two years experience as an academic, when I was a research associate it was different because you don't have those responsibilities. You only do research, write papers, and that's it. But when I became an academic then it's not just research, it's teaching. Fatima- STEMM

The views of Hiba and Fatima suggest they filtered being academic through lecturing. Fatima explicitly stated that, prior to being a lecturer, she was not an academic.

The HSS participants differed in their conceptualisation, as they emphasised what they believed to be significant about their academic profession.

I mean I've always been interested in the question of UU [his area of expertise], and I think all of that is marked by my biography...so my academic profession and my academic interest are reflections of that.

Ahmed- HSS

I do strongly identify as a professor...there are two distinctive features about my professional identity...I'm a Sociologist, Muslim Sociologist, if you like, but that's clearly not my PhD professional training ...I've completely recreated my own intellectual orientation, and that means that I have relatively loose discipline associations. I don't think of myself as a sociologist in the sense some colleagues think of themselves, as strong sociologists. I do Sociology but then I do Political Theory. I define myself much more thematically. Another very important aspect is that my work is interdisciplinary because of my previous work experience in the policy area. [Finally] I am someone who is very seriously, publicly engaged in debates with some degree of advocacy on behalf of Muslims in Britain, and that matters to me very much.. it's not a chance thing, it's a priority! Fazel – HSS

I see being an academic as something which is public.. and not just confined to the institution. And I've noticed one thing that actually I've been valued for..is my links with groups outside academia ... so I've been instrumental in using my contacts within civil society to bring in funding... [...] but then you also notice how my seniors want to take the limelight when the research is evolving...so... so, it's... it's quite paradoxical ..., they do and they don't ... they don't accept you completely, but they are quite selective... taking the bits that are useful for them.

Adam- HSS

[being academic] is a source of intellectual stimulation [...] I love reading and teaching. Doing just the things you love ... that's a Rahma from Allah (Mercy from God). I mean the whole idea of teaching, learning is really gratifying.

Aref- HSS

Ahmed illustrated how his 'biographical baggage' has influenced the shaping of his academic interests and has been the impetus for his academic profession. This view is grasped from Fazel's quote, as his previous work in policy has influenced his interdisciplinary scholarship. This interdisciplinary scholarship was also the case for

several of the participants in HSS, who work on the ‘Muslim question’. That is why he described his scholarship as ‘thematic’ and loosely related to the discipline. This is, perhaps, why other HSS participants who work on issues related to Muslims do not strongly identify with their disciplines. Additionally, Fazel’s emphasis on the significance of ‘public engagement’ to his profession was shared by Adam, who described his professional identity in terms of his public engagement. Adam’s quote shows how his sense of membership is incomplete, as suggested by “it’s quite paradoxical...they do and they don’t”, and his success in generating funds entails his partial membership status. Aref shares Tariq’s view that teaching is ‘gratifying’

Unlike other participants, Aqeel did not speak about what he values about his professional identity, but what made it different.

One thing that I noticed about my professional identity is it sort of sat at odds with the usual dynamic...and I always feel a bit, not like an outsider, because middle class liberal academics are all very nice usually, but they don’t exclude you in that way, but sometimes the structures do [...]

Aqeel- HSS

Aqeel spoke in detail about his schooling time when teachers would nurture white students and neglect non-white students’ potential, his working-class background, his job as labourer before joining academia and his Black political identity. He then spoke about the way his academic credentials are often challenged by students, although widely published, and the racism he experienced in academia, although he refused to expand on it, as will be discussed in section 6.3, and that he ended up having no career expectations. These aspects shaped his academic identity, which ‘sat at odds’ with the structures and made him feel like an outsider. Aqeel’s account shows how the repertoire of his personal identity influences how he is placed in academia, as previously discussed.

The views above reveal that their ‘biographical baggage’ (Collinson, 2004), that is social context and life histories, has an effect in shaping the participants’ academic identity. The views that teaching is gratifying were reported by non-white academics in previous research (Asmar and Page, 2009, Bhopal, 2015; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). Asmar and Page, for instance, found that indigenous academics

give particular salience to teaching in their career. They also reported gratification in being among students and supporting them.

5.11.1 Academic Career Intertwines with Political and Community Activism

This subsection follows on from the previous section, in that some of the participants view that their academic career correlates with their political and community activism. Some even perceive their academic career as analogous to their social activism and the struggle to influence change. Therefore, the importance of public engagement that Fazel and Adam, in the previous section, emphasised when describing their academic identity has been cited by some as the impetus behind pursuing an academic career. Interestingly, social and community activism was not limited to the HSS participants, as some of the participants in STEMM spoke about their engagement in bringing about positive changes to Muslim communities. These activities include: offering advice to Muslim organisations, volunteering in activities that aim to empower and inspire Muslim youth/ communities, contributing to non-academic events and conferences that advocate human rights and challenge Islamophobia and reaching out to non-academic readership through making their writings accessible via other venues, for example free online newspapers. Their accounts on their social activism were in stark contrast to their silence with regard to their personal experiences of institutional racism within academia, as will be discussed in section 6.2

I decided to become an academic because I wanted to contribute to knowledge... through bringing the Muslim voice to the conversation about Muslims, because, at that time, a lot of the debates were happening about Muslims, but not with Muslims. So [being an academic] is not a vanity project. It's not about my status or anything. I don't care about people praising me ... I want to contribute to the discussion, and I want to progress it, and I want to create nuanced understandings about Muslims/Islam and validate their perspective, because the kinds of blunt understanding we have about Muslims/Islam today is having a very real impact on the lives of Muslims in Britain, they're being discriminated against. Basim- HSS

All my research is basically geared around... I don't want to be targeting ivory tower scholars, I want my research to benefit and empower the Muslim community ... so I see myself as an activist scholar... Aref- HSS

The intentions that I have for working in an institution like this are mainly to empower and to inspire people, so that's basically pretty much it. I don't see it as a job; I don't see it as a career. I consider it mainly like a duty... basically I see it as an extension of my voluntary work, so it is a service that is extended to humanity
Jamal -HSS

Basim's pursuit of an academic career was fuelled by the Islamophobic climate. Being an academic for him is neither a 'vanity project' nor about status. He wants to shift the narrative that has long disadvantaged Muslims. Similarly, Aref does not perceive his scholarship as part of the 'ivory tower'. Rather, 'all his research' is done about Muslims and *for* empowering them. Jamal's view echoes that of Aref. Jamal sees being an academic as neither a 'job' nor a 'career', but, rather, an augmentation to his voluntary work (with Muslim communities) and a 'service' to humanity. The absence of personal ego in these quotes suggests that those who uncompromisingly proclaim an activist project are less influenced by the normative definitions of academic work.

Furthermore, while Basim did not change career, Aref, Jamal and Dilawar did (see section 3.3, in which Dilawar highlighted that, for those who left an untaxing secure job to join academia, this was an act of political activism). The general negative climate surrounding Muslims globally has stirred their activism and necessitated their political mobilisation to work in academia, as they felt that most of the debates about Muslims are generated inside academia. That is why Dilawar compared an academic career with 'intellectual jihad (strive)' and Jamal perceived it as a 'duty'. If academic scholarship has contributed to the 'othering' of Muslims, then it could be the very means to recalibrate this othering and present the Muslim voice in the Muslim issues. The findings from this section correspond with those from section 6.1.9.

Their views invoke the notion of 'public intellectual', as defined by Said (1993, p.11-12) below, in that their scholarship is not confined to academic circles; it articulates a message *about* Muslims and *for* Muslims. Their profession aims at challenging the normative views about Islam/Muslims and their personal biographies- being

Muslims, thus members of marginalised communities- have intertwined with their scholarship.

The intellectual is an individual with a specific public role in society that cannot be reduced simply to being a faceless professional, a competent member of a class just going about her/his business...the intellectual is an individual endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to, as well as for, a public. And this role has an edge to it, and cannot be played without a sense of being someone whose place it is publicly to raise embarrassing questions, to confront orthodoxy and dogma[...] The intellectual does so on the basis of universal principles: that all human beings are entitled to expect decent standards of behavior concerning freedom and justice [...], and that deliberate or inadvertent violations of these standards need to be testified and fought against courageously.[...] I say or write these things because after much reflection they are what I believe; and I also want to persuade others of this view. There is therefore this quite complicated mix between the private and the public worlds, my own history, values, writings and positions as they derive from my experiences, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, how these enter into the social world where people debate and make decisions about freedom and justice.

Their views also align with the views of the non-white academic participants in the studies of Bhopal (2015) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014), and with Cornthassel's (2003) personal narrative as a Cherokee academic, who views that empowering communities is essential to their academic role. Guadalupe, in Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (p. 14), holds that

...that's [community service] probably the part that I like best about my job actually, and that's why I'm actually doing what I'm doing is to be of use to the community.

Muslim academics' activism aligns with Muslims' political mobilisation to combat anti-Muslim racism in the broader society and with Muslim students' activism in its multi-faceted forms, as documented by several studies (Asmar 2005b, Khosrojerdi, 2015, Mubarak, 2007). Muslim academics also seek to build coalitions with and seek the support of white academics who have true commitment to global justices. The views and scholarship of white academics might be rendered more credible, due to their White privilege, than those of Muslim academics, since the latter can hardly

avoid having their scholarship judged on grounds of their background, as suggested by Hussain's account in section 5.6.1.

I organised a lecture around Islamophobia. Initially, I thought I'll do it myself, but I had this thought in my head that I'm a Muslim...they're gonna think I'm biased and they're not gonna take it seriously... so I invited a white academic from a different university to deliver it. It went on fantastically, more than 100 people turned up ... everybody agreed, everybody was happy... and I said to him if I delivered that lecture it would've been very different, he agreed.
Basim- HSS

A professor in STEMM, *off the record*, mentioned that he has been considering doing something about 'terrorism'.

In terms of dealing with terrorism in Britain, one of the things I've been thinking about is whether I should actually spend a lot more time to work on those issues... but that will be beyond academia... there's a real need really ... I know that will be at the expense of my career... that's what I'm grappling with personally

5.12 Views on Research and the Research Excellence Framework (REF)

Regardless of the discipline, nearly all of the participants stressed that the main reason behind joining academia is their enthusiasm towards conducting research, and gave it salience over other academic responsibilities.

I always knew I wanted to be doing some medically related research. I always liked that, [...] so I did a Masters in research, then I was offered a PhD.
Sarah – STEMM

All my research is about identifying problems and developing tools to solve them. Actually I enjoy every single part of research. Akbar- STEMM

Generally, the STEMM participants spoke about the mentally stimulating nature of, and the enjoyment they feel about, conducting research, as suggested by Sarah and Akbar.

The majority of the HSS participants noted that they carry out research hoping to inform policies, to 'politically' improve the situation of Muslims locally and globally and to document the current history of Muslims from a Muslim standpoint.

Research for me is the history of the present. It's a matter of agency; it's a testimony for resistance. Because, in another 50 year time, when scholars will look back at this particular time of Muslims in the West in such a dark and difficult period...and basically ask: Well, how did Muslims respond? It is something that I can leave behind that presents an analysis of the present.

Jamal- HSS

The majority of the STEMM participants spoke about the REF in a positive light, as they were part of the submission team, even those in teaching-intensive universities.

I was put forward for the REF. [...] There was something like 7 papers 3*. So I know it's internationally recognised.. Alhamdu liAllah (Praise be to God). It's leading the field. There are a couple, maybe one or two are 4*. So the papers have high quality.. yeah..I know... and you can always tell they're high quality depending on the journals that accept them. Sarah- STEMM

I am part of the submission team for the REF and RAE. My school considers me an active researcher. We have some internal assessment criteria for selection ... and I think it's objective in our school... any staff member from whatever background, but has quality publications in top journals, definitely this will benefit the whole school. It's [the internal assessment] good actually; it shows your strength. Tariq- STEMM

Sarah shows pride and confidence about her performance, which has been 'internationally recognised' through the ranking she received. Tariq viewed that the selection criteria was 'objective', regardless of individuals' background. This aligns with the views of some of the participants in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013), who perceive that the REF selection criteria within schools has 'neutralised ethnicity', as follows

A Black colleague used to say: "I would not be a Professor if it was not for the REF." Simple as that. I think I agree, because the REF puts pressure on university management, who need to appoint people either who can publish, or have the potential to publish, or have published. Now, that literally neutralises the ethnicity; it just eliminates ethnicity. So, it creates a level playing field. (p. 9)

5.13 Chapter Summary

The discussion in this chapter aimed at answering the first research question in relation to how the participants defined their identities. In their description of their identities, the participants spoke of multiple identities, including ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion and profession. The significance given to one particular

dimension over another was relatively connected to the importance they allocated to that particular dimension during the interview interaction. The participants' Muslimness featured in various forms and could be described on a continuum of two versions of 'Muslim consciousness', which ranges from faith-centred Muslim consciousness at one end to a Muslim consciousness that has elements of activism aiming at challenging the plights of Muslims through their scholarships, informed by Muslim politics and/or their insider perspectives. The participants' multi-faceted identification with Islam invalidates the homogenising discourse of what being Muslim means, a point that has been long highlighted in both theoretical writings and empirical research related to Muslim identity in the West (e.g. Ansari, 2004; Gilliat-Ray, 2010; Modood, 2010).

Puwar (2004, p. 55-58) eloquently critiqued the 'disembodied institutional narrative' that stresses that professions have job descriptions regardless of individuals' colour, ethnicity, gender or class background, and that individuals, once recruited, could progress in their career, regardless of their background. Academia is one of those institutions espousing a powerful narrative that presents the ivory tower as a colour-blind and gender-neutral institution that is principally interested in 'pure intellectual scholarship'. Empirical research has challenged both this narrative and the notion that HEIs are gender neutral (Van den Brink and Benschop, 2011; Teelken and Deem, 2013) or race-neutral (Gillborn, 2010; Villalpando and Delgado Bernal, 2002). Moreover, the accounts of non-white academics, for example in Bhopal, (2015), Lugo-Lugo, (2012). Solórzano, (1998) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, (2014), have illustrated that their identities shape and inform the ways they are positioned in academia. This is because their identity dimensions, such as gender and/or ethnicity, serve as lenses through which others judge them and decide on how to treat them. Hence, the presence of ethnic, racial and gender micro-aggressions through interpersonal interactions with others inside academia illustrates the form of status misrecognition that non-whites experience, and points out how their opportunities may be tainted by this positioning. The experiences of the participants in this current study indicate that they are no different to non-white fellow academics in Western academia. Regardless of the participants' religiosity, it

appears that academia is not particularly immune from the general apprehension, and, rather, the common hostility, against Muslims in the West –including the UK. The religious micro-aggression the participants experienced assures that the lens through which Muslim academics are observed in academia is both created and reinforced by the current global consensus about Muslims, underpinned by a ‘war on terror’ ideology’, and suggests that academia is not faith-neutral.

The situation was more significant for some of the female participants, due to the hijab, which represents the gendered aspect of the Muslim problem. The hijab seems to put extra pressure on Muslim female academics to prove themselves, as well as to be approved by their colleagues. This extremely negative global consensus about Muslims is also argued to have some influence on the presence of silence in some of the accounts when the topic of Muslim identity was on the table. Additionally, this dominant anti-Muslim discourse was evident in the way some of the participants negotiated their Muslim-ness in academia, which was a common thread in the accounts across the diverse themes discussed in this chapter. Negotiation was performed through toning-down, submerging or disassociating this dimension of their identity in academia, and compromising aspects of their faith identity, due to the normative socialising norms. Thus, the broader ostracising climate seems to have a threefold influence on Muslim academics: the ways others perceive and treat them, the way they go about their Muslim identity inside academia and, more importantly for some, the internalisation of Islamophobic discourse; thus, they perceived themselves through an Islamophobic lens.

Being perceived purely as an academic, regardless of their religious background, appears to be less feasible, except perhaps in the case of White converts. Nevertheless, being an academic of Muslim background has brought about professional success for some of the participants, through enabling an insider perspective, and has also positively influenced their career excellence, through the ‘faith capital’ lens, which also helps them cope with workplace challenges.

The findings of this current study further support non-white academics’ views in previous research regarding what being an academic means (Bhopal, 2015; Urrieta

Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Corntassel, 2003). Community and political activism has principally underpinned the choices of several of the HSS participants in this current research to join academia. Moreover, social and political activism was not uncommon, even amongst the STEMM participants. The findings also suggest that Muslim academics are involved in two forms of activism. First is proactive activism, through producing rigorous scholarship to combat injustices that Muslims face locally and globally- an active explicit form of activism. Second is passive activism, illustrated in the way the Muslim female academics spoke about how their presence, the way they conduct themselves and the extra effort they exert in their teaching are aimed at clarifying the misconceptions about Muslims and Islam, as section 4.9.1 illustrated. This category exists in relation to the attitude and demeanour, regardless of the type of discipline. Their activism appears to be congruent with Muslim activism as minorities in the UK – and generally in the West- and with Muslim students’ activism in the HE context. The next chapter explores the participants’ experiences within academia.

6 Experiences within the Academia

Introduction

The previous chapter illustrated how Muslim academics' personal identities were central to how others in their workplace perceived and positioned them. This chapter discusses themes relating to the second research question, which aims to explore how Muslim academics perceive their career experiences.

Many positive experiences were shared with me during the course of the interviews, such as being nominated for teaching awards, being offered a contract after their first job application and/or first interview or being invited to apply for a promotion. The participants found the acknowledgement of their scholarship and contributions to be positive aspects of being within the academia. However, the negative experiences that peppered their narratives cannot be ignored and require further scrutiny. I propose that these experiences appear largely to have resulted from the overwhelming Whiteness of the academy.

Therefore, the discussion in this chapter unpacks the impact of the concept of Whiteness within the academia. Firstly, the Whiteness of the academia would appear to directly impact on the participants' experiences with regard to entering academia, as well as their career advancement. Secondly, there would appear to be a differential impact of Whiteness between the STEMM and HSS experiences, with participants who belong to the former discipline citing more positive experiences than those belonging to the latter. Finally, the role of Whiteness in defining legitimate/illegitimate scholarship would appear to have influenced the resistance within academia to a scholarship, which is produced by Muslim academics, that aims at challenging mainstream discourse about Muslims in the West. This mainstream discourse has also influenced White students' (negative) feedback and resistance to Muslim academics' presence and scholarship in classroom settings. A second theme relating to Whiteness is that of its role and impact on the presence of silence. Silence, in its various guises, appeared to surround the participants' accounts on, and discussion about, the presence/absence of racism/Islamophobia within the academia in general, and with respect to their career experience in particular. The final section

explores the development of a camaraderie of Muslim academics with other non-white academics, which resulted from both the Whiteness of and silence within the academia, as a way of building bridges and providing support for each other.

6.1 The Whiteness of Academia

6.1.1 Recruitment Practices: Subtle Favouritism

In this interview, a male and a female, both whites, were speaking about their interviews for the job at [X institution]. I said: Excuse me, did you both get an interview at X? They said: Yes. I said: Can I ask you about your experience please? [both did not have any previous experience]. The female then asked: Why are you asking this by the way? I said: Because I had applied for this job and received feedback saying they only short-listed people with five years plus of teaching experience...they looked embarrassed... I had almost tears in my eyes... and I'm thinking I had a hunch that I'm being discriminated ... but *for the first time* I've got *evidence* that I've been discriminated Sami -HSS

The accounts of several participants in the HSS challenged the powerful discourse that portrays pathways into an academic career as 'purely meritocratic' (Osterling and Wong, 2008). The accounts revealed the difficulties participants faced when entering academia and highlighted the presence of double standards in recruitment practices. Sami recalled that his first job interview took place after his 70th application. He mentioned his hunch that the feedback he would usually receive from unsuccessful applications was a camouflage for some sort of discrimination, but could not put his finger on it. Overhearing this conversation between the two White candidates, during his first interview, led him to frame his previous experiences with feedback as acts of discrimination. The quote suggests that aspects of feedback could preserve Whiteness through excluding non-white applicants based on a made-up short-listing criterion that did not apply to White candidates who were shortlisted, despite having similar experience to that of Sami.

The presence of double standards was not unique to Sami's experience.

A lot of the lecturing posts I've applied for have stipulated an expertise in race and ethnicity, which, given my research and background, I'm qualified to teach. Yet, I also often find that these posts go to white applicants – again, lacking in experience. This is in contradiction to the statements made in job adverts for 'applicants from minority backgrounds being encouraged to apply as they are under-represented'. I find it hard to believe that there are no minority applicants suitable for such posts... Zahra- HSS

I've been here for around 10 years.... I'm the only brown face in this department... and it shocks me that every time they've been recruiting over the past 2 years, I think they recruited about 10 lecturers, none of them were non-whites... and they've had non-white applicants because I know friends who've applied and they have the qualifications. So, I personally think they just pay lip service to equality.

Adam- HSS

Zahra is a female academic with over 15 years of experience, with an established publication record, and has worked at prestigious universities. Despite this, she finds herself stuck in junior posts. Her quote suggests the subtle favouritism of White staff, even those 'lacking in experience' when benchmarked to the job description. The quote reveals her impression that the favouritism of Whites has been commonplace to her experience, suggested by the use of 'again', and that some job advertisements might be earmarked for favoured candidates. She also questions the extent to which recruitment practices and selections of successful candidates are in line with the aspiration of the adverts. While Zahra only reflected on her personal experiences, Adam remarked on his observations regarding recruitment in his department. Adam's view aligns with Zahra's, in that some job adverts could be a façade of the possible indirect exclusion of non-white candidates, and that institutional statements about wishing to encourage diverse applicants are simply 'paying lip service'.

By the same token, some of the participants' views about some of the feedback from unsuccessful applications/interviews would suggest that there has been a shifting of the goal post, in terms of how the criteria stipulated in the job advert have been applied. Shifting the goalposts was evidence of the presence of a favoured candidate, for whom the advertised post was ear-marked. The feedback that Zahra received stimulated her view that "many of the jobs advertised are already 'ear-marked' for an internal candidate and that opportunities are created for them in order to facilitate their success"

Basim recalled several negative experiences with feedback from unsuccessful applications/interviews. He remarked that either he would not receive any feedback or that the type of feedback was "stupid excuses [sic]... insignificant things". Exemplifying on this feedback, Basim mentioned an instance when the panel wrote back to him saying, "We didn't think you had IT experience", although Basim noted

having “written it in three places in my application... but I’m thinking, I have a PhD, are you crazy thinking that I don’t have IT experience? You can’t make that accusation today against a 12-year-old”. His quote below not only captures his impression that some of the feedback he received lacked integrity, but also the difficulty of contesting the authority of, and the power exercised by, the panel members.

The interview went very well, I interviewed better for that job than I did for this job... you understand? I didn’t get it. I phoned them asking why; they said, they wanted somebody with experience in X field. Now that requirement wasn’t on the sheet and they didn’t ask about it in the interview. So, I’ve no way of knowing that they wanted this experience because it wasn’t mentioned anywhere. But, I sent an email back saying I looked at the application, nowhere this expertise was mentioned...so I’m very surprised that I didn’t get the job. They didn’t respond. I chased everybody in the panel...they didn’t respond
Basim-HSS

Feedback was also absent in Huda’s experience

I’ve applied for several external examiner jobs, never seemed to get any...although I have the expertise [...] and it’s funny. Sometimes I wonder whether it’s my name? [laughing] Change my name, maybe that might help... you never get a feedback as to why you weren’t selected Huda- HSS

Although expressed jokingly, Huda pointed to the potential negative impact of her Muslim-sounding name on the recruitment panels’ decision to overlook her *several* applications.

Taken on their own, each of these experiences could be argued as being an unfortunate instance that could be explained in one way or another. It might be that some participants were not applying for the right jobs that fit their qualifications, hence the absence of feedback. It could also be argued that some of the experiences discussed above are also common to white applicants, due to the scarce and competitive nature of academic posts. Not receiving feedback for unsuccessful application could also be a bad institutional practice. However, if the instance of not hearing back from unsuccessful applications is frequently repeated to the extent that it becomes a pattern and a lived experience, as suggested above, it would not be unreasonable for participants like Huda, Basim and others to suspect that there may

be more to the matter than meets the eye. Therefore, in taking the previous accounts as a whole, there is evidence of a direction of travel, which would appear to suggest that being part of the ‘in group’ and not the ‘other’ matters.

The experiential knowledge of the academic participants above would benefit from further scrutiny, especially in relation to considering the dynamics of structural power relations. For instance, Huda’s quote, unlike the rest, pointed to the potential negative impact of her name on recruitment panels’ decisions to overlook her applications. Her idea about ‘changing her name’ accords with the views of some of the participants in a study conducted by CSAMI (2014), who considered ‘whitening their names’, as they felt that their Muslim-sounding names had a detrimental effect on their opportunities within the UK job market. For instance, an unemployed female participant with a Western-sounding name recalled the smooth road of her application until she attended the interview, when she felt discriminated against due to her conspicuous faith identity.

“The first stages of the interview process were a telephone interview. The person on the other end was really receptive and warm [...] Then I turned up for the interview in my hijab...they were almost not sure whether I was ‘Sara Baker’ and asked me repeatedly ‘Oh you’re Sara Baker?’ She was the same one who conducted the telephone interview. She was really frosty in her manner towards me and it was all because my name didn’t correspond to the Muslim woman in a hijab who turned up” (CSAMI, 2014, p. 14).

Whilst the participants did not articulate the potential impact of Islamophobia on these negative experiences, the wider societal context of the existence of Islamophobia and its impact on individuals’ attitudes cannot be ignored. The findings from empirical research conducted about the experiences of roads to employment for different ethnic and religious groups in the wider UK labour market (Berthoud and Blekesaune, 2007; Blackaby et al, 2012; Brown, 2000; Khattab & Johnston, 2013) provided insights into the experiences of some of the participants in this study. These studies showed that Muslims face a ‘religious penalty’, in addition to the colour/ethnic racism they share with other ethnic minority groups. Additionally, social experiments, through sending fictitious CVs to potential employers, as

conducted by the BBC (2004) and Wood et al. (2009) on behalf of the Department of Work and Pension, and BBC Inside-Out West Bristol (2013) and BBC Inside-Out London (2017) attested to the potential negative impact of Muslim-sounding names. These experiments revealed that CVs with Muslim-sounding names received the lowest rate of invitations for interviews, followed by those with African-sounding names. The CVs with White-sounding names received the highest rate of interview invitations.

Moreover, academic writings and empirical research on recruitment practices within academia (Jackson, 2008; Mertz, 2011; Pilkington, 2013; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014) and beyond (Tooms, Lugg and Bogotch, 2009) provided evidence that selection decisions are not limited to objective judgments about candidates' qualifications, as listed on papers. Rather, decisions are commonly tainted by the subjective views of the panel about the *possible* 'fit' of a specific candidate. More particularly, decisions about the 'fit' are impacted by the panel's attitudes towards, and ideas about, the social group to which candidates belong. Individuals' names are indicators of their memberships of social groups. Pilkington (2013), who documented his observation of an academic interview setting, found that suitability criteria could be made subordinate to accessibility criteria. Pilkington noted that the course leader, a panel member, excluded an "extremely well qualified British Muslim Asian" from the second formal interview, because the former felt that the latter "had no sense of humour and would not, therefore, relate well to students" (p. 230). Lacking a sense of humour is one of the stereotypes commonly insinuated by the media about Muslims (see Burns, (2015)).

This study, therefore, has to grapple with the real possibility that the names of Sami, Basim and Huda could have impacted on them not being short-listed for interviews, not receiving feedback, or receiving feedback that changed from the stipulated criteria. It is not inconceivable that the current pervasive apprehension of Muslims may have subliminally affected some of the panel members' attitudes.

6.1.2 Career Progression: The Role of Vague Criteria, Double Standards and Networks

Some of the participants' views, particularly in HSS, about the difficulties they faced in securing permanent posts, or in getting a promotion, revealed that their upward mobility was hindered by the presence of double standards in how promotional criteria were applied, as well as the lack of strong 'networks of known' with senior people.

Adam, who is on a fixed-term contract, spoke about his several unsuccessful applications for a permanent post.

I have applied more than once to a permanent post but wasn't successful. I've been told until you finish your PhD we can't consider you ... it's near to submission... although my research profile is much more attractive than many people here... I even have more research funding... I know a white senior academic here who hasn't finished their PhD. But I know, it's not about the PhD... a few years ago there was another BME colleague holding the same post as myself and they were a Dr already. When the director of their department was stepping down, people said she should become the acting director...they [the management] were, no, no, she is too junior ... I can see why they won't give it to me ...I don't need to have a PhD!
Adam- HSS

The double standards are suggested by how his department differentiates between him and a White colleague with equivalent qualifications to himself. The quote intimates his impression that, when it comes to non-white academics, issues of career advancements become analogous to a *moving target*, as suggested by the analogy he made between his situation and the treatment his non-white colleague received, where their progression was hindered. The obstruction of his chance to secure a permanent post was justified by his lacking of a PhD, but for the PhD-holding non-white colleague, her young age was given as a reason for obstructing her progression.

Likewise, Hadi and Muna faced difficulties in securing permanent posts. Hadi's seniors refused to commit to the understanding they made with him about the terms of his recruitment, in that the fixed-contract near its end would be turned into a permanent one.

I applied for a fixed-term post at a previous university. Once I got it, the dean said the post was meant, because the one who was holding it has been promoted to a senior leadership post and left the department... it's unlikely

he'd come back to the department. Therefore, they said that the post could be very likely made permanent. However, when the time came, they said the post is going to be closed... Of course that's what they said...but, I knew that this was not true ... so I took them to tribunal, I won my case there and I left to another university.

Hadi- HSS

I've been teaching at XX University for nearly ten years now on a fixed-term contract. I was so happy when my department advertised a permanent post. I had the experiences and qualifications needed, plus I'm already working here, so I thought I have a better chance getting the job or at least shortlisted for it. All what I got later was an apology with no explanation. I learnt later that other colleagues, also on fixed term, applied. We all got the same response. We then learned that they only short-listed someone who has a different area of expertise, and she was not offered the post. So the interview was only a cover! Eventually, the one who got the job was a friend of the head of department. I can't see myself working on permanent job in academia, as I believe that senior people will always prioritise their relationships over anything else.

Muna- HSS

While she did not remark on favouritism due to colour, Muna underlined how the power/ authority of senior staff could allow for aspects of nepotism and cronyism. Muna did not explain whether the person who was offered the job had equivalent or better qualifications than hers. However, it would appear that the process of short-listing was not done fairly and the presence of a favoured candidate had perhaps caused the exclusion of Muna and colleagues.

Some colleagues with a similar profile got promoted... the issue is ...I can't argue with decision makers saying why X and not I. Because it's just politics, and only politics decides for promotions. It's been the same at every university I've worked at, I've always found a very vague description for promotional criteria...because politics are there. It's not just if you publish 3 papers/year, teach X courses/year, it's not about the funds, I have clear figures of these... but when you apply, they ask for more. Tariq- STEM

I applied...then they said, you need to do x, y and z. I did x, y, and z and applied again...then they said you need to do A, B, C... x, y, and z are not relevant. But you told me it was relevant and that's why I did it. I mean I know White people who're senior academics, they've never written a thing in their lives, never published. I have diverse range of outputs, a lot of published work, funded research[...] I don't think that necessarily has to be about race... it's actually about networks and power. Aqeel- HSS

From time to time I was discouraged to apply [laughing] I was never encouraged to. I applied for a senior post... but senior people here suggested that I should go for the less senior post... I felt that that was unfair on the basis of my work. It felt as if, when they assessed my work the criteria were

modulated... it seemed there was a certain amount of inconsistency about how they apply different criteria... so I questioned this...because I was told unless I demonstrate [...], I couldn't be considered. Now, that didn't necessarily apply to other people who were promoted to this position in the past. It took a while to demonstrate what they required, but eventually they didn't accept my initial proof. Even the union rep was siding with them instead of representing me, he said: I beg you to accept it...but I didn't accept. It just didn't seem that I was being treated fairly and so I declined that, and never actually applied for the less senior post. Eventually, I achieved my ends through some challenging and fair amount of persistence. Adel- HSS

Another recurrent theme with regard to the difficulties in moving up the ladder was the lack of transparency in promotional criteria and that performance indicators are not solely decisive in career progression. For Tariq, 'politics', that is 'the informal and unwritten rules that are used in a discretionary way to favour some at the expense of others', regardless of the performance, were significant to career advancement. For Aqeel, being part of the 'in group', regardless of your performance, was substantial to career advancement. Adel's quote reveals his concerns about the amount of discretion senior staff can utilise to apply criteria differently, or indeed amend them, with different individuals. Thus, it would appear that the vagueness of promotional criteria serves to camouflage power domination and favouritism, and ultimately indirect discrimination.

Furthermore, the accounts of the participants who reported difficulties with regard to career advancement show that they were not so 'skilful' at networking, which disadvantaged them. Tariq and Ali, for instance, acknowledged that they lose out because their belief restricts them from being part of informal socialising, to which alcohol is central, in which networks are usually established. Aqeel, on the other hand, expressed his strong disagreement with the form of business networking.

Networking] isn't my thing, I can't ...that seems like...like prostitution to me [sic] that sort of selling yourself...handing your card out ... I can't do that ... I think you have to be of a certain disposition, some people are unbelievably good at it. I don't have Facebook nor a Twitter account. I don't want to tell the world about all the wonderful things I'm doing... I just don't want to do that. I'm happy to be teaching and researching. Aqeel - HSS

These participants exercised a form of agency in abstaining from certain forms of networking, even if at the expense of their career advancement, yet the strength displayed in having such agency is likely to remain unrecognised.

Interestingly, Adel, who is currently a professor and sits on promotional committees shared with me an insider view of what influences promotional (or recruitment) panel decisions.

The process of promotion is fairly formal until applications come in. But how you look at them, who is promoting whom, what is the standing of the department... all of these have a quite influence on whether an application goes through to the next stage or not... and at that point of time quite a lot of informal discussion takes place in those committees... how people champion different individuals depends to a certain extent on the social interaction with those people and their perception of those people... certainly the ideologies of those powerful individuals come into play in terms of how they see you and how they evaluate you... in terms of assessment criteria... yes the suitability criteria are to do with skills [...] which are quite demonstrable. But *that is not* necessarily decisive regarding who gets forward... it's the acceptability criteria that is actually quite significant ... how they engage with colleagues... how they socialise... this is important... whether they socialise in places where decision makers become part of or not... so whether they go to pubs... all those things then come into play. Adel-HSS

His quote captures the influential aspects to successful promotion. First, suitability criteria could be overtopped by acceptability criteria. Thus, formal procedures could act as a smokescreen for personal judgments, which may result in indirect discrimination, as suggested by emphasising that suitability criteria '*is not* necessarily decisive regarding who gets forward'. Second, two factors influence boosting the acceptability criteria: informal socialising with senior individuals and their personal ideologies' impact on their perceptions about the fit of a certain candidate to the post.

The issues that surfaced from the accounts in sections 6.1.1. and 6.1.2 were found in previous studies. Firstly, studies revealed how a 'higher threshold' is part and parcel of the experiences of the non-white academics who achieve career advancement (Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Carter, Fenton, and Modood, 1999; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Villalpando and Delgado Bernal, 2002). Secondly, studies also highlight the role of familiarity, favouritism, nepotism and networks in recruitment/promotion decisions (Bhopal, 2015; Deem, Morley, and Tlili, 2005). Similarly,

Mertz (2011) highlighted the importance of ‘networks of knowns’ to career pathways in academia and that merit alone could rarely be enough for career progression, hence ‘who you know’ might outweigh ‘what you know’. These ‘networks of knowns’ might withhold the important information needed to facilitate career advancement from those who are not ‘members of the club’, whilst providing insiders with this information (Bhopal, 2015; Deem, Morley, and Tlili, 2005, ECU, 2011). For instance, a black female academic participant in the ECU (2011) study described the exclusion she felt by male colleagues

There are blockers here... Too many people with too many agendas – it’s very much the old school – been there for 20 or 30 years... There were blockers – oh, get this one in – not that one... It’s word of mouth I never got through faculty... they’re more comfortable with me sweeping the floors than teaching, I’m sure. I see myself as a pro vice-chancellor, while they see me as a toilet cleaner, that’s the difference. (Female academic, p. 33)

Adel’s account of a panel on promotional committees, which stressed the influence of senior people’s ideologies on promotional decisions, agrees with Tooms, Lugg and Bogotch (2009, p. 96), who illustrated that the senior management decisions about the ‘fit’ of a candidate in a department are used to “perpetuate hegemony and the social construction of what a school leader is”.

Finally, the opacity of promotional criteria was also commonplace to the experiences of the participants in the studies of Bhopal (2015), Bhopal & Jackson (2013), Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005); ECU (2011), and Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007).

For example, a participant in Deem, Morley and Tlili reported

[the guideline] says ‘preferred qualifications’. Well someone got told they could climb the ladder...he says ‘Well I can’t because I haven’t got the qualifications’. And the management says ‘Well what it says there is that it’s preferred, but if you haven’t got them and you can do that job, that’s okay’. So they can reword something to suit themselves. That’s the nearest one that I’ve managed to think of. *It’s rewording things and making things fit to suit you.* (p. 55-56- emphasis added)

In this current study, two possible effects resulted from this opacity. It indirectly impelled some to persevere to achieve their ends, as Tariq remarked that he was not optimistic about being promoted in his own institution, but he was determined to achieve this in any other institution. Others, nevertheless, were demotivated from

applying for promotions. Therefore, they ended up stuck, or more accurately, made to stick, in junior posts, as suggested in the quote below

I really have no career prospects... I'm alright where I am ... I'll eat less but will eat happier.... I haven't got any faith really in that process [laughing]. I'll put it this way if I do apply for a promotion and get promoted, I'll be genuinely...quite surprised..[because] there are other tensions within that equation that reduce the likelihood of it happening .. so not only are these structural issues around *how* promotion is measured, but I think BME people are possibly in somewhere are less valued. Aqeel- HSS

His account suggests his distress and disillusionment, due to the presence of double standards, for example, through laughing, but also the sarcasm hinted by explaining his disappointment if his promotion would get through.

6.1.3 Workload Allocation

While the majority of those who teach mentioned the presence of a transparent workload model in their departments, a few participants raised the issue of unequal workload division

There is really a lot of diversity in terms of workloads, there are people who get paid a lot more than me but do a lot less than me....I don't know, but how much work you do seems to be based on the relationship you have with your line-manager...and how well you can negotiate it ... that's what it's about ... power! [...] A few years ago I used to have twice much teaching than I do now, but still I've got reasonably heavy teaching workload ... I've got a heavy admin workload in addition to my research, and I don't really have time to apply for research grants Aqeel- HSS

During the interview, because the post was a lecturer, I asked about the support offered to research... what proportion I might get for research... they said it'll be allocated this way [...] I said OK... when I got the job ... I wasn't supported..... nominally I was, but in terms of time I wasn't ...because I was overloaded by teaching ... I was teaching 8 modules/ year, there is no way am gonna do any research, which was the only reason I took that job....when I reminded them about our agreement I was told .. you use the evenings and the weekends ... am like I'm using my weekends and evenings to prepare lectures.... I think it has to do with who you know and who you talk to. Abbas- HSS

A senior prof sent round a strategy document saying that we want to do an assessment of workloads allocation by age and gender, just to make sure we are not discriminating against somebody on the basis of these two characteristics... and it's interesting, particularly when diversity is all around themMuslims

and BME students, Muslims in the city, and yet they just remain blinkered to it.
Adam- HSS

These quotes demonstrate how the relationship a member of staff has with their line-manager is significant in terms of workload allocation. The quotes also suggest that a heavier teaching workload was given to non-white academics, impeding them from writing grant applications and conducting research, which are key requirements for progression. This agrees with ECU (2011) and Wright, Thompson and Channer (2007) on how workload allocation might be a site for control and favouritism. A participant in Wright, Thompson and Channer mentioned that “our work loading never seems to be on an even keel, we’re doing all the mundane stuff, and don’t really have time to do the thinking and the reading, that’s a frustration” (p. 154). Adam’s quote highlights that gender and age are the focus of senior people’s concerns about equality (and not ethnicity or race) with regard to workload allocations.

6.1.4 The Possible Impact of Whiteness on Routine Practices

Before discussing the possible impact of Whiteness on routine practices, a note on this study’s approach to Whiteness may be helpful. Drawing from the writings of Gillborn (2007), hooks (1995) and Leonardo (2002, 2004, 2009), Whiteness is an ideology (and not a skin colour) that operates on institutional and societal levels; it aims at maintaining a racial hierarchy through creating policies and regulations that maintain the power to control within the hands of White people. Bell hooks (1995, p. 184) argued that White supremacy [I use Whiteness instead] is a more accurate term for racism

As I write, I try to remember when the word ‘racism’ ceased to be the term which best expressed for me exploitation of black people and other people of colour in this society and when I began to understand that the most useful term was ‘white supremacy’

It is not an ‘innocent’ unearned advantage Whites enjoy by the virtue of their race; it is an unearned advantage they enjoy over non-whites, due to the former active and agential role in setting policies and procedures that maintain their domination over the latter (Gillborn, 2007; Leonardo, 2002, 2004). In assessing the impact of Whiteness, this study benefits from Gillborn’s (2007) framework, which stipulates

examining three aspects to judge whether an institution is implicated in racism (Whiteness): the system priorities; the beneficiaries of the followed protocols; and the outcomes of processes/procedures/practices.

While I acknowledge that the participants' negative experiences could be mere coincidences, I consider these experiences within the context of the existing structural and cultural patterns of inequalities, and within a context where Muslims are increasingly having an unfavourable press and position. Leonardo (2002) points out that one of the characteristics of Whiteness is the tendency to narrow down explaining entrenched inequity to factors other than the institutionalised policies and processes that are performed by Whites. Drawing from CRT, I now discuss the possible ways Whiteness operates and is maintained in academia.

From participants' experiences and discussions, it would appear that academia is failing to pay due attention to intrinsic issues of equality, and that currently the focus of equality monitoring is geared towards issues other than racial, ethnic and/or belief equality. Findings from previous research support their views. Firstly, the few studies conducted in this regard pointed out that, within HEIs, data on promotional applications, short-listing and appointments were found to be either not collected or not monitored (Abbott, Sapsford and Molloy, 2005; ECU, 2011; Pilkington, 2012, 2013; UCU, 2012).

What is evident at Midshire is an extreme reluctance, even among senior staff, to develop recruitment or other targets relating to any of the equality dimensions. While the rhetoric continues to refer to mainstreaming, the reality is more mundane, with no progress made in the incorporation of (race) equality targets into the strategic plan. (Pilkington, 2013, p. 236)

Similarly, the UCU (2012) study, as discussed in section 3.6.1, pointed out the failure of a significant number of institutions included in the study to provide the requested data, because they "do not collate or retain the data requested". Additionally, for the institution that provided the full requested data, their data focused on gender differences, not on race or ethnicity (p.13). Thus, the current drive to equality and diversity is geared towards gender equality rather than race/ethnic equality (Pilkington, 2012). The significant transformation of the under-

representation of women academics in the STEMM discipline, due to the Athena Swan Charter (Bhopal, 2015), is but an indicator of this drive. This discussion shows that issues of race/ethnicity, let alone religion, in routine practices are not prioritised in the current E&D agenda.

Regarding the beneficiaries, the presence of double standards, goalposts shifting, opacity in promotional criteria and disparate workload division across the accounts provides evidence to suggest the subtle favouritism of White candidates. This indirectly disadvantages Muslim (and other non-white) academics. These practices, therefore, provide a means to maintain Whiteness. Given that recruitment panels members are predominantly Whites, Rangasamy (2004, p. 28) argues that interactive situations, such as job interviews, are one of the ways in which Whiteness could be preserved, because such situations facilitate “a measure of control over the destiny of non-whites”. Workload allocation could also be a venue for the favouritism of whites, because allocating workload is solely decided by line-managers, again predominantly Whites. Additionally, given the influence of senior people’s ideologies and their subjective views on the best fit for a post, it is more likely that these views are more favourable of whites, to perceptions that they are a better fit for the job (Mertz, 2011), which indirectly disadvantaged non-whites. In this regard, Neimann (2012, p.486) argued that

Tenure and promotion committees, department heads and other administrator- depending on their motivation- may frame a faculty member’s portfolio so that even the most accomplished person looks like a failure and the most unaccomplished one looks like a success.

Given the commonplace of Islamophobic micro-aggressions on interaction levels to the experiences of the participants, as discussed in Chapter Five, this study proposes that it is not unlikely that recruitment panels’ implicit views about Muslim academics applicants/interviewees would be tainted by the global/societal Islamophobia. However,, I also recognise that the study could not gain tangible evidence to support this proposition, due to the difficulty of postulating what clearly underpinned the panels’ decisions.

Regarding the outcomes, the accounts of the participants indicated diverse reactions to what they perceived to be barriers to career progression. These included the loss of faith in the system and losing hopes of career advancement, as suggested by Aqeel in section 6.1.2, or leaving academia. In spite of this not being part of my data-collection stages, I recently contacted some of the study participants whose contracts were about to end during the fieldwork. Two of those who shared with me negative experiences have left academia. This points out the ‘revolving door syndrome’: the problem of the low retention rates of non-white academics, due to aspects of institutional racism (Bensimon, Ward, and Sanders, 2000). A participant mentioned during his interview that he was considering applying for universities overseas, which supports the findings of Bhopal, Brown and Jackson (2016) and ECU (2015b), that highlighted discriminatory practices as one of the reasons behind non-white academics’ departure from UK academia. Thus, according to Gillborn’s (2007) framework, Whiteness appeared to be present vis-à-vis Muslim academics.

6.1.5 Over-average Merit: Mitigates Whiteness

You need to be exceptionally good to avoid Whiteness. Ahmed- HSS

If there is a female wearing the hijab, who’s kind of leaps and bounds ahead of everybody else... my feeling is that she’d just go all the way through fast-track given the necessarily aid... but if you’re comparing like with like then I think there are probably some discrimination that goes on... I don’t think I’d personally perceived any, but I hear it from colleagues Rami- STEMM

Some of the participants, particularly in STEMM, reported smooth routes into academia. They recalled being invited to an interview and/or offered a job after one or two job applications.

Hiba and Sarah spoke about their straightforward journey into academia.

My UG supervisor said .. I want you to go into a PhD, and applied for funding for me and got it... It was a win-win situation ...I’m not the first person he’s kept on after doing honours for a PhD ... if he sees somebody that he thinks is good, he’ll do his best to keep them on. [...] After finishing my PhD, he suggested I stay and he applied for a post-doc funding, and I got it. [...] Then I had to resign after getting married because it was too difficult to commute between [two UK countries]. So, again he suggested I contact somebody there who works in similar field, and I started working with that guy. [...]

I’ve presented at European level at conferences when I was working in X,

and I think the research I do is of interest to quite few people because I won a couple of poster prizes and awards... cash awards... and I guess, just the fact that my new boss wanted to take me on based on what I'd done in X was quite satisfying [laughing]. I guess he expects me to know more than what I actually do, as he asks people if they have any question in my field to come and ask me. [...] I'm still quite early in my career ... I guess people might've been familiar with my name because they've seen it published with my supervisor, who is eminent in the field... so being associated with quite a high profile researcher improved my profile...so people recognise my work. Hiba- STEMM

A few months before submitting my thesis, I learned about an advert for X post at another university ... I thought, I'll try .. Alhamdulillah [Praise be to God]. I was invited to an interview ... I went to the interview...but in the back of my mind I also felt, who's gonna get this job, seriously I haven't finished my PhD, I haven't done anything, I haven't ... you know...even the salary banding was beyond my expectations. So, in the back of my head I was like, I am gonna go for this because if nothing else, it's gonna be an interview experience and I need it more than I need the job. A few days later my current boss phoned me and said: they were very impressed with the interview, but they've given the position to someone else. *But*, because they were so happy with my interview, they were creating a position for me ... so they created a position for me ... I took the job, but told them I need to finish my PhD first. [...] My first post was a rolling contract, initially it was a one-year contract, but near the end of the contract we could not get a grant to cover my salary, but they retained me and paid me from a different project. Then my boss helped me putting in an application for a post-doc, which I got...then at the end of it, my boss put me forward for a permanent post. In the same year, again my supportive boss said just apply for a promotion and we'll see...so, I drafted the application... we discussed it with our director ... and we decided if we applied ... probably weren't gonna get it because I needed to contribute to [...]...because I'm not a lecturer... So we held off submitting it that year, but they put me on to several committees to get the experience needed to be able to tick all the boxes. The following year I applied and got promoted to my current post. Sarah- STEMM

These two quotes suggest that both Hiba and Sarah, an early career researcher and a senior researcher, respectively, showed levels of above normal merit. For Hiba, this is evident in the proper nurturing she received from her UG supervisor, which continued even after her resignation, due to her getting married in another UK country. It is also evident in receiving more than one award at European level conferences. For Sarah, the fact that 'they created a position for her', even though the advertised job was given to someone else, and her performance in REF, as discussed in section 5.12, both indicate her above-average performance. The achievements of

both Hiba and Sarah provided them with symbolic capital, that is, their achievement in their fields have been recognised. For Hiba, it helped in building social capital, through which other researchers and senior people have become interested in her work, which facilitated her new post when moving to the other city. For Sarah, the recognition of her seniors is manifested in the extra-ordinary support her line-manager offered all the way through, from being on a rolling contract till she got her promotion, which was facilitated through being offered what is required in order to ‘tick all the right boxes’. Furthermore, Hiba’s quote suggests the importance of being associated with well-known academics to improve one’s profile and facilitate recognition.

Rami and Fazel, currently professors in STEMM and HSS, respectively, described their fast-track progression.

I’ve had two research-fellow posts before coming here. I was made a professor when I came here over 15 years ago...my career has highly accelerated because... I would say it’s in the land of the blind, the one-eyed is king...I was one of the few people who was able to come up with an alternative perspective than the mainstream ones... I was coming up with new original ideas. I was a head of the curve, highly motivated, highly productive bring out, lots of publications, speaking in public [laughing] I think I’ve been quite well rewarded. This is the only university I’ve worked at as a permanent academic. I’ve brought the university quite a lot of success and prestige in the work that I do. Because my success takes place here, it means that my department has success, my university has success...it’s a good deal for both parties

Fazel- HSS

There haven’t been many transitions in my career. After finishing my PhD, I got a post-doc fellowship...then at early stages of my post-doc I was invited to apply for a professor here by the head of the department...I’ve never applied for a promotion; I came as a professor...it’s quite unusual. But, you have to be operating at slightly high level to achieve equivalent ends. Being only brilliant and hard-worker is not enough. Yes I work incredibly hard, but I’ve had a few white people who’ve backed me very strongly actually, and I have a lot of people on my side, a very wide network. [But also] you need to understand the hierarchies...power dynamics...what could be said and what could not... all these dimensions are important... there’s a degree to which you have to *fit in* (emphasis original).. you have to play these things, yeah, I mean it’s difficult.

Rami- STEMM

Like Sarah, Rami and Fazel did not initiate their applications; they were offered professorship by White senior academics. Thus, who is encouraged to apply seems

crucial to smooth progression. Both of them mentioned that they hold several editorial positions with leading journals in their fields, for example (co-) founding editors, (co-) editors or leader editors. Fazel's quote implies his intellectual exceptionalism at that time, suggested through his use of 'in the land of blind...' metaphor, and his statement about being 'a head of the curve'. Rami's quote sheds light on the factors, combined together, that facilitate upward mobility for Muslim (and other non-white) academics. First, they have to show degrees of exceptionalism, as suggested by 'I work incredibly hard'. However, this alone is not enough, as suggested by 'only' in 'being only brilliant'. Therefore, merit should be recognised *by the right* senior White academics, who subsequently facilitate non-white academics' social capital through networks. Second, they also have to be able to get along with those in power positions, and be able to 'fit in', through understanding the hierarchies and abide by the normativity. The fact that non-white academics 'have to fit in' indicates how Whiteness shapes and decides the normativity. His quote suggests the necessity for Muslim (or non-white) academics in leadership posts to tread a tightrope of compromise and negotiation, as suggested by his words "you have to play these things although it's difficult". In section 5.9.2, Rami mentioned attending events where alcohol is central as a necessity to *fit in*, which he conceived to be 'a compromise' for his faith identity.

Taken together, these positive experiences illuminate three main points. First, senior white people were not acting in a biased way on grounds of ethnicity, race or religion; they were principally rewarding merit and hard-work. Concurrently, these participants have demonstrated aspects of exceptionalism. It would, therefore, appear that the effect of over-average merit is difficult to dismiss when explaining why they were enormously nurtured. The views of Ahmed and Rami at the opening of this subsection support this stance. Rami stated precisely that the fast-track progression for Muslims (and other non-white) academics is conditional to :1- being exceptional, as suggested by 'leaps and bounds ahead of everyone else', and 2- being recognised by senior people. If these conditions were not fulfilled, then discrimination might be present, suggested by 'compare the like with the like', which resonates with Ahmed's view that being exceptionally good buffers Whiteness. Therefore, the achievements of these participants attracted senior White individuals' recognition.

Second, for Muslim academics to make it into senior leadership roles, they need to put in extra effort to negotiate their identity(ies) and gain the approval of their seniors, through a process of ‘assimilation’ to the normativity. In this regard, Puwar (2004, p. 56) argued that race-relations in academia are strongly impacted by “likeness or social cloning in comportment, manner, social connection, theoretical persuasions and politics”. Whiteness, thus, operates in these accounts, through its domination over defining the terms of success. On this point, Mertz (2011, p. 59) argued that

To be successful in academic terms, attain tenure and promotion, principally requires being socialised into the roles and expectations for the position- both of which owe much to traditional academic norms- by those who have successfully been socialised and have earned the right to make judgments about the legitimacy and appropriateness of those who have newly entered the academy.

Previous research also found a strong correlation between ‘social cloning’ and successful career trajectory (Deem, Morley and Tlili, 2005; ECU, 2011).

Finally, it would appear that, where there is ‘interest convergence’ (Bell, 1980), there seems to be a way forward for individuals. Thus, non-white academics are more likely to have a smooth career progression when there is a perceived benefit for the institution from their upward mobility, as the last sentence in Fazel’s account suggests the mutual benefit of his success, to himself and to his institution.

For the sake of economising space, I would like to discuss the possible gains Sarah’s department would get in supporting her way forward, as she was the only female participant with a senior post. First, creating a job for her suggests that they perceived her scholarship as an asset to the department. Additionally, the possible influence of the Athena SWAN charter, of which her university is a member, on this attention Sarah receives should not be overlooked. Sarah is a female of ethnic minority background, with a visible faith identity, at STEMM. The intersectionality of these identities perhaps makes Sarah an asset to her department in meeting the requirement of some funders and policy makers. However, we should not over emphasise the potential influence of this charter on non-white females’ career pathways, as statistics clearly show that non-white female professors comprise only

1.4% of the proportion of all professors, whereas White female professors comprises 19.4%.

Another gain academia would attain by supporting some hard-working individuals to progress is that their presence helps in creating ‘the model minority facade’, which ultimately maintains the status quo of inequalities (Gillborn, 2007, 2008).

Furthermore, while Gillborn’s research focuses principally on non-white students in school education in England, his argument is adaptable to our discussion. He argues that this model would ultimately preserve Whiteness, as, whenever charges of racism are made and the rhetoric of meritocracy is questioned, this model is utilised by the institution to backlash these claims in two key ways

First, the mere fact of minority success is positioned as if it automatically disproves the charge of racism against any and all minoritized groups; and second, comparisons are made with ‘underachieving’ groups so that the latter are cast as deficient (2008, p. 152).

Thus, the presence of model minorities conceals the Whiteness domination through, allowing business as usual to go on even more smoothly than before, because now we can point to the exceptional case and say, “See, our system is really fair and just. See what we just did for minorities or the poor” (Delgado, 1999, p. 445). Therefore, while these participants have benefitted and progressed, these benefits have not reached all non-white academics, which, therefore, validates a commentary on networking vis-a-vis Muslim amongst other non-White academics.

6.1.6 Networking: A Commentary

With regard to making a career in academia, both the negative experiences discussed in sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 and the positive experiences discussed in section 6.1.5 illustrate an emerging pattern of patronage granted by senior White academics towards Muslim (or other non-white) academics. Social capital in HEIs entitles its holders a position of power; it refers to the combination of resources that stem from having institutionalised networks and relationships which back and support its members, but, more importantly, grants them *credit* and *recognition* (Bourdieu, 1986). Such resources define the terms of inclusion and exclusion and include institutional practices of support and patronage that are crucial to making a

successful academic career. First, the fact that all of the participants, including those who reported negative experiences, have managed to enter academia suggests that they possess the required merit to operate in this environment.

The accounts of those who encountered unfavourable experiences suggest that the favouritism of White academics operates through offering White people ‘lacking’ in demonstrable evidence of achievement opportunities. Thus, it would be fair to argue that the patronage extended to White academics tends to stem from impressions about their potential. However, the nurturing of White senior academics cited by the participants with positive experiences principally resulted from the latter’s actual achievements. It might, therefore, be fair to argue that the nurturing by senior Whites of White academics is commonly grounded on *presumed competence*, while the nurturing of non-whites (by White academics) is largely conditional to *actual demonstrable* competence.

This might illustrate the harder and longer journey, as reported by non-white academics in previous studies and academic writings (ECU, 2011; Shilliam, 2015; Vo, 2012), which is characterised by subtle barriers and the ‘higher threshold’ they have to be prepared to overcome in order to make it (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013). A lecturer participant in Bhopal and Jackson remarked “...sometimes you see that some people can just move up the ladder very quickly, without doing very much and then you wonder if it’s objective” (p. 13). The ‘meritocracy illusion’ is but the defensive normative discourse, which provides the perfect vent through which the institutional normativity of Whiteness is preserved and maintained. Indeed, Gillborn (2008, p. 30) argued that

CRT’s criticisms of meritocracy, and related notions such as objectivity and colour-blindness, are not a rejection of them in principle but a criticism of their raced effects *in practice*. It is simply and demonstrably the case that these notions, despite their apparent concern for equity and justice, currently operate as a mechanism by which particular groups are excluded from the mainstream

Thus, drawing from a CRT standpoint, if career trajectory is analogous to a racecourse that has no route map where Whites and non-whites (including Muslims) are competing, White senior academics nurturing of Muslims is likened to the provision of services, such as advice for safety, cheering runners, providing water and

give directions, all needed in order to reach the endpoint. However, nurturing White academics might exceed these services to include directing them to a *secretive shortcut with a clear and detailed map* to the race endpoint. How institutions further benefit from the presence of token minorities is discussed next.

6.1.7 Muslim Academics and Tokenism

Whilst the participants believed that their merits earned them their academic posts, some of the participants felt that them being put forward to teach certain modules, to become members of certain committees, or/and to represent their institutions in local/transnational events was partly serving tokenistic (institutional) ends.

Sarah remarked on how she feels about being invited to present on behalf of her team at (trans)national conferences

I know I am a minority... *I know I am a minority..* and I know it looks good to a Muslim women who's brown up on to the presentation stage. You're a woman, a minority, a Muslim, [laughing], and wearing hijab.. like,[laughing]I tick every box. I know it looks good ... and it suits *me*. If I feel like doing it or I feel I'm capable of doing it..I have a proper claim to do it, I do it... it doesn't bother me in that way. But I think a lot of it is: Look how diverse we are... Look we have a brown person [laughing], and it's not the case. Sarah- STEMM

Because I've been very successful, X [a funding body] still comes to *me* as a preference over someone else to do things... because I'm their flagship person if you like. So,[being a minority] can work towards advantage as well. Recently, I contributed to one of their events, they were very impressed by things... so I think if you're a minority and give a very good account of yourself, then the sky's the limit!
Ali- STEMM

I was doing lectures around racism. Sometimes I had white colleagues saying: why *you* are always asked to do this? And I said to them: I don't know, I suppose it's probably because .. it may've been a bit of both. I'd like to think, it was because of my academic interest. However, it could be because.. I am who I am, a BME academic, and they're perhaps in the best place to talk about those experiences. So, my colleagues acknowledge that. Realistically, I would be happy to talk about it, because I felt if I don't who's going to talk about it, because these issues are very real. [...] Recently, I started to move away from this aspect, so I'm actually thinking well, I want to talk about this... as I bring a level of authenticity to my work because I'm a BME Muslim wearing the hijab, so I'm drawing on my lived experience, not just presenting research. And for me, it's about the children all the time. If I don't talk about these

things, then students will be unaware when they go out to teach, which I didn't want them to do.
Huda- STEM

There always exists what I call the parade bit. I'm paraded at different meetings and I think with parading there exists discrimination because institutions fail to understand; it's not about including or excluding Sami, it's about including *all* the Samis [non-white academics]. But, you'd be the token one.
Sami- HSS

These accounts reveal the participants' awareness of the possible tacit institutional intent in offering opportunities that make them more visible. This is clear in Sarah's last remark and Sami's use of 'parade bit'. Interestingly, these accounts show their preparedness; rather, their actual functioning within the meritocratic paradigm, which they perceive to be crucial to achieve their ends. It is a win-win situation. They have been able to benefit from opportunities to achieve their career prospects, in the case of Ali and Sarah, and to push the wheel of equality forward, in the case of Huda's work with her students. For instance, Sarah emphasised 'me' in 'it suits *me*', and that she plays the game when having 'a proper claim to'. Similarly, Ali remarked on being 'their flagship', acknowledging its benefits, 'the sky is the limit'. Huda, who initially resisted acknowledging the possibility of being selected due to tokenism, altered her attitude towards the 'game' and chose to become an active, rather than a reactive, player, suggested by 'recently, I started to move away...'

The approaches of Ali, Sarah and Huda towards tokenism differ from the findings from previous studies, for example Bhopal (2015), ECU (2011), Jackson (2008) and Niemann (2012). The participants in these studies resisted tokenism, due to its effect on their morale, because they were getting the impression from colleagues that they were the 'token hire' and that their recruitment was not based on their academic merit of qualifications.

A possible explanation for this disparity might be that the participants in this current study do not feel the pressure to perform. They have the choice to accept/ decline opportunities, as suggested by Sarah. Participation, therefore, does not trigger any psychological troubles. Their positive attitudes towards tokenism could be understood by drawing on Yosso's (2005) notion of navigational capital, which denotes their ability to 'manoeuvre through social structures/ institutions...

acknowledging their individual agency to operate through institutional constraints, such as showing resilience, not only to survive, but also to thrive' (p.80). Through disregarding the negativity associated with tokenism, such as the common stereotypes within the institution about the presumed incompetence of non-white academics and/ or that their presence at academia has resulted from EO policies, the participants showed resilience.

Ali's, Sarah's and particularly Huda's attitudes towards tokenism align with Debra's, a Latina principal in the study of Hernandez & Murakami (2016, p. 11), who refuses to succumb to the undermining effect of tokenism and asserts that she has established herself as a principal and she is focused on serving her community at school.

I really need to be here. I bring a different perspective in the school operations. I'm often advocating for students... I know a lot of people felt I got the position just because I was a minority... But I refuse to give into the myth that I was only hired because I'm a female or a Latina. I know that was not the case.

As previously remarked, the making of a token is utilised to pinpoint that equality has been achieved, which is challenged by Sami's words regarding the absence of 'including *all* the Samis'.

6.1.8 Disparate Experiences between the STEMM and HSS Participants

From my experience as a chair, when we have projects, we need to achieve the expected results... we can't recruit John just because his name is John or any other name that sounds British. We are after someone who is competent and able to do the job...we don't care about your background... the name attached to your CV is regardless in that sense, be it a British name, Muslim name..it doesn't matter..[..]. Personally, I've had applications, and when they short-listed candidates for interviews...it happened that none of them was white British... they were Overseas.. because they had better profile than other applicants, then we had to apply for work permit for the successful one.

Hasan- STEMM

As remarked previously, the majority of the STEMM participants cited smoother entry to academia than their HSS counterparts. Securing a post after the first interview or the first job application, or being offered contracts by their PhD supervisors upon finishing their PhD were commonplace to the STEMM participants.

They generally felt that their creed or/and outward appearance was irrelevant to their recruitment. Akbar remarked: “engineering is engineering whether you are in Japan, China, Europe, or the Middle East...it’s governed by the same principles.. it’s not related to a specific culture or religion”. Similarly, Hasan’s quote above illustrates that recruitment in Engineering is solely driven by meritocracy. However, this positive experience does not guarantee upward mobility, as a few STEMM participants recalled the difficulties they face in getting promotion (see Tariq’s account in section 6.1.2). Thus, positive experiences should be interpreted with regard to the big picture of career trajectory of the non-white academics in STEMM, which is not very bright. The ECU (2015a) report indicated that there is only 8.1% of non-white UK professor in SET, with 82% of these being of Chinese background, compared to the 91.1% of white professors. Thus, having been offered posts as early career academics/researchers does not necessarily guarantee smooth upward mobility. Several reasons might explain this disparity though. Firstly, the demand in certain fields might provide opportunities for Muslim academics, particularly those in Engineering, Informatics and some medical-related sciences, as suggested by the ECU (2015a, p. 213) report. This report highlights the relatively high proportion of UK non-white staff members in “chemical engineering (19.4%), clinical dentistry (18.6%) and electrical, electronic and computer engineering (16.3%). Moreover, the STEMM structures follow relatively different norms than HSS, with the former commonly operating with teamwork; each member has a certain contribution to a collective project. This might lighten the significance of (extended) networks for early career academics, but could also provide junior academics, who were team members during their PhD, with work opportunities. Whilst teamwork might exist in HSS, it is not prevalent. Therefore, allies and networks are less substantial for creating opportunities in STEMM than they are in HSS.

Secondly the positivist nature of STEMM disciplines might temper Whiteness in the early career stages. Generally, most STEMM disciplines rely on experiments and results, so the studied phenomena and the followed methods are loosely linked to the background of the researcher or the context, whereas HSS fields move in the area of philosophies, ideologies, context, subjectivities, perspectives and change. These, therefore, are open to interpretation and critical engagement, and the background and

the personal history of academics/researchers influence their scholarship. Whiteness is argued to be operating in these areas through an ‘apartheid of knowledge’ (Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002), which results from ‘epistemic racism’ (Grosfoguel, 2006, 2012a). These terms discuss how *the* legitimate knowledge is defined and validated at universities, while any knowledge that challenges the normativity is deemed, at worst, as illegitimate and invalid and, at best, as peripheral and subjective. On a side note, Imtiaz (2011) blamed the misrepresentation of Muslims/Islam in British society on the rarity of Muslim researchers in HSS. He argues that this rarity is responsible for restricting the Muslim voice in academia that would ultimately challenge the inequalities Muslims face in the broader society. However, his view is not supported by my findings. My findings align with previous research (Corntassel, 2003; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Villalpando & Delgado Bernal, 2002) that discussed the difficulties faced by non-white academics committed to challenging the normativity. The next subsection elaborates on this point through discussing epistemic racism as experienced by the participants.

6.1.9 Academia and Epistemic Racism

Some of the participants in HSS were more vocal in speaking about this form of racism than their day-to-day experiences. Epistemic racism was detected in the accounts of the participants whose scholarship challenges the mainstream knowledge about the ‘Muslim question’. Epistemic racism, as the accounts reveal, is not influenced by the presence of Muslims in academia qua being Muslims, nor is it impacted by their multiple identities per se. Rather, it aims at marginalising, subordinating and disenfranchising: first, the knowledge that principally challenges the normative knowledge vis-à-vis Muslims; and/or second, the knowledge that makes use of Islamic (rather than Western) epistemologies and philosophies. Epistemic racism is a “hierarchy of colonial domination” whereby the knowledge produced by western individuals (primarily White males) is considered ‘universal’, ‘superior’ and ‘timeless’; this has been utilised to ‘inferiorise’, and ‘subalternise’ the epistemologies of the rest of the world (Grosfoguel, 2012a, p.18; Grosfoguel, Oso, and Christou, 2014). For Grosfoguel, epistemic racism vis-à-vis Muslims/Islam is a form of Islamophobia, since “the subalternisation and inferiorisation of Islam was not merely a downgrading of Islam as spirituality, but also as an epistemology”

(2012a; p.18). Regarding the first point mentioned above, the definition of Islamophobia I adapted for this study (see section 2.5.4) holds that Islamophobia is an *ideology* that aims at controlling the patterns of thoughts and meanings about Islam and Muslims and silencing/marginalising views that combat this ideology. Thus, epistemic racism, as experienced by some of the participants, is subsumed under Islamophobia. In this sense, epistemic racism is a result of the Whiteness of the academy, as Whiteness defines both the ‘legitimate’ knowledge and canonises it, and the ‘illegitimate’ knowledge and relegates it to the margins.

The accounts revealed two layers of epistemic racism: the first is related to the scholarship generally produced about Muslims/Islam; and the second is related to the reactions/responses of publishers, White colleagues and students to the scholarship Muslim academics produce about the ‘Muslim question’.

6.1.9.1 Academic Scholarship vis-à-vis Muslims

Dilawar, Aqeel and Fazel shared with me their views in considering the scholarship produced about Muslims/Islam, particularly after 9/11.

The narrative of Muslims in Britain was developing very rapidly [after 9/11] ..in the mainstream, in the media ... and basically I felt in a sense incapacitated ..I felt unable to shape the discourse, I felt I was a bystander in a debate of which I was also a central participant ... they’re talking about me ...in ways I was unhappy with ..and I realised that in order for me to actually make a difference, try to help shift narrative, I need to move to academia...[discussed his career change] ..because I believe that the key debates regarding Muslims in Britain are happening in academic circles. Dilawar- HSS

Suddenly after 9/11, all these academics, came specialists in Islam! [laughing], hundreds of them from nowhere... they weren’t experts in Islam before..how they become experts? They must’ve gone on really kind of intensive course ... like one week PhD about Islam [laughing] Aqeel- HSS

I think at the moment, the problem is that we have too much research about Muslims, obviously the quality of research suffers..... that’s one problem.. and I think that too much of the research is directed at showing Muslims being in some sense rather a problem .. I think most Muslims in this country feel the burden of that. Fazel- HSS

Dilawar’s quote captures his feelings of discomfort and perplexity regarding the development of the mainstream narrative about Muslims in Britain, which eventually stimulated his decision to move to academia to try to ‘shift the narrative’. His quote

shows his disapproval of the mainstream narrative, to which academia significantly contributes, suggested by 'in ...unhappy with'. Section 5.11.1 explained that this negative scholarship triggered some of the participants' decisions to join academia.

Fazel's agreement with Dilawar is suggested by 'quality of research suffers' and that, generally, this scholarship depicts Muslims as 'the problem'. Aqeel, although in a sarcastic manner, critiqued the sudden upsurge of academic specialists in Islam, who lack, in his view, rigorous understanding about Islam, suggested by 'from nowhere'. Taken together, their views suggest there is a tendency within mainstream scholarship about Islam/Muslims to portray Muslims/Islam negatively. Mainstream scholarship, therefore, contributes to the presence of the post-9/11 wave of Islamophobia; but, drawing on Said's *Orientalism*, Islamophobia has long been characterised through the Orientalist scholarship (Grosfoguel, 2012a).

The participants' views echo the literature. Scholars, for example Al-Jabri (1999), Esposito (1992) and Munoz (1999), discussed how Western philosophy and scholarship have contributed to the creation of a negative image of Muslims/Islam. For instance, Munoz (1999) addressed some of the misleading methodological tendencies often applied in academic research conducted in the West about the rise of 'political Islam'. These include: first, a tendency in Social Sciences and Islamic Studies to validate, but also restricts the validation to Western points of reference and social theories in their analysis; second, research's tendency to associate problems within Muslim communities/societies with Islam, whilst ignoring the societal, political and economic factors that caused the problems. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilisations*' thesis is a good example of a contemporary scholarship that has given rise to widely spread anti-Muslim fervour in public, but has also effected, and continues to effect, political consequences. Its impact in fuelling Islamophobia was discussed in Chapter Two. Clearly, these tendencies align with the ideology that underpins the 'normative truths' about Muslims. Indeed, in considering the portrayal/positioning of Muslims/Islam as enemies in the West, Shadid and van Koningsveld (2002, p. 176-177) stated that

Every actor involved acts and is motivated by his /her own personal interest. The reporter accentuates sensational and exotic news [...], the politician uses

demagogic statements in order to attract voters, and the scientist generalises, thereby violating the ethical rules of science, to enlarge his influence outside the scientific community. In other words, when the societal reality demands a negative attitude towards a certain ethnic or cultural group, the aforementioned actors stand ready to fulfil that demand, fuelling more propagation of the negative attitude in society to the group concerned.

6.1.9.2 Reactions towards Challenging the ‘Canon’

The reactions towards the participants’ scholarship feature through the attitudes of colleagues/senior academics and publishers, but also in classroom settings

Your work is obviously not given a priority, because of its topic...working on questions of Islam and identity or race and ethnicity are much less visible in Sociology than some of the topics that are given emphasis to. And that’s a form of discrimination, because these topics are very substantive, and they could have as much legitimacy as any other, but perhaps they’re diminished because the prevailing priorities don’t give them the appropriate status.

Ahmed- HSS

I think that there is a certain amount of politics involved in senior posts regarding the argument about priorities.... there’s a disputes about who’s to be given extra resources. I personally don’t feel that any of the people who’ve wanted a different direction to the direction I wanted to go in that they objected to my view simply on the basis of colour or religious discrimination or any combination of that thing. *But I do* think there were issues to do with the relative importance of the work that I was doing, which clearly is on ethnicity and Muslims. I think that also status and envy come into play.

Fazel- HSS

I was presenting at a conference about the UK government counter terrorism approach ... and a White old academic was like, I don’t believe it ... he goes are you sure about this or you’re just making it up? Are you serious? I’m talking about my research findings ... I’m not making it up, he wouldn’t believe. And I think part of the reason for that is because I’m producing knowledge which is challenging their sense of stability and what they know about it... and I think that’s partly why they consider it problematic. I’m not the only person to mention this, there’re a lot of Muslims as well as minority academics talk about similar experiences..the knowledge of minorities is considered of lesser importance.. of lesser value.... and for me that’s very frustrating because my method is no different to a white academic, but it’s considered of a lesser value because of who I am and who I am talking about and what I am saying.

Basim -HSS

The quotes collectively suggest a tendency within academia to portray the knowledge produced by minority academics as having less value than that produced by White

academics. Ahmed and Fazel view that scholarship on the issues of race/ethnicity and Muslims are not given due priority.

Basim's quote intimates the double standards in academia that make it possible to undermine the scholarship produced by non-whites, but recognise the scholarship produced by Whites, although both use the same methods. He also pinpointed why Muslim (and other minority) academics commonly have their scholarship challenged by White academics: because it 'challenges their sense of stability' and because of who says what about whom. The common approach to challenge the scholarship produced by non-white academics is through accusation of bias and lack of objectivity, as the interruption of the White academic to Basim suggests. His account highlights how individual's racial/ethnic/religious identity influences how their scholarship is judged, which ties with Hussain's rationale for bracketing his Muslimness (see section 5.6.1).

Moreover, some of the participants recalled facing barriers to publish, because their argument challenges the 'canon'. For instance, Hadi spoke about how, at early stages of his career, senior White colleagues delayed the publication of a book he authored, because he refused to accede to their demands requiring him to include a section in which he accommodates a mainstream view in relation to the argument he was proposing. For confidentiality purposes, no direct quote is provided. Fazel mentioned a similar experience

I had very great difficulty in breaking through into academic publishing. I had a book proposal that I sent to the key publish houses, and I had 15 rejections before it was accepted. I've never heard anyone else had this experience ... to have 15 rejections! I think one of the things that was driving that rejection was they didn't like what I was saying which was highly critical of liberal and secular interpretations of majority-minority relations. Fazel- HSS

These accounts suggest that the hegemony of Eurocentric knowledge could be safeguarded by blocking the dissemination of knowledge that challenges the canon.

These findings align with previous research findings (Bhopal, 2015, Jackson, 2008; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Villalpalndo & Delgado Bernal, 2002; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). The non-white academic participants in these studies felt that their scholarship is, at best, not duly respected /recognised and,

at worst, is devalued, questioned, and also sometimes invalidated. A participant in Bhopal's (2015, p. 117) study remarked that "race is devalued as a study in academia, because it's Black people who study race. There are some white people studying race, but their work on race is more valued because they are White". It is ironic how the knowledge produced by Whites about whites is afforded legitimacy, while that produced by any minority group about their own group is questioned and challenged, when simultaneously "many white social scientists are establishing their professional careers as experts on minority issues" (Jackson, 2008, p. 1015). Villalpando and Delgado Bernal (2002) argued that the 'apartheid of knowledge' in academia defines the twofold of a legitimate knowledge as the one that is produced by Whites *and* that asserts the inferiority of non-whites. Thus, again, this 'apartheid of knowledge' is underpinned by Whiteness. Indeed, the debates and arguments that take place in academia about the 'standard proof' required of anti-racist research reveal the attack in academia on scholarship that challenges the mainstream reasoning of inequality (Gillborn, 2008).

Moreover, some junior academic participants described how senior White colleagues restricted critical discussions that might possibly recalibrate the Western secular Social Theory about Muslims, particularly in classroom settings, or that rest on Islamic epistemology.

I gave a lecture on religion ... I opened up the discussion with some of the classical thinking in Sociology...then introduced contemporary thinking...like Talal Asad, on the position of religion in public sphere ... students were so enthusiastic. After that one session, they [senior colleagues] thought *no*, we can't have discussions like this. I think there's a great fear amongst colleagues about Islam/Muslims...but this fear is blocking opportunities for discussion...it's quite nice to have discussions ... but...well, recently, I put together an idea for a talk around the Charlie Hebdo affair...they had a talk here and it wasn't very well received by students who said it was just the same old story...academics were saying Muslims are the problem [...]. So, I invited a great speaker [...] very good at this issue and he agreed to do it. Then, I sent the proposal to the head of department, asking for some funding, he didn't even respond to me. So, sometimes I try to take the opportunity to create the space, but then the space for a critical approach to race/ ethnicity at universities is never there. We'd like to try shake it up and think a bit differently ...and that where it gets difficult

Adam- HSS

I used to design my courses to help people look at the issue from different perspectives. For example, I presented YY from Islamic view, why are you presenting information this way? I was told now and again by colleagues.... then you need to be very careful...I felt it... because I was being observed during the lectures..... I know I am able to change people's perspectives, well to an extent ... had I been given more freedom...Although I have a diverse student body who identify with what I say ... you could see the room lights up...but obviously I have to be really mindful of what I was trying to say
Abbas- HSS

The quotes hint to the presence of indirect silencing in Adam's and Abbas' departments to their attempts to challenge the canon or make use of Islamic epistemology, respectively. Adam's impression about the 'absence of space' has resulted from his experience in the classroom, as well as through not receiving any response regarding his proposal. This absence of space is what he grapples with in his department. Abbas felt that he was silenced through the constant questioning of his colleagues and their observations.

Adam remarked that 'fear' possibly underpinned this indirect silencing. The current Islamophobic climate and the possible impact of the anti-terrorism agenda that prescribes duties over HEIs could explain the fear. For instance, issues of surveillance and the argument about academic freedom of speech under the Prevent agenda might be among the possible reasons behind Adam's senior colleagues' obstructing a discussion of the 'Muslim question' from the perspective of a prominent Muslim thinker like Asad, who operates predominantly in secular intellectual domains. Perhaps Adam's colleagues were unaware of Asad's reputation, or they were just cautious of the possible repercussions by the state; therefore, they perhaps felt it is safer to silence the discussion instead of engaging with it. This experience was reported to me during the first interview with Adam before the new Prevent came into effect at HEIs. However, ignoring the possible impact of the Prevent backdrop on Adam's seniors blocking of non-majority scholarship would be uncritical. By side-stepping or silencing critical discussions regarding local and global events in which Muslims/Islam are involved, not only might some universities indirectly exercise epistemic racism through obstructing non-mainstream Eurocentric narratives tainted by the 'war on terror' agenda, but they may also contribute to the wider Islamophobia through preserving the status quo. It is expected that with the

implementation of the new Prevent statutory duty at HEIs, the current existing tensions as expressed by academics, see Perfect (2016), resulted from the poor implementation of new Prevent and the notion of academic freedom, will add another layer of indirect pressure to *mainstream* knowledge and scholarship. The first layer of indirect pressure is a typical result of the Whiteness of academia and Western hegemony over legitimate knowledge.

This overwhelming ‘fear’ would appear to also impact on the choices of some Muslim academics regarding the type of scholarship they produce, according to Jamal. Therefore, they chose to work on safer zones than those that deal with controversial areas that might intersect with the normative discourse about Muslims.

I think the climate might be one of the reasons behind [Muslim academics] making decisions about what to write about. I think if we didn’t have this war on terror, if we didn’t have the Muslim fifth column presence, then perhaps that would’ve been slightly different. I think they’re very scared of the implications arising from their decisions ... I attended BRAIS conference last year, I think most of the papers were on philosophy.... these are the comfort areas that Muslims can actually go into...it’s not to do with controversial areas.

Jamal- HSS

Linking these experiences to other incidents that occurred in academia could pinpoint a common thread amongst these incidents: some universities have possibly developed a tendency, affected by the Prevent duty, to scrutinise and curtail the scope of freedom of speech in relation to Muslim-related scholarly activities. For instance, in December 2014 a HEI in England pulled the venue of a conference that aimed at tackling institutional Islamophobia, due to, according to an official spokesperson, far right groups threats. However, some academics and community organisations sent an open letter to the institution, in which they stated their impression that HEIs, by taking this position, contribute to silencing, instead of enhancing, constructive debates that aim to tackle Islamophobia. But again the extent to which the implementation of the new Prevent duty at HEIs on what would be judged within the content of Muslim-related scholarship as acceptable (and not ‘extreme’) according to the policy guidance in academia is yet to be investigated.

It is worth noting that the participants’ accounts in challenging the canon align with the recent initiatives of non-White students, as well as academics questioning the

celebration of Eurocentric perspectives in HSS subjects that concurrently show less regard to other perspectives on these subjects. These initiatives, such as the NUS Black Students' campaign at UCL (2014) 'Why is My Curriculum White?', 'Rhodes Statue Must Fall' in Oxford (Jan., 2016), and the 'Black Studies Movement' (Andrews, 2015), aim principally to open spaces for perspectives of knowledge, other than the Eurocentric ones, and to decolonise the academia.

Moreover, participants' views were expressed before the implementation of the new Prevent; yet they suggest that Muslim academics are alert to the suspicion package associated with Prevent in the wider society, and that some of them might choose to moderate the content of their scholarship to avoid any unwarranted suspicion, as Jamal's observation suggests as well as Abbas' reaction towards his colleagues questioning and possible suspicion.

6.1.9.3 Students' Perceptions of / Reactions towards Muslim Academics

All of the STEMM participants and some HSS participants reflected positively on students' feedback. For example, some participants mentioned being frequently nominated for teaching awards. However, adopting a CRT lens means that the negative reactions/feedback of students towards some participants cannot be ignored.

Some narratives reveal that the participants' authority as lecturers is challenged by some students' verbal or non-verbal reactions.

Sometimes students turn and leave my lecturers ... because ... I don't know why they don't believe I'm a lecturer... once or twice students thought I was a cleaner or something in a tutorial. For example, I remember a BME student ...she said when I first met you I hadn't believed you were a lecturer. I said, what do you think I was? She was I thought you had come to fix something. I said why? She said even when you were lecturing I was like why is this guy talking? Because you're not like a lecturer... Aqeel- HSS

Students' acts of leaving the hall, which does not seem rare in his experience, suggested by 'sometimes', is a powerful non-verbal micro-aggression that dismisses Aqeel's authority as a lecturer, and a blatant act of misrecognition. Micro-aggression was not limited to White students; non-whites also appeared to have internalised the

hegemonic discourse that normalises White academics. The fact that this student impudently transmitted her impression that he was a technician seems to be worse than leaving the lecture.

Basim's students challenged his scholarship, though differently

My students are largely white females. When I'm lecturing, some of them enjoy, but a lot of them just snigger. For example, once I was making the argument on how the criminal justice system punishes people according to their race, I talked about Muslims, introducing new perspectives from research, but they didn't want to listen....they thought maybe I were being biased, because I'm Muslim and I'm talking about Muslims, right? I didn't say anything... I mean there was ignorance, and looking and stuff but I just carried on... and if that was a White person delivering that lecture, I don't think that would be a problem. Basim -HSS

The students' disrespectful behaviour, through sniggering, is a way of ignoring and challenging his input, which could be impacted on by their impressions about both his identity *and* his argument, thus they question his 'objectivity'. The quote reveals his awareness of the possible impact of his identity on their reactions.

Additionally, students' challenging of some of the participants featured through their formal feedback at the end of the module, which eventually led some participants to modify their style.

I've modified my [teaching] style, [...] because before, students used to say they'll really like me or really hate me..[...] occasionally I get one or two students who find my style a bit overbearing because when I'm teaching around ethnic relations/ power, I get quite enthusiastic ... In one lecture I talked about the representation of Muslims post-9/11. And then the feedback for the whole module she said he is busy keep talking about the Muslim race. Even she didn't get the term right. What Muslim race are you talking about? That kind of thing annoys me when students have inaccurate and wrong as well to be blunt.

Aqeel- HSS

The majority of my students are BME. They see you as one from their background... so you have the opportunity to present stuff from their perspectives... I was trying to present an alternative viewpoint. Some White students, the parochial bureaucrat ones, although they were a minority, felt I was catering for a particular group. So, they would raise an issue, because they prefer more mainstream viewpoint. Obviously the department noticed the way they

didn't like me...so I felt silenced, I felt I had to very much to mainstream
Abbas- HSS

While Aqeel did not mention that he mainstreamed, Abbas's quote clearly shows that his modification was towards a mainstream perspective. The modification of both was triggered by students' feedback, which indirectly posed pressures. Aqeel's anger about the 'inaccurate and wrong' accusation is suggested by 'What Muslim race are you talking about?'. Interestingly, Abbas's quote suggests the power and authority of White students, even when they were a minority in classroom.

These findings accord with previous research findings (Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Lugo-Lugo, 2012; Muhtaseb, 2007; Puwar, 2004; Solórzano, 1998; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; and Wallace et al., 2012). For instance, Muhtaseb (2007) described how her students would question her authority in the classroom, because they were either White or "normalized to White professors" (p.30). Lugo-Lugo described incidents when White students used derogatory language with her in the classroom. Puwar (2004) remarked on students 'double-take' she often encounters at her first lectures. Muhtaseb (2007) and Wallace et al. (2012) also highlighted how students' reactions to non-White academics largely rest on the former perception about the racial, ethnic (or religious) background of the lecturers, rather than what they say, and the tendency amongst White students to focus on 'who delivers the message' rather than 'what the message is'. Similarly, the participants in the research of Bhopal and Jackson (2013, p. 11) recalled feedback as a discriminatory practice, as illustrated by this quote

I feel a little discomfort when the student body is practically all white [...] And so once. when I taught on a particular module...the comments were a bit snide ... I don't know whether it was my lecturing style, the content, and you can't tell. Sometimes, it all gets mixed up

In the same token, Dlamini (2002) demarcates the difference between having a 'voice' and having 'the power'. It appears that some Muslim academics have less power than their White students, in that the latter could question latently and blatantly the former and even challenge the empirical evidence presented by Muslim academics. Dlamini remarked, drawing on her experience as a critical pedagogy teacher educator in a Canadian UG programme, that White students tend to question

narratives of racism and fight them back, whether in classroom settings and/or through their writings, which challenge her authority, but ultimately side-step issues that affect minorities through focusing on discrimination on grounds of gender or sexuality.

6.2 Institutional Racism and Veiled Silences

Senior colleagues, even those who embrace anti-subordination ideologies, often advise their junior contemporaries to remain silent.
Onwuachi-Willing, 2012, p. 142-43.

“it is not the case that the man who is silent says nothing” (Apache maxim, quoted in Montoya, 2000, p. 279)

This section discusses the various approaches through which the participants responded to the topic of institutional racism. While the study adopts a CRT lens and holds the view that anti-Muslim racism is present in the everyday, it *does not* assume that *every* Muslim academic has experienced (or is currently experiencing) racism in their workplace. I attended the interviews with the expectation that the participants were aware of the study framework, as described in the participant information sheet, and that, by volunteering to participate, they were ready to engage in, and to discuss, the topics, including racism. During the interviews, the participants were asked whether racism had been part of their career experiences and whether any Muslim colleagues had confided to them about any negative experiences they had encountered, and/or they were offered a copy of the Nottingham Two Case, (*THE*, 2008), to read to prompt discussion in this area.

However, only a few of the participants engaged openly in the topic of racism. Some felt that institutional racism was present in their experiences and they elaborated on negative experiences, such as facing barriers in recruitment, as discussed in sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.

Others appeared to be reluctant, or resistant, to discuss this topic, even generally. Some completely disregarded the presence of institutional racism vis-à-vis Muslim (or other non-white) academics; others challenged the presence of Islamophobia in the broader society, avoided using the term racism and/or avoided framing their negative experiences as discriminatory. The responses of this group appeared to follow a pattern, which generally sidestepped the topic, though in diverse forms. The diverse discursive strategies that shaped their responses are interpreted within this study as forms of silence. Whilst I have discussed in Chapter Four that the

‘discursive practices’ are significant to any analysis under the CT paradigm, I do not use the Foucault notion of power. I use, instead, Bourdieu’s notion of power, in which he emphasises individuals’ agency in reproducing social inequalities through the habitus. The themes discussed in this section suggest that the participants’ responses, and silences, have resulted from the Whiteness of the academy.

Additionally, I draw on Mazzei’s framework to discuss the participants’ approaches in responding to the topic of institutional racism. A discussion of how silence is defined is warranted firstly, followed by a discussion of the possible contextual impetus for silence. Then, the different forms of silence will be unpacked.

6.2.1 Conceptualising Silence: Theoretical Framework

The difficulty in talking meaningfully about sensitive aspects has been highlighted by several scholars. For example, discussions related to race and racism have been found to be challenged, or resisted, in classroom settings (Dlamini, 2002; Gillborn, 2008; Osterling and Wong, 2008). Open and meaningful discussion is also limited in research examining Whiteness (Mazzei, 2003; 2007), sexuality (Morison and Macleod; 2014; Ryan-Flood and Gill, 2010), obesity (Warin & Gunson, 2013) and chronic illness (Charmaz, 2002). Silence is commonly used by scholars to frame the way the participants in these studies discuss topics that are perceived as personally/morally sensitive to engage in or disturbing, and/or when individuals anticipate the potential cost of their disclosure.

Interpreting silence in qualitative research is not limited to attending to the absence of spoken text, such as literal silence (Poland and Pederson, 1998) or non-verbal cues, as they are involuntary and, thus, could communicate the speaker’s emotional response, such as laughter (St. Pierre, 1997). Mazzei perceives “speech on a continuum between that which is voiced literally [...] and that which is voiced silently or metaphorically” (2007, p. 634). Mazzei (2003, 2007) postulates that silence could be performed by the absence of words; equally, words could mask silence. The form of silence performed by speech is termed as ‘veiled/ metaphorical’ silence (Mazzei, 2003), as the speech serves to veil, or mask, the participants’ unwillingness, or inability, to engage in topics they perceive to be sensitive. Mazzei (2003, p. 363, 365) argues that veiled/metaphorical silence, unlike literal silence,

occurs when the participants speak, but their speaking [is] an attentiveness to a different question, not the specific one offered by the researcher', or it is about peripheral aspects, or aspects loosely related to those expected by the researcher to be discussed, which is done through meandering. Their answers manifest acts of '*avoidance, denial, deflection, reframing and intellectualizing that are prevalent in their interactions and in their responses*'. These responses are 'neither inaction nor passivity, but, rather, a silence that was speaking without speaking'. They appear as 'empty talk' (Poland and Pederson, 1998). Thus, veiled silence that features through denial, reframing and so on, could be interpreted as discursive strategies that mask/veil their silence regarding the original topics/questions.

Although the current study does not utilise a discourse analysis approach, unpacking veiled silences is achieved through attending to ruptures and non-verbal cues, such as laughter and higher voice pitch, as well as the contradictions, omissions and digressions (Mazzei, 2003) that exist throughout some accounts in relation to issues of racism/Islamophobia. 'What goes without saying' with regard to a discussed topic could provide insights into the influence of the socio-cultural context on individuals' accounts (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000).

In the discussion of silence, it needs to be understood that this current study is in accordance with Poland and Pederson (1998), in that interpreting silence is *tentative* and open to *reinterpretation*, since assumptions made about silence have no clear-cut evidence. Furthermore, its interpretation is contingent to the context (Van Dijk, 2008). A brief discussion of the possible contextual influence on the presence of silence is discussed below.

6.2.2 Impetus for Silence: Evoking the multiple contexts

Largely, silence marks power hierarchies and dynamics and, perhaps more often, sustains those hierarchies. Bourdieu's habitus is useful to explain the strong possible influence of both the wider local (and global) 'war on terror' context and the institutional context on the presence of silence. Habitus provides insights into the *agential* role of (marginalised) individuals in legitimising and 'reproducing' unjust structures, even 'unconsciously' (Bourdieu, 1984, p.170). Muslim academics enduring

the weight of twofold pressure, the societal and the institutional, are more likely to develop ways of thinking, speaking and behaving that correspond with the prevailing normativity of that environment.

The societal (and global) silencing impact is vivid across several dimensions. Firstly, the shift in multiculturalism policies and practices to ‘assimilation’ is argued to silence Muslims’ difference in the public sphere (Modood, 1998). Put differently, for Muslims (and only Muslims) to *integrate* and ‘fit in’, they must change (Kundnani, 2007). Secondly, the overemphasis of the ‘incompatibility thesis’ between Islam and secular policies is argued to aim at silencing Muslim claims of par citizenship (Meer, 2010; Modood, 2010). Thirdly, it is argued that Anti-terrorism Acts, particularly the Prevent duty, are ‘silencing’ any religious, political or dissenting views and ‘curtailing’ the democratic participation of Muslims (Ameli and Merali, 2015). Moreover, it is argued that the global ‘war on terror’ aims at silencing Muslims’ political activism locally and globally (Birt, 2010; Sayyid, 2010). The findings of empirical research that examined the impact of ‘war on terror’ discourse on Muslims support these arguments. For example, Mythen, Walklate and Khan (2009) and Ahmed, Shamila (2012) found that one of the effects of anti-terrorism discourse was the taming of Muslims, as some of the participants in these studies had resorted to self-effacing or, rather, silencing their Muslim-ness, in order to prevent being picked on. In the wider society, research, for example Allen (2014) and Allen and Nielsen (2002), have found that the majority of female victims facing gendered Islamophobia tend to remain silent, hence avoid formally reporting it.

Puwar (2004) and Smitherman-Donaldson & Van Dijk (1988) highlight the significant role of the dominant discourse in constructing and reproducing racism. The diverse signs regarding silence in the academia in relation to issues of race equality and racism have been discussed in section 3.6., highlighting the complicity of academic research in sanitising the seriousness of racism through sugar-coating it with soft language that avoids serious terms (Bouattia, 2015), such as ‘inadvertent bias’ or ‘office banter’. Additionally, Harper (2012) conducted a systematic analysis of 255 articles focusing on issues of race and minoritised people’s experiences in postsecondary educational settings that were published in seven peer-reviewed leading journals between 1999

and 2009. Harper found that the terms racism and racist institutional norms were “rarely explicitly named among the range of plausible reasons for racial differences” and that “many of the authors presupposed that racial differences were attributable to a wide spectrum of possible factors; racism was hardly ever among them” (p. 16). Moreover, the hegemony of the meritocracy myth discourse, as well as the apolitical language of E&D policies, has drawn the attention away from issues of race equality (Ahmed, Sara, 2007, 2012; Deem and Morley, 2006). This hegemonic discourse within academia has more likely had an effect on *regulating* the language individuals use to talk about their experiences or to discuss issues of (in) equalities (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). The diverse forms of veiled silences detected in the accounts are discussed in the following paragraphs. Moreover, the implementation of the new Prevent duty might have the effect of silence scholarship deemed as extreme, according to the guidance. This will not be limited to Muslim academics who attempt to combat the normativity vis-a-vis Muslims and Islam, but to any academic whose research content might be categorised as extreme.

6.2.3 Avoidance and Reframing: Masking Silence

Some of the participants exercised a form of self-censorship, which was deliberately exercised to close down the discussion, even after gentle pressure to open up discussion in the area. These participants were clearly unwilling, or felt uncomfortable, to disclose their experiences related to racism. Reframing was also used as an avoidance strategy. In this current study, reframing occurred when a speaker asserted the commonplace of racism to their experiences, but changed the focus from the personal to the general. Thus, they depersonalised their input to the conversation through speaking generically about discrimination in academia against non-white students and staff or the research undertaken in this regard.

Ibtihal: have you ever had any experience which you felt perhaps I've experienced...?

Aqeel: Yeah, yeah..I really

Ibtihal: Would you like to talk about it?

Aqeel: I don't really want to talk about it [laughing] quite in details ...but I might talk in general, ...BME employees have a higher rate of disciplinary...

and the outcome is a bit mainstream. If you look at the criminal justice system [discussed BME situation in criminal justice system] there's no difference in employment. In academia, people've done research on this and they found that BME academics seem to have a higher rate of disciplinary issues [discussed the research findings]

Ibtihal: I understand, but I am interested in your personal experience.

Aqeel: Uhh, from my own personal experience ... I mean I find it difficult to talk about that... not that I haven't had any experience but it's quite kind of personal issues ... so, and I wouldn't want to get any, any [laughing] any more troubles

Ibtihal: But I will anonymise....

Aqeel: No, look, it's obvious. I've experienced some very problematic, double standards around the treatment of BME staff compared with their white counterparts... this isn't just about me, I've talked with other non-white colleagues and some of the experiences they've faced were absolutely disgraceful... There's been overt racism taking place in their work place... and they'd been advised by the line-manager to look for another job if they don't like it, you know, that sort of thing.[...] A good marker is BME students. I engage a lot with them ...they feel they encounter racism [mentioning some racist incidents BME students disclosed to him].

Ibtihal: May I ask, what was your feeling then?

Aqeel: You feel debilitated, because there's nothing you can do about it. If you try to claim that discrimination is going on, then you're on the risk of being labelled as playing the race card. And if you don't, you're gonna have to live with it.

Aqeel's quote is worthy of pausing to unpack. He was quite alert to, and aware of, the next topic to follow on from our conversation, which is obvious through his response that interrupted my question, asserting that he had really experienced racism. Simultaneously, his avoidance was obvious in his immediate closing-down response, 'I don't really want to talk about it in details', even after my gentle pressing. Clearly, he was uncomfortable with this topic, which is suggested through his laughter and meandering through different loosely related topics, yet he repeatedly asserted that he had experienced serious instances of racism.

Aqeel also adopted the reframing strategy to avoid discussions of racism. Instead of speaking about his personal experiences of racism, he spoke about several topics, including the situation of BME people in the criminal justice system, making this

analogous to the situation of BME academics and students facing racism in academia.

Here, both avoidance and reframing masked Aqeel's unwillingness, inability or discomfort to speak about his personal experience. Aqeel's silence appeared to be a means to avoid 'any more troubles'. Use of the word 'more' suggests that he experienced some trouble at some point in his academic career when he spoke about his experience of racism. Perhaps the possible 'troubles' of personalising his account may include retaliation or victimisation should he be recognised. This interpretation could be supported by his description of his feelings when he went through that experience. The suppressive structures have had a demoralising effect, which made him choose to steer away from highlighting any possible issues and accustom himself to endure the pain silently.

Avoidance was adopted by some of the participants when asked whether any Muslim friend/colleague had confided in them about any experience of racism.

All these years there are times when people told me personally that they've been discriminated against because they're Muslims, or because they're Asian, or because they're non-white. Certainly it happened. But I don't think I'd like to share any of these experiences... I think that, for it to be of any value, I'd have to give a level of detail that I wouldn't want to share because they said things in confidence.
Fazel- HSS

I don't prefer to talk about others [laughing] Said- STEMM

Both Fazel and Said blocked the conversation through their responses. While Said, politely but cannily, blocked any further prompting on the topic, by expressing that this is against his personal preference, Fazel asserted that Muslim colleagues confided in him about experiences of racism and they alluded that Muslim-ness might be a rationale for their negative experiences. Although aware of several stories, he silenced the possibility of giving voice to these stories, as he did not wish to breach confidences.

6.2.4 Silence Masquerading as Denial

The STEMM participants generally felt that institutional racism did not exist in academia, as most of them were generally able to secure posts and experience

smooth promotions (see section 6.1.8). This might have enabled them to side-step the issue of racism and discrimination. In addition, successful individuals may tend to stress the positive (and down play the negative) aspects of their experiences. The denial occurs through diverse discursive strategies, including blaming the victim, citing the discourse of meritocracy, describing academics as liberal individuals and referring to the internationalisation of HEIs. Akbar's view below provides a flavour of how these strategies played out during the interview. Capital letters are used to denote a louder, almost shouting, voice.

Ibtihal: Within your academic experience, have you ever experienced discrimination?

Akbar: No, not...not in academia

Ibtihal: Thanks. Generally, have any of your Muslim academic friends confided in you about any experience of discrimination?

Akbar: Ummm, not really, I don't remember anything serious, honestly. I find it the case that people blame it on this sort of thing [discrimination] ... but I've never seen this in my personal experience (silence). I MEAN SOME PEOPLE WILL REALLY FIND IT EASY TO BLAME THINGS ON DISCRIMINATION. For example, they apply for a job, didn't get it, then they start...well they discriminated against me because THEY HATE ME BECAUSE I AM A MUSLIM. Come on (laughing loudly) I don't think so. (Silence). BUT I HONESTLY THINK PROBABLY THEY ARE NOT QUALIFIED ENOUGH AND THIS WILL REALLY EXPLAIN THINGS IN A MUCH BETTER WAY.

Ibtihal: Why do you think his supposition is invalid?

Akbar: Because he lacks merit. If he's really better than others, they would definitely hire him. [...] If he isn't, of course they won't hire him.

Akbar: And talking about Muslims in the UK, I honestly, and this is my personal opinion, I've lived in X countries [silence]...Ok, I should put it this way [...] I find.. the UK system to be the most tolerant compared to any other system I've lived in ...actually it's the fairest [discusses the fair system compared to the other countries he's lived in]..it's a very serious issue to discriminate against someoneif you want to do such a thing .. you'd really have to think quite a lot about it before doing it.. [...] but also British academics are really tolerant [discusses the influence of travelling on nurturing tolerance]. The academic society in the UK is so international. [discusses diversity in conferences]. SO IT'S AN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY BY DEFINITION. SO IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST SOMEBODY.

Ibtihal: Uhha, so you feel academia is based on tolerance?

Akbar: I would say yes. I would rather put it as it's an international community by definition. There is no nation or race or religion dominating. It's a combination of different nationalities [...] how is it possible?... I mean if there's a minority-majority situation then you would probably discriminate, but if it's no majority-minority (silence)

Ibtihal: So I take it that there is no majority-minority staffing here?

Akbar: Of course, now... in the UK, I don't know, I don't have numbers... but my impression is international academics are no minority....

Akbar is an international Muslim academic in STEMM, whose personal ambition to be an academic was achieved through the UK academia. He recalled being obstructed from pursuing an academic career in his homeland prior to coming to the UK, due to the political situation of the ethnic minority group to which he belongs. Akbar spoke about being offered a contract at his first interview, before even passing his viva, when other white finalists were unsuccessful at the same interview. Therefore, there is little likelihood that Akbar had negative experiences.

Akbar dismissed the possibility of anti-Muslim discrimination in academia, even when some of his friends felt that it was part of their experiences. He displayed a derogatory attitude towards claims of racism that were raised by colleagues, citing the hegemonic discourse about meritocracy to blame the victims. He then meandered to speak about Muslims in the societal context, to support his view that there is no such thing as racism in the UK generally, and against Muslims in particular. Although he did not state that there is no Islamophobia, this view was implied by linking the situation of Muslims to his view that the UK judicial system is 'the fairest' compared to other countries. He then provided evidence that racism is less likely to exist inside academia by emphasising the international characteristic of the UK academia, the diversity of staff and the absence of a minority-majority situation amongst staff without explaining how, for instance, the diversity of staff could prevent racism and assure the achieving of equality.

His quote is worthy of unpacking. Firstly, in attending to the non-verbal cues, his laughter, his louder voice and his avoidance of using the term discrimination, his remark 'blame it on that sort of thing' might indicate that the topic was

disconcerting. Secondly, his meandering to other topics loosely related to the discussed one was somehow not only a distraction from the focus of the conversation, but it also appeared to be ‘empty talk’ (Poland and Pederson, 1998, p.299). Additionally, he was uncertain about his proposition that there is no minority-majority makeup within the academic staffing in the UK.

There were two instances during the interview that could strongly suggest denial. Firstly, Akbar’s response to the question about his career prospects in five years time and the feasibility of these prospects indicates that he denies racism, as long as it does not affect him. He remarked

I expect to be a Professor [...].I think it’s quite a reasonable expectation based on the experience of my peers. Now, if you ask me this question after five years, probably I would give you a different answer; I may tell you there has been discrimination (laughing)

Secondly, the denial could clearly be captured in my field-note on the off-record post-interview conversation, as field-notes “can assist in capturing some of the silences” (Poland and Pederson, 1998, p. 308).

Akbar: What are you trying to find out? Be careful, are you assuming there is racism at universities?

Ibtihal: Stats and research findings attest racism in academia.

Akbar: You are too courageous; perhaps because you are Palestinian. If someone is used to having too spicy food, would they be able to recognise mild spices? [He spent over an hour speaking about the way his ethnic group is discriminated against in his homeland]

The spices metaphor indicates denial, through contradicting his previous view about the little likelihood of the presence of racism in academia. The metaphor indicates that racism might be present in academia, although in more subtle forms than the one he experienced previously in his homeland. His warnings, as well as him associating courage with the research topic choice, indicates that he perceives the research topic to be controversial.

Commenting on the *Nottingham Two* article, Hasan, a professor in STEMM, denied the presence of Islamophobia at universities and toned down its existence at the societal level.

Hasan: Yes, this is related to ONE INCIDENT. I would say I never felt there is anything Islamophobic within XX University. And I don't think any of my colleagues at other universities revealed anything of the kind. I have so many friends, Muslims and non-Muslims in different universities; no-one told me about Islamophobia at universities. NEVER. It is an environment where people are highly educated... On top of this I can tell you that in so many universities in the UK Muslims have a prayer room, other religious groups don't... Muslims have halal food, other religious groups don't have their dietary requirement provided.... all universities have Muslim societies.... So, Muslims are, in my view, nicely treated... of course most of them are guests in this country... because they only come for some time and then they go back, so they don't consider themselves..

Ibtihal: You mean students?

Hasan: Yes, well students and staff ... they work for a few years, then go back to their own countries.

Ibtihal: Do you consider yourself a guest?

Hasan: Pardon?

Ibtihal: Do you consider yourself a guest?

Hasan: Well... if you stay 10 years plus you are no more a guest... especially if you hold a citizenship. So just to summarise ... we have to be realistic and to say things as they are. I think Muslims have great opportunities here if they want to thrive [discussed again the provision of halal food...etc]. So, I think they are privileged...

Ibtihal: I mean, there is one sentence that intrigued me, when you said most Muslims here are guests, what about the Muslims who were born here and they are UK citizens ... I mean this guy in the article is a UK citizen?

Hasan: Yes, yes, I think, I think, I think, I had the opportunity to know many of them as well... [silence]... these people, if they want to thrive and develop, they will have opportunities. But if, if some of them, reject the society, and they don't want to, you know, to integrate, probably that's the problem. And there are many people who don't want to integrate [he discussed Muslims' resistance to 'integration']

Ibtihal: OK, can I just ask one last question? Do you think there is Islamophobia in the wider society?

Hasan: It's something which is not constant, it can be zero, it can be high, but it varies between the two. When I came to the UK, I never felt it [discussed UK government combating 'terrorism' in Northern Ireland]...but after 9/11, 7/7 [discussed Muslim 'terrorist attacks'] ... then if you take what's happening in the Middle East [discussed the turmoil there and ISIS], so all that sends wrong messages, and probably some people will become Islamophobes ... so probably there's a bit of Islamophobia...like if you look for it, you may find it ..., but if you don't look for it, you won't see it. But who's responsible? Muslims are responsible! So when a Muslim is subjected to Islamophobia, don't think ... Oh poor guy...NO, they are responsible, because part of our responsibility is to show that Islam isn't what they think, we aren't doing this job.

Hasan's personal experience seems overwhelmingly positive, crowned through receiving professorship at a relatively young age. He has widely published in established journals and generated big grants for his department. Hasan dismissed the *Nottingham Two* article as being an isolated incident and was adamant that he had neither experienced Islamophobia nor had been informed about its presence. He even dismissed the presence of Islamophobia at universities, by remarking on the tolerant ethos of the workplace and the provision of Muslim related faith-requirements and emphasising that Muslims are privileged compared to other minority groups. He acknowledged that Islamophobia did exist in society, but swiftly toned that down by drawing attention to the many opportunity the academia offered and the generally fair and tolerant ethos of the British society. While he concluded that, if you went looking for Islamophobia, you would find it, he blamed it on Muslims' lack of integration.

However, Hasan's account at the close of the interview would appear to contradict his previous standpoint (emphasis added).

Ibtihal: Do you think there's anything else I should know to better understand your experience?

Hasan: Probably not, the only thing I'd say is it's not an easy issue.

Ibtihal: Sorry, what is it that is not easy?

Hasan: *This issue you mentioned and the questions you asked, it's very complex. It's not one answer, but it could be easier for other groups, other religions than for Muslims now*

Ibtihal: You mean the research?

Hasan: No

Ibtihal: You mean the situation?

Hasan: This topic you asked me about.

Ibtihal: Sorry, the last one?

Hasan: All the questions you asked are related towards the end, about being a Muslim academic in this country, correct?

Ibtihal: Yes.

Hasan: Yes. So *around this time it's one of the most complicated issues.* (silence). Probably if you came 10-15 years ago, it wasn't a burning issue...I hope in the next 5 years, things *will change to the right direction...* and it won't be a burning issue.

Hasan's excerpt highlights two key points. Firstly, the denial of Islamophobia, or anti-Muslim discrimination, is evident in the contradictions. His last quote shows he is aware of how difficult it is to be a Muslim in the UK academia nowadays compared to 15 years ago, which contradicts his previous statement that Muslims are privileged compared to other religious groups. Yet, he was not ready to engage in a discussion about Islamophobia. In fact, he went out of his way to suggest that Muslims might, themselves, be to blame for the rise of Islamophobia, which suggests that he has internalised the broader Islamophobic discourse that portrays Muslims as 'the problem'. Additionally, his final coded input through using one-word-responses suggests he was aware of the study structure, but was unwilling, or unable, to engage in discussion, as the current situation of Muslims is one of 'the most complicated issues' and because the current climate is not conducive to engage in such discussion, as his final sentence suggests. Perhaps then, it is prudent, during this calamity, to keep one's head down by not highlighting any potential anti-Muslim issues.

Hasan's comments off-the-record could support that denial concealed silence. Hasan hinted that this topic is risky, through inquiring about the background of my supervisor(s), particularly whether they were Palestinians, and how they feel about supervising such a political topic. Post responding, I inquired about the connection he assumed there was between their background and my research; he responded 'courage!'

6.2.5 Silence as Euphemism

I propose in this section the presence of another form of veiled silence in addition to those discussed by Mazzei (2003): euphemism as a mask of silence. This refers to individuals' use of sanitised terms to describe an experience they spontaneously cited during their conversation or when they were asked whether they have ever felt that they had experienced racism. In other words, they responded to the question, but avoided using such terms as racism or discrimination. Euphemism is akin to reframing, yet, in the latter, people explicitly said they had experienced racism, but de-personalised their input, whilst, in the former, people responded by providing examples of what might be perceived as discriminatory acts, but removed the negative connotation that surrounds the term racism. Of particular interest is how euphemism permeates the accounts of some of the participants whose academic scholarship tackles Whiteness and minority issues outside of academia. For example, Huda, unlike Akbar and Hasan, does not deny that racism exists, as section 6.1.7 shows. Nevertheless, she used the term 'unfair' to frame a negative experience she spontaneously mentioned upon discussing her post type.

Huda: Previously, there were white colleagues in a similar situation as myself and their contracts were renewed and mine wasn't. But I believed that was because students' numbers had dropped and there wasn't going to be another contract. There were times when I perhaps thought that I felt it was unfair, but didn't really think more about it. Didn't think about it in any other way, just felt the system was unfair.

Ibtihal: What do you mean by unfair?

Huda: You're in the right place at the right time, or you're in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Huda mentioned this occurrence in the spur of the moment when she was speaking about how she had not felt that mentoring was provided in her career, as it was for other White colleagues. It might have been the case that she genuinely thought about it as an unfair incident. Huda's experience aligns with the ECU (2015a) report, which shows that the proportion of non-traditional staff on fixed-term contracts is greater than that of white academics, which suggests the presence of a White privilege regarding contract types. Additionally, Huda's area of expertise makes it difficult to assume that she was unaware of the discourse around racism. However, in

rationalising the possible impetus for her unfortunate experience, she cited the drop in student numbers, which had only impacted on her contract. She recalled times when she tried to figure out a reason for this incident and ended by framing it as an ‘unfair’ incident, emphasising that no other explanation was clear to her. Attending to what ‘went without saying’ in Huda’s quote, or what was avoided, could provide insight into how euphemism masked silence. For instance, she denied thinking about it in any other way, limiting her conceptualisation to ‘unfairness’. Other possible factors that were sidestepped from the conversation and that draw directly from her scholarship expertise are Whiteness and racism. It is also intriguing how the possibility of Whiteness did not occur to her when this ‘unfairness’ was only present in her experience and not in the experiences of her White colleagues. Interestingly, Huda noted her preference to describe her research participants as ethnic minorities, even when they are Muslims, as the former is *a safer* banner to adopt. One may question, therefore, whether the comparative form ‘safer’ suggests that there is a risk associated with using the term ‘Muslim’, even with regard to research.

6.2.6 Silence: Commentary

The discussed accounts in the previous sections indicate that the societal and institutional habitus not only influences the ways in which the participants rationalise and/or speak about their negative experiences, but also their general approach to the topic of racism/Islamophobia. It would appear, thus, that Charmaz’s (2002) view that silence ultimately operates when the speaker anticipates the potential repercussions their disclosure may create is relevant to Aqeel, Akbar, Hasan and Huda resorting to silence.

The guises of silence discussed above could be seen as survival strategies that ensued from a multi-layered habitus that side-lined issues of racism. For example, the denial of Akbar and Hasan rested on the institutional mantra that depicts academics as liberal intellectuals and celebrates its diversity. Concurrently, this hegemonic institutional discourse does not provide much space for claims of racism. Rather, blaming claims of racism on a lack of merit has been found to be part of the institutional approach to deny and backlash claims of racism, with the support of the hegemonic meritocratic discourse within the academia (Gillborn, 2010, Ostreling & Wong, 2008). Denying

racism is commonly espoused by members of the dominant majority within a system, because denial dismantles collective efforts to challenge racism through pre-empting and countering its publicity (Van Dijk, 1992). Drawing on habitus could, nevertheless, explain why members of minority groups tend to develop (perhaps unconsciously) modes of thinking, judgments and expressions that help them fit into the *modus operandi* of academia. Advocating this mantra is, perhaps, a way of maintaining membership. Hasan seemed, also, to internalise the broader Islamophobic discourse that portrays Muslims as ‘the problem’. For Aqeel, it would appear that he has experienced some repercussions, hence silence through avoidance and reframing was adopted in his case.

In the case of Huda, the apparent separation between her scholarship and her own personal experience is twofold: it suggests how membership in academia facilitates academics’ agency in combating racism beyond academia, whilst it simultaneously curtails this agency inside academia, particularly in relation to their own experiences. Huda’s framing of her experience points to the notion of ‘symbolic violence’, “the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with their complicity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, 142-143). Thus, instead of calling a spade a spade, she is contributing to the status quo through using the language approved by the institution to tone-down issues of institutional racism. Secondly, perhaps not framing experiences that might be considered discriminatory as such is but a coping mechanism, where a form of ‘false consciousness’ is created by ‘cognitive dissonance’ that helps to continue daily responsibilities. The silencing effect of a macro-context on her experience is suggested through her avoidance of giving the ‘Muslim’ label to her colleagues. These survival strategies of avoidance, reframing, denial and euphemism could be seen as giving (unconscious) complicity to the structures.

Previous research has found that the fear of victimisation caused some academics affected by racism to choose not to revisit, re-examine or speak about these experiences. For instance, Y Muhs et al. (2012) mentioned the silence that featured through reservation to contribute to the anthology on *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* (in the guise of avoiding to

contribute). Y Muhs et al. remarked that a considerable number of would-be – contributors abstained from contribution, believing that contribution would harm them professionally “and they were not prepared to become pariahs” (p.11). Moreover, Onwuachi-Willing (2012, p. 143) warned of the double-edged effect of silence: it might be “a key to survival”, but it might work against us and contribute to (more) subjugation.

Whilst this current study set forth with a framework that was made explicit to all of the participants, I argue that the existence of silence has hidden what could be considered valuable insights into the experiences of Muslim academics. Regardless of whether they have actually experienced racism or not, and regardless of the actual reasons behind their silence, the silences, which were somehow counterintuitive, due to their participation being completely voluntarily, suggested their indirect complicity in, and acceptance of, hierarchical power relations in HEIs. I do understand that challenging the structures in their current standings is extremely difficult, however resorting to silence during the interview suggests that Muslim academics, perhaps unlike other non-white academics, are not yet ready to even speak about and expose the inequalities of the sector vis-a-vis themselves in their capacity as a religious minority.

In contrast, those who openly discussed racism were asked why they had disclosed this after noticing others’ reluctance. Their responses revealed two main reasons. Firstly, ‘there is nothing to lose’ was the response of those who had little (or no) hope of having their contracts renewed in their departments, or were retiring soon. Secondly, the politicised participants seeking to challenge inequalities felt the need to openly discuss these issues. Indeed, “speaking is knowing that you are doing your part in this arduous journey toward justice” (Reyes et al., 2014, p.216).

Despite mainly citing the multi-layered context and drawing on ‘habitus’ in analysing forms of silence, I recognise that other explanations for their non-committal responses to the study frame might also be valid. Firstly, silence could be a form of resistance (Ferguson, 2003) to avoid a victimhood mentality in a societal and institutional environment that might further victimise the victims. This makes Muslims more

focused on achieving their goals, particularly those who have an activist agenda, and directing their energy towards empowering their communities. Therefore, their silence is restricted to their workplace. In a similar vein, Onwuachi-Willing (2012) emphasises how the untenured faculty of colour in the US HEIs use silence strategically, as they tend to remain silent in their institutions, but have a powerful voice when speaking outside of their universities with communities. Secondly, but also underpinned by the dominant institutional mantra regarding the academic profession being merit-based, colour-blind and gender-neutral, silence might be a manifestation of a professional identity. Perhaps Muslim academics construct themselves as academics through disassociating their religious background from their narratives. However, this view is less congruent with a CRT framework, as it recognises that intersectionality of multiple identities is central to how individuals are positioned in any given environment. A common feature amongst these possible interpretations seems to be the mental (unconscious) subordination of participants to the dominant discourse within the habitus.

6.2.7 Dealing with Racism: Diverse Approaches

Some of those who spoke about being faced with racism remarked that they did not bring it up in their context, as they have no expectations of any positive changes. For instance, Adam remarked that he had observed that those who flagged up inequality were either ‘silenced’ or ‘removed’. Therefore, he chose to adopt ‘a constructive approach’ in his career, based on ‘remaining silent’ and carrying on with his responsibilities. This approach in dealing with racism is not dissimilar to the approach of other non-white academics in previous studies (Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Jones, 2006; Pilkington, 2013; Wright, Thompson and Channer, 2007). For example, a participant in the study of Wright, Thompson and Channer (p.158) remarked that

I am too feisty to recognise it as racism as such. I’m not saying that it isn’t racism. I just see everything that goes against me as intolerable. I don’t stop to deal with it. If I focus on it and call it racism, then I’ll have to spend time and energy to deal with it.

A few of the participants had consulted their trade union, but they reported that they were often discouraged from filing a complaint. Where there was initial support,

such a response often changed to taking the view of the perpetrator, who was often a more senior member of staff. For example, Abbas remarked about consulting the union regarding discriminatory treatment he was enduring from a white colleague, who was close to the dean. Although the union supported him, remarking that he had a strong case for constructive dismissal, they discouraged his application by emphasising the possible drawbacks of such action, such as draining his time and energy, impacting on the way he would be perceived and treated by colleagues and the little chance of renewing his contract. Eventually, he chose to remain silent, but left the institution. This is in accordance with the findings of Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005), in that some of their participants reported how their complaints were unfairly handled, due to the powerful position of the perpetrator, which suggests the impeding impact of the micro-politics, the hierarchical powerful structures that control interpersonal relations, on filing complaints.

6.3 Mentoring: Camaraderie of Non-white Academics

The avenues to visibility and recognition within academia are underlined by networks, mentoring and small recommendations. Academia is not sustained by a neutral mechanical machinery of measurement. Rather networks [...] sustain the machinations. And while there are competing elements seeking to redefine the academic field, these struggles are conducted via networks and connections. Opportunities are made or broken within this context. (Puwar, 2004, p.56)

If you want to pursue a career in academia, it is about who you know...that's generic...regardless of your field or the colour of your skin Ali-STEMM .

This section follows on from the previous two sections. Non-white academics' networking in the UK academia is a way to survive and form alliances with others who have shared experiences as a result of being within a workplace that is dominated by Whiteness. As networks and mentoring form the skeleton of academia and are substantial for career success, non-white academics are now building their own networks and forming alliances to survive.

There wasn't much mentorship. There is the process of annual assessment, where your performance is evaluated. But I'd have never thought that people went out of their way, and come on Adel let's have a chat about how things are going....that certainly didn't happen Adel- HSS

Mentors don't actually help...for example, when I started lecturing, I didn't have enough clue on teaching... I discussed it with them, they were this is normal... by time you'll improve. So, they didn't help me to improve in any way. Tariq- STEM

Any university department will allocate you a formal mentor. They are the people you go to for departmental issues...but that's not really the mentoring I have in mind. I mean by mentoring the informal external and people of significance in the field ...people who can write you good reference, people who you can collaborate with you in research proposals, people who you can invite to events, and therefore elevate everything...those kinds of networks I'm talking about... I've benefitted from that. Ahmed- HSS

I was very fortunate that the first person who took interest in me was a non-Muslim BME who wanted to help me... he related to me in a cultural sense... then a Muslim because he could relate to me, but also he had his personal experience of going through things. I think being a Muslim as a

common thing makes them inclined and well proud to do a bit more than an ordinary would do. Ali-STEMM

He was a professor from my ethnic background, but not a Muslim, working in the same area. So, when he advertised the job, even he told me about it before he advertised it. [...] The main reason I felt was the area of research, but because...well, yeah, I felt our cultural background played a role because they told me even before they advertised. Tariq- STEMM

When I started teaching, my supervisor...who offered me the contract...he's also X [same ethnicity]...he'd help me with anything and everything, whenever I had any issue, I would call him, formally and informally... he was always available...but recently, after he left, I've experienced discrimination. [...] he'd ultimately prevent this thing, but things have changed. Muna- HSS

The above quotes highlight several points. For Tariq, Ahmed and Adel, the formal mentoring scheme was either absent or not quite beneficial in terms of actual support. The actual mentoring, as expressed by Ahmed, Ali and Muna, involves senior non-white academics who are eager to open doors and assist junior non-white academics. Non-white senior academics extend their support to junior fellow academics because of the difficulties they, themselves, experienced in navigating their way into academia. The accounts reveal that informal networking could be based on common scholarly interest and/or shared cultural, ethnic or religious background.

Some people spoke about being part of extended non-white academics' networks across UK universities that provide diverse forms of development opportunities, including advice on how to deal with instances of discrimination, how to write successful grant applications and how to play the 'citation game'.

These accounts are in accordance with previous research findings (Bhopal, 2015; ECU, 2011; Gordon, 2012; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014; Wilson, 2012) that indicate that non-white networks providing professional and emotional support within academia are instrumental in counteracting the challenges they face to progress in their careers. For instance, Gordon (2012, p.322-323) spoke about how she depended on a wide network of Black Women Law Professors, who would meet outside of their institutions to "discuss work-in-progress and to exchange ideas on the development of a Black Feminist Theory". Similarly, a female participant in Bhopal's (2015, p. 74) study noted the emotional boost she received from a safety network of

marginalised academics; she would “automatically go to other people of colour who have experienced some of the issues I have experienced. We pick each other up when we’re told we’re not very good.”

6.3.1 Absence of Solidarity

However, the notion of ‘lifting as we climb’, from NACWC during the 19th century¹⁹, was absent in some accounts. Some of the junior academic participants noted the presence of other Muslim and/or non-white academics in their departments/institutions who were not only unwilling to connect with (and provide assistance to) them, but might also exploit them. As most of these occurrences were mentioned off-the-record, precise quotations are not available. These occurrences generally included having their research ideas plagiarised or having their routes to publications blocked by senior non-white colleagues, as some of their research findings challenged the arguments made by these senior colleagues.

Moreover, the political discourse related to Islam that distinguishes ‘good’ Muslims from ‘bad’ Muslims (Mamdani, 2004) appears to be influential, particularly in HSS, regarding how ‘good’ Muslims in the same department or beyond may choose to disassociate themselves from ‘bad’ Muslims, or vice versa. For instance, a participant spoke off-the-record about how other senior Muslim colleagues in his department became distanced after asking him, when he joined the department, whether or not he practised Islam. This situation caused the participant to feel further alienated in his department. Adam’s quote below describes a similar experience.

I’ve met a few Muslim academics who’re very Muslims [practicing] and made their name through doing Muslim stuff after-9/11, but they feel very uncomfortable being in a group ... then even afterwards when I sent an email to a group of people saying let’s stay in touch, maybe we can work on a collaborative project, those were the ones who didn’t respond ... and they don’t stay in touch.... and I thought, you’re very visibly Muslim, and you’ve made your name from issues to do with Muslims, but when it comes to solidarity...it’s upsetting, they just disappear... Adam- HSS

¹⁹ NACWC (National Association of Colored Women's Clubs) adopted the motto of “Lifting as We Climb,” promoting self-help among women. Considering aspects of gender and race; viewing their women’s movement as a way to uplift black women, men, and children – (BlackPast. org)

Adam, during the course of the interview, mentioned that he had joined academia to try to shift the narratives about Muslims/Islam and, hence, he has an activist agenda. This quote describes a situation where senior Muslim academics, who are visibly Muslim, built their careers working on the ‘Muslim question’ but refused to extend solidarity to other Muslim academics, as was evidenced when Adam suggested a collaborative project. It is unclear why these colleagues disassociated themselves from Adam’s network, but one possible explanation may be that they were not politicised and, thus, did not feel comfortable being part of a group of academics who are recognised in the institution as being activists and see themselves as such. This preference to not be pigeonholed by such groups may result from internalising the normative discourse within academia that portrays being an activist and being an academic as mutually exclusive (Corntasell, 2003). This wishing not to be identified with Adam’s network might also be tainted by the current Islamophobic climate, as Jamal’s comment in 6.1.9.2 suggests. Niemann (2012, p. 493) asserts that non-white academics “who have reputations as activists [...] [are perceived] as a threat to some people’s perception of collegiality”.

6.3.2 Muslim Academics as Mentors for Non-white Students

Several of the participants commented on providing mentorship to non-white students, including Muslims.

In my field, Muslims are more represented at UG level, then it goes up like a pyramid, a few of us have academic posts. So I think Muslim students will say...oh wow, he’s in that position, I want to be in that position one day. Like being a Muslim hasn’t stopped him getting to where he is...I didn’t know that Muslims can get into that position
Ali-STEMM

I’m starting to see that I’m a positive role-model for all students ... for the girl wearing a hijab setting in the classroom, with all white students’ cohort, I walk in wearing a hijab. Straight away, she connects to me and feels comfortable [...] A few Asian students said to me, just because you’re here, has made all the difference for us. And I was quite happy, but also saddened; why is it? If I hadn’t been here, would you still not feel happy? They said no, it’s just because there’s somebody we could relate to.
Huda -HSS

One of the things I do consciously ... when I see African, Asian, Arab students setting together, I would approach them and give them my business card to help

them. Now, this is not part of my job. But, I'd like to think, yes, those people will benefit something

Sami- HSS

I engage a lot with students...they often come to me... maybe because they think I'm one of them, or they might know my views about equality and discrimination; therefore, they feel he might be safe to talk to about racism they encounter... partly from the students, but partly from White academics. I feel almost obliged to help them ... [laughing]. This is weird because most of the time they are not my students. I speak on their behalf, advocate for them, or just point them in the right direction.

Aqeel- HSS

I almost stay in touch with some of my students, including those who have finished a few years ago...they get in touch with me, I take them out for coffee or lunch...so it's nice because...it's about working with poor people, it's about bringing about changes in this world, so I...I really like it.

Jamal- HSS

These quotes highlight a diversity of aspects. The presence of Muslim academics in academia provides symbolic empowerment by acting as a role-model and providing inspiration to Muslim, and other minority, students. Additionally, they empower minority students, as they can relate to them. For example, Huda's visible likeness to Muslim females who wear the hijab comforts them, by being a minority who stands out in a mainly white cohort classroom, which provides emotional support. Sami voluntarily reaching out to non-white students mirrors an intrinsic willingness to help. Jamal continues to extend mentorship, even after the students' graduation, and this bonding with the students creates gratification. Aqeel's willingness to listen to, and support, minority students in relation to their experiences of racism, regardless of them being his students, is interesting, as he feels 'obliged' to help.

Similar to Aqeel, Niemann (2012, p. 345) described this sense of moral obligation towards non-white students. "I felt duty-bound to respond to students, especially ethnic/racial minorities, who often sought me out to listen to their experiences of racism [...] Emotionally, I felt pulled to respond to them". One of the reasons behind this sense of moral obligation is that these academics are aware, due to personal experiences, of the detrimental effects of racism, or feeling isolated, on individuals' self-esteem.

The participants' accounts align with previous research findings (Asmar and Page, 2009; Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014) that highlighted the strong inner satisfaction non-white academics

expressed regarding the nurturing of non-white students and preparing them for future leadership positions in their communities by acting as role models. A senior lecturer in the study of Bhopal and Jackson (2013, p. 5) stated that

The Black and Asian students identify with me and talk to me. And I know I make a difference, and this keeps me going even when going through difficult times. I'm a role model for them and I got so much satisfaction from this.

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the themes that emerged in relation to the second research question, which focused on determining how Muslim academics perceive their career experiences. Three main themes emerged in this regard, which led to the division of this chapter into three main sections. The first section discussed the dominant hegemony of Whiteness in academia, which was the pervasive and overarching theme. This led to silences being the second major theme of discussion. The third section explored non-white academics' mentoring and networking, which resulted from the Whiteness of and silences within academia.

Whiteness affected the routine practices, with regard to recruitments and promotions. The accounts provided evidence to suggest that being a member of the 'in group' and not the 'other' group does matter. White favouritism subtly operates through the existence of the aspects of facade feedback that shifts the goalposts in recruitment, the double standards, the opacity of promotional criteria and differentiation in relation to workload divisions. The accounts also hinted at the possibility of the presence of a 'Muslim penalty' in academia, particularly for the HSS participants. Whiteness also influenced the aspects of networking and mentoring, through what Puwar (2004) terms as 'social cloning'. The accounts indicated that, for Muslim academics to be recognised by senior people who would facilitate their moving up the ladder, they need to be able to 'fit in' with the normative culture, to be able to get along with those in powerful positions and, more importantly, to demonstrate aspects of exceptionalism. The nature of STEM disciplines seemed to somewhat temper the effect of Whiteness in the early career stages, unlike its clearly potential negative impact on some of the HSS participants, whose experiences were coloured by epistemic racism. This theme relates to how

the dominant Whiteness of the academia shapes the perspectives about, and defines, what legitimate knowledge is and what marginal, or illegitimate, knowledge is through an ‘apartheid of knowledge’. The resistance within the academia to validate perspectives and epistemologies, other than the Eurocentric ones, was revealed across the accounts through the reactions and/or attitudes of (senior) White colleagues and students in the classroom setting and their feedback towards the scholarship that challenges the mainstream views with regard to the ‘Muslim question’.

Furthermore, while some participants were more articulate in discussing epistemic racism, there seemed to be a reluctance to engage in the topic of institutional racism or their experiences in this regard. This reluctance was featured through diverse discursive strategies that masked their inability/ unwillingness to engage openly in the topic. These strategies, which included avoidance, reframing, denial and euphemism, were interpreted and discussed drawing from Mazzei’s metaphorical/veiled silence theoretical framework. The accounts included hints to suggest that these silences were a coping approach to deal with institutional, and also, perhaps, societal and global, pressures that do not welcome discussions about racism, let alone anti-Muslim racism.

The final section addressed how Muslim (along with other non-white) academics, due to them being aware that networking, mentoring and connections are the driving force behind upward mobility in academia, rely on non-white academics’ networks in order to survive in an environment where they might be (indirectly) excluded from White networks. The accounts indicated that research interest and common cultural, or religious, background were the impetus for successful networking. The participants pride themselves in providing mentorship for minority students and consider themselves as being positive role models for them. Some of the participants, however, remarked on the absence of support from other non-white or Muslim academics.

7 Conclusion

‘...few call into question the Othering of Muslims across the globe or in local communities. This taken for granted normalization of Othering Muslims in society best occurs through one of the socializing systems/mechanisms in western society; education’ (Neider, 2009; p. 8).

This chapter pulls together the key findings from this current study, discusses their significance to the current academic literature and concludes by suggesting that aspects of faith/belief in HE policy and practice require much more systematic consideration. I would, however, like to begin with some personal reflections on this PhD journey.

7.1 Personal Reflections

This study set out to explore the experiences of Muslim academics at UK universities, recognising Islamophobia as its societal backdrop. However, I faced difficulties in recruitment; I had many broken promises and withdrawals, and I received instances of negative reactions/comments from some Muslim academics during the dissemination of my findings at seminars and conferences. These, together, made me realise the extent to which my research topic was controversial and touched raw nerves. This impression was reinforced by two patterns that featured in the accounts of those who took part in the study. The first was an apparent resistance to the study framework, which I have discussed in depth in section 6.2, where I unpacked various forms of silence. Whilst I am not proposing that *every* Muslim academic has experienced, or is currently experiencing, any form of institutional racism, I was puzzled by why people would voluntarily participate when they were unwilling, or unready, to discuss the research topics. The second was the ‘off-the-record’ conversations. Many issues that were important for the study, particularly issues that were deeply meaningful but potentially controversial, were shared with me off-the-record. My dilemma was twofold; I was struggling to find participants who were willing to discuss the research topics, but I was also restricted by the fact that a large amount of useful material was articulated off-the-record by

those who disclosed it. This has limited, and also affected, the strength of the evidence I provided in my findings.

I did not include a section related to off-the-records remarks in my findings, but I would like to share some of them here. Some of those who resisted the study framework, or denied the presence of Islamophobia in the broader society, made remarks after the interview was concluded that indicated they were very aware of, and rather concerned about, Islamophobia. One of them told me *'I don't know why you are bothered with this topic. In the past Jewish were discriminated against here in the West, now it's Muslims' turn'*. This particular participant challenged my use of the term Islamophobia, even when I suggested the term might be replaced with describing the outward manifestations of the phenomenon it represents, namely anti-Muslim discrimination, but he declined the presence of such a phenomenon. Another participant, who blamed the presence of Islamophobia on the lack of Muslim integration, noted that, whilst walking me back to the train station, *'there is going to be a massacre against Muslims soon'*. I inquired: *'In Europe'*? He responded: *'No, in the UK; they hate us!'* Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to speak with him again, as he did not respond to my emails or phone calls intended to schedule a second interview with him. He had clearly decided to withdraw.

I would also like to bring to light an example of sensitive aspects that were shared with me, which I was unable to discuss in my findings either because the participants required them to be off-the-record or because they changed the topic after mentioning deep aspects in a slip of a tongue. A participant in a senior leadership post provided details of an instance of disparaging behaviour by, and remarks from, a White secretary, but concluded his story by saying "you are not allowed to quote me on that". Furthermore, a participant remarked that a Muslim colleague had an issue in his department because of his research standing and academic merit. When I asked her to elaborate, she responded through evading any impact of religious or racial prejudices and moved to another topic. Another participant remarked that a Muslim colleague in Islamic Studies told her that whenever he attends an interview the panel require pledges that he would not take a 'confessional approach' to his teaching. He

felt that, had he not been Muslim, such an attitude would never have been taken by the panel. However, when I asked her for more details, she remarked that she did not know the whole story or why he had experienced this.

7.2 Study Limitations

These were some of the circumstances that surrounded my fieldwork and data analysis. Therefore, in hindsight, if I were to conduct this study again, I would benefit from purposive and snowballing sampling, but would combine theoretical sampling, which is a constructive grounded theory sampling approach (Charmaz, 2014). This is because theoretical sampling helps researchers collect further selective data to refine the emerging themes. Thus, purposive and snowballing sampling would be utilised to address the initial interview questions, for example. Then, in order to develop the tentative themes emerging from the initial analysis, theoretical sampling is followed. Thus, it ‘guides where to go’. This means that either new participants are recruited or the researcher would conduct more interviews with the participants who spoke about a particular theme, aiming at saturating the subthemes within that theme. The interview focus in the latter stages of the theoretical sampling would be more specific. For instance, with regard to the theme of epistemic racism, theoretical sampling could be applied through recruiting new participants who would share their views/experiences with regard to this particular topic and, thus, could develop and elaborate the analysis of this theme through their perspectives, which would function as ‘explicit systematic checks and refinement for, and thus saturate, the analysis’ (p. 192).

As mentioned previously in Chapter Four, while I strived to recruit a diverse sample of Muslim academics, two important groups were missing in the actual sample: female Muslims who do not wear the hijab and Black (African, African Caribbean) Muslims. Therefore, to obtain more insights into the experiences of Muslim academics and the challenges they might face, future research should explore the views of Muslim academics from these groups. Additionally, future research should focus more on White Muslim converts, including females, and female Muslim academics in senior posts. Furthermore, to gain further insight into the theme of

‘epistemic racism’, future research should explore the experiences of Muslim academics in Islamic Studies, in order to gain a better understanding of how they perceive challenges, barriers or opportunities within the Western secular paradigms to legitimate Islamic epistemologies with regard to these subjects.

Moreover, a large-scale survey questionnaire could be designed based on the themes generated in this research, which should include open-ended questions, in which potential participants might wish to provide details with regard to some of the questions. Afterwards, the survey could be conducted online, through sending it to universities across the UK, asking the administration staff to circulate it to its academic staff members who self-identify as Muslims.

Finally, since only three interviews of the second-round were conducted between September 2015 and January 2016, after the new Prevent duty came into effect, future research should examine Muslim academics views about the possible chilling effects, if any, of the new Prevent duty on the topic and content of scholarship they pursue in academia. It is important to investigate whether it has an impact of curtailing political activism, through scholarship, amongst Muslim academics who have the agenda of shifting the normative narrative about Muslims/ Islam in the West.

7.3 Significance of Research Findings

The principal aim of this study was to gain an understand of the experiences of Muslim academics in the UK HEIs, due to the absence of their experiences as a faith minority group in the academic literature in the UK context and beyond. To achieve this aim, the study set to answer two research questions. The first sought to investigate how the participants describe and define their identities; the second explored their career experiences. The following paragraphs summarise some of the significant findings related to these questions, respectively, explaining their relationship to previous research and demonstrating how they could contribute to bridging some of the gaps in the existing literature on the experiences of minoritised academics.

Firstly, the participants' views about their Muslim-ness spanned two forms of 'Muslim consciousness'. The first corresponds with Meer's (2010) theorisation: an identity that is politically mobilised, seeking to challenge anti-Muslim racism in the broader society and demanding "all the benefits and protections afforded to other minority identities" (p. 105-106). The second corresponds to identifying with Islam as a faith system that not only influences their lives, but also provides ontological security. Whilst this aligns with previous research findings on Muslim identity (Asmar, 2005a, 2005b, 2006; OPM, 2009; Tyrer and Ahmed, 2006), it provided two insights in relation to the notion of ontological security. Firstly, the views of those who perceive Islam through a faith lens called into question some of the common Western views of postmodern individual identity as being ruptured, decentred and rootless (see, for example, Hall (1996a) and Kellner (1992)). Thus, the participants' accounts, in this sense, provided empirical-based evidence to challenge the supposed universality of Western theorisation on identity as being fragmented.

Secondly, the results also bridged a gap regarding the absence of narratives in the existing literature about Muslim identity, in relation to the possible positive/stabilising influence of Islam, except in the case of converts (see Kose (1996); Moosavi, (2015b); Suleiman (2013)). Some of the participants confidently cited their Muslim identity as being the very impetus to their success and/or a way of enabling them to handle difficulties. Such accounts provided insights into the notion of 'faith capital' that I proposed to be added to Yosso's (2005) theorisation about the forms of capital minoritised individuals resort to in their struggle for equality.

Additionally, the accounts showed that the two forms of Muslim-consciousness converged, as the political dimension of Muslim identity was also crucial to some of the participants who identify with Islam as a belief system. This was evident in the accounts that provided evidence to suggest political and social activism as being the impetus for a career change for some participants in HSS. Their views regarding their professional identity also diverged from the mainstream theorisations and writings about academic identity. However, the possible chilling effect of the

implementation of the new Prevent duty at HEIs on *depoliticising* Muslim academics, an effect that has been observed with respect to Muslim children at schools and Muslim population in the wider society, is yet to be investigated. It is interesting to examine the extent to which the policies and guidance related to the new Prevent will impact on Muslim academics political activism within and beyond academia. Crucial to their academic identity was the concept of the *public intellectual*, as defined by Said (1993), through which the participants described their engagement with issues related to the ‘Muslim question’ and to empower Muslim communities. The accounts also revealed that academia, for some participants, was another venue through which Muslims continue their struggle for equality and recognition. This corresponds with how the non-white academics in previous research defined the dimensions of their professional identity, for example Corntassel (2003) and Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez (2014), through the lens of community service.

Moreover, the findings provided evidence to suggest that the global (and state) politicising of ‘Muslim-identity’ within the context of a global ‘war on terror’ has impacted on how participants go about negotiating their Muslim-ness within their workplace. The accounts showed that negotiation principally aimed to disassociate them from the stigma associated with Muslims/Islam at the societal level.

Bracketing out his Muslim identity was successful in the case of the White convert participant, since, not only did it buffer the individual from the detriment that comes with being ‘othered’, but it also facilitated maintaining White privilege. This straightforward negotiation, through sidestepping, was not necessarily successful for those with a conspicuous Muslim identity, for example through wearing the hijab or having a beard. Although the accounts of some of the participants demonstrated diverse approaches to privatise and/or submerge their Muslim-ness in their workplace, the nature of their negotiation seemed contradictory and complex. This is because it was unclear how they were certain that, by toning-down their Muslim-ness, colleagues would not think of them as being Muslims. Indeed, Younge (2005) asserted that

The decisions as to which identities we assert, when we want to assert them and what we want to do with them are ours. But those decisions do not take place in a vacuum. They are shaped by circumstance and sharpened by crisis. We have a choice about which identities to give the floor to; but at specific moments they may also choose us. Where Muslim identity in the west is concerned that moment is now.

Previous research findings revealed that non-white academics recognise the importance of, and, thus, constantly engage with, racial/ethnic identities negotiation for their career prospects (Bhopal, 2015; Hernandez & Murakami, 2016; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). However, the findings from this study suggested that negotiating their religious identity, more particularly Muslim-ness, seemed to pose more challenges, particularly for those who have an outward faith identity, than the form of racial/ethnic identity negotiations carried out by other non-white minorities groups of academics. This was particularly felt by the female participants, whose negotiations included more efforts to challenge a global pervasive narrative that ostracises Muslims. For example, Huda's concerns about the possible questions that might be raised in her department about her decisions to wear the hijab impelled her to justify this to colleagues, and, to a lesser extent, to students. Her approach to negotiation aimed at dissociating her decision to wear the hijab from the prevailing view in the broader society that links the hijab with the 'evils of Islam', including perhaps the discourse about 'terrorism'. Moreover, the intersectionality of faith and gender identity meant that the challenge to fit in was actually much more felt by the female than by the male academics.

This is closely related to another significant finding of this study in relation to the hijab. Whilst the way it was received and perceived by non-Muslim colleagues and students differed based on diverse grounds, including the type of post they occupy, the staff/student body, the discipline and the proportion of the Muslim minority in the city, the findings provided evidence to suggest that the hijab in the case of Muslim female academics does symbolise Otherness. The findings, though, did not provide evidence about whether or not the hijab has an impact on career progression, as all the female participants, except one in STEMM, were not in senior posts.

Moreover, the findings with regard to religious (rather Islamophobic) micro-aggression are significant in two ways. First, they bridged a gap related to an absence of a narrative/discourse on Islamophobic micro-aggressions. Previous research (Bhopal and Jackson; 2013; Solórzano, 1998; UCU, 2016; Yosso et al., 2009) focused only on racial/ethnic and gender micro-aggressions. Second, the findings vividly point out how the wider Islamophobic climate has penetrated academia and tainted the ways Muslim academics are perceived and positioned by their colleagues and other non-academic staff members. This means that the diverse forms of Islamophobic micro-aggressions not only emphasise the ‘us versus them’ narrative through which Muslim academics are depicted as the ‘other’, but they also add another layer of exclusion, in addition to the racial/ethnic exclusion Muslim academics share with other minority academics.

The findings related to the second research question were discussed under three main themes: firstly, the Whiteness of the academy within an increasing global context of stigmatisation of Muslims; secondly, the metaphorical guises of silence, particularly vis-a-vis the topic of institutional racism and Islamophobia; and finally, Muslim academics reliance on non-white academics’ networks and mentorship to chart their course in academia and survive.

Whiteness was a theme that peppered through the accounts in areas such as recruitment, moving up the ladder and workload division through the presence of double standards, which require a higher threshold for Muslim academics compared to their White peers, moving up, opaque promotional criteria, which allows for including favourable, and excluding non-favourable, candidates, and/ or powerful networking with senior people that affects the workload division. These subtleties of Whiteness were documented in previous research conducted with non-white academics (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Carter, Fenton and Modood, 1999; ECU, 2011; Villalpando and Delgado Bernal, 2002; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014). For instance, Carter, Fenton and Modood (1999) brought to light these discriminatory practices within British academia. They found that “the difficulties that ethnic minorities experienced in getting promoted was the single

most important complaint” and that participants expressed views that, “for ethnic minorities to be considered for promotion, it was necessary for them to have twice as many publications, qualifications and experience as their white peers” (p. 53).

My findings, however, did not provide strong evidence to argue that there is anti-Muslim discrimination with regard to routine practices, such as recruitment and promotion. However, some accounts did provide insights into the possibility of anti-Muslim discrimination in relation to routine practices, as the accounts of Huda and Sami, in section 6.1.1, and Adel in section 6.1.2 suggest. Therefore, it would be difficult to eliminate the influence of Islamophobia on participants’ negative experiences in this regard. This is possible, due to several factors. Firstly, the presence of Islamophobic micro-aggressions provided evidence to argue that who you are, that is your background and your membership of a certain group, influences the way you are positioned and treated. Secondly, there is a body of empirical evidence (Pilkington, 2013; Tooms, Lugg, and Bogotch, 2009; Urrieta Jr., Méndez and Rodríguez, 2014) to suggest the influence on career prospects of individual identities. In addition, there is a degree of confidentiality that surrounds recruitment practices and the extent to which adherence to issues of equality is present across these practices, and, therefore, it is difficult to provide clear-cut evidence of what influences panel decisions in each individual case. This confidentiality is implied by the findings from empirical research that attempted to examine the possible reasons behind the rarity of some groups, women and non-white academics in senior posts (see Pilkington (2013) and UCU (2012)). Therefore, a potential influence of the ‘war on terror’ narrative on the subjective views of panel members related to academics of Muslim backgrounds, particularly those who are not familiar with the panel members, should not be ignored.

The key arguments of my thesis might be diminished or dismissed, due to the lack of tangible strong evidence to support my views on Whiteness, silence and the growing networks between academics of ethnic and religious minoritised backgrounds. Here, the comment by a lead anti-racist academic in the UK, David Gillborn, is worth considering. Gillborn (2008, p. 30) argued that the ‘standard proof’ often required

from anti-racist researchers in UK academia reveals the ‘attack in academia on a scholarship that challenges mainstream’. It also needs to be asked, if mainstream research about the experiences of non-white academics inside academia continues to tone-down the impact of racial discrimination on their negative experiences, how then would it include discussing religious discrimination as possible grounds for racism inside academia? Drawing on some of the defining characteristics of Whiteness, as discussed by Leonardo (2002, p. 32), ‘the minimisation of racist legacy’, in the case of Muslims/Islam, this study traces the roots of Islamophobia to the long history of Western colonialism in the Muslim majority world. Thus, it acknowledges that the legacy of the past, as well as the current atrocities Muslims face in the West and elsewhere, are central to any interpretation of discriminatory experiences Muslims might face. Indeed, Essed (1991, p.12) argued that

Racism is created and reproduced out of a complex set of conditions. Even when it draws on cultural and ideological remnants of previous historical processes, the specific forms racism takes are determined by the economic, political, social and organizational conditions of society.

However, two aspects were found to mitigate Whiteness. First, the over-average actual merit of some of the participants facilitated recognition by the academy, which then enabled smoother career progression. Second, the nature of, and the demands in, some STEM disciplines for key staff members with specific discipline skills and knowledge sets tempered Whiteness within the recruitment practices. While the study provided some possible reasons behind the disparity in experiences between STEM and HSS participants, with the latter citing more negative experiences, it has not reflected upon the possible influence of the public and political discourse regarding ethnic minorities in Scotland, England or Wales, on the participants’ views regarding racism. Perhaps the political discourse about minorities in Scotland made it less conducive for them (than those in England) to articulate negative experiences; or that the atmosphere in Scottish universities was more conducive to positive experiences.

The political discourse about the minorities in different UK countries might have influenced the accounts, as all of the STEM participants work at Scottish universities, and even forms of silences were more common amongst the participants

working at Scottish universities. Literature has highlighted several factors that could contribute to more positive experiences in Scotland than those cited in England. Hussain and Miller (2006) found Scotland to be less Islamophobic than England. Meer (2015) pointed out the tendency within the Scottish context towards ‘aspirational pluralism’, in which political elites tend to speak of Scotland as being an inclusive nation towards its ethnic minorities. Kyriakides, Verdee and Modood (2009) found Scotland to be less ethnically exclusive than England. Whilst Bonino (2015a) found that Scottish Muslims in Edinburgh reported some instances of racism, he reported that their overall views were positive, as they believed ‘Scotland to be easier to integrate, more welcoming and tolerant and less racist and Islamophobic than England’ (2015b, p. 93).

This study could not confidently discuss regional disparity, because the study recruited only two participants from Wales, one of whom withdrew before the second interview. The other moved before the second interview and both were based in England and would commute to their workplace in Wales.

An important finding within the theme of Whiteness was how the participants vocally spoke against the presence of epistemic racism in academia, with regard to the mainstream scholarship about Muslims and the resistance within academia to scholarship that challenges the canon. However, they were less vocal when issues regarding institutional racism were on the table. Some of the accounts contained discursive strategies that masked their unwillingness/inability to discuss the topics. I do recognise that the silence within academia related to issues of race/racism, evident in the absence of issues of racial equality from the E&D agenda, are not conducive to challenging racism. Nevertheless, with regard to Muslim academics’ experiences, another layer affects their silence, which should not be ignored: the global ‘war on terror’ agenda and the local anti-terrorism acts.

Moreover, public hostility surrounding Islam/Muslims seems to have made its way to universities, as the current status of Islam in UK universities is largely entangled with concerning issues that associate Islam with radicalism, for example the debates

about 'underpants' bombers, gender segregation and inviting radicalising speakers. These debates have been recently culminated by the enactment of the Prevent Duty in public bodies, including HEIs. This climate has possibly stimulated suspicion within the institution towards Islam/Muslims and also apprehension across Muslim academics to openly engage in discussing racism vis-a-vis Muslims' qua being Muslims. This backdrop would support the argument put forth that Muslims bear the brunt of twofold pressure. Thus, their resorting to silence, in the form of avoidance, denial, euphemism or reframing, could be seen as a means of survival and/or a form of self-conformation, consciously or unconsciously, with a habitus that does not entertain a shake-up of the normativity of Whiteness. I am aware that it might be rightly argued that some of the participants, as a microcosm of members of a larger society, might not be politicised, which could affect their views on the presence/absence of institutional racism. This might be the case for some participants. However, what gives significance to a conceptualisation of silence is the fact that off-the-record remarks and /or some remarks made during their interactions, as well as the fact that some of them work on issues of race, minorities and Whiteness, reveal they are aware of issues of anti-Muslim racism.

7.4 Religion/ Belief in HEIs: The Way Forward

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Muslim academics at UK universities. The findings with regard to their perceptions about their identities, as well as their experiences in their workplace, were tainted by a wider stigmatising discourse of Muslims. The commonplace of Islamophobic micro-aggressions for some (male, female, senior and junior) participants, as well as the ways some participants go about negotiating their Muslim-ness in academia, where one's personal (lack of) belief should not matter on their membership, showed how subtle misrecognition and aspects of inclusion/exclusion operate for those who identify with a religion, which is widely accepted to be an antagonist to modernity, democracy and human rights and by extension to the West.

Even for those who cited positive experiences and achieved career progressions, the inability/unwillingness amongst some of them to engage with the research topic and/or discuss possible issues of racism Muslims might face in academia was also impacted on by the indirect, though pervasive, pressures from within the institution, and also from outside the institution. These pressures feature through a grand-scale ostracising via the media, policies and societal views, which make it difficult for Muslims to challenge racism when there is now a tacit global understanding that colour racism is not right and should be challenged.

Whilst, to my knowledge, this is the first study to explore the experiences of Muslim academics in the UK HE, several previous studies have concluded that non-white academics are disadvantaged in British academia (Bhopal, 2015; Bhopal and Jackson, 2013; Carter, Fenton and Modood, 1999; ECU, 2011; Gabriel, 2014; UCU, 2016). I will not discuss, or include, any recommendations on how to improve the quality of the experiences of Muslim academics, as a religious minority group of academics. This is because previous studies have provided useful insights into how to tackle issues of race inequalities and to boost the experiences of non-white academics at the HEIs in the UK, for example Turney, Law and Phillips (2002) and Gabriel (2014). Yet, it would appear that the majority of this scholarship was overlooked by policy makers and senior management. Turney, Law and Phillips' *Anti-Racism toolkit* was a result of an actual move towards racial equality in a post-Macpherson era. However, the marginalisation of racial equality and its subsuming under the banner of 'diversity' and 'inclusion' in E&D policies has enabled attention to be drawn away from institutional racism in academia with regard to race issues (Pilkington, 2012), let alone religion/belief issues. The findings from this study provide examples of how Muslim academics feel that they can be disadvantaged in the academy. The findings highlight that their negative experiences and some of the challenges they face are tainted by the 'normative truth' about Islam. Therefore, for HEIs to improve the experiences of Muslim academics, more consideration is required of such issues as every day Islamophobia at the level of E&D measures and practices.

On the ECU website, it is expected that the Race Equality Charter, which was launched in 2015, will advance race equality, similar to the Athena Swan Charter for improvement of gender equality. Perhaps a new initiative for a belief/religion charter is required to improve the conditions of Muslim academics in the UK universities. However, it is unknown how conducive this proposition is in the current global climate.

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Appendix 1: Governing Muslims after 9/11

Modality/ Subject	Islamophobic Governmentality (National)		Neo-Orientalist Governmentality (Global)	
	Bio-politics	Discipline	Bio-politics	Discipline
Sovereignty/ thin moral subject	Anti-Terrorism Legislation/Policing	Combating extremist ideology	War/Occupation/ State of Exception	Combating extremist ideology
Discipline/ individuated subject	Reform of conservative Muslim institutions/ communities	Reform of conservative Muslim practices	Promotion of neo-colonial or client political order	Reform of conservative Muslim practices
Governmentality/ citizen subject	Self-Regulating Muslim Communities	Promotion of liberal Islam	Self-governing pro-West political order	Promotion of liberal Islam

Birt (2010), p.121

Appendix 2A - All staff (excluding non-academic atypical) by activity standard occupational classification group, mode of employment and ethnicity 2014/15

	Staff of known ethnicity	Staff of known ethnicity as a percentage of total staff	Ethnic minority staff	Ethnic minority staff as a percentage of staff of known ethnicity	Total‡
Staff (excluding atypical)					
Academic staff					
Full-time	122755	92.4%	18690	15.2%	132865
Part-time	59025	90.2%	6645	11.3%	65470
Total academic staff	181775	91.7%	25335	13.9%	198335

Source HESA (2016) Statistical First Release 225

Appendix 2B - Ethnic minority staff by ethnicity and activity standard occupational classification group 2014/15

	All staff (excluding atypical)		Atypical staff	
	Academic staff	Percentage of academic staff	Academic staff	Percentage of academic staff
Ethnicity				
Black or Black British - Caribbean	775	3.1%	300	3.3%
Black or Black British - African	1965	7.8%	1000	10.9%
Other Black background	275	1.1%	170	1.8%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4680	18.5%	1225	13.4%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1170	4.6%	570	6.2%
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	505	2.0%	230	2.5%
Chinese	5895	23.3%	1915	20.9%
Other Asian background	3510	13.8%	1285	14.0%
Other (including mixed)	6555	25.9%	2455	26.8%
Total	25335	100.0%	9145	100.0%

HESA(2016)

Appendix 3A Academic professors by ethnicity (2013/2014) (ECU, 2013, p.230).

UK academic staff by professorial category and ethnic group

	Professors %	Non-professors %
White	92.7	91.6
Black	0.5	1.3
Asian	3.0	3.4
Chinese	1.6	1.3
Mixed	1.0	1.4
Other	1.3	1.0

Appendix 3B Academic Professors d by gender 2012/2013

Gender	Total	percentage
Female	3870	21.7%
Male	14010	78.3%

HESA(2014)

Professor			Non-professor			
No.	%*	%^	No.	%*	%^	
All staff with known ethnicity						
White female	3345	19.4	5.1	62230	42.0	94.9
White male	12560	73.0	15.9	66555	44.9	84.1
BME female	235	1.4	2.8	8300	5.6	97.2
BME male	1075	6.2	8.8	11150	7.5	91.2

Appendix 4 All Staff by Religion and Belief

All staff by religion and belief	%
No religion	10.8
Buddhist	0.2
Christian	9.8
Hindu	0.4
Jewish	0.2
Muslim	0.6
Sikh	0.1
Spiritual	0.1
Any other religion or belief	1.1
Information refused	9.0
Blank	66.8

ECU (2015a, p. 503-504)

Appendix 5 Participants General Profile

Characteristic	
Age group	25+..to 60+
Academic discipline	Diverse across Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences(HSS) disciplines and Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM)
Gender	8 females and 18 males
Background	(South) Asian and Middle-Eastern (Arabs and non-Arabs), and White
Nationality	Largely UK citizens
University Type	Post 1992, Pre-1992 (Russell & non-Russell group)
Academic post	From research associate to professor, but also with senior management positions
Type of post	Permanent and fixed
Years of Experience	2+...20+

Appendix 6.A : An example of an inductive theme

For example, in relation to the first research question, one of the themes that emerged inductively was the impact of wider context on negotiating one's Muslim-ness. Participants responses in this regard were collated under three subthemes:

- Assertion of faith identity (e.g. Huda)
- Allocating a low-profile to their Muslim identity (to avoid being pigeonholed for White convert (Hussain) or to avoid the negative image associated with the category Muslim(e.g. Sami) which involve a form of code switching, e.g. once they declare their Muslim identity, once they play it down

Then their views were analyzed based on the theoretical lenses , e.g. the concept of 'double consciousness' and the 'other'. The following excerpts are taken from longer sections in the transcripts of participants who linked their perceptions about their identity to a wider context. This was not a theory driven theme, although Modood (1990) talked about a re-assertion of Muslim identity amongst young Muslim post the Rushdie Affair. Everything between square brackets is my own clarifications for the sake of brevity.

Hussain remarked that his conversion is beneficial when he conducts fieldwork with Muslim communities, as it assigns him an insider status and opens doors for establishing rapport with participants, he also remarked that he disclosed his conversion in an academic setting in response to a challenging question by one of the Muslim students attending the event. Additionally, the majority of the audience were Muslim academics and Muslim students.

Ibt: can I ask you ... why perhaps, why would you feel less comfortable talking about being a Muslim with a non-Muslim audience? In academic settings?

Hussain: yeah, i don't , i mean[uncertainty], (silence) , i don't know, I mean I think , again [...] I want to be judged by my work[Dissociation , a means to avoid pigeonholing], and i think , i was more comfortable talking , (silence)[Note the literal silences

]... i don't know,[Uncertainty]i mean .. [...]i think again the concern is not necessarily about discrimination or these sort of things ...but the concern is about being pigeonholed [Avoid pigeonholing

]... and again the challenge that you and other Muslim colleagues have is, not to be able to separate your professional work from your Muslim identity ... and not to be solely judged based on your profession achievements [easy to conceal –white privilege]...so that's why i probably would have been more cautious[caution]. I mean i don't think discrimination would

have been [no concerns of discrimination- (how he defines discrimination?)].. [...] so ... mm, i think that's perhaps the concern i ... the potential to be pigeonholed [avoid pigeonholing]... and again the personal experience , you know, have confirmed that you can be pigeonholed [an experience of pigeonholing] referring to an instance he mentioned earlier in the conversation whereby he confided his conversion to a non-Muslim academic and how the latter became distanced] .

Sami was asked how he would like to identify in academia, his response was BME academic and for him he would downplay the Muslim dimensions of his identity. I probed to know why he chose to put it this way. Again the following excerpts are reduced from longer conversation..

Ibt: So you like, to refer to religion only in a professional framework of when referring to international/local Muslim students needs... and so on?

Sami: YES, YES, rather than... rather than[hesitation], because I am just thinking well, what is it that makes me different, [he means being a Muslims], it makes me different in the global perspective but that is only one angle[different globally?], I am not here on daily basis to teach or deal with global perspectives, I am here to kind of look at day to day stuff, yes?[focus of daily routine and dissociate from global aspects]Ibt: Ok, so this is with your daily professional context, but for your ownself, is this the same way you define yourself? I mean you are talking to me about how you would like to be seen within the academia , in a professional way, and as a BME staff?

Sami: Yes, Yes, I would I would I would I would go with that because the point is i think that it's only recently that religion belief has come up into the horizon in terms of the protective characteristic [...] categories as ethnicity, disability , gender, are ingrained in us. Religion just, just isn't (silence) appear on the horizon[religion not fully recognised] it's been left to almost private belief for expression.[public-private divide]

Ibt: Ok, Can we use this argument when Islamophobia now is actually spread over the West? I mean, i mean, i take it that from what you say that there is an indication that religion is still a private thing

Sami: Yes, and ... No[uncertainty], but as I said, I will take the opportunity to engage them about that. for example, on the first time i met my line manager when then about ten minutes i use the word... oh by the way i am of Muslim background[a peripheral topic]

, yes, so that to me was very important[yet very important], i thought the person in the top needs to know exactly what my lived in experiences not just simply as a kind of visibly BME person[lived experience as a Muslim (not just a BME)-]

, but there is a different dimension, being religious. I think that most Muslim academics might say, this is all private.[public-private (generalising)] Yes i do my prayers in my own room , i don't want to be about in the public domain[public- private] and just keep my head down[religion in the difficult climate

] and just carry on, and let them think, oh by the way i am Asian or Arab or I am whatever background. [belief is diluted with ethnicity/race]BECAUSE that's safer that's easier to identify with [Islam is more dangerous vs ethnicity is safer] [because] Muslims just basically means become narrowed into a different group all together [Muslims are a different group (others?)]

[...] Religion comes into our domain in a number of sharp focuses or sharp sensational [Islam and negative portrayal] headlines, what's happening globally and impacts of Islamophobia, but also what is , kind of headlines about Muslim ppl in this country, yes, so u know that , yes, schools have been run by extremists [Islam AND extremism], right, u know particularly Pakistani men or Muslim men , or Muslim Pakistani men, that's a key word , i will likely be kind of child molester or whatever, right?, yes?. [Not identifying with Islam in academia safeguard from these accusation.]

Huda spoke about when she took on the hijab upon a spiritual journey wheryby she rethought her belief and how this journey resulted also in shifting in her personal identity with an assertion of the faith identity and moving beyond her previous concerns of fitting it.

Huda: [the spiritual journey] just made me realise that I wanted to , perhaps, know more about my own faith. I understood that for me wearing the hijab, it was not just about covering my hair. It was about me, perhaps, taking on the identity... that I often say, I am Scottish and Pakistani and I am Muslim. And I've just turned the table around and now I see I am a Muslim, Sottish Pakistani.

Ibt: could I ask why do you choose to be Muslim first?

Huda: this time because I am more aware of my faith, I was born and brought up here. My parents are very traditional parents[...]And now there is so much more out there, that you can learn about and I wanted to challenge my own self because we hear of all these extreme negative views now and I wanted to find it for myself: what is the religion of Islam is telling us to do. And so there is when I wanted to make the decision of adoptinig the hijab, I think perhaps to assert my Muslim identity that I was now very comfortable with my identity. And that I thought it was at that part of my life where I was not so bothered about fitting in anymore. Did I may perhaps have the confidence to say well no, I know that I do my job very well. I am very strong within my own professional context, and I want.. I want what is going on in my personal life and my professional life to be together. I can't separate it. And so therefore, I took on the hijab.

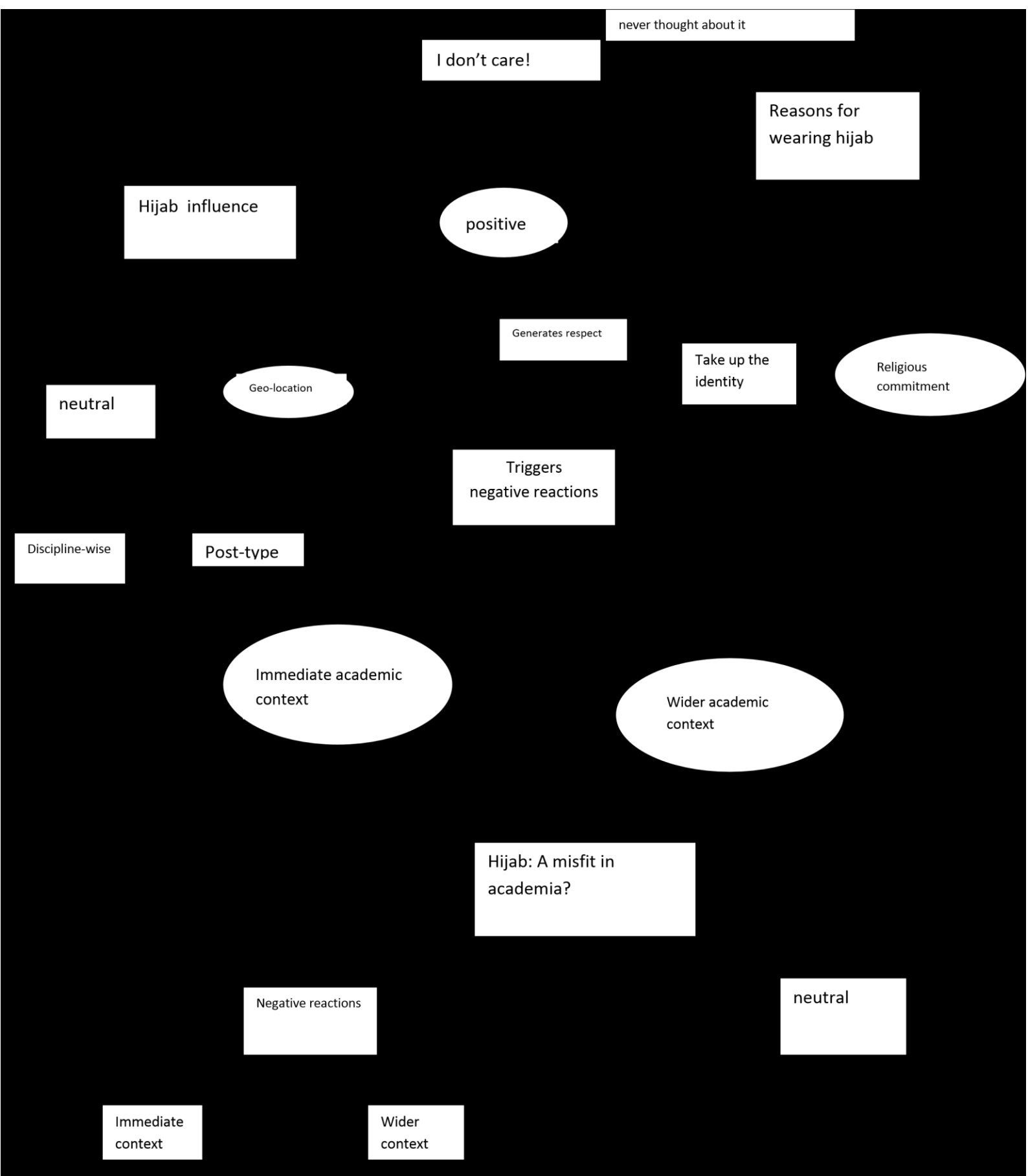
Appendix 6B: Deductive Themes Examples-

As for the top-down themes, that were driven from the literature related to academic settings and/or influenced by my lived experience in the UK in academia and beyond were the topic of mentoring and the topic of hijab respectively.

The theme generated in relation to hijab was : Hijab : A misfit in Academia? And i used the question mark to indicate that hijab might be conceived as a misfit but not always. The diversity of experiences and reflections of women academics on the influence of their hijab in their academic context varied on grounds of discipline, type of university, students' body, whether they have daily interaction with students and staff or work in a laboratory, thus they have minimal social interaction and thus negative instances are but rare or do not exist.

Moreover, as for the theme on mentoring, several studies discuss how mentoring is central to a career in academia and to academic progression, particularly for non-white academics (Bhopal, 2013; ECU, 2011; Wright et al, 2007). The study was interested to see the extent to which Muslim academics participants' perceive they receive (or do not) mentoring. Bearing in mind some participants belong to the exceptional academic category, the amount of nurturing and mentoring they receive was evident in their progression. Other participants, recalled they did not receive proper mentorship. What is new in the discussion of this theme is that there seems to be two patterns of mentoring. In STEMM the mentor is normally a White academic disinterested in their background (faith, ethnicity...etc) and also in some cases in HSS, but the majority of HSS participants who receive mentoring or have received mentoring reported that their mentor was of BME background and sometimes a Muslim.

Appendix 7- Mind mapping: The Theme of Hijab



Appendix 8A Information Sheet

Research Title : Investigating Muslim academics' perceptions about their experiences at UK HEIs.

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I am writing to introduce myself to you and to invite you to participate in my PhD research. I believe that your contribution can contribute significantly to my study. I am a female Muslim academic, though my academic experiences is beyond the UK context . Please take few minutes to read this information sheet before making your decision whether you would like to participate in this research or not.

Information sheet

A. General Background and the research aims:

Although Muslims have attracted negative local attention in Britain and globally over the last few decades and have become a most conspicuous research topic in western academia, particularly post-9/11, there is a gap in the academic literature about the lived experiences of academics who consider themselves to be Muslim. Most of the studies explored Muslim students' experiences, the general and/or the academic, in the Western HE, e.g. (Asmar, 2005a, Cole & Ahmadi, 2003 in the USA; Asmar et al, 2004- in Australia; Ahmad, 2001; Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006, OPM, 2009; Hopkins, 2011- in the UK). The results of this studies reveal that although the immediate academic experiences of Muslim students are positive, their on-campus lived experiences are rather negative due to what they claimed to be institutional practices of marginalization and discrimination

against them. Other studies, though rare, investigated experiences of non-traditional staff in the UK academy lumping together issues of colour, race, gender or ethnicity rather than on religion and belief (e.g. Carter et al, 1999; ECU, 2011a, Pilkington, 2011). The results of these studies show clearly that non-traditional staff including academics are disadvantaged under the institutional cultures, processes, and practices.

Moreover, academic studies and writings about academic identities and the impact on their identities of HE structural and policy changes have marginalised the views and the concerns of non-traditional academics in the regard. Therefore, the ways Muslim academics, who largely belong to non-traditional academics category, describe their professional identity is yet to be explored.

This research therefore attempts to address this gap in the literature through answering these questions:

- 1- How do Muslim academics conceptualize their identity (identities)?**
- 2- How do Muslim academics perceive their academic career experiences?**

The Recruitment Criteria:

I am interested in including **any academic who self-identifies to be a Muslim**. I am fully aware that Muslims are not a homogenous group and therefore would wish to seek gender diversity within my participant group along with other factors of diversity as listed below:

- (mixed gender) males and females
- Females who wear the hijab and also who do not wear the hijab
- Home and international academics
- Senior and regular academics
- Academics who started their posts pre-9/11 and also post 9/11
- Various disciplines
- Various posts, e.g. in senior managerial posts, lecturers and/or researcher as well as those who work in support units.

What participation will entail

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to:

- Take part in two face-to face interviews with open-ended questions led by a topic guide to cover the research questions. Each interview will last between 60-90 minutes at the very most, though the time commitment can be negotiated. The timescale between the first and second interview is likely to be two months. Interviews will take place at a time and a location that is mutually suitable. With permission, I would like to audio-record the interviews for transcription purposes only and not for sharing. Recognising time constraints, it may be possible to have the second interview as a Skype or phone interview.
- Review your own transcripts and highlight for me the themes that you would not wish me to miss during analysis.
- If you decide to participate, could you email me and let me know.

Confidentiality and anonymity

The possible risks of participating in this research have been minimized by the design. For example, to reduce any institutional impact on the participants, identifying potential participants takes place through informal routes as opposed to formal routes through their institutions. Additionally, all your personal details and any identifying clues, both personal or/and institutional, will be completely anonymised and data will be stored securely in a password secured computer. No one, except myself as the researcher and the interviewer, will have access to all data. There is no direct benefit for participation and you will not be paid or rewarded for participation. However, it is my hope that the information the research will generate will help give voice to Muslim academics in the UK context, will assist understanding the needs of minority academics and might also open the window for more research on Muslim academics in the future. Transcriptions and data presentation in the thesis and any future publications will be completely anonymised. Your personal details will be kept separately.

Your Participation is Voluntary

Taking part in the study is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw at any time of the research, your choice will be respected and this will not result in any penalty.

The results of the study

The results of the data analysis will be mainly reported in my PhD thesis, but also will be retained up to three years for the purposes of participation in conferences presentations and local seminars and publications of journal articles.

Contact Information

If you require any further information about the research, you could contact me directly. You are also welcome to contact my supervisors in case you would like to engage in a wider discussion about the topic of the research.

First supervisor: Dr Rowena Arshad OBE

Head of Moray House School of Education

rowenaa@ed.ac.uk

Second supervisor: Daphne Loads

Academic Developer, the Institute of Academic Development (IAD), the
University of Edinburgh

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Appendix 8B Consent Form

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.
4. I understand that all the information I provide will be dealt with in a confidential manner
5. I agree to take part in the above study.
- 6- Below is a voluntary self-declared demographic information

(If you are happy to tick any of these boxes, this will help me obtain a profile of my participants)

6.1 Age group

20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

6.2 Are you:

A UK national OR International academic

If international, are you

EU

OR

 Outside EU

6.3 How would you describe your ethnicity?

6.4 Gender

 Male Female

6.5 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

 Yes No

If yes, please state the nature of the disability

—

6.6 Would you describe yourself as:

 Straight (heterosexual)
 Not certain Lesbian
 Prefer not to say Gay
 Bisexual
 Other

6.7 In terms of your academic experience, have you started your career in the academy

Pre- 9/11

Post-9/11

6.8 How many years of experience do you have in the academia

6.9 Concerning your post in the academy, are you currently

In a senior position

A lecturer only

A researcher only

A lecturer and a researcher

Other

Please specify _____

6.10 What is the term of your employment?

Fixed-term

Short-term

Zero-hours contract

Permanent-contract

6.11 What is your academic field (discipline)? _____

6.12 What is the type of institution you are currently working in:

Pre-1992 a Russell Group

Pre-1992 a non- Russell Group

Post-1992

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Contact details:

Telephone/Mob. number _____ Email: _____

Thank you for your time and consideration

Ibtihal Ramadan,

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Appendix 8C. Interview Questions (Topic Guide)

These are roughly the areas (or topics) I would like to explore in each interview. I am fully aware though that their order will be changed among different participants.

RQ1 How do Muslim academics conceptualize and define their identity (identities)?

After a short briefing...

- 1- Opening question: Could you tell me about yourself, your background? What has influenced your decision to work in the academy?

- 2- How would you define yourself? – Here, there will be prompts (e.g. depending on their response and how they choose to order the attributes that better define them.

You've agreed to participate in this research (as you self-identify) as a Muslim: How would you define being a Muslim for yourself?

- 3- The following question will try to identify why they define themselves in this specific way (therefore it is a sort of prompting, depending on their responses for the two previous questions).
- 4- How would you define being an academic for yourself? – This question might have been answered by the participant in their response of the previous question.
Could you tell me about your role (researcher, lecturer,...
How would you perceive your institution define you as an academic? Why do you think that?

I would also like to know about Muslim academics take on the Hijab and how veiling (or non-veiling) affects on female academics' role (in the academy).

So if they raise the topic by themselves in the first interview- we will take the discussion forward, but if they do not, I will wait until the 2nd interview, when we get to know each other better and will raise the questions. These could roughly be:

For a female academic: I would like to ask her about her dress style – the question will be therefore –

- 5- For an academic who does not wear hijab: If you don't mind me asking, could you tell me about your dress style outside the academy?... why?
- 6- I guess you are aware of the political argument which renders the Hijab as a political symbol because it is seen by some as invading the secular norms of the West? What are your views on the hijab? Have you ever considered putting on hijab? Why?
- 7- For females who wear hijab? If you don't mind me asking, could you tell me the reasons behind you wearing hijab?
- 8- How do you feel about wearing hijab in the academy? (I am trying to find out indirectly if there is any effect of Hijab?)

RQ2 How do Muslim academics perceive their career experiences?

- 1- How do you see yourself as an academic working at X institution (in research, teaching or both, or support unit)? (Here there will be prompting to ask for reasons and to see if they think their work is recognised—and about their status.
- 2- Within your role as an academic have you ever experienced any harassment or discrimination? Here there will be prompting....

If they were reluctant, depending on the kind of answers they give in the first interview I would be able to judge the level of their disclosure, I would go about this topic indirectly like:

Do you feel there are any issues of discrimination facing Muslim academics? (a general question)

- 3- You've just said that you've been working in X for ...yrs., could you tell me about the support and mentoring you receive within your institution? What about your colleagues? Why?

4- Where does (the name of the academic) see him/herself in five years in terms of their career prospect? ---- followed by a question: To what extent do you believe that this goal is attainable?

5- For experienced academics (who have quite a long experience but not in a senior position) have you ever considered applying for a promotion? Why? Why not? Could you recall what happened then?

6- I guess you might be aware of the *Nottingham Two* case? (what is your opinion about it)- If they were not aware I would show them the article and then pose the question.

7- For more experienced academics- who have been before 9/11- or 7/7:

Do you think that 9/11 or 7/7 has impacted HEIs structures or cultures of practice? How? Could you elaborate? (Or maybe the Nottingham two case could be an indirect passage to respond to this question—but if they show reluctance or they do not actively engage with the case, I will pose the question about 9/11- or 7/7