UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

University of Southampton Research Repository

Copyright © and Moral Rights for this thesis and, where applicable, any accompanying data are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners. A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge. This thesis and the accompanying data cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder/s. The content of the thesis and accompanying research data (where applicable) must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holder/s.

When referring to this thesis and any accompanying data, full bibliographic details must be given, e.g.

Thesis: Author (Year of Submission) "Full thesis title", University of Southampton, name of the University Faculty or School or Department, PhD Thesis, pagination.

Data: Author (Year) Title. URI [dataset]

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Faculty of Social, Human and Mathematical Sciences

Southampton Education School

Transition from University to Work: Social experiences and Perceptions of British South Asian women in Higher Education

By

Laila Khawaja

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2019

Abstract

Faculty of Social, Human and Mathematical Sciences

Southampton Education School

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Transition from University to work: Social experiences and perceptions of British South Asian women in Higher Education

By

Laila Khawaja

Much of the earlier literature found on the lives of British South Asian women is merged within their familial and traditional roles, and limited attention is being paid to their educational and professional prospects. This study examines how ethnicity, gender and social class issues interrelate in the social experiences of South Asian women in Higher Education. Exploring the perceptions of these women is paramount to understand how the interplay between these constructs impacts their educational trajectories and shape their expectation of transition to work. By drawing upon Bourdieu's conceptual tools- Habitus, Capital and Field, the researcher has theoretically and empirically linked how one's individual experiences and social position, opportunities and challenges shape the expectation of subjective dimension of their experiences and the ability to pursue these expectations.

This ethnographic study explored the social experiences of twelve British South Asian women studying in a range of universities around South East of England as they relate to their evolving experiences within a raced, classed and gendered world. Data analysis is informed by thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and fieldnotes. The key findings demonstrate that young women's perceptions of transition to work are situated within the complex structures in their families, communities and mainstream society. As these women enter new social spaces of higher education and employment, increased independence leads them to re-assess their familial, cultural and religious assertions and their relationships within it. Based on the evidence gathered, the study argues that through negotiations and individual strategies, these women have at least to a certain extent, availed some degree of control over their circumstances. This study suggests that the younger generation of British South Asian women are changing their social positions from being traditional and dependent to independent and self-directed individuals both within their families and communities and in mainstream society.

Table of Contents

Abstract

Table of Contents ..... **i**

Table of Tables ..... **iii**

Table of Figures ..... **v**

Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship ..... **ix**

Acknowledgements ..... **xi**

Abbreviations ..... **xiii**

Chapter 1 Introduction **1**

1.1 Background of the Study 1

1.2 South Asian Women: Education and Employment 4

1.3 Overview of the Study 6

1.3.1 My Reflection on the Research Context 8

1.4 How this Study Contributes to the Existing Knowledge 10

Chapter 2 Literature Review **15**

2.1 Introduction 15

2.2 How was the Literature Search carried out? 16

2.3 South Asian Families and Communities 18

2.4 Ethnicity and South Asian Women 21

2.5 Gender Inequalities 24

2.5.1 Social Construct of Gender 25

2.5.2 Marriage Patterns 27

2.6 Social Class and Higher Education 29

2.7 Process of Transition 31

2.7.1 Career Planning and Role Models 33

2.7.2 Career Migration 35

2.8 South Asian Women in the Labour Market 36

2.9 Summary 39

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework 41

3.1 Introduction 41

3.2 Defining and understanding Habitus 42

3.3 The Concept of Capital 43

3.3.1 Cultural Capital: Family and Parental Resources 43

3.3.2 Social Capital - Community Networks 45

3.3.3 Economic Capital - Employment 47

3.4 Field Theory 48

3.5 Rationale for using Bourdieu 50

3.6 Summary 52

Chapter 4 Methodology 53

4.1 Introduction 53

4.2 Research Aims and Research Questions 53

4.3 Research Philosophy and Research Paradigm 54

4.4 Qualitative Research Approach 55

4.5 Ethnography 57

4.5.1 Ethnography in Educational Research 59

4.6 Data Collection 61

4.6.1 Selecting and accessing the Participants 61

4.6.2 Participant Observation 64

4.6.2.1 What to Observe? 66

4.6.1.2 Challenges in Participant Observation 67

4.6.3 Ethnographic Interviews 69

4.6.3.1 Pilot Interviews 71

4.6.4 Field Work and Field Notes 72

4.7 Reflexivity- how things worked 74

4.8 Ethical Consideration 77

4.9 How I Analysed the Data 80

4.9.1 Phase 1 - Organising the data 81

4.9.2 Phase 2 - Reducing the data 82

4.9.3 Phase 3- Drawing Conclusion 85

4.10 Summary 85

Chapter 5 Findings 87

5.1 Introduction 87

5.2 Influences from the Family 89

5.2.1 Parental Support in Higher Education and Career 90

5.2.2 Choice and the degree of freedom: A Gendered Perspective 93

5.2.2.1 Staying away versus staying at home 95

5.2.3 Complex Family Patterns 98

5.3 Marriage and Career 100

5.4 Influences from the Ethnic Community 104

5.4.1 Enforcement of Ethnic Values 104

5.4.2 Benefiting from the Ethnic Community 107

5.5 Influences from Mainstream Society 110

5.5.1 University Life 110

5.5.2 Perceptions of Career 114

5.5.2.1 Job Market Challenges 115

5.5.2.2 Ethnicity, Religion and Gender 117

5.5.3 Strategies to Find Work 119

5.6 Summary of the Findings 121

Chapter 6 Discussion Part 1 129

6.1 Introduction 129

6.2 The Similarities 130

6.2.1 Family Support and Encouragement 131

6.2.2 Community Belonging 135

6.3 The Differences 138

6.3.1 Influences from the Family Structure 139

6.3.1.1 Parental Education and Occupation 139

6.3.1.2 Lone-Mother Families 143

6.3.2 Influences from Family Processes 146

6.3.2.1 The Choice Issues 147

6.3.2.2 Parental Social Networks 149

6.4 The Changing Marriage Patterns 151

6.4.1 How Marriage defines Gendered Roles 154

6.5 Marginalised Cases and Choice Issues 155

6.6 Summary 158

Chapter 7 Discussion Part 2 160

7.1 Introduction 160

7.2 University Life Experience 160

7.2.1 Social life adaptation 161

7.2.2 Transformation within the University 166

7.2.3 Dealing with the Discrimination 167

7.3 Job Market Experiences 169

7.3.1 Ethnicity and Job Market 171

7.3.2 Religion and Job Market 173

7.3.3 Social class and Job Market 177

7.4 Strategies for Career Success 180

7.4.1 Balancing Cultural and Job Market Expectations 183

7.5 Summary 185

Chapter 8 Conclusion 187

8.1 Introduction 187

8.1.1 Family, Community and University: Influences and Challenges 188

8.1.2 Mainstream Society: Influences, Challenges and Strategies 189

8.2 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge 190

8.2.1 Empirical Contribution 191

8.2.2 Theoretical Contribution 193

8.2.3 Methodological Contribution 195

8.3 Limitations of the Study 197

8.4 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research 198

8.4.1 For Higher Education and Job Market 198

8.4.2 For South Asian women and other Ethnic Minorities 199

8.4.3 For the Policymakers 201

8.5 Concluding Thoughts 202

Appendix 1 205

Appendix 2 206

Appendix 3 207

Appendix 4 208

Appendix 5 215

Appendix 6 216

Appendix 7 217

Appendix 8 218

Appendix 9 219

Appendix 10 222

Appendix 11..... 226

List of References.....227

Table of Tables

Table 1. Ethnic minorities in the UK 205

Table 2. Participants' Biography 206

Table 3 List of Topics / Questions 207

Table 4. Occurrence of Codes 217

Table 5. Coding Phases 218

Table 6. List of Deductive and Inductive Codes 219

Table 7. Parental Information 226

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Changes in the observation phases 66

Figure 2. Components of data analysis: Interactive Model 81

Figure 3. First cycle codes (Preliminary coding) 83

Figure 4. Key themes incorporated within Bourdieu's framework 88

Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name:	Laila Khawaja
Title of thesis:	Transition from University to Work: Social experiences and perceptions of British South Asian women in Higher Education

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signature:	Laila Khawaja	Date:	05/06/2019

Acknowledgements

The long journey of this thesis is the result of the support, encouragement and efforts of many people who have been involved in different ways and for different reasons. First and foremost, I would like to express gratitude and my sincerest thanks to my supervisors, Dr Christopher Downey, Dr Cristina M. Azaola and Professor Mike Grenfell for their continuous support, encouragement and feedback. I have been expertly guided by their knowledge and wisdom. They have had a wonderful knack for knowing just when to support, when to encourage and when to throw down the gauntlet and challenge me. I want to thank you for your collective wisdom; it is through our many exchanges that I found clarity.

I am wholeheartedly thankful to my study participants and their parents for their motivation, unwavering trust and generosity to take part in this study. This thesis would not have been in its current shape and form without you sharing your experiences so candidly and thoughtfully. Last but not least, my family and friends have supported me through their kindly questioning and helpful advice, I am hugely thankful for believing that I could do this. I am also grateful to many other people for their help in completing this thesis.

Abbreviations

BIS - Bank for International Settlements

BME - Black and Minority Ethnic

HE - Higher Education

HESA - Higher Education Statistics Agency

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

LFS - Labour Force Survey

ONS - Office for National Statistics

UCAS -Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Ethnic diversity is rapidly increasing in Western Europe because of globalization. The majority of Britain's current South Asian population can be placed within three broad categories: Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis (Ballard, 2003). The arrival of South Asians in Britain began in 17th century mainly for educational or economic reasons (Fisher, 2006). An influx of these immigrants for settlement was evident during 1950s and 1960s. However, estimating the proportions of South Asians migrants from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh that can be described as second or third generation is complex as the time of migration of these groups varies considerably (Ahmad, 2001). While the majority of immigrants from India and Pakistan first-generation groups arrived between 1965 and 1974, Bangladeshi arrivals peaked during 1980-84 (Dustmann and Theodoropoulos, 2010). It is, therefore, not practical to paint a consistent picture of how these groups are situated with regards to their experiences in higher education (HE) and career in the United Kingdom.

People from South Asian heritage have been treated typically as one monolithic people by the West (Hussain, 2017). However, despite sharing commonalities of similar culture and country of origin, there are differences within and between three sub-groups of South Asians (Basit, 2012; Mirza, 1997). For example, British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tend to be religiously homogeneous, with Muslims accounting for 92% of each group while their counterparts of Indian origin are more religiously diverse, with 55% Hindus, 29% Sikhs, and 15% Muslims (ONS, 2015). One of the main aims of this thesis, therefore, is to acknowledge the similarities and the differences within and between these groups with regards to their HE and employment.

Earlier research has recognised the differences within and between British South Asian groups with a focus on their cultural and familial practices. For example, Basit (1997) examined the significance of religion and the relative position of women in it. The author argued that in British Muslim culture, choosing HE was dependent upon young women's position within their familial and cultural structures. Often these women found themselves confused in their roles and identity during post migration and resettlement process

(Parmar, 1988) in two cultures: the one at home (Eastern) and the other outside home (Western). This contestation was referred by many scholars as 'cultural clash' leading to numerous issues within their lives as well as upon their education and employment (Brah, 1992; Ballard, 2003). The evidence in the research shows that although South Asian descendants of first generation gradually assimilated into British society by adopting various British traditions and values, they tended to adapt to only a certain extent and preserved specific characteristics of their own culture. This issue has been widely recognised in the research by South Asian and White researchers and referred to as 'pluralism' which explains that immigrants participate in societal institutions, such as education and employment, albeit retain their structural and cultural identities (Anwar, 1985- cited in Basit, 2017; see also Bhatia and Ram, 2004).

The topic of South Asian women's education came into notice in 1980s research when it was found that these women, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, go through major influences by their parents and families in the process of choosing HE. Several researchers over last two decades have explored the differences and reasons of the under-representation of these women in education (Ali, 2003; Ball, 2003; Caballero, Haynes and Tickly, 2007; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Kutty, 2014). Although some researchers initiated the investigation of historical frameworks to understand the position of these women, yet little attention was given to differences within and across three sub-groups. For instance, whilst Bangladeshi women had been consistently underrepresented in HE in Britain followed by Pakistani women, Indian women, in contrast, have been presented as having higher levels of HE participation. In 2011 census, Bangladeshi (54%) and Pakistani (52%) women were reported as more economically inactive than Indian women (34%) (ONS, 2014). Among the main reasons for inconsistent representation of these groups includes the varied nature of their ethnic origins, the family patterns, religious practices and cultural practices (Modood, 2015). This evidence clearly shows the significant influences from familial and cultural practices and processes setting the secondary priorities for HE and paid work for these women.

In more recent past, some researchers presented a more holistic view of educational experiences of women from South Asian backgrounds by addressing the issues of gender, ethnicity, and social class (Baert, Heiland and Korenman, 2016; Dronker and Kornder, 2014), such as the impacts of early marriages leading to imbalances in gendered roles of

these women in their personal, academic and professional lives. With regards to HE and career, what has been illustrated so far relates to the educational experiences of these groups (Abbas, 2007; Bhopal and Preston, 2011; Crozier, 2009; Dale and Ahmed, 2011; Hussain and Bagguley, 2007; Modood, 2012), family and cultural issues (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Franceschelli and O'Brien, 2015), community influences (Modood, 2004; Shah, Dwyer and Modood, 2010), religio-cultural influences (Abbas, 2003; Charsley, 2006), and employment experiences (Crozier and Davies, 2006; Kamassah, 2010). However, crucial phase of transition from university to job market has not been explicitly explored where most of the career perceptions of these women are shaped. Reiterating these issues exemplifies new knowledge that this thesis brings on British South Asian women's perceptions of transition to work, as the existing research on this topic is limited. This study, therefore, helps to fill an important gap in the literature by exploring the social experiences and perceptions of women from South Asian groups by highlighting their educational trajectories.

Arguably, there have been many changes in the structure and governance of HE in the UK over last two decades. The growing importance of HE has been recognised and its contribution to the competitive economy on national and regional levels have gained the attention of policymakers (UCAS, 2015). That said, ethnicity in the UK HE system has been recorded using various criteria from 2011 census. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2014), ethnic minority groups are defined as all ethnic groups outside of White British. A total of 18 categories of ethnic groups in the UK are identified as shown in table 1 in appendix 1. These ethnic minorities make 14% of the total UK population, out of which 6.8% were recorded as South Asians (UK government report, 2016). The records from Higher Education Statistic Agency (HESA, 2014, 2015) show that HE participation of students from ethnic minorities continues to increase in the UK universities. This study was conducted in South East of England which according to recent UK government report in August 2018, comprises of 5.2% of Asian population in comparison to London (8.5%) West Midlands (10.8%), and South West (2.0%) of England.

In response to recent increase in HE representation of South Asian women (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016), the research focus has shifted from traditional issues of family oppression and gendered roles to more practical aspects of gender identity, educational achievements and employment (Tariq and Syed, 2017). Hence, the integration and

achievements of second and third generation women of South Asian diaspora have become a significant focus of research. However, the concept of researching social experiences of South Asian women, particularly during their HE trajectories is a recent phenomenon which is rarely captured. This study, therefore, is an attempt to fill this important gap in literature by examining the social experiences of young women and how their educational trajectories shape their transitional views.

1.2 South Asian Women: Education and Employment

When South Asians first arrived in the UK, at that time, there were many jobs available since the indigenous population was willing to get out of certain jobs (Basit, 2017). This first-generation often remained invisible and were segregated into the sectors of work where only a few indigenous people worked. Such disadvantages have led to speculation as to long-term social implications of placing these groups in the lowest class with no power and stack in economic system (Wrench, Rea and Quali, 2016). However, not all South Asians were in non-qualified jobs. There is evidence of middle-class South Asians such as doctors, lawyers and teachers (Kao, 2004). The evidence quoted in this thesis in many chapters makes it clear that young South Asian women are disproportionately concentrated amongst those not working or those working in non-qualified jobs.

The second generation who are born and brought up in Britain and speak English language as natives aspire to jobs similar to those sought by their white colleagues. More specifically, this understanding is missing among first-generation parents, in particular, those who are uneducated, who although have high aspirations for their daughters' education but often lack the understanding of what it involves achieving career aims. Younger generation of South Asians put themselves forward to a broader range of occupation and thereby are in competition with young people from the majority population. However, their efforts lead to assumptions in mainstream society for having 'unrealistically high aspiration' as well as prejudice and racism (Basit, 2017). One of the most prominent assumptions is that many British South Asian women, particularly Muslim women, are not allowed to continue education after compulsory schooling. It is also believed that young women are sent back to the country of origin to have arranged marriage. Other assumptions relate to their cultural and religious restrictions such as consumption of ritually slaughtered meat- 'Halal meat' (Salman and Siddiqui, 2011) and

the ways of dressing- 'Hijab' for example (Hamzeh, 2011) have become major sources of 'religious stereotypical' image of young Muslim women in the UK universities and job market. Such a situation puts these women in positions where they are most likely to encounter ethnic and religious discrimination (Wrench et al, 2016).

Recent research also draws attention to the labour market exclusion of younger generation of ethnic minorities, which is witnessed over two or perhaps three generations. In effect, evidence in literature shows ethnic minority graduates in Britain face lower success in securing the employment in contrast to White British graduates (Battu, Seaman and Zenou, 2011; Connor, Tyres and Modood, 2004). A recent study by Zwysen and Longhi (2018) found that ethnic minorities have 4% to 15% fewer employment rates (depending upon their ethnicity) than white British counterparts. The authors found that tendency of ethnic minorities to graduate from non-elite universities contribute to their lower success in the job market. Several other factors such as lower parental social class and socio-economic status limit their access to the financial resources in the local community. It can be concluded that the effects of the prior attended educational institution, economic and cultural challenges faced by their families and the wider community are among the potential factors adding to disadvantages for these groups in the labour market (Khambhaita, 2014).

Several other studies have opened up grounds for the debate over the position of these women within their lives in the families and communities and how they are perceived in a Western perspective (Dale and Ahmed, 2011). Importantly, researchers have investigated contribution and involvement of British South Asian women in the wider aspects of the community (Bhopal, 2008, 2010; Puwar, 2004). Modood (2015) argued that the traditional norms of South Asians are embedded within their family and cultural practices and these practices nurture their social roles. Therefore, there is a need for in-depth empirical research into social lives of these women to ascertain the extent and nature of such assumptions in the society shaping perceptions of transition. There is a need to examine the gap between culture at home and outside home to scrutinize if this problem is the result of the fact that young women's career aspirations are moulded by their familial culture or their perceptions are shaped by the secular Western society. Thus, exploring social experiences of young women would be paramount to making sense of not just how

their HE trajectories are shaped but also what influences the process of transition from university to work and in what ways this influence is perceived and enacted.

This thesis, therefore, is relevant in relation to the debate on examining educational outcomes of young women and social changes brought by ethnic composition of Western societies (Modood, 2007). The argument addresses the need for promotion of equality in the job market with a respect for diversity of interests of these ethnic groups. It is argued, therefore, that the way young women perceive their transition from university to work, may determine their future social positioning and career success.

1.3 Overview of the Study

The thesis highlights how British South Asian women negotiate process of transition to work and attempt to understand meanings they ascribe to their social experiences. More specifically, this study looks at position of university-educated young women in their families, communities and mainstream society. The thesis consists of seven chapters in total. These present the order in which this thesis was developed. This present chapter introduces context where this thesis is set, which forms the main content of this research. The chapter begins by presenting the brief information about position of South Asians in Britain followed by an overview of how they are situated in HE and job market in the UK. I also relate and reflect upon my own educational journey with respect to context of this thesis. The chapter then highlights the gap in literature and how this thesis may contribute to existing body of knowledge.

The second chapter is based on literature review, highlighting the intersection of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class by considering how each of these interconnected elements impact upon HE trajectories of young women. Looking into multi-dimensional aspects of young women's social lives, chapter starts by illustrating how literature search was carried out for this exploratory study. In doing so, particular attention is given to the social construct of ethnicity, social class and gender impacting education and career of these women. In particular, the process of transition examined in this chapter provides an account of different perspectives of social fields and how these women have been positioned into those fields. The conceptualisation of social fields involves looking into a complex range of factors and social dynamics which affect young women's perceptions of

transition to work. The present status of UK labour market is also highlighted as to how this contributes to job prospects of educated South Asian women by elucidating demands and challenges these women may have to deal during transition process.

Chapter three presents theoretical framework of the study, by referring to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field. It explains how habitus can be utilised for understanding the social construct of South Asian women while it sets out the definition and relevance in the study. The relationship between Bourdieu's trilogy of habitus, capital and field is understood in the context of women's social experiences in their families, communities and mainstream society. In more detail, Bourdieu's conceptual model highlights the process of intergenerational transmission, influenced by relationship between habitus and field and relevant transfer of cultural capital. The chapter illuminates why and how Bourdieu's concepts are used to understand social lives of young women.

The fourth chapter builds upon methodology of this qualitative study by using ethnographic research design. The chapter discusses research aims and research questions followed by how epistemological perspectives influence research design by reflecting on context of the research. The number of factors has been illuminated that had to be looked into in evaluating which research design would be suitable in terms of best addressing research questions. This is followed by highlighting reasons why ethnography is considered the most appropriate research design for this study. The discussion of selection strategies for research design leads to the section on data collection methods through interviews, participant observation and fieldnotes. What follows next is discussion of how analysis was carried out in different phases of data analysis.

Chapter five presents the findings of this study from the data analysis. The chapter identifies four key themes to construct the development of a coherent research design. These themes enhanced my association and limits to the literature and to declare the findings of my research. The key themes are the influences from family, ethnic community, mainstream society and the overarching influences from the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class.

The next two chapters report the critical discussion of research findings and revise and answer the original research questions. The discussion is divided into two parts: part one in chapter six presents the discussion of the findings related to first two themes:

influences from family and ethnic community. To do this, findings are placed in the context of literature, in particular, with Bourdieu's conceptual framework, in order to interpret the key issues. I discuss family structures and processes which impact young women's choices of HE and career. Importantly, I highlight the emerging issues such as arranged marriages, conflicting family processes and role of lone mothers in shaping young women's perceptions. A relevant discussion of role of community in HE and career success is highlighted by paying important attention to in what ways parental social networks have been helpful to women's successful transition to work.

Part two of the discussion chapter examines findings from the priorities and aspirations held by British South Asian women in relation to their HE and career perspectives. This is done by presenting discussion of the last two themes: the influences from mainstream society: in the university and in the job market. I evaluate participants' university experiences reflecting the challenges they face, and the changes they are gradually bringing about by deconstructing cultural and gendered norms by acquiring HE. The chapter goes on to report the strategies adopted by these women for their future success after completing HE studies. The chapter also discusses the ways in which young women negotiate their ethnic identities to deal with the day to day discrimination while they adapt to mainstream society. The final chapter concludes the thesis by providing a synthesis of the key aspects and presenting the empirical, theoretical and methodological contribution of this study. I also outline the implications for British South Asian women, other ethnic minorities in the UK, HE and job market practices as well as for policy and practice. The chapter also identifies and recommends the areas for future research.

1.3.1 My Reflection on the Research Context

This thesis is a combination of a long-rooted process and brings together my own family and cultural background as paramount to my research interest. My personal motivation as a South Asian woman for studying this specific topic is an extensive achievement in itself. I come from a conservative Pakistani Muslim family, where education of a woman is subject to parental, more accurately, cultural approval and the availability of financial resources. My parents had limited educational background, particularly, my mother who never had been to school neither she worked outside the family. Education of girls in my community, is considered optional, in comparison to boys who are encouraged to achieve higher

education. It is expected that the son will have to take the financial lead and manage the family decisions about education and property. Young girls, on the other hand, are encouraged to learn how to cook, clean and look after the family.

I was among those lucky ones who were sent to school along with other siblings. My early schooling experience has also had a lasting effect on my education progression. I was not sure about my future plans in terms of education, neither was encouraged by my parents to discuss with them. In fact, towards the end of my school years, I was reminded by my family for marriage and learn to undertake the responsibility of an obedient wife. I was surrounded by female peers who faced similar uncertain situations in terms of their education that whether or not they would be able to continue their education. Many of them did not see themselves in further education due to familial and cultural restrictions and hence, agreed with the family decisions of getting married at an early age. With constraint negotiations with my family, I was successful to negotiate the choice of continuing my further studies.

My journey into the present scenario of HE would never be complete without having enriching work experience. By gaining HE qualification, I moved away from home and worked in the United Arab Emirates, a multicultural country, where my understanding of how people from different ethnic backgrounds make sense of their previous trajectories became prominent. By living and working in a diverse environment, my initiative of learning about different ethnicities and comparing my own ethnicity to their ways of thinking continued. Soon I decided to do a Master course from the University of Sheffield in England. My time at this university was a rewarding experience and facilitated my understanding of who I was and what I really wanted to do with my life and career. I observed that many of my female colleagues from South Asia struggled in many ways during their studies. While some faced issues from family and community expectations, others shared concerns of not been able to find work in mainstream society despite having master's degree.

My situation was not different, although I applied for several roles soon after completing my Master course, I had no success in securing a job offer for over one year. I ended up working for casual roles such as those in the retail market and restaurants. This distressful situation further damaged both my confidence and my work experience history as 'not working in a degree-related job' for a considerable amount of time. In that time of my life,

I was demotivated and often would think that I will never find a professional job matching my qualification and experience. It was at this stage that I decided to do PhD, perhaps to increase my job prospects and feelings of self-worthiness. My decision to undertake Doctoral studies was also influenced by the idea that I would be able to have some understanding of how educated ethnic minority women are situated in their individual trajectories and how their views are shaped. I was particularly interested to study the position of university educated South Asian women in their familial and cultural context, making their ways in the dominant societies.

This study was, therefore, carried out to provide some much-needed empirical evidence to illuminate the social experiences and perceptions of university educated British South Asian women in relation to their transition to work. I truly believe that these women should be aware of the challenges and opportunities around them, and be able to exercise their right to study and work with the intention to contribute to the society they live in. That said, this thesis could ultimately be used as a base for the development of government policy and to provide recommendations for future research.

1.4 How this Study Contributes to the Existing Knowledge

This section includes discussion of the work of other authors in the field as well as how this study contributes to the existing literature. As mentioned in the beginning of this thesis, most of the earlier literature focus has been on British South Asian Muslim women due to the complexities attached to their religious practices and stereotypical assumptions in the society (Ahmad and Sardar, 2012; Dale and Ahmed, 2011; Hamzeh, 2011;Tyrer and Ahmad, 2006). In so doing, while some researchers argue for women's access to HE (Blanden and Machin, 2004), others have pointed out to the issues around HE decision making (Khambhaita, 2014; Hussain and Bagguley, 2007). Identically, research that explores post-university experiences, mainly point out the labour market experiences of ethnic minorities (Franceschelli and O'Brien, 2015; Wells and Florea, 2015), and the job search methods they used (Battu et al, 2011). In the cases where previous studies have looked into HE experiences, the emphasis was more general including all Asian categories in the UK (Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Chinses and other Asians) with no apparent distinction between women and men from these groups (Crawford and Greaves, 2015). To add to this, there is evidence that researchers have explored how gender and ethnicity can

influence ethnic minorities in HE (Bhopal, 2010; David, Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, 2010; Reay, Davies, and Ball, 2003), however, these issues are dealt with separately Cole, 2012; Lancrin, 2008). Whilst some qualitative studies have looked into the impacts from the intersection of social, cultural, and religious factors across South Asians in different generations (Dale and Ahmed, 2011; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010), less attention is being paid to HE trajectories of young women and how their perceptions of transition are shaped.

Moreover, recent literature examining the process of transition of women graduates from South Asian heritage is limited. A few international studies, for example, the work of De Grip, Fouarge and Sauermann (2010) in the US and Berggren (2011) in Sweden have explored the perceptions of transition of youth. One example I found in the UK literature is the study by Monteiro, Santos, and Goncalves (2015) examining the transition accounts of university graduates, however, not particularly South Asian women. It is equally important to acknowledge that some studies in the UK have responded to the recent changing notion of HE and employment patterns among South Asian women. For example, Bagguley and Hussain (2016) explored the social mobility patterns among women from these groups in response to increased HE participation, and Tariq and Syed (2017) investigated the job market experiences of successful British South Asian women in supervisory and managerial roles. These studies point out to the strategies and negotiation of second and third generation South Asian women in HE and the racialized labour market. However, none of these studies has explored what struggles and opportunities these women come across to adapt and adjust within their families, communities and mainstream society to pursue employment after having completed their HE.

By investigating the social experiences of South Asian women, my study identifies several avenues that depart from these two studies which appear close to the context of this thesis. Bagguley and Hussain's (2016) research was carried out by interviewing 114 young women of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi background from Hindu, Muslim and Sikh faiths. In a way, this resonates with one of the aspects of my study as my study includes women from these common religions. I argue that although having larger sample size enabled authors to draw a comparison between women from different religions, these differences were placed in broader categories which overlooked the deeper sense of individual trajectories. Although their focus lied on the outcome of the successful

completion of HE, this did not provide an opportunity to appreciate cultural differences across and within other South Asian groups. Although the comprehensive qualitative work in the above studies has revealed broader themes, the context of individuality and uniqueness of the experiences seemed blurred. Perhaps for this reason, Bagguley and Hussain (2016) acknowledged that only a few differences in cultural and religious practices were captured in their work. As a result, researchers revealed a few differences between Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women's HE and employment outcomes. Furthermore, because of the larger sample size, less attention was paid to the participants who may have had unique experiences in their lives with regards to how their educational journeys have been so far.

Drawing upon the data collection method, Bagguley and Hussain adopted a thematic topic-centred design. The authors mainly relied upon the study participants' 'meta reflexivity' to understand their views. This approach did not explicitly explain the researcher's own positionality and context which is considered fundamental with regards to reflexivity (Archer, 2007). Here, the methodological aspect of my thesis places emphasis on researcher's context and positionality in contrast to the study participants while exploring their perceptions. Even though Bagguley and Hussain have widely examined social structures of young women in relation to the concept of social capital influencing HE and career expectation, the important aspect of transition was not fully explored where young women's perceptions of HE outcome are shaped.

Similarly, Tariq and Syed (2017) examined the multi-layered issues and challenges faced by successful British South Asian Muslim women who worked in supervisory and leadership positions. In line with the focus of this thesis, Tariq and Syed's (2017) research accounted for the intersection of gender, ethnicity, religion, and family status. Unlike Bagguley and Hussain (2016), they focused upon a smaller group of working women in the given social construct of gender and religion particularly in the view of the concurrent rise of 'Islamic radicalism'. Through semi-structured interviews with 20 Muslim women, they investigated how these women use their individual agency and strategies to overcome obstacles in their career. The fact that only a few South Asian women attain managerial and leadership jobs, Tariq and Syed (2017) overlooked how these women have transited from university to the successful employment and what negotiations they might have made within their families and communities to reach this level of success.

Hence, my study identifies and fills this important gap in the literature to explore HE trajectories of educated South Asian women as to how their transitional views are shaped.

Furthermore, although the research perspective of these studies is closer to my thesis with regards to the context of HE and career of British South Asian women, my thesis explicitly explores some crucial questions in these areas. For example, given the current increased participation of South Asian women in HE as mentioned by Bagguley and Hussain, why only a few South Asian women are able to secure a successful career as indicated by Tariq and Syed? What happens to the majority of women graduates from these groups in terms of their career? How the perceptions of these women are shaped by their individual trajectories and how they view their transition from university to work? And, why having a HE qualification does not guarantee the job market success to these women? These vital aspects are the main aim of this study which concerns how young women from South Asian descend view their transition from university to work.

Moreover, transition as a process is socially constructed involving a series of interactions and negotiations and is overlapped with cultural, religious and family structures, hence, needs in-depth exploration. Achieving a greater understanding of the social experiences of young women can provide an understanding of their complex social lives and how they position themselves in the future field of employment. I found this study as an opportunity to add to the body of knowledge that how the past and present social experiences shape young women's individual trajectories alongside structural influences from ethnicity, gender and social class. Moving on to the next chapter, I present the extensive literature review in relation to British South Asian women's social positionings within the contexts of their culture and the wider society.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The chapter offers a critical discussion as to why British South Asian women are more likely to be affected in their HE journeys than other ethnic minority and majority women in the UK. The existing literature presented in this chapter outlines how the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social is influential in shaping perceptions of transition of these women. Although the complexity of social and family structures in South Asian culture is widely recognised (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Modood, 2006; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Shah et al, 2010; Bhopal, 2010), much of the existing research focuses on the factors which affect young women's decision to pursue HE or gain employment. However, the mechanism of social and cultural factors affecting young women's educational trajectories is not fully understood. This thesis, therefore, takes opportunity to explore the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class to see if and how HE qualification and paid employment would alter social relations of these women within their families and communities. Using an intersectional lens is helpful to understand how various social structures in the lives of these women interact in the system of oppression, such as those arising from religion and culture (Turner 2011).

The chapter begins by presenting a brief description of the methods used for the literature search to complete this thesis. The first section identifies research evidence indicating the significance of South Asian from families and the community. This includes the current position of young women in HE and the labour market and the role of community in achieving educational and career goals. The conceptual and theoretical evidence of how gender in general and in a specific context such as marriage, impacts women's social lives is illuminated in the next section. This is followed by discussion of social class and its complex intersection with gender and ethnicity. The final section illustrates an overview of UK job market and the employment patterns of the graduates, in particular, ethnic minority graduates highlighting the transition process. Evidence from a range of literature is discussed indicating where in the current job market, British South Asian women with university qualification stand in particular, influences from career role modelling and

migration. The chapter ends by presenting summary of the key concepts relevant to the framing of this thesis.

2.2 How was the Literature Search carried out?

The key focus of the literature search was to develop an understanding of the context of South Asian women's HE trajectories and how these women view their transition to work. After formulating research questions, I started to search relevant literature particularly the empirical studies which have examined HE journeys and experiences of ethnic minority women, more specifically, South Asian women in the UK universities. Although keeping research aims in the view during the search helped me stay focused on what I was seeking for, finding the relevant literature on the experiences of South Asian women was not easy. I was disappointed that in recent years, there has been so little apparent basis in research on South Asian women's social lives impacting their transitional views.

When I looked for references in publications, only a few studies were found which explored complex transition process of ethnic minority graduates in the UK Labor market for example, Monteiro, Santos, and Goncalves (2015). Most of the studies in the UK have focused on ethnic minorities in general and if Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian groups are discussed, they are termed as 'Asians' under a wide umbrella. Therefore, searching for specific empirical evidence on South Asian women was a struggle. In fact, it has been difficult to provide specific evidence on the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class to explicitly understand how these factors shape HE trajectories of young women from South Asian diaspora. Some international studies such as De Grip, et al (2010) and Berggren (2011) although examined the transitional views of university graduates, they did not include level of transparency in the context of ethnic minorities that I would find helpful. I still thought it was worthwhile reviewing these studies for comparison purpose. The following comprehensive list presents most frequently used keywords:

Higher education, ethnic minority, British South Asian women, gender, ethnicity, social class, socioeconomic status, Muslim women, religion, social experiences, family, family structure, family process, HE choices, ethnic community, community social networks, ethnic differences, Bourdieu's theory of practice, habitus, capital, field, interpretive paradigm, ethnography, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, fieldnotes,

fieldwork, thematic analysis, intergenerational social mobility, arranged marriage, migration, , transition, university experiences, post-university experiences, racial discrimination, UK job market.

Using above range of keywords was intended to provide consistent criteria that meant only those studies that explicitly detailed specific empirical work relevant to this thesis. Most of the literature was searched through University of Southampton Delphi search portal. Some conceptual and philosophical sources were found through the library catalogue, as well as through the popular search engine 'google scholar'. Other data sources include reports from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UK government website, Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), Labour Force Surveys (LFS), Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), and Office for National Statistics (ONS). These online sources provided access to the recent trends in HE and employment of ethnic minorities in the UK.

An important aspect of my literature search was the methodological choice of research design. The literature sources on ethnography included some conceptual books and written work of earlier scholars such as Gobo (2008), Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) Angrosino (2007) and Milled (2017). Majority of the sources were drawn from the empirical literature in Education and Social sciences such as Lichtman, (2013), Mills and Morton (2013) and Hammersley (2018). On balance, educational studies that used ethnographic data collection tools such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, fieldnotes and reflexivity were carefully reviewed. Likewise, a range of books was reviewed to gain an understanding of Bourdieu's theoretical framework and its application to the sociology of education. This also includes the publications of other scholars who have used Bourdieu in their research. Reviewing empirical studies was particularly helpful in providing guidance to understand the practical use of Bourdieu's concepts and compare my understanding with others work. Having established how the literature was searched, the following section discusses the social position of British South Asian women in their families and communities.

2.3 South Asian Families and Communities

This section documents the importance of family and childhood experiences in providing young women with exposure to the ethnic community playing important role in shaping their perceptions of transition. Ethnic minority groups are, by definition, more alienated from the majority who are native born and may have fewer possible individuals with whom to exchange obligations and expectations (Kao, 2004). The shared experience of migration and the sentimental attachment of community in South Asians is well established in the literature (Modood, 2004; Shah et al, 2010). A community is composed of groups of people who construct their identities within the premises with a strong sense of empowerment (Weeks, 2002). Families are thought to have a clear impact, often more than peers, on the education and career aspirations of young people (Lindstorm, Doren, Metheny, Johnson and Zane, 2007). The literature review has helped me to identify two main interdependent contexts relevant to the South Asian families in this study: family processes such as support, aspirations family relations (Crozier, 2009; Whiston and Keller, 2004) and family structural factors such as parental education, occupation and social class (Shah et al, 2010; Wigfield and Turner, 2012). These aspects are illuminated in many chapters of this thesis, including the present one.

In the existing literature, South Asian families are represented as male-dominated and oppressive to women (Archer, 2003; Crozier, 2009). Youth from these groups find themselves caught between the restrictive home culture and freedom of Western culture (Shain, 2003). Cultural practices and expectations such as the requirement for looking after the elderly, arranged marriages and giving women least priority for education, underline the significance and presence of familial norms set in the extended households amongst South Asian families. Other evidence in the literature revealed that the employment outside home provided awareness to young women from South Asian background, of their roles and rights as an individual. Earlier work of Bhopal (1998, 1999) implied that successful South Asian women choose to turn their backs on their religion and culture by negotiating their ethnic identities. However, detaching from the family and community where their social life is rooted, is not easy and this may result in internal distress and potential role-conflict in young women's personal and professional lives. Consequently, this conflict can affect the identities of young women, not only in their social construct but also in their social interactions outside the home (Franceschelli and O'Brien, 2015).

Several other aspects of young women's position in their family and community have been a focus of the research (Modood, 2004; Takhar, 2006; Crozier, 2009; Dale and Ahmed, 2011). For example, South Asian parental support and expectations have been viewed as placing huge impacts upon young women's education and career influencing the development of their vocational identity (Abbas, 2007). Charsley and Shaw (2005a) found that although educated parents believe that university degree not only provides financial security in matrimony, their daughters have better chances of getting a job to be financially independent. Ahmad's (2001) study on British Muslim women in London, although published over a decade ago, remains relevant to my research because similar issues about Muslim women's education and career are still evident. South Asian Muslim women in Ahmad's study demonstrated how their parents encouraged them to attend HE. In investigating the academic achievements, Ahmad's (2001) work situates these women under the obligation and boundaries set by the community they live in, but not necessarily the boundaries placed by family. This in a way, shows that over the years, despite having different assertions with regards to young women's education and employment, South Asian parental support for their daughters' education remains consistent.

More recently, there is a new shift in South Asian women's HE and employment patterns as noted by Bagguley and Hussain (2016). The authors suggest that second-generation South Asian women are highly ambitious to work. They argue that unlike their first-generation parents, the majority of second and third-generation women are highly qualified and fluent in English and therefore, are able to question the differential treatment they get in mainstream society, specifically at the workplace. In another example, Dhar's (2012) study considered South Asian women's freedom to decide and financial independence as the positive outcomes of HE, however, some women felt that they were dealt with different standards in society. For example, if an English woman wanted to stay at home and take care of children, it was considered as her freedom of choice, whereas, in case of a South Asian woman, same was seen as a sign of oppression or a family decision forced on her. The author found that young women appreciated the flexible options to work part-time if an offer was made by the employer. This evidence shows that family and community expectations place significant impact upon young women's social position in their communities.

Alongside, the norms and standards held by mainstream society are also key elements in shaping the trajectories of these women. To explain this further, Tariq and Syed's (2017) work is worth quoting here. The authors pointed out to the cultural barriers affecting social lives of these women. For example, they explained that Muslim women cannot participate in certain topics of office conversations due to cultural and religious reasons (for example, non-marital relationships and alcohol). Also, social get-togethers at pubs and Christmas parties may be challenging due to the presence of alcohol. Such boundaries may detach them from creating a social bond with work colleagues. I believe this situation asserts two-way pressure: on one hand, these women may feel isolated and miss out on important social opportunities that are significant for career progressions. On the other hand, their colleagues at work may feel uncomfortable with such strong beliefs of these women.

Another line of explanation that has prominence in the literature points to the possible role of racism while these women seek work (Modood, 2004; see also Lander, 2011, 2014). In contrast to their White peers, these women have to deal with another trail of the labour market and workplace challenges related to their ethnicity, gender and social class. One of the main reasons is linked to their social structures within their families (Bailey, Cowling and Tomlinson, 2015) shaping women's image in the wider society. This being the case, some researchers claim that South Asian women, particularly Bangladeshi and Pakistani, are less motivated to enter paid employment (Battu et al, 2011; Nandi and Platt, 2010) due to the constraints they face from their families and communities.

This argument is relevant to my thesis in explaining that not only family, culture or religious practices affect how young women see their transition to work, but there are also potential workplace influences which may entail additional challenges. Therefore, it appears that for these women, the key factor to succeed rests in their bargaining with their families and communities, as well as developing strategies to resist expected barriers in the wider community. In line with these arguments, it is essential to explore what other challenges labour market brings to South Asian women and how they perceive their transition to work. More detail on labour market challenges is discussed in section 2.7 of this chapter. The next section explores the evidence relevant to explain how the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class correlates with familial and cultural contexts that shape perceptions of these women.

2.4 Ethnicity and South Asian Women

Ethnic diversity has considerably risen in Britain over the past century. There is a consistent debate in the existing research in defining and understanding ethnicity. In the 19th century literature, the term 'race' was used to distinguish the major construct of biological distinct sub-groups in Britain. Over the past decades, the focus has been on the ethnic classifications based on the country of origin and the term 'race' was interchangeably used with 'ethnicity' (Mathur, Grundy, Smeeth, 2013). Recently, ethnicity is understood as a way of reflection upon individual's self-identification, enveloping a broader range of social characteristics in comparison to the race which supported imperialism by the imposition of power upon those who were considered inferior (ibid). Considering it a multifaceted phenomenon, earlier research by Bhopal (2004) defines ethnicity as a multidimensional concept covering the components of common geographical origin, language, cultural traditions, food, the way of dressing and religion. As published on the UK government website (www.gov.uk) in 2017, one's ethnicity is determined by the country of birth, geographical origin, the spoken language, skin colour and religion. It is noted that the major debate of ethnicity in the literature involves country of origin and religion. Thus, this section mainly discusses existing research evidence associated with the ethnic and religious norms and practices impacting young women's positions within and outside South Asian culture.

More recent research points out that Muslim women in the UK are more likely to have challenging experiences to gain and retain employment than are women from other ethnic minority and majority groups (Tariq and Syed, 2017; see also Lander, 2014). Here, I argue that because most of the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are predominantly Muslims, this can be one reason why these women may face more problems in finding jobs. Pointing to the BBC news report by Wallis and Robb (2013) 'workplace discrimination', Tariq and Syed (2017) argued that Muslim women who wear hijab (headscarf) are more easily identifiable in terms of their religion and hence, likely to face discrimination at the workplace. They go on to explain that some degree of ethnic discrimination has also been identified during the recruitment phase. They explained that some Muslim women have reported being questioned about their intentions and plans for marriage and children. Whilst this may well be true for all women, however, Muslim women are challenged with the stereotypical image they carry labelling them as strict and conservative. It appears, therefore, that South

Asian Muslim women have to carefully negotiate their education and employment options in order to reach a balance between education, employment and marriage role expectations.

Available literature suggests that the second-generation South Asian women are more socially engaged and motivated towards the acquisition of modern education and career than the previous generation women (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016). The rapid growth in Bangladeshi and Pakistani women going to university signifies not only the transformation of their position but their negotiations to gender identities within their communities. Two studies here are relevant to explain how personal and cultural acquired attributes affect young women's role in education and economy of the household.

The first ethnographic study of Ijaz and Abbas (2010), conducted in West Midlands in England, found a range of complex issues relating to the identity and religious norms within South Asians, specifically the educational issues. Even though South Asian parents in their study, supported their daughters to go to university, they feared that young women may not carry cultural and religious trends as they mix with the culture 'outside' home. Parents also demonstrated concern that their daughters might forget their religious and cultural values and adapt Westerns culture, which asserts different values in dealing with young people. The study also revealed various reasons for South Asian women to get the education, such as for economic security, independence and increased confidence. The authors conclude that there is an awareness among first-generation parents about the positive outcomes of HE as they expressed willingness to send their daughters to university. Whilst most parents viewed their daughters' education as a sign of prestige and social status, young women were not exempted from maintaining cultural and religious obligations. Nonetheless, the present increase in South Asian women's HE participation could be one of the possible results of increased parental support and value they give to HE.

The second study by Dale and Ahmed (2011) investigated British Pakistani and Bangladeshi women who had arranged marriages and faced strict social boundaries set by husband and family. The authors found that in the South Asian community, marrying an overseas husband often interrupted women's education. They go on to suggest that in some cases if a young woman's family valued education, ways were found to allow her to continue education even after marriage. However, in contrast to Pakistani and Bangladeshi

groups, Indian marriage patterns were different, accommodating more flexibilities in terms of women's education and employment. The authors concluded that there is clear evidence of gender inequalities within and between South Asian groups which are associated with the differences in culture and religious practices within each group.

As such, marriage acts as an important social institution aiding in the maintenance of 'ethnoreligious' identities and shaping young women's gendered identities. The cultural and religious discourses documented in the above study show a direct link between education and marriage and how young women's education and career aims are affected by marriage. I argue that the popularity of arranged marriages is still common in South Asian communities. Therefore, I aim to explore themes of cultural practices to examine the patterns of arranged marriages impacting HE trajectories of these women, and how they negotiate agency and choice within such practices.

While prior research explained first-generation South Asian women as docile, uninterested in education and bound to arranged marriages (Ahmad, 2001; Bhopal, 2009; Dale, Fieldhouse, Shaheen, and Kalra, 2002; Modood, 2006), the current population of South Asian women demonstrate relatively higher levels of participation in HE. For example, Bagguley and Hussain (2016) examined this notion by considering the use of reflexivity by young women in negotiating the choice of marriage and career. The process of reflexivity is understood as an essential element during interviews and more critically during the analysis phase to distinguish similarities and differences in the social experiences of women. Reflexivity 'is exercised through internal conversation which not only mediates the impacts of social forms but also guides the responses to it' (Archer, 2007, p. 4). These responses are deliberate acts of individuals who hold internal dialogues between their perceptions and their intended actions. Hence, Bagguley and Hussain (2016), suggested the ways in which South Asian women may deal with social challenges by recognising their agency- their intractable behaviour. The authors explored broader perspectives of South Asian women's agency and related the current trend of increased participation in HE to their reflexive ability through which these women were able to change some of their circumstances in order to be successful in future.

Moreover, it is noted that in contrast to previous studies which focused on particular religious aspects among South Asians (Ahmad, 2001; Shah et al, 2010), Bagguley and Hussain (2016) worked with women from Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths. They noticed

different reflexivity patterns within each of the groups. Using this broader approach enabled authors to identify similarities and differences between and within these groups. This approach is significant to my thesis as the key focus of my study is to identify and distinguish the similarities and the differences between and within women from South Asian groups with regards to their experiences and perceptions of transition.

Earlier mentioned work of Tariq and Syed (2017) is another significant addition to current literature concerning the changing notion of HE and employment patterns of South Asian women. They focused upon South Asian Muslim women in the managerial and supervisory career in the UK and investigated what challenges they face at the workplace. By using an intersectional perspective, the authors explored how factors such as gender, ethnicity, religion and family impact upon the lives of successful South Asian women. The authors viewed agency as a means for young women's independence and how they make use of their unique resources, as well as take advantage of available opportunities to achieve their desired outcomes. Agency refers to an individual's ability to make effective choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes (Kabir, 2010). Tariq and Syed (2017) conclude that Muslim women are able to tackle some of the issues at the workplace through their individual strategies, personal networks and further education. This study is relevant to my thesis because the concept of reflexivity has its implications in the context of South Asian women in my study as to how they perceive and act upon their transition phase while they negotiate their HE and career choices within their families.

Moving on to discussion of gender, the following section delineates how gender inequalities in HE and employment have been influential in the lives of British South Asian women.

2.5 Gender Inequalities

In this section, the overall changing notion of gender inequality is highlighted with a particular focus on the aspects of social structures in young women's educational trajectories in which gender operates. I draw on the concept of gender inequalities by relating to some empirical studies on South Asian women's social experiences assessing their renegotiations of education and employment aims within their families. I identify the

theoretical strand in feminist theory to conceptualise South Asian women's re-working of their gender identities.

Gender differences are produced when men and women are placed in different gender roles within their social structures (Wood and Eagly, 2002). It was in the early 1990s, new approaches in the field of educational research on gender inequality, professional education and career began to emerge (ibid). This facilitated a surge of interest in the interdisciplinary gender studies. A range of scholars, therefore, started to examine gender and its relation to education from various perspectives. UNESCO in 2016 reported that the intractable gender disparities in education have continued over the last two decades. Even with the huge progress of women in HE enrolment (ONS, 2016), inequality and gendered discrimination against women in education still operate globally (UNESCO, 2016). In relation to the job market, the concept of gender inequality may have been lost on a wider perspective in the UK, however, reports from ONS (2016) and recent evidence in the work of Zwysen and Longhi (2018) suggest that women of ethnic minority still have low prospects in the job market as compared to women from White majority groups. In the following section, discussion highlights the social construct of gender in the context of South Asian women in this study.

2.5.1 Social Construct of Gender

This section highlights the feminist theory to understand how gender is constructed within South Asian culture and impacts upon the lives of young women. The section also discusses certain stereotypical gendered roles acquired from the social structures in which South Asian men and women live.

Early feminist theorists were criticised for being limited in terms of their focus on the aspects of women's social lives. However, feminists now are increasingly debating over the earlier views and are more interested to consider the issues of modern feminist theory (Adkins and Skeggs, 2004) which are relevant to the diverse issues emerging from social contexts. Here, I reflect on how these feminist concepts may be utilised in relation to South Asian women's negotiations of gender identities within their patriarchal (Ahmed, 2003) social constructs.

Worrell (2001), a feminist practitioner, argues that feminist researchers are concerned about the way existing research has presented the issues that impact the lives of women. One of the inconsistencies identified by Worrell is the distress which leads women to adaptive strategies to seek help, which involve developing the life skills for education and economic independence. In other words, the concept which explains that gender is a social and cultural construct, where women negotiate the 'appropriate' performances of social frameworks (Butler (1990) is significant within the practice of arranged marriage and religion. It is within these frameworks that I position my analysis of gender and how the performance of new gendered identities within South Asian women affect their present scenario. More accurately, feminist theory supports the notion of gender identity which is not fixed and can be modified by the use of 'power structures' and 'agency' (Butler, 1990). Butler's concept that 'gender is culturally constructed' adds to the understanding of the idea that gender identities remain inherently unbalanced. To balance this instability, Lockford (2004) engages with the concept of 'agency' highlighting that women's own agency empowers them to exercise individualised choices over their actions, behaviours and identities. Furthermore, the literature review revealed that British South Asian women are less likely than men from the same ethnicity, to participate in community decision-making, including parental associations and school management committees. This lack of participation is not only linked to their low levels of education in comparison to men but to the cultural attitudes of men towards women (Eldred, 2013).

Another example of patriarchal construct is the management and the use of financial resources in South Asian families which is traditionally sought by men. With regards to managing money, South Asian men are expected to take the lead of household expenditures and savings and be responsible to fulfil any deficits. This exemplifies the importance of understanding the depth of the cultural practices which is situated within and between men and women of South Asian groups. Thus, in relation to developing and adapting the strategies to overcome cultural and structural constraints, young women's education is seen as a means of economic independence (Barnes, Bassot, and Chant, 2011).

One way to assess the effects of gender is to determine the educational hiring and career pathways which are considered as one of the major areas of discrimination affecting ethnic minorities. ONS report (2016) recorded the highest overall employment rates of

74.6% since 1971, over 300,000 more people were now working in comparison to the employment rates in 2015. This also includes a marked rise of 70% in the employment rate of women in the UK. However, even though these figures appear to have reverted to the levels that existed in the 1970s, employment rates of ethnic minorities continue to remain lower than that of the overall population (Zwysen and Longhi, 2018).

In the view of social constructionist theory, Gergen and Wortham (2001) argues that gender is constructed in relations between people. Although a full description of the relevant background of the constructionist theory is beyond the scope of this thesis, here I intend to mention its useful understanding and relevancy to this thesis. Gergen and Wortham (2001) suggests that human actions are dependent on the cognitive processing of information, which means that the worldview is described as how people understand it and not how the world is. Thus, the way people understand their world is not an automatic phenomenon driven by natural processes, but it is a result of the enterprise of people's relations. Wood and Eagly (2002) on the other hand, argue that the roles assigned by society and selected by personal choices determine gender differences. For instance, women's roles are traditionally associated with taking care of the household and family whereas men occupy roles that involve economical production (Wood and Eagly, 2002). This evidence emphasises the importance of social structures in describing gendered roles rather than traditionally comparing the differences between men and women.

2.5.2 Marriage Patterns

Another significant aspect of gender identification in South Asian culture is related to the marriage patterns. Marriage is a form of cultural capital (DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985), which is seen as a market to which partners bring exchangeable resources that determine their social positions. More recent research has shifted from traditional marriage patterns to the changing formations of marriage among South Asians. The rising percentage of divorce and lone-parent families has doubled since the mid-1990s when these figures were just under 20% for Pakistani and Bangladeshi families and under 10% for Indian families (Babb, et al, 2006-cited in Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw, 2014). However, there is relatively little research on examining the underlying processes leading to such statistics. The few explicit explorations of the increasing divorce rate in South Asian families have focused on the contributing factors such as mode of selecting spouse in arranged or forced marriages

(Dale, 2008) and increasing education and employment levels of younger generation of South Asian women (Qureshi et al, 2014).

Dale and Ahmed's (2011) research provides an insight into understanding the views of UK-born Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim women who had arranged marriages. During the interviews, the authors found that the parents and the families of the participants believed that in an arranged marriage, young women are likely to live a non-complicated life in line with cultural and religious norms. This includes the idea that a woman should not work, take care of home and children and obey husband's commands. Their findings show that the notion of marrying an overseas partner carried its cultural meaning in the sense that men who were born and raised outside the UK, were believed to be more traditional. Therefore, it was expected that they would not ask the wife to work outside home and will fulfil all financial liabilities. This evidence shows that despite some intergenerational changes in the way South Asian women's gender identity is modified within their families, some of the cultural and religious beliefs predominantly those distinguishing gendered roles between men and women, remain influential in their social lives.

Moreover, Charsley (2005) in a study with a similar focus has drawn attention to the marriage migration among Pakistani community and the associated transformation of traditional gendered roles in marriage. The author argues that in a traditional Pakistani marriage context, it is expected that the woman would live with the husband and his family and will adopt their lifestyle. However, in a marriage migration scenario, it is important to note that South Asian men who migrate to the UK are in the unusual situation of joining wife's family and leaving behind their own family, social life and employment. Such marriage may result in the loss of men's traditional power in the family after marriage (Charsley and Shaw, 2006). This example is significant to the disempowerment of male migrants, who implicitly impose religious and cultural boundaries on their UK-born wives first by the influence of their construct of gender and in line with cultural expectations. Pointing to the consequences, Eldred (2013) argued that male dominance in decision-making in South Asian family and community, often restrict young women from participating in education.

In effect, Bhopal's (2009) educational research on arranged marriages and dowry practices within South Asian communities suggests that having HE qualification provides women with independence over the degrees of choice they have in the marriage process. She

argues that educated women seem to be successful in affirming an individual identity, hence, are embracing the new gender identities as educated and independent women. Hence, the family and marriage are the most significant aspects of South Asian culture within which gendered identities are negotiated and contested. This evidence shows that depending upon the level of negotiations with cultural, religious and family boundaries, South Asian women are able to pursue education and career and rework their gender identities.

This section highlighted that even with the existence of several studies on social and ethnic issues associated with gender, the continual changes in the social context are bringing in new challenges that need careful and in-depth exploration. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the changing marriage patterns among these groups.

2.6 Social Class and Higher Education

A wide range of social research have noted the influential role of parental social class on educational progression of youth (Blanden and Machin, 2004; Hills et al 2010; Modood, 2003, 2006, 2012; Vincent, Rollock, Ball and Gillborn, 2012), however not limited to the influences from parental occupation (Archer, Hutchings and Ross, 2003). It is important to note that in the present body of knowledge, the term social class is often used almost interchangeably with socioeconomic status. Whilst social class concerns power and control, socioeconomic status, on the other hand, is related to the prestige of education and income resources (Wohlfarth, 1997). Kohn and Kazimierz (1990) view social class as: 'groups defined in terms of their relationship to ownership and control over the means of production, and their control over the labour power of others'.

This section documents the evidence from available literature to find answers to questions such as what are the reasons for economic vulnerability within social class differences impacting the Labour market of South Asian women. Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) suggested social class and gender differences in the UK HE in their report in 2015. They found that the ethnic minorities from low socioeconomic groups are, on average, more likely to attend HE than White British pupils in the same group (Crawford and Greaves, 2015). Their report identified some striking factors associated with unexplained differences between the prior educational attainments of ethnic minorities in

the UK that need to be explored. So, what are those unexplained differences among ethnic minorities that even with social class differences, they tend to go to HE? Are these motivational forces attached with the notion of parental encouragement or sense of prestige associated with enrolling their children in HE? This argument is explained by Modood (2006) that the ambition among South Asians to be university educated is seen as an integral element to their social mobility. Social mobility is defined as 'the relative income mobility, measured as a lack of association between the adult earnings of children and their parental income in childhood' (Blanden and McMillan, 2014, p.3). This argument is highlighted in this thesis that the role of social class should be qualified by the ethnic norms and the expectations in different South Asian communities.

Another relevant example is the earlier discussed study of Ijaz and Abbas (2010) in section 2.4 in which South Asian parents demonstrated enormous motivation towards HE of their daughters even though they themselves were not educated. This evidence suggests that not only social class issues affect South Asian women's' ambitions and educational journeys, but persistent impacts related to social class background can also alter educational outcomes and career goals. However, with parental support and encouragement, educational and career aims are attainable. In order to explore the concept of social class differences and how they impact upon educational and career choices, this section builds upon Bourdieu's concept which explains how the social class may affect the educational goals leading to a career.

Importantly, the literature review identified limited research in the UK comparing ethnic minority students' experiences in the university (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2010), in particular, the social experiences of South Asian students had been overlooked. A growing body of research, however, points out that social class, in the form of parental education, employment and family income continues to exert substantial influences on educational outcomes and wellbeing of the youth (Hills, Brewer, Jenkins, Lister, Lupton, Machin, Mills, Modood, Rees and Riddell, 2010). A recent study by Hartas (2015) investigated the educational outcomes by means of secondary data analysis. The data for the study came from a longitudinal study (Millennium Cohort Study) which was carried out in 2007–2008 in England and Wales. Hartas (2015) explained that the role of social class is crucial in improving the educational attainment of children, albeit, she acknowledged that it is difficult to fully explain the forms of complex social and cultural interaction of parents with

their children. This can only be met by tackling the fundamental causes of inequality such as lack of fairness in the distribution of resources and services and inequality of opportunities available to the children. The author although viewed the conflicting information in the data indicating the impact of parental occupation, she argued that this factor may have less of an impact on education because parents matter for their children for what they are and not what their occupation is.

The research in sociology and education have been strongly influenced by Bourdieusian concepts to understand cultural and social reproduction of inequalities between social classes of ethnic minorities (Reay et al, 2005, Modood, 2006, 2012). Bourdieu (1986) emphasises the centre point of reproduction of social class division by combining the three theoretical elements of social class: cultural, social and economic capital and believes that it allows continuous future access of resources to the members. For Bourdieu (1993), the social class of parents can not only support children's education, but such parents can also support their children in several means. These concepts are discussed in great detail in chapter three. The following section discusses the research evidence by highlighting the significant factors in the transition from HE to work.

2.7 Process of Transition

Career is conceived as the sequence of occupational positions through the lifespan (Hoekstra, 2011). Existing higher education research views transition to work as a process involving a series of planned and unplanned events, which majority of the graduates find challenging and stressful (Macmillan and Vignoles, 2015; Monteiro et al, 2015). A few earlier studies have attempted to disentangle the issues of transition from university to work as a process involving the series that overlap and extend during student life and work life (Brah, 1996). However, returning to employment after a long period of study or going back to education after gaining work experience might exhibit various effects on a person's educational journey (Wells and Florea, 2015). They argue that these factors are complex and often associated with individualised experiences of transition and concern both employers and graduates. Wells and Florea therefore, conclude that periods of unemployment and uncertain job contracts can further complicate the transition process.

Monteiro and colleagues (2015) viewed the transition as a developmental process which needs to be adopted by individual experiences. They explained that for some young adults, this phase can be extremely challenging, thinking that they are no longer students in a state of uncertainty about the new role can lead to considerable distress. Further to this, newly qualified South Asian women may face a burden from cultural and family expectations. For instance, upon completion of HE degree, young women are usually expected to marry and engage in family roles (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016; Dale and Ahmed, 2011). Negotiating with such cultural and familial boundaries can create considerable uncertainty in choosing personal and professional career goals (Bhopal, 2009).

Importantly, the empirical evidence that exists on South Asian women's HE journeys and transition to work is limited. A few studies have pointed out that in contrast to White British students, the process of transition appears more demanding for ethnic minority students, South Asian women in particular, on the account of the decreased opportunities to be accepted on the jobs. For example, Zwysen and Longhi (2018) argue that despite having similar HE qualification, ethnic minorities face lower job prospects in comparison to White graduates. The authors explained that factors such as holding degrees from less prestigious universities and achieving lower grades than White British, adversely affect the transition process of ethnic minority graduates. The fact that ethnic minority graduates are likely to come from a lower parental social class background, Zwysen and Longhi added that they tend to have minimal access to financial and social resources. These resources are also generated from the local community (Shah et al, 2010) and thus, by living in deprived areas with the lack of opportunities can further reduce their employment prospects. This evidence shows that the information and resources available in the local community networks can be useful in finding suitable jobs for South Asian graduates.

One of the ways in which young people explore what is out there in the labour market or what opportunities can be pursued is through the social networks where they engage in social interaction (Faggian, McCann and Sheppard, 2007a). Battu and others (2011), however, pointed out that there are important differences across ethnic minority groups in terms of using community social networks for searching jobs. They agreed that even though community networks are useful in finding a job, ethnic minority graduates who having first generation parents and family may not necessarily benefit from community

networks due to lack of familiarity to the local resources (Dustmann and Theodoropoulos, 2010). Therefore, it may be problematic comparing graduates with native and foreign-born parents. This issue, therefore, is critical in determining differences within and between South Asian groups, particularly helpful data collection and data analysis phase in identifying and addressing the differences within and between these groups. The following two sections elaborate the literature evidence on how young people, South Asian women in particular, engage in career planning and post-university outcome.

2.7.1 Career Planning and Role Models

The evidence in the present body of knowledge shows that today youth are able to evaluate the situation, such as career, by using more abstract thinking than the generation ago. For example, Barnes, et al (2011) explain that students start to think about their career at their early schooling; an adolescent at the age of 10 years is considered appropriate to understand the idea of 'career' as a general concept and to make sense of paid work. Barnes and others (2011) however, predicted that the comprehensive benefits of career are developed at a later stage in life. Therefore, it can be assumed that the chances of financial independence are likely to occur as young people start their career. This knowledge was helpful during data collection and analysis process to understand how South Asian women perceive the notion of financial independence in their lives and how that impacts their perceptions of transition to work.

Pointing to the importance of social networks for career success, Gibson (2004) relates the process of social learning to 'social role modelling' whereby young people aspire those who they consider successful. Although it is not relevant to develop a whole section on role model theory, it is essential to explain how young graduates perceive the role models and what influences role models may have upon their career planning. Role modelling is a cognitive process based on attributes of people in social roles that individuals perceive to be similar to themselves (Gibson, 2004). To Gibson (2004), this is a form of psychosocial matching of skills and behaviour that individuals admire during social learning. Psychosocial learning is viewed as a process of young people developing career innovations in which they choose characteristics of people whom they admire to enhance their self-modelling (Hoekstra, 2011). Adopting Gibson's (2004) role model dimensions, researchers such as Fried and MacCleave, (2009), have incorporated the idea of role

modelling in career transition which includes identification of the strategies to help in early career choices They indicated that the role models have a small but significant direct influence on career choices. In their work, although they included the role models from a range of social and academic backgrounds, one of the limitations of their study was that the selected role models were not similar in gender and ethnicity of the participants. This is a critical aspect, particularly with regards to South Asian women as Gibson (2004) asserts, the role models from similar gender and ethnicity are more supportive and helpful.

Furthermore, the similarity between an individual and the career role model is seen particularly important for women (Karunanayake and Nauta, 2004). The evidence in the literature denotes that South Asian women's female contacts and role models within and between ethnic groups are viewed as a support to enable their progression to HE (Bhopal, 2010) and career (Tariq and Syed, 2017). Moreover, Gibson (2004) makes an important distinction that women have fewer role models in comparison to men relating this notion to the assumption that men and women have different role expectations in a career. Women students, therefore, are challenged by the issue of translating male role model behaviour into the behaviour matching their expectations.

In the light of the above evidence, therefore, I argue that as the second and the third-generation South Asian women in the UK continue to demonstrate high career aspiration. It can be assumed that their cultural expectations of leaving work to look after the family could gradually lose ground. Also, there is a possibility that the educated South Asian women develop sound strategies so as to negotiate employment and family life in order to fulfil their career aims (Bhopal, 2009; Dale et al, 2002). For example, considering part-time work instead of a full-time job when they have young children and family to look after. Another careful career planning would include negotiating and re-working their gender identities within their families and cultural boundaries if they decide to go for paid employment after completing their HE degrees. In doing so, some of these women may adopt individual strategies as well as the guidance from the role models.

2.7.2 Career Migration

University graduates are considered highly mobile in terms of migration and the change in the industry of employment (Faggian and McCann, 2015). According to Abreu, Faggian, and McCann (2014), immediately after completion of HE, almost half of the UK graduates work in the non-graduate occupations where a degree is not required. The authors suggested that despite some differences in the job market in the past few years, there is no clear evidence of a change in this trend. Ponting to the consequences of persistent uncertainty of finding an appropriate job, Monteiro et al (2015) argued that many of the young graduates leave their home and families behind to accomplish their career goals.

However, some researchers, such as Wells and Florea (2015) cautioned that migration to another country for finding the work may entail adverse effects on young people's career prospects in the UK. The authors identified one of the biggest challenges was whether the overseas work experience was taken in a comparable labour market. Further, career abroad can multiply problems in getting the employment when these young graduates return to the home country because holding an overseas work experience may not be compatible with the local job market demands. Hence, there is no guarantee if working abroad is helpful on the account of leaving home and family behind.

Moreover, there is a lack of evidence on the migration of women graduates to overseas countries (Dhar, 2012). For example, the previous study by Faggian et al (2007a) indicated that young women graduate in the UK tend to migrate inter-regionally more than young men graduate. Although the exact cause was not identified by the authors, they assumed this could be due to the partnership arrangements of men and women and therefore, women would follow men. They argued that such migration could be the result of a partial compensation mechanism used by women graduates in the UK for gender bias in the local labour market. Here, I refer to what Giddens's (1995) theory explain that identities and biographies become profoundly individual, and the object of choices and decisions. Therefore, it would be important in data collection and analysis phase to explore how South Asian women re-work their identities while they negotiate cultural and familial structures.

The concept of migration of ethnic minority graduates outside the UK for career purpose is under-researched area. More specifically, there is limited research on the immigration

and the emigration of South Asian graduates. Indeed, most of the literature that I came across, looked at all UK graduates in general. However, in a recent work, Tariq and Syed (2017) assert that successful South Asian women leave their home, culture and religious boundaries behind to consider the career, something which was earlier argued by Bhopal (1998). Nevertheless, Tariq and Syed and Bhopal focus on saying no to the cultural and religious boundaries by having HE qualification, their studies did not particularly focus of career migration. Hence, given the lack of UK-based literature on the career migration of South Asian women and how their perceptions of transition are shaped, some international studies (earlier mentioned in section 1.4 in chapter one) such as from the US (De Grip et al, 2010) and Sweden (Berggren, 2011) were considered for developing the understanding of the transition process.

2.8 South Asian Women in the Labour Market

This section explores the literature evidence on how South Asian women are positioned in current UK labour market in contrast to the graduates from White background. The section also highlights the demands and patterns of the job market so that the employment patterns of ethnic minority groups can be understood, one of the most crucial settlement needs (DeCoito and Williams, 2000). Not only it provides much needed financial independence and security, but employment also creates opportunities to contribute to the host society and to establish social networks (George and Chaze, 2012).

Drawing upon job prospects, South Asian women so far are presented on a slower pace and minimal progress indicating one of the lowest participation rates of British women, who are vulnerable and paid lower wages with differences in educational levels (The World Bank, 2012a). Although ethnic minorities are substantially more likely to go to the university than White groups, their labour market success remains lower than that of White graduates (ONS, 2016). Previous researchers have focused more on Muslim women of South Asian heritage and examined the effects of the religious practices which lead to the disadvantages in HE participation (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010: Shah et al, 2010) and labour market experiences (Heath and Martin, 2013).

Recently, the research focus on South Asian women has shifted from the traditional issues of family and culture to the aspects of inter-related social issues (Charsley and Shaw, 2006;

Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Shah et al 2010; Puwar, 2004). Several studies have revealed that South Asian women are still underrepresented and disadvantaged in employment in the UK (Heath and Martin, 2013). The researchers are focusing on the increased participation of young South Asian Muslim women in HE and paid employment. Some studies have pointed out the motivation of South Asian women and their efforts to negotiate social structures, family and cultural challenges which hinder them to continue education and consider work. For example, Hussain and Bagguley (2007) argued for intergenerational social mobility that how education and employment may help these women to develop alternative life options in their communities. That being the case, examining the effects of intergenerational changes of these groups, more importantly, HE journeys and employment of young women are relevant to the context of this thesis.

The identity structures of the younger generation of South Asians are considered in relation to those of their first-generation parents. This describes the complex network of social processes that shape their unique identity in Britain. In the recent past, research upon these groups clearly shows that higher levels of education and parental support seem to be impacting their cultural and religious retention. This tension is recognised as 'cultural value conflict' (Inman, 2006) leading young women to adopt hybrid identities. However, to deal with such situations requires self-exploration and confidence, by gaining HE for example. Previous work of Ahmed (2001) concluded that apart from social mobility and status, young South Asian Muslim women in university education viewed university qualification more for their personal benefit. These benefits include adopting alternative identities to deal with their religious and cultural expectations leading to construction and reconstruction of hybrid identities. Maintaining ethnic identity while socialising within mainstream society seemed both personal and parental expectation and strategy for young women. Ahmed (2001) related concept of 'agency' in her research on British South Asian women in HE as a process of negotiation and renegotiation to express their social and religious identities. The education hence has been documented as one of the strategies for young South Asian women to gain independence and confidence.

There is evidence that shows that South Asian women's educational and employment patterns are gradually altering the stereotypical image held by their previous generations (ONS, 2016). Some ethnic minority groups, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, have seen a significant increase in employment rates from around 42% in 2005 to the current high of

almost 55% in 2015 (Tariq and Syed, 2017). The unemployment rate refers to the percentage of the total labour force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment and is willing to work (Delebarre, 2016). The most robust data derived from Labour Force Survey (LFS) in 2016 defines employed people like those in work, either full-time or part-time whereas, unemployed are those who are looking for work within last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks' time. Dustmann and Theodoropoulos (2010) define 'an individual to be employed if he/she is in paid work, as opposed to being economically inactive or unemployed' (p. 219).

More recent ONS report (2016) reveals 38.5% economic inactivity rate for all women from ethnic minority groups whereas, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women have higher inactivity rates of 57.2%. Although this gap has been gradually decreasing, these inequalities indicate that South Asians are still less employable in labour market (ONS, 2016). Drawing upon their job market success rates, despite an overall rise in HE participation of South Asian women (ONS, 2016), these women, particularly those from Pakistani and Bangladeshi background, continue to struggle to be considered for employment. These patterns of job market further complicate Muslim women's employability who are up to 65% less likely to be employed than other women of same qualifications (Dobson, 2014, cited in Tariq and Syed, 2017).

To elaborate, Dale and Ahmed (2011) argued that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women usually quit their jobs after engaging in a partnership and therefore, have lower employment rates after family formation. This situation may be true for South Asian Muslim groups because of the stricter religious expectations (Hamzeh, 2011). For example, after marriage, there are many changes in a woman's role expectations from husband and family in terms of power and decision making. In the cases where educated Muslim women enter the employment, the most relevant assumption is associated with gaining approval from the husband and the family. Ahmed and Sardar (2012) explained that there may be an assumption by the employers that Muslim women are likely to leave employment soon after they get married. Dale and Ahmed (2011) concluded that some Muslim women are able to navigate their career by constant negotiation within their families.

Furthermore, not only educated South Asian women negotiate their cultural and family boundaries, but they also deal with the challenges associated with their ethnicity and

religion in the labour market such as discrimination (Lander, 2014; Modood, 2004). Thus, the evidence above shows that South Asian women's employability and career aims are dependent upon the complex intersection of their ethnicity, gender and social class which operates not only within their culture and families but also impacts young women's job the job prospects in the labour market.

2.9 Summary

The chapter presented the evidence from a range of literature sources to understand how HE trajectories of British South Asian women are shaped contributing to their perceptions of transition to work. The literature review revealed that despite familial and cultural boundaries, the second-generation South Asian women are gradually altering HE and employment patterns (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016). There is a growing interest among young women to use individual agency and personal negotiations. Young women are challenging parental and community expectations to achieve their education and career goals. This change shows that younger generation of South Asian women is focusing on the alternative strategies while choosing HE and career. However, the literature points out that there are multi-layered barriers these women have to face in entering and sustaining the career.

During the literature review, I had difficulty to find relevant literature addressing the social experiences of South Asian women in HE, in particular, those who have either entered transition phase or are nearly completing their HE courses and looking for work. Despite having determined the lack of available literature on HE trajectories of these women, it was imperative to illustrate how the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class background contribute to the current social positionings of these women with HE and job market. Evidence presented here on the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class revealed that there is a substantial overlap between these factors in the lives of these women. Whilst several positive changes have been noted in overall social mobility of this community over the last decade, there seems to be a significant influence from the interplay of ethnicity, religion and social class on their HE and job prospects. For example, those from lower social class background face more challenges in their education and Job market experiences in comparison to those from higher social class and more advantaged in their education and post-university experiences. There is a small percentage of

successful South Asian women who have overcome these challenges; however, they are still challenged by the discrimination associated with their ethnicity, gender and religion in the workplace.

In response to the recently increased motivation among British South Asian women, the literature review has opened up important questions such as how the social experiences of these women in HE, lead them to the transition phase? What strategies these women will adapt to navigate their choice of a career in the present contested positions within their culture, family and labour market? What expectation can be made from them as they start to work? Or, due to any changes in their social, religious and personal circumstances, will these young women quit or continue their career? And how such experiences may affect their identities in their families, communities and in the wider society. The next chapter discusses Bourdieu's concepts and how these concepts are used in this study to understand young women's educational trajectories from early childhood so as to determine how they are shaped within their social contexts. The aspects of the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class are highlighted in the light of Bourdieu's framework.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

By drawing upon Pierre Bourdieu's framework, this chapter informs a nuanced understanding of South Asian women's social experiences and perceptions of transition from university to work. I draw on Bourdieu's concepts derived from the theory of practice in framing the findings of this study. This is addressed by looking into how an individual is connected to the social world and the implications of conducting research. The chapter begins by describing the conceptual model to explain the relationship between social structures, social experiences and culture based on Bourdieu's views. Particular attention is paid on how Bourdieu's framework enhances the understanding of the participants' social world which contribute to shaping their perceptions of transition.

One of the main focus of Bourdieu's work is on a combination of 'immense theoretical ambition; by means of constructing socially insignificant objects into more rationalised objects (Bourdieu, 1989c). This is further understood by three essentials phases and levels in Bourdieusian methodology: construction of the research object, field analysis and participant objectivation (Grenfell and Lebaron, 2014). The first phase of constructing the research object is most critical which requires a constitution of radical view of the research object. Without this critical construction, the process may lead to simply reproduce one's own dispositional views and their relative positions (Grenfell, 2017). Therefore, the prime aim of constructing the research object is directed to alter the 'pre-given' worldview and to re-think in a new way. Bourdieu's framework represents a flexible approach in which all the main elements are interconnected to each other (Walther, 2014). This is to say that explaining one aspect of Bourdieu's theory is almost impossible without associating to the others. This thesis considers conceptual tools of 'habitus, capital and field' by focussing on the relationship between data and these concepts to explain and interpret the findings.

To elaborate this, whilst I acknowledge the arguments for a broader understanding of social experiences of South Asian women, I will write a brief description of their social and cultural contexts because young women in this study connected themselves to their social and cultural expectations in a particular way. The key influences from the family and the community that shaped women's perceptions are reflected by three sets of processes:

individual habitus, collective habitus and women's' agency. This also includes analysing how capital acquisition takes place and how resources are mobilised by these women and their families to secure their social positions after gaining HE. Although Bourdieu's work is criticised for not explicitly addressing the issues around ethnicity, the theoretical concepts of habitus, capital and social field provide a nuanced understanding for the sociological analysis of ethnicity (Modood, 2004). For the purpose of this thesis, Bourdieu's field theory is placed within a broader sphere of South Asian cultural practices to make sense of the social lives of the participants. That being said, and keeping the aim of this thesis in mind, I shall elaborate these concepts in detail with regards to their use and philosophical understanding in young women's educational trajectories and to examine perceptions of transition to work.

3.2 Defining and understanding Habitus

The concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) provides means to explain individuals' actions which are seen as reactions within the structured field in which they are positioned. Bourdieu describes habitus as the main resource for actions by which social, cultural and class relationships are defined in a person's life span development. Habitus, therefore, explains one's early childhood experiences in the form of family socialization and modified by the outside world experiences over the life span. Habitus is about what Bourdieu calls 'dispositions' acquired from primary socialisation (in the family from early childhood) and secondary socialisation (from the life experiences, school or university). According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), individual habitus makes sure that all actions are carried out in accordance with the field-specific rules, as competitors for positions within the field. Bourdieu says habitus is:

'… a system of durable and transposable dispositions … which generate organized practices and representations (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53-65).

More specifically, highlighting Bourdieu's views on disposition, Jenkins (2002) writes that disposition is the way by which 'individuals carry themselves' (p. 74-75). In other words, these dispositions could also be referred to as 'cognitive mechanisms 'which go un-noticeably within one's thought processes and then are displayed by gestures or mannerism in actions (ibid).

Sweetman (2009) understood habitus and the disposition as a person's 'filter' mechanism in which impacts from social interactions are internalised as objective practices which guide individuals to act in specific manners. In other words, as Bourdieu (1990a) these actions are exhibited as second nature and taken for granted. However, their influence is always there and can become visible to influence the development of secondary habitus. Therefore, it is true to say that habitus constantly modifies, and reinforces life experiences.

3.3 Conceptualising Capital

This section builds upon Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital which is explained as social, cultural and economic capital by considering the processes of capital acquisition and mobilisation of young women in this study. Tomlison (2008) argued that in the process of acquiring HE, young students in the university are encouraged to mobilise different forms of capital so that they able to secure their social and economic positions after completing their degree. The capital in each field is the set of resources which can be used to obtain more assets (Bathmaker, Ingram and Waller, 2013). The section also highlights how the precise nature of the relationship between cultural, social and economic capital impact upon the social position of South Asian women within their families, communities and educational fields. The different forms of capital acquired and maintained in different fields are defined by power balances exerted by the capital (ibid). For example, cultural capital constitutes assets necessary to mobilize cultural authority such as competencies, education, intellect, physical appearance. Thus, capital is the main factor as well as a byproduct of the new or potential field (Bourdieu, 1986). The forms of capital relevant to this study are discussed in the section below.

3.3.1 Cultural Capital: Family and Parental Resources

Cultural capital can also include several notions, such as knowledge about educational credentials and schooling. Bourdieu explains cultural capital as currency to a field which determines what to include and exclude, for example in education. This section focuses on how family and parental influences are operationalized as young women's cultural capital highlighted through Bourdieu's theory. Various cultural and economic differences describe the word 'family' differently and how the family is enacted, however, for the purpose of this thesis, I would assume that 'family' means those adults and children who live together

in close proximity and share similar norms. Cultural capital, therefore, refers to the system of attributes, such as cultural knowledge, mannerisms and language that are inherent from parents and defines an individual's class status (Bourdieu, 1986).

Giddens (2009) believed that children learn about their identity in the early socialisation within their families. Although Bourdieu's concepts on familial life are highly debated in the literature, there is evidence that Bourdieu offers a clear and consistent means of conceptualising 'family life' with the broader aspects of social and cultural reproduction and power structures (Atkinson, 2014). Bourdieu (2000) views the family as a children's basic ground in which they learn and identify future struggles while they seek other social fields. It is within this social space; a child's trajectory shapes habitus to deal with the challenges and the shifts in power. In that sense, Bourdieu's (1990) notion of field is conceptualised as an autonomous system of relations among those who are bounded together through certain recognition and assumptions that are by taken-for-granted-doxa, which display unequal power possessions (capitals) to engage in the strategies and struggles. Bourdieu views family as 'the field of relationships' comprised of 'dispositions' and 'interests' which are displayed, reinforced and maintained by the efforts of the family, presenting specific relations of interdependency.

Alongside, a more general perception of the family as to what constitutes a family, is an articulated perception or a family-specific 'doxa', a shared sense of what is to be done in the specific context (Atkinson, 2014). According to Bourdieu (1999), such patterns form the embodiment of family doxa; by displaying assumptions that families mean living together by sustaining emotional attachment and to act as a barrier to the outsider's entry. Hence, Bourdieu defines cultural capital as having multiple views:

> 'Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state i.e. in the form of long-lasting disposition of the mind and the body; in the objectified state, in the forms of cultural goods which are the trace realization of theories or critiques of these theories etc. and in the institutionalised state ... as seen in the case of educational qualifications' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).

In his book 'Distinction', Bourdieu (1984) focused on identifying how the consumption of cultural goods including clothing, furniture, food etc. related to cultural capital (measured by educational qualification) and social origin (measured by father's occupation). Even

though internal family dynamics were not Bourdieu's main focus, in his analysis, he indicated the aspects of distinguishing social class which are relevant to the understanding of the social aspects of young women in this study. The process of intergenerational transmission, for example, used by most parents to transfer their cultural values and practices (Lindley, 2009). More accurately, the idea of habitus, cultural capital and social fields explains the intergenerational transmission of values, norms and traditions from South Asian parents to their young daughters. In particular, the way South Asian parents invested their efforts in getting their young daughters in education, are understood in line with their expectations to better economic and social outcomes for their daughters. This exemplifies that the forms of cultural capital that are specific to parental influence, can be reproduced into other forms of capital. Bourdieu (1986: 241) also extends his thoughts on other forms of capital, such as cultural capital as he views is holds the 'capacity to reproduce itself, produce profits, expands and contains the tendency to persist'. Importantly, in line with Bourdieu's views, the concept of intergenerational transmission explains how a family is involved in the social and moral upbringing of children, thus, shaping their habitus as they grow. In other words, it is within the family's 'logic of practice' that young person's habitus is transformed.

In this study, I underscore Bourdieu's concept of culture in its significant defining power and exclusionary function which is inherent in power. In Bourdieusian framework, culture is both a process and product of struggle, or what he calls symbolic struggle, a struggle to get to name or define the 'legitimate view' of the social world (Bourdieu, 1985), as a symbolic power. This concept helps to set young women's social experiences in HE against the symbolic system of meanings and values and uncovers boundaries that constitute their experiences of inclusion. Thus, in this study, the above understanding of cultural capital is applied to describe the intergenerational transmission and cultural reproduction within South Asian families and communities.

3.3.2 Social Capital - Community Networks

In social research, there is evidence of extensive use of the concept of social capital so that the impact of community networks on educational attainment of young people can be understood (Modood, 2004; Shah et al, 2010). The social capital according to Bourdieu

(1986) is the sum of available resources that agents can use to carry out their day to day social relations. The following definition explains this concept in more detail:

> 'Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources of a group-which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248).

Whilst Bourdieu (1984) explains the reproduction of social class division and inequalities of power, his main emphasis is on the concept of conflict and power in regulating social capital within social networks. In response to critics on Bourdieu's work that his research mainly focused on the elite and social capital as an asset of the privileged, one of the most prominent arguments was of Putnam (1995) who proposed that the social capital is the moral resource divided into three perspectives: trust, social norms and social networks of the members. Putnam (1995) suggested that social capital is inherited in the community where collective voluntarily actions are formed. In contrast to Bourdieu, Putnam (1995) explains that community networks may alter the productivity of the individual members and the community as a whole. In his later work, Putnam (2000) put forward the idea of 'bridging the networks' which maintains a connection to the external resources and information. Analysing the debate between Bourdieu's and Putnam's concepts, Siisiainen (2003) suggested that the notion of conflict and trust is the main difference between the two ideologies. Whilst Putnam's (1995) theory do not deal with the concept of conflict in social associations, in Bourdieu's views of social capital, trust is not included. From how I understand, both Bourdieu and Putnam share the ideas of compatibility of universal norms and values which is closer to the trust and hence applies to the context of social connections of the participants in this study.

Moreover, having explored in introduction chapter that South Asian groups are not homogenous in their cultural contexts, I will use this knowledge to build the basic understanding of the differences in the values and gendered roles among these groups. It is also relevant here to link the concept of social capital in the previous research on South Asian communities indicating parental social networks playing a pivotal role in young people's education (Modood, 2004; Shah et al, 2010). Thus, it is crucial to see how these networks within sub-groups are useful in educational and career success of the younger generation. It is, therefore, understood that rather than having any direct impacts on

South Asian women's HE journeys, social class of parents and community networks may account for generalised but important impacts in creating inequalities in education and career of these women.

3.3.3 Economic Capital - Employment

Economic capital relates to a person's fortune and revenues which are obtained from economic forces and can result in certain economic repercussions (Bourdieu, 1986). In the Bourdieusian view, it is through economic capital that qualified and non-qualified individuals are related to a unified manner, by setting up revenues and the convertibility of cultural capital into money (Bourdieu, 1990). For Bourdieu, qualifications confer credit and authority in contrast to the individual's permanent social positioning in the families which are dependent. Positions educated individuals acquire are independent of biological power relations where educated individuals re-define relations of power and dependence between their social relations. Bourdieu (1990: 132) argue that symbolic profits are assigned according to the 'bargaining power of qualification' or the social position of the holder.

Moreover, symbolic capital takes the form of prestige and knowledge in the field such as education which is displayed by grants and a number of key indicators which structure the practice. For example, the outcome of education in the form of cultural capital is usually considered individual's capability, by disregarding the crucial influence of family and cultural background in acquiring economically rewarding jobs (Bourdieu, 1977, cited in Grenfell and James, 2004). Highlighting the economic position of the South Asian population in Britain, some authors argue that the impacts from the intersection of ethnicity, religion and social class are important in determining the labour market outcomes of these groups. As one of the main focus of this thesis is situated in the centrality of the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class, understanding economic capital is crucial to determine the labour market experiences of young women. This is also exemplified in the earlier empirical studies (Khattab, 2009; Khattab, Johnston, Modood and Sirkeci, 2011; Modood 2005; Platt 2005) who conclude that all non-white groups in Britain faced disadvantages in the labour market. Other studies have shown that the nature and severity of such disadvantages were tougher for Muslim groups (Abbas, 2007; Brown, 2000; Franceschelli, 2014).

The system of cultural reproduction, therefore, is not automatic, and belongs to the ideology of established order, in fact, it is through the 'logic of functioning' that agents contribute to the reproduction of social order (Bourdieu, 1990: 132-133). Young women in my study exemplify this 'logic of practice' while they use individual strategies, aiming for converting their cultural capital into economic capital through future employment.

3.4 Field Theory

Bourdieu (1977) argues that the concept of field is based on the idea of 'rules of the game' which helps in setting standards of practice. Bourdieu suggests 'early familiarization with the rules of the game' so that the adaptation can be achieved, and the rules are reinforced. He insists that 'the earlier the players enter the game the less they are aware of the parallel learning and the greater will be their ignorance' (Bourdieu, 1990). So, it is the volume and the structure of the capital that signifies the position of agents in the fields relative to that of others (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). According to Bourdieu, the nature of social fields is relational and indicates agents' struggle for other forms of capital:

> 'To think in terms of field is to think relationally … in analytic terms a field may be defined as a network, or a configuration of objective relations between positions' (Bourdieu and Wacquant,1992, p. 96-97).

An individual's daily life is determined by numerous interactions, negotiations and conflicts. According to Bourdieu (1966), these interactions occur in their relative social space (Walther, 2014) which is further divided into different social fields. A social field, therefore, represents a point of struggle (Bourdieu, 1977). Interactions, conflicts and competitions between the agents in the field are their relative positions to mobilise the capital. These social positionings in the field create self-evident rules; in the form of doxa (limitations: what to do and what not to do within a field). According to Bourdieu (1972), doxa actuates agent's place in the social field and the sense of what is possible and what is not. Here, another important aspect to relate from Bourdieu's theory is a trust which is essential in defining the identity of the participants in this study. Bourdieu (1990) argues that beliefs are pre-intentional and are part of social fields. These beliefs come in play with doxa to set the fore-conditions for the adaptation of one to the other as 'pre-reflexive' ability to adjust in the field.

Similarly, within the ideology of 'strategy', agents must develop strategies to improve and sustain their relative positions in the field with respect to the defining capital of the field (Jenkins, 2002). Crow (1989, p. 19) defined strategy as a 'long-term perspective'. For Bourdieu (1990) therefore, strategies are the result of the adjustment of subjective aspirations to objective possibilities. This is to say that the objective structure of the field is reproduced by agents' habitus which is already composed of the objective structure of one's interactions.

Bourdieu's analogy of the field as 'rules of the game' is useful in visualising the social positioning of women in this study as players whose experiences and trajectories are shaped by their habitus, both from primary socialisation at home and secondary socialisation outside the home. By adopting different positions in their social fields (family and community and university) these women anticipate their future field (employment). These fields are overlapping and interconnected through the distribution of properties. Objective relations of power tend to reproduce themselves in relations of symbolic power. In the symbolic struggle for the production of common sense they have acquired in previous struggles, for example, educational credentials, represent true titles of symbolic property which give one a right to share in the profits of recognition (ibid). Importantly, it is through the 'field theory' that scientific knowledge in education research is understood. Taking this idea further, the logic of practice within a given field is generated as a result of the intersection of habitus, capital and field. In Distinction, Bourdieu (1984:101-102) attempts to explain the interplay between habitus, field and capital by an equation:

[(Habitus) + (Capital) + Field] = Practice

This formulation shows that habitus and capital in a relational field intersect, and the logic of practice within the field is generated. It is through the workings of habitus that practice (agency) is linked with capital and field (structure) (Reay, 2004).

Furthermore, educational research has drawn on Bourdieu's field theory to examine how the ethnicity, gender and social class contexts result in disparate levels of symmetry with educational institutions and the advantages (Reay, 2004; Vincent, Rollock, Ball, and Gillborn, 2013). In educational fields, positions are not just the ways of action that agents have to perform, there are meanings of these positions that must be interpreted and acted upon (Ferrare and Apple, 2015). Bourdieu affirmed the significance of field theory as the

basis to discover the objective scientific knowledge in analysing the purpose of research (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The field can be employed as a tool of analysis because, as Grenfell and James (2004) argue, the concept itself by definition is dynamic and ever-changing. In that sense, the role of an educational institution is of prime importance in the educational fields of South Asian women in this study, where their perceptions of transition are formed. According to Bourdieu (1996b), the educational institutions are 'immense cognitive machines' where students' cognitive structures are constructed into social realities. Those with interest to *'play the game'* have something to gain. Thus, the aim of field theory in this study is to understand the social dimensions of the young women's HE journeys which contribute to constructing their social identities in new social spaces as an outcome of HE qualification.

3.5 Rationale for using Bourdieu

There is evidence in several educational studies of the use of selective Bourdieusian concepts, such as cultural capital (Modood, 2004; Edgerton and Roberts, 2014; Shah et al, 2010; Sin, 2013), followed by habitus (Reay, 2004; Reay, et al, 2009, 2010; Smyth and Banks, 2012; Vincent and Ball, 2007). Other scholars have shown recognition of interdependencies of Bourdieu's concepts (Grenfell, 2004a; Grenfell and Lebaron, 2014; Nast and Blokland, 2014; Pluss, 2013; Samaluk, 2014). Field is the least utilised concept (Atkinson, 2014; Grenfell, 2009), often it is seen as a 'tag on' to habitus and capitals. This study considers the basic tools of Bourdieu's theory: habitus, capital and field, to discuss the findings. Moreover, the field of education is a space to 'play' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) and its existence depends upon the similarities with individuals whose habitus leads them to value it. However, Bourdieu (1990) asserts researcher's reflexive return to the subjective experience may appear as an 'objective' viewpoint of the social world, the fact remains that it is important in a sense that it provides the in-depth familiarity of the practical experience. Hence, I have widely used the reflexivity concept throughout this thesis.

Bourdieu's immense influence in education is another influential factor to make sense of the findings in this study, as acknowledged by many researchers (David, et al, 2003; Grenfell, 2009; Grenfell and Lebaron, 2014; Modood, 2004; Nash, 1991; Reay, 2000; Zhou, 2005). I do this by considering the family, ethnic community and the HE as the social

spaces of these women and then use Bourdieu's theory to analyse their social experiences. This also includes analysing the process of capital acquisition and mobilisation by young women and their families to enhance future social positions. More specifically, this thesis recognises that South Asian women, being from minority ethnic groups, may find it difficult to adjust to the university. Reay and colleagues (2005) suggest that despite the fact that peer group, family and institutions are crucial in creating boundaries for students in HE, there are specific effects from educational institutions altering their adaptation. Therefore, the particular focus of this study is to examine how participants' cultural backgrounds impact their social lives in UK universities having predominantly 'White culture' (Lander and Santoro, 2017).

The current literature has widely recognised that the issues arising from South Asian women's cultural and family background are highly diversified in their participation in the wider community (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016; Franceschelli, 2014). This placed a majority of these women in this study at a marginalised position particularly in securing jobs. The interconnectivity of the social fields: the HE and employment, for example, is relevant to this thesis indicating that the process of transition is hugely affected by the intersection of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class and therefore, had shaped young women's present and future perceptions. This also leads young women to make uninformed choices which could distance them from pursuing the career. Section 6.3.2.1 in this chapter details the discussion of choice issues.

Despite recognising Bourdieu's (1986) focus on the elite and privileged (Field, 2003), this study aims to contribute towards addressing the social structures of South Asian women having various socio-economic backgrounds and social class: middle class and working-class South Asians. Bourdieu (1986) centres his discussion on future achievements by the access of resources within and by the social networks. This important understanding of how South Asian women benefit from their social networks for their HE and career success are crucial in shaping their HE trajectories. Moreover, conceptualising 'symbolic violence' within South Asian context helps to understand the social positionings of young women in mainstream society in relation with their social interactions and dealing with the challenges faced in university and in the job market. Here, Bourdieu's concept of 'strategy' is particularly important which explains the strategic actions in two areas: first, the parental strategies used to transmit cultural values to their daughters and second, the strategies

young women used to negotiate their HE and career aims. Hence, negotiation strategies are understood through Bourdieu's lens highlighting the continual interaction between habitus and field resulting in 'habitus fluidity' as asserted by Ingram (2011) with regards to ethnicity, gender, social class and religion of these women.

3.6 Summary

The chapter presented the theoretical underpinning of this study by relating and referring to how concepts of habitus, capital and field can be used for studying British South Asian women's relationship within their families, communities and wider society. The chapter indicated that Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field are essential to understanding the relationship between an individual and the social world. Whilst habitus concerns the subjective dimension of their experiences that requires negotiations within the social structure, the field indicates the social space determining and hindering the available opportunities. While using Bourdieu's concepts in the discussion of the findings, particular focus is directed to understand how individual experience, structural context and the social fields intersect in young women's social interactions. The next chapter will sketch out the research process followed by the epistemological and methodological issues that are central to the research design, the analysis and the presentation of collected data.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the process of choosing a research methodology to enable this inquiry. The main objective of methodology was to achieve an in-depth understanding of the subjective experiences of British South Asian women as they engage with the transitional contexts. While seeking their perceptions of to explore the transition to work, a particular focus was on the extent to which young women's social experiences reflect similarity or differences across and within South Asian groups.

There are seven sections in this chapter. The first section describes the research aims and research questions. The second section deals with research philosophy and choice of research paradigm emphasising the epistemology of the researcher in a qualitative inquiry. This is followed by the rationale for choosing an ethnographic design, its position and utility in educational research with respect to this thesis. The next section goes on to describe how data were collected including the strategies used in accessing the research participants and tools for data collection including interviews, participant observation and fieldnotes. The section after this offers my reflection on the research process and how reflexivity was used in the field work. What follows next is a brief overview of pilot interviews and lesson I learned to enhance my understanding of the entire data collection process. The chapter also highlights ethical considerations taken into account for data collection and fieldwork.

4.2 Research Aims and Research Questions

At the beginning of this thesis, the aims were set out to explore British South Asian women's perceptions of transition through the interpretations of their HE trajectories. To achieve this, I did not begin with structured research questions because my aim was to understand the unique experiences in their own ways as well as how their values, beliefs and worldviews are shaped. While formulating my research questions, my implicit assumption was to know what the data would reveal the social lives of these women. So that an in-depth insight of their social experiences was achieved, I was interested to explore the social positions these women take within their families, communities and in

mainstream society. The research aims were grounded partly in my own educational journey and my positionality to the context of this study. Thus, this study is guided by the following research questions:

- In what ways have ethnicity, gender and social class shaped previous educational trajectories of South Asian women in this study?
- What are the perceptions of these South Asian women, as to how the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class impacts their ability to transit from university to the work environment?

Through these research questions, I aimed to explore the social experiences of British South Asian women to examine how their perceptions of transition to work were shaped during HE trajectories.

4.3 Research Philosophy and Research Paradigm

A review of philosophy is vital in the research process because it explores the sense of an assurance that an appropriate methodology is being carried out to enrich the research (Holden and Lynch, 2004). While choosing appropriate methodology, it is imperative to understand that the worldview of participants can be used as a starting point by the researcher to guide their ontologically and epistemologically position (Lincoln and Guba, 1994: 105). More specifically, I find myself inclined towards how Crotty (1998) explained her thoughts on 'the social constructionist view' which signifies that all knowledge (reality) is 'dependent upon human practices' which are continually formulated by social interaction of individuals and transmitted through a specific social context of their constructs. In that sense, the term 'social constructivism' explains embedded social constructs within social experiences and cultural contexts. Interpretivists discover reality through individuals' worldviews, and links to their own backgrounds and experiences (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2013). To clarify further, Ellis and Bochner (2000) argued that the researcher can be value-neutral; it is more rigorous to acknowledge and allow for the values they bring rather than attempt to avoid them.

Like many others, I also assumed for many years that this was how the research was done (Clayton et al, 2008), perhaps because the interpretation of the term 'data' and 'research' have many meanings which can be misleading. However, in my Master course, I began to

understand other possibilities, realising that there is much more to it than the discovery of objective reality. Not only are there many types of scientific inquiry, but also many researchers now believe that there is no absolute truth. I argue that in the subjective nature of social context in the lives of people, the positivist paradigm may not be useful to understand the richness of social interaction which could not readily be understood.

The interpretive paradigm, on the other hand, focuses on the naturalistic inquiry, concerned with producing meaning of the phenomena of social experiences. I understood that I was researching within my naturalistic setting, a key element of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Nind and Todd, 2011). The interpretive paradigm in education underpins multiple understandings of the worldview which often leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). A widely held view is that the complexities of educational research are more benefiting from an interpretative, or relativistic stance (Elliott, 2005). Hence, this approach recognises the social aspects of research and the vital association between the researcher, the researched and the context in which it takes place.

The context of participants and the nature of their experiences lends itself more to the in-depth study of rich, contextual data. Taking accounts from different researchers, I theoretically understood that interpretive paradigm enables the visibility of the worldviews through gaining the insight of participants' perceptions and experiences. To go further into research methodology, the next section highlights with the theoretical underpinning of qualitative research approach in relation to its use in this study.

4.4 Qualitative Research Approach

Following the literature review, I was able to find a match between my research aims and the qualitative research design which allowed a rich and descriptive detail of the perceptions of this group of women. A commitment to participants' viewpoints, conducting inquiries in the natural context of the phenomenon (Punch and Oancea, 2014), and reporting findings in a literary style (Lichtman, 2013) are considered the main characteristics of qualitative research. However, during the literature review, I found that there is no straightforward way to describe the qualitative method as its meaning tend to change across disciplines and historical time frames (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). However,

what I was aiming for in my research, matched with Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) definition which draws from various research and theory traditions to analyse multiple aspects of human reality:

> 'Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self' (p.3).

The structure of this study was also guided by Creswell's (2013) perspective whereby a qualitative inquiry begins with a theoretical framework or a set of concepts to address the issues and the meaning a group of individuals ascribes to a social phenomenon. However, the generalisation of the findings was not intended due to the unique nature of the enquiry, rather the focus was to collect in-depth information about the social experiences on the participants and how their perceptions are influenced during their HE trajectories. The flexibility of qualitative design is understood as 'responsive to the changing settings during the course of the study (Maxwell, 2012). In effect, choosing a qualitative approach provided a systematic way to understand the meaning of participants' social contexts (Lewis, 2015).

Nevertheless, qualitative research is viewed as having some drawbacks, in particular, related to the methods of sampling. The fact that qualitative studies often have a relatively small sample size, it is argued that they may not result in the true representation of the research aspects. However, because qualitative research focuses on 'how' and not on 'what' of the casual explanations, Maxwell's (2005) argue is valid to quote here that the causation relies more on the sequence and the flow of the events than the outcome. This may lead to an argument that outcomes are not important in qualitative studies. The answer lies in the key emphasis of the research process which leads to comprehensive outcomes (Patton, 1990). That said, some authors cautioned about the potential subjectivity of qualitative research (Thanh, and Thanh, 2015) in which drawing casual conclusions can present major concerns (Angrosino, 2007; Denzin and Lincolin, 2011). However, these subjective concerns must be recognised in the reflexive process by the researcher (Saldana, 2016). I applied Bourdieu's (1992) concept of reflexivity to reflect on the subjectivity during the research process which enabled me to understand the in-depth meaning of participants' views. More on reflexivity is in section 4.7. The next section

attempts to capture the conceptual pathways of ethnography and its developments in educational research.

4.5 Ethnography

This section highlights the theoretical concepts of ethnography that framed my research decision. In doing so, I first explain my decision to use ethnography, introducing my rationale for choosing this research design. The first thought in my mind in terms of selecting a research design originated from reading my research questions, more explicitly, 'who can answer these questions' so that I can gain insight of what I was seeking for. The reason that enhanced my motivation to know about the educational journeys of South Asian women, was because my research inquiry was centred in their social lives. I was focusing on a comprehensive analysis of the adaptation process of young women's lives to understand how these processes happened.

My readings formed my understanding that an ethnography is about the social reality of others through the analysis of one's own experience in the world of these others. With such explanations, an ethnographic approach seemed most suitable to achieve the understanding of the social experiences of the study participants, because it provides the information on the first-person accounts and details of participants' social interactions in the day to day lives (Hobbs, 2006). Within the plethora of definitions, several viewpoints exist on the conceptualisation of ethnography in different contexts (Delamont, 2009; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Gobo, 2008). Angrosino (2007) understands it as a field-based, personalised method, conducted through two or more data collection techniques. Other researchers such as Denzin (2017) view ethnography as a method and the product of research. Punch and Oancea (2014) point out to ethnography as being a method as potentially empowering nature of ethnography. They argue that ethnography is about understanding the cultural and symbolic aspects of practices and the contexts of these practices. Drawing on the work of Hobbs (2006), the following definition provides further clarification on the features of an ethnographic design:

> 'Ethnography … should be regarded as the product of a cocktail of methodologies that share the assumption that personal engagement with the subject is the key to understanding a particular culture or social setting' (p.101).

As a product, ethnographies are reported as narratives to draw the reader into the 'imaginative' experience (Lichtman, 2013). In her view, ethnography is related to the ways in which group members make sense of their surroundings 'to describe the cultural and social interactions of a particular group or subgroups.

Although each of the above explanations picks out somewhat different features, there are common elements such as long duration of data collection process in natural settings, immersion of researcher into those settings and using a range of types of data. These explanations illustrate the underlying principles that informed this study; an understanding of the social lives of the participants. This study, therefore, was conducted through the interaction with participants in their natural setting, so that an in-depth understanding of the shared meaning can be achieved. Given the interpretive standpoint, the above explanations suited to this study so as to explore and understand the social interactions of the study participants.

Further to this, the evidence in the literature suggests that unlike other qualitative methods, the term ethnography carries a debate of unclear taxonomy (Hammersley, 2006). Existing literature has criticized ethnography for its subjectivity, ambiguity, and lack of generalisation (Angrosino, 2007; see also Lichtman, 2013; Mills and Morton, 2017). However, its main features are important parameters to provide detail, context, explanation of emotional aspects and the interplay of diverse social interactions which make it an enriching approach to investigate social lives (Denzin, 2017). Pointing to the fieldwork, one of the key aspects of ethnography, Lichtman (2013) argues what should be done in the fieldwork and what to be written in fieldnotes is not clearly laid out in the existing literature, which can result into a more complex interpretation of the meaning of the experiences. To add to this, blurred boundaries of the positionality of the researcher in the field work is also an area of concern (Miled, 2017), more specifically, reflecting on the self and revealing the self to others could be a difficult state for many (Mason, 2010). However, these boundaries must be acknowledged by the researcher through reflective writing (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Taylor, 2011).

Keeping these insights in mind, how I understood ethnography was highly personal. It provided me with the basis for comparison and an understanding of the differences within and across South Asian groups. By focusing on the transition of young women to work, I investigated the continuities and the changes in their perceptions as to how these are

negotiated in the context of their ethnicity, gender, religion and social class. Reflexivity in my ethnography took a central role in the entire research process. Even being from South Asian background, I realised that the critical aspects can only be understood by longer and deeper immersion in the fieldwork which can well result in more complex situations (Davies, 2008). Thus, the messiness of the fieldwork with young women from three sub-groups of South Asians required consistent reflective writing in line with my institutional ethical guidelines (Hemmings, 2009). More on reflexivity is discussed in section 4.7.

Hence, using ethnography in this study was helpful in determining how participants' present HE experiences and those prior to the entry to the university were interrelated. The following section delineates the particular confrontation of using ethnography in educational research.

4.5.1 Ethnography in Educational Research

Although much of ethnography comes from sociology than education (Lichtman, 2013), education has been a generative site for ethnographic research (Mills and Morton, 2013) where it has acquired a range of meanings, divergent orientations, and has thrived over the past 50 years (Spindler, 2014; see also Hammersley, 2018; Punch and Oancea, 2014). Evidence in the literature suggests a connection between ethnography and education by focusing on several dimensions of social interactions, for example, the intersection of ethnicity, religion and class (Hopson and Dixon, 2011). Often educational researchers choose the context of their own culture (Lichtman, 2013). For example, the ethnographic study of Abbas (2007), a Muslim Pakistani researcher, focused on the ways in which South Asian groups are able to enter into selective education in the UK. Highlighting the factors of social class, ethnicity and culture, the study was conducted in Birmingham where South Asians live in vast majority. He took a grounded approach through a process of ethno-phenomenological inquiry illuminating life experiences of young South Asian school pupils and their parents to interpret perceptions and attitudes towards selective school entry. Abbas (2007) concluded that socio-economically disadvantaged groups of South Asians are also culturally disadvantaged as they experience religio-cultural discrimination from mainstream society.

Identically, a recent reflexive ethnographic study by Miled (2017), a Muslim researcher, highlights the complexities of 'sameness' as she draws upon the experience of researching Muslim youth in Canada. She argues that being Muslim did not make her access easier to the study participants. She explains that every individual is unique and how they experience effects from gender, ethnicity and religion are differently situated under different circumstances. According to her, the notion of 'sameness' was more related to cultural traditions, localities, educational levels, social class positions that individuals belong to than the similar gender.

Further to this, my literature review suggests that educational researchers mostly focus on educational cultures in schools, colleges and universities where most of the interaction of the students takes place (Lichtman, 2013; Reay et al, 2009). For example, drawing upon their study with students in UK HE, Reay et al (2010) investigated how institutional processes at university influence the identity of students. The factors they examined included gender, race, social class and the processes through which these factors alter students' identity during university. In another example, the ethnographic study of Spiteri (2015) explored the nature of informal social interactions of the students at a college canteen in Malta. The study found that the college canteen served as a social space in the educational setting and the nature of the interactions of the students positively or negatively influenced their overall educational motives and retention.

Concurrently, many ethnographers are educators (Mills and Morton, 2013), they use ethnographic research to understand education in practice. One such example is the study earlier mentioned study of Ijaz and Abbas (2010) in which British South Asian parent's narratives explain their attitudes towards their daughters' education (see chapter two section 2.4). In the above studies, ethnography is used to explore culture and identity within education to highlight the experiences of the students in various contexts. I anticipated that ethnography would enable me to gain an in-depth understanding of the social interactions and an exploration of the perceptions of how the study participants see their future career. Moreover, to produce rich and in-depth knowledge, researchers are required to draw on several theories and practice traditions from education and social sciences (Denzin, 2017). Here, I could relate that my study used a combined approach by considering the field of Education and Sociology. The next section elucidates the process and the methods of data collection.

4.6 Data Collection

Ethnographies often require multiple types of evidence gathered from various sources and methods of data collection methods (Angrosino, 2007). In this section, the data collection process and the relevancy of the data collection tools to the research questions of this study are described. In the following comment Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) explain the data collection process which is relevant to this research:

> '… ethnography usually involves the researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artefacts' (p.3).

The researcher's involvement according to this definition, is crucial in the data collection process. Data collection in this research falls from August 2017-December 2017, just over five months period. This was perhaps less than what a conventional ethnography would be. However, the fact that educational ethnographies can be conducted over the much lesser duration (Lichtman, 2013), this time frame proved useful in this ethnographic study in collecting data from twelve women by regular contacts. Developing a data collection plan was a very convenient way to connect with the participants at their own pace and timings as well as an assurance that the researcher's intention to collaborate was clearly conveyed to them. In the following sections, I present the step by step practicality of the data collection process.

4.6.1 Selecting and accessing the Participants

By reviewing the research questions, I broadly identified the research participants and started to think about the strategies to establish contact with them by 'purposive sampling' (Mason, 2010; Wengraf, 2009). The purpose explains selecting those participants whose interview data can address the research questions. When I begin the data collection, most of the participants were on summer vacations which allowed flexible scheduling to establish contacts with them. The participants were recruited by using my personal contacts within the university and in the ethnic community. Using this method gave me the advantage of an ever-expanding set of potential participants for my study (Khambhaita, 2014). The snowball technique proved to be indispensable for accessing the

participants (as without the recommendations from known people to the interviewees, I would have had problems accessing my participants. Snowball sampling is the method in which the researcher recruits the participants through contact details provided by other known people (Noy, 2008). This process by nature became repetitive in a way that more participants were referred to me by other potential participants (Noy, 2008). The evidence in the literature shows that snowball sampling helps the researcher to gain more trust from participants who would otherwise not respond to be a part of the study with the potentially sensitive topic (Browne, 2005). In her study with non-heterosexual women, she writes that due to the sensitivity of the topic, it was less threatening to recruit women by using personal and social networks. Similarly, the work of Ijaz and Abbas (2010) is relevant here to mention who highlighted how social networks influence South Asian community. In this regard, using snowballing was relevant in acknowledging those who were connected to their communities.

While exploring literature on ethnography, I learned that individuals who resemble each other in gender, education, occupation, or cultural backgrounds are much closer in terms of social bonding. In that sense, the term homophily refers to the tendency of different people to associate with those who are similar to themselves (Currarini, Jackson and Pin, 2009). The extent to which a social network is composed of people of the same characteristics and ethnic background is considered a means to determine how quickly information can diffuse or be influential among them (ibid). Homophily in this study was related to the characteristics of ethnicity, gender and the level of education (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001). However, carrying out research with known people brought some advantages and disadvantages. The most prominent advantage was that my ethnicity, gender and social class of being a South Asian woman provided me easy access to the participants (Atkinson and Flint 2004). However, I was aware that the participants can have diverse opinions and background of the variable (Angrosino, 2007; see also Hammersley and Atkins, 2007), and therefore, there can be obstacles in gaining access to a specific group in the specific settings (Abbas, 2007; Hammersley, 2018). The fact that my study involved young women from three sub-groups of South Asians, was a concern in some circumstances where I held more of an 'outsider' status than an 'insider' establishing contact with Indian and Bangladeshi young women (see section 4.7 for more details on insiderness and outsiderness). However, bearing in mind the above literature evidence as a

guide, I carefully identified the following screening criteria for this study which explain the research participants:

- Second-generation South Asian women from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh
- Currently enrolled as a full-time student in HE, or
- Has recently completed HE (within last one-year period)

Hence, twelve British South Asian women aged 19-26 years were recruited. By taking UK-born women into account, I obtained a direct comparison between these women and their first-generation parents. Most of the participants lived locally and went to the range of universities around coastal cities in Hampshire England. Six participants had completed their HE studies, out of which, five were already working and one was searching for work. The remaining participants were studying full-time in the final year of the undergraduate course. The detail of biographical information of research participants is contained in table 2 in appendix 2. Diversity enabled me to work around different levels of transition and provided me with a broader view of participants' varied experiences. The evidence in the literature indicates that having a variety among the study participants shows the multi-ethnic nature of their experiences particularly within South Asian communities (Hamzeh, 2011). The researcher argues that due to the given complexities of human phenomena, ethnographic research requires a concentrated focus on a small sample (Maxwell, 2013; Punch and Oancea, 2014) because the data produced are not generalizable, but individualized. Hence, choosing twelve participants was intentional because I was aware that a small sample would enable me to gather in-depth information about their experience.

A researcher is considered to form a closer association with the group respondents and in a small sample size which may also promote in-depth engagement with participants in their natural setting (Angrosino, 2007). In support, researchers such as Patton (2002) argue that the size of the sample is dependent on 'what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry and what can be done with available resources' (p. 244). Conversely, the larger sample size, the researcher may become overwhelmed by the amount of data (Higginbottom, 2004) and be less attentive to the in-depth understanding of data. Furthermore, a small sample size allows creativity by adding the number of interviews per participant (see also Wengraf, 2009). In this research, the series of follow up interviews

were useful for asking additional questions, prompting further in-depth discussion and building mutual trust (Maxwell, 2013; see also Mason, 2010). More detail is contained in section 4.6.3 on the interviews.

Although the literature review on ethnography revealed that there is no straight forward and standard method suggested for data collection, the ethnographic studies I reviewed, used observations, interviews and fieldnotes or a combined approach (Abbas, 2007; see also Delamont, 2009). Using multiple research tools: participant observations, interviews and fieldnotes in this study, enabled capturing a holistic view of participants' lives and to develop an understanding of the social lives in natural settings (Rowley, 2012). The following sections deal with data collection process in great detail.

4.6.2 Participant Observation

The core of ethnographic fieldwork is participant observation (Seale, 2004; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). It is written in the fieldnotes, supplemented through interactions with participants in their natural setting (Delamont, 2009; Gobo, 2008; Lichtman, 2013). Although participant observation is often used as a fundamental characteristic of ethnographic research (Denzin, 2017), there is a considerable argument whether it is a method, a technique or a methodological approach to collect data (Eriksson, Henttonen, and Merilainen, 2012; Moore and Savage, 2002). The synonymous use of the term ethnography further complicates the definition of participant observation. Some researchers such as Seale (2004) however clarified by pointing to the inclusive nature of ethnography in which participant observation is one of its several types of data collection methods.

In this study, the most important aspect of participant observation was my own ethnic background, impacting the scope of my interaction with the participants. My HE trajectory as a Pakistani woman helped me to get nearer to the social dimensions of the complex lives of the participants, rather than aiming to discover single truth. I noticed that being a South Asian woman created some familiarity which was essential for building trust to understand the depth of participants' experiences. However, as an established member of the group, I was surprised how conducting systematic observation impacted my viewpoint of looking at things. There were many aspects of young women's lives I felt different about

than how I viewed them earlier. More accurately, situations which previously seemed natural to me had become something of significant interest to explore further. For example, working in close contact with Indian and Bangladeshi women, whom I had limited interaction prior to this research, brought new avenues of knowledge about their familial patterns which were different from those in Pakistani families.

As I progressed with getting to know my participants, it was important to allow myself enough time for notetaking and reflexivity. Although my physical appearance gave me the 'insider' position, I recognised I held a clear 'outsider' position because of the religious differences. Hence, religion dominated ethnicity in some aspects of the observational data.

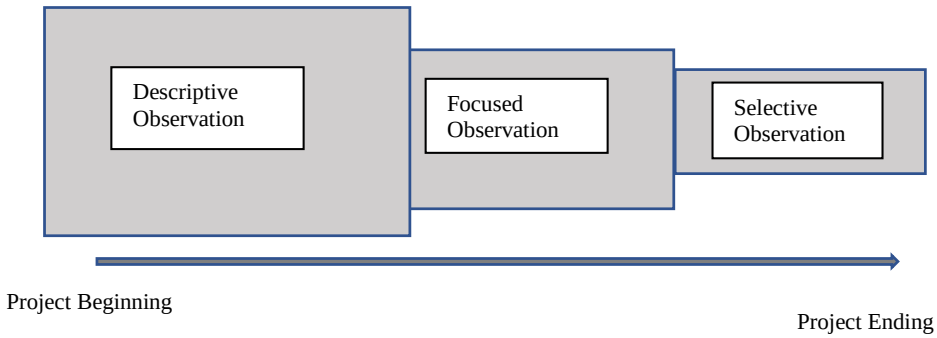
My observational data collection process was transformative; in a way, it advanced my understanding of what moved me as an observer, what framed my research choices and how it empowered me through those choices. Participants observation in this study had both elements, individual as well as group approach. Women who were studying, I visited them regularly in the university (twice a week at least) in social lounges, career events and ethnic society meetings so that I could engage with them informally. Each participant was observed at least two times (time duration ranging from 20 minutes to one hour) in their natural settings such as at the university campus, while interacting with university ethnic societies, in shopping mall, during celebrating cultural events such as Eid (Muslim festival), Diwali (Hindu festival) and even in family gatherings. On a few occasions, I was invited to attend activities in Church and Hindu temple too where my main challenge was my own positionality as an 'outsider' because I was from a Muslim background and did not know exactly how I would be welcomed by the group. The observations were also done outdoors; in the ethnic community festivals and ethnic events. Being a member of the local ethnic community, I become familiar with some of my participants and their parents as they were part of the same ethnic community as mine. On many occasions, I realised that religion guided the group interaction and the way participant observation was carried out. For example, while observing the Bangladeshi community which comprised mostly Muslim women, I was invited to attend as an 'insider' in a mosque. Even though I am not Bangladeshi, my bond with Bangladeshi participants seemed stronger and the group interaction was a lot deeper because of the shared religious identity which facilitated the process of building mutual trust in data collection (Bhopal, 2010).

I understood gaining insight into the phenomena of educational experiences of my participants required a deeper and important level of understating of their lives. Therefore, I used guidance from the symbolic interactionist approach (Angrosino, 2007), which concerns uncovering the meaning participants attach to their social experiences (Gobo, 2008). The focus of using this approach was to uncover the meaning of how my participants act and think in their contexts. By using a symbolic interactionist approach, I documented my observation of the social lives of South Asian women and the meaning they ascribed to their transition to work

4.6.2.1 What to Observe?

Whilst there is no right way suggesting what to observe, it concerns active participation in the social world of research group or a community and the production of written records of that experience (Emerson, Fertz and Shaw, 2011), by observing the routine activities of participants and their social characteristics (Spradley, 2016). Having reviewed literature before actual contact with the participants helped me to determine what should be observed during the research process. To illustrate it further, the diagram in figure 1 shows the phases of the observation process and how the changes in observation occur in each phase.

Figure 1. Changes in the observation phases



(Adapted from Spradley, 2016, p.34)

The above illustration indicates how the researcher's position changes in conducting observation through different phases; from descriptive observer to a focused and selective observer towards the end. Most of the observation was done with participants' families, communities, university and work settings where they engaged in different interactions. I noticed that my focus, in the beginning, was broad looking for general social interaction.

However, as I progressed with the subsequent phases of observation, I could see myself engaging more critically in young women's lives, for example making connections to the contexts of ethnicity, religion and social class. Collecting observational data in such manner was helpful in understanding the individual context of my participants in their natural settings which otherwise they may not have freely talked about in the interviews. Hence, adopting these guidelines and conducting participant observation in different, but natural settings was a useful strategy.

Looking at my research questions, I identified some broad topics for discussion: family and community support, career versus marriage, religious and ethnic influences and so on. While conducting observation, I placed myself with the participants in their situation as much as I could. I visited them in cafes, community meetings and university events in order to engage with informal conversations with them. I had an opportunity to attend Pakistani and Indian festival celebrations where I was able to observe various levels of interaction of members of that ethnic community. In the university setting, a few women played leadership roles in their ethnic societies. For instance, one Pakistani woman in my study was seen chairing an ethnic student society in the university consisting of over 100 students. In a similar situation, an Indian woman was observed in a leadership role in Indian society in the university. To me, this was an exercise of power in social roles where being in a lead, these women were using their skills, agency and opportunity to build a social network within their fields of education.

Although data collection schedule was flexible, fitting participants' routine and convenience, without prior relevant research evidence on the topic, was challenging while preparing schedule based on literature. Thus, the schedule of data collection relied upon participants' schedule and their convenience so that they were able to participate with ease.

4.6.1.2 Challenges in Participant Observation

Many ethnographers draw attention to participant observation in transnational communities, those who have migrated from their homeland to another country (Denzin, 2017). They argue that it is challenging because the representation of the people may not be the true social reality in the affiliated country. The migrant communities may have already adopted certain traits and characteristics of the community in the host country.

This perspective was constantly in my mind, I found myself relating to the ethnic values and practices I observed back home. I could clearly distinguish certain aspects, however, being aware of the transformations and changing trends was then helpful to acknowledge in the data analysis phase (see section 4.9).

While reviewing the ethnographic studies, I learned that inevitably, all data collection methods have some limitations. For example, it is likely to collect huge data that are often much unstructured and become challenging in the analysis (Cotton, Stokes, and Cotton, 2010). My experience was not different, I had to spend several hours to reflect and write my fieldnotes after each observation. However, because my observation was focused on particular settings and events, I categorised my observational data broadly according to three ethnic groups: Pakistani, Indians and Bangladeshi. By doing this, I could observe and reflect upon inter-group and intra-group differences among my participants. Other categories I formulated include those women who were studying or were in employment. Using this initial strategy, further organised my observational data to some extent.

Ethnographers are cautioned to be aware of potential influences of the act of observation upon the behaviour of the participants (Cotton et al, 2010). The differences in the description of observation reflect what orientation and positionings were taken into consideration during the observation (Emerson et al, 2011). In particular, the way the researcher had observed, can create discrepancies in observational data. Being a South Asian Muslim woman and doing research with other South Asian women from diverse religious backgrounds, questioned my engagement with ethnography, reflexivity and my positionality. Engaging with my participants informally on several occasions was one strategy to handle the formal and subjective process of observation. However, I acknowledge that it was not an easy task. I was regularly writing my fieldnotes, particularly of any significant aspect, feelings and fears to gain insight into my own worldview. Moreover, the researcher's subjective experiences and perceptions are likely to impact the whole observation process (Miled, 2017). Even the act of reflection is likely to change the way of thinking of the researcher. Since it is a form of subjective experience, the researcher's own values and background are important factors to impact the way of thinking.

Being aware of the challenges made my worldview visible to me while I attempted to gain insight into how my participants' perceptions were shaped. The entire process helped me

to develop keen observation skills by perceiving my own experience as a South Asian woman and as a PhD student while I observed different aspects of my participants' social lives. As a result, I see myself more critical and insightful to analyse my data. The following section discusses the process of data collection through interviews.

4.6.3 Ethnographic Interviews

Initially, I had several questions in my mind; I needed to decide where to start and what to ask. That said, I initiated the process of interview broadly, taking note of the physical setting and personal views. I took a traditional ethnographic approach, by beginning with individual participant observation then going for interviews with a group of participants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Lichtman, 2013). In doing so, I conducted pilot interviews with two South Asian women to familiarise myself with the interview process. The section after this presents how I conducted the pilot study.

In the beginning, I spent some time with the participants in an attempt to build an equal physical setting for data collection process, however, this was more difficult than I expected. Although I carried a similarity as a South Asian woman, the differences in age, level of education and the context as a PhD researcher were unavoidable. Even though having some 'insiderness', I could not deny the clear 'outsiderness' with different participants. I represented myself as a researcher thus having more power on the context of interviews. Caretta (2014) reported how researchers try to create balance with participants with their struggle to re-construct hierarchical position with the participants. However, she found that the perception and expectations of her study participants towards her did not change much. This was something which I felt was difficult to express. I could feel the difference, although not obvious, in the way they communicated with me. With these critical reflection on my positionality, I decided to start the interviews.

Kvale's (1996: 1) description matches the aims of this study that interviews attempt 'to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, to uncover their lived world'. I started with semi-structured interviews to produce understanding of participants' views and experiences to express their inner self (Gobo, 2008; Parker-Jenkins, 2018; Seidman, 2013). All participants were verbally briefed of the study just before starting the interviews to ensure their comfort and trust. They were

encouraged to dictate the direction of the interview and explore their own reasoning for choices, enabling them to lead the interview with few prompts. The purpose of the interviews, however, was not to get the answers to my research questions (Patton, 1990) but to understand the social experiences of young women and what meanings they give to their social experiences (Seidman, 2013). I was intrusive to understand the influences of ethnicity, religion and social class and how these factors impact their perceptions of transition to work. In doing so, the participants were asked to reflect upon their educational journeys from childhood and to consider whether their HE experiences had an impact on their perceptions, attitudes and expectations of their transition. The following initial questions were asked to initiate the interviews:

- How would you describe your HE experiences so far?
- How do you see your transition from university to the work environment in relation to your ethnicity, gender and social class?

Additional questions were prompted to seek clarification about participants' statements. Based on participant's responses, further questions were modified to facilitate the conversation, however, I was aware that asking too many questions may block participants' thoughts or make them less responsive (Wengraf, 2001). Although not structured, I had broad topics to guide my conversation with the participants (see appendix 3 for the list of topics). Even though I had topics to discuss during the interviews, at times I felt I was dependent upon the participants' willingness to share their experiences. The topics of discussion during semi-structured interviews imply substantial complexity and revealing pertinent examples may not be easy for the participants (Angrosino, 2007). I was also aware that participants may bring their own agenda to the interview (Karnieli-Miller Strier and Pessach, 2009), I did not ask specific structured questions, but rather relied on the interaction process which guided the interviews. This lack of structure was beneficial in the sense that it allowed flexibility in the overall nature of the interview process. The interviews were conducted as a participative conversation where each participant spoke freely about her experience. I believe that allowing participants to talk freely demonstrates a sense of empowerment and independence to talk about their perceptions and experiences. The fact that flexibility during the interview is the key aspect of semi-structured interviews, some researchers consider this type of

interview 'unstable' due to the uncertain nature of the interview questions which can be problematic in coding the data later (Creswell, 2013; Lewis, 2015).

Each interview lasted between 35 to 55 minutes and was audiotaped which is considered a useful tool to enhance the accuracy of what is said (Angrosino, 2007). Although audio recordings only captured a segment of the ongoing social life of participants (Emerson et al, 2011), I still found it worth recording so that I could use them while writing the interpretations (Wengraf, 2009). I did not take any notes during the interviews because of the potential risk that it may block thoughts of participants as well as of mine (Campbell, 2015). Also, note taking during the interviews may impose discontinuity in the flow of speech of participant impacting the accuracy of the information and the outcome of the study (Whitehead, 2004). Interviewing the participants provided me access to the context of their worldview and the meaning they give to their social experiences. However, research evidence shows that interviewing as a data generation method may be challenging in terms of instrumentation rigor and bias management (Denzin, and Lincoln, 2011). Therefore, by reviewing a range of relevant literature sources to grasp the knowledge on ethnographic interviews before conducting actual interviews was essential. By gaining this knowledge and working through step by step process (Rowley, 2012), I was able to view the broader aspects of my study.

4.6.3.1 Pilot Interviews

Two South Asian women who were final year undergraduate students were recruited for pilot interviews on a purposive sample (Silverman, 2010). By using my social network in the local ethnic community, I met my first participant whom I knew for some time. The contact of the second participant were passed on to me by the first participant through the snowball technique (Lichtman, 2013). The fact that my participants had known me already, helped me to contact them without any hassle. The issues related to gender and ethnicity of the researcher have primary importance in creating the quality of interview (Kim, 2011; see also Bhopal and Myers, 2008). Examining my own positionality placed me in similarity to the participants. I could relate to my HE journey and how my gender, ethnicity and social class have influenced my worldview. This view is consistent with the work of Mills and Morton (2013) who suggest that researchers' personal values, assumptions, and biases must be clearly identified.

A range of broad topics was identified for the interviews, including the perceptions of transition and the influences from the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class. Semi-structured in-depth interview method was used for data collection. However, I was aware that these topics for interview were significant to the participants and tried to cover them during the interviews. Just before starting to record each interview, a verbal consent was also obtained in addition to prior written consent. During the interview, I did not write any notes and was attentive to non-verbal cues of participants while they talked. Most of my immediate reflections after the interviews included the observations and impressions about participant's behaviour, non-verbal cues and the process of the interview.

Conducting pilot interviews was an opportunity for me to test the data collection tool; semi-structured interviews, on a smaller group and make changes if needed, before conducting interviews on the larger group. Even though no obvious obstacles were found in the process of conducting interviews, I was able to see, although not comprehensively, that my positionality as a researcher with similar gender and ethnic background was useful in engaging with the participants.

Here, I strongly believe that a particular research technique is a way of looking at a certain topic. I did not particularly change interview technique or topics, the only change implemented was adding the variety of data collection tools: participant observation and fieldnotes. I also learned that careful planning of the data collection process was essential to get familiar with the practical aspects of accessing the participants (Noy, 2008) and conducting interviews (Kvale, 1996).

4.6.4 Field Work and Fieldnotes

Fieldwork is about living with and living like those who are studied for the purpose of achieving the understanding of the researched phenomenon. While I entered the field, I was anxious for my purpose of research and how that may impact on the participants, my positionality and how I should build a collaborative relation with them. After the initial phase of identifying the participants, the next step was to select a better location for meeting the participants where they felt at ease. I kept it open for the participants to choose the place and time to meet. Some of them who already knew me before this study commenced, were flexible in selecting the venue for meeting in comparison to those

whom I met through snowball sampling. Some women preferred to meet at their homes. The home served as a functional place in which they had access to physical and emotional support from family as well as a place where they felt loved and validated. In a way, these meetings provided an opportunity to observe their family interaction, particularly those with parents and siblings. Some women chose to meet in the university campus while others preferred an evening meeting at a public place, a cafeteria for example.

Moreover, ethnographers agree that field work is often a prolonged and repetitive process (Lichtman, 2013; Punch and Oancea, 2014) that can take from several weeks up to a year or more (Angrosino, 2007). I made several repetitive visits to meet my participants in different settings. At times, I thought I might lose important information about a particular event, or context. However, by writing fieldnotes afterward prevented this issue (Eriksson et al, 2012). I also wrote important concepts and their interconnectivity to the aspects of ethnicity, religion, social class and gender. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2011) argue that such concepts and relationships may be linked to specific meanings at a later stage. My construction of fieldnotes was dynamic. In line with Willis (2007), fieldnotes in ethnography tend to be imaginative, iterative and disciplined with the traditions of the field (Mills and Morton, 2013).

What I have often found that the writing process is an important part of developing thought and understanding. I found writing fieldnotes a helpful strategy to write down my observations and reflections of every single interaction. Throughout the writing process, I understood that it is an important part of ethnographic study to learn in the field as similar to literature searching, reading and reflecting to synthesise findings. Having found the writing process useful made me realise that verbalising those thoughts was not always easy, something I needed to remember when assuring participants' understanding.

I realised that collecting data on everything and recording details of all the things happening in the field was almost impossible. That said, some argue that fieldnotes are only a partial account (Eriksson et al, 2012) in which the researcher chooses what to include and what not to include. I had the same impression while writing fieldnotes that it probably only reflected a fraction of my thoughts and ideas that were there (Creswell, 2013). But for me, it was both an analysis and a new significant collection of data at the same time, which in turn was worth analysing to elicit the underlying themes. Traditionally, the analysis of data is assumed to be done once the data collection is achieved. However,

my analysis was ongoing (Henninck, Hutter and Bailey, 2010), showing a parallel interaction of data collection and data analysis simultaneously. The ongoing process of interaction in the fieldwork encouraged me to appreciate the social lives of the participants. It was both a form of data analysis and a new, significant collection of data, which in turn was worth analysing to elicit the underlying messages.

Writing my reflective journal regularly was helpful to capture my thoughts and tease out the themes and ideas that were emerging. I learned that paying less attention to the reflexivity during the fieldwork, as asserted by Georgalou (2015) and Lewis (2015), can lead to a threat of unworthiness of the data collection.

Maintaining detachment and objectivity was another challenge in the field (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). It was almost impossible for me to detach from my past experiences and what I believed while reflecting on the present events as acknowledged by Bogdan and Biklen (2007). Through the process of reflexivity, it was important for me to be explicit about my own background in understanding what social, cultural or economic factors in participants' lives that I was not appreciating. However, I found it was not easy. I was aware of my own position, values, and past experiences which could bring potential bias to my writing this phase needed careful handling by being reflexive in writing (Saldana, 2016).

In order to spot own biases, Bourdieu (1992) affirms that paying conscious attention to the own internalized structures, researchers are able to distort objectivity. In this context, reflecting on the potential biases and influences created an insight of interpreting the data. In a way, therefore, this study provides me with a way of linking my own experience and reflection with that of the participants.

I regularly reviewed my fieldnotes to identify new areas to be observed and new questions to add. In line with these arguments, the next section deals with my reflexivity during the data collection process.

4.7 Reflexivity- how things worked

Although there is no right or wrong way to write reflexivity, how reflexivity is conceptualised was the hardest part of the entire research process. This also included ow I used reflexivity at different stages of the analysis. By doing this ethnographic research, I was able to respond to my previous knowledge of South Asians in the UK which made me

more aware of the unanticipated challenges in the field work. It took me a while to understand my own worldview in contrast to my participants who were from three different groups- with some similarities but many differences. Thus, to me, reflexivity is not only being aware of self but also a recognition of others.

The use of reflexivity in contemporary ethnographic research is common (Angrosino, 2007; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Punch and Oancea, 2014). In broader terms, reflexivity concerns issues around researchers' underlying assumptions, power and positionality to produce rigorous ethnographic research (Day, 2012). More importantly, the researcher's explicit position in reflexivity requires being aware of own values, experiences and biases (Creswell, 2013). Thinking of how exploring the complex experiences of my participants not only affect the research process and outcome but also my participants, Davies (2008) emphasises the centrality of reflexivity and how it impacts different stages of the research process. She further explains that 'reflexivity refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research' (p. 4). In this definition, Davies (2008) indicates researcher's multiple positionalities: social, political, cultural, which influence the process of reflexivity research from the time of formulating initial interest of research to the final stage of presenting the findings and achievements.

In my reflexivity, I used the power of writing as a valuable tool, I became aware of the consequences fieldnotes can have on this research (Eriksson et al, 2012). For example, in one sense, the reflexive writing also means that all the data are considered the result of the researcher's interpretation and reflection (Holloway, 2013). For five months, my fieldwork was more like riding a roller coaster. At times when I thought everything was going smooth and in control, swiftly things became upside down. I was aware that I was moving away from my usual comfort of being a PhD student and interacting with young women in several unfamiliar zones. Likewise, staying focused on a huge amount of raw data was another struggle (Brookfield, 2009). I used reflexive writing throughout my data collection. However, at times, I found myself having difficulty to focus on the data collection process and analysis. However, through writing about how I felt and writing my views about the research process I learned to become more flexible about my participants and their views. That being said, reflexivity was a tool for testing my own interpretations and to be accountable for interpreting the data (Frosh and Emerson, 2005).

I approached research participants feeling like a privileged insider, Pakistani, Muslim, educated woman doing research as a PhD student. Most of the participants actively took part in the data collection at the beginning and discussed the various aspects of their educational trajectories and their views on transition. However, problems arose when I interacted with young women whom I met for the first time through snowball sampling. This was partly because I shared positions of both 'sameness' and 'difference' with these participants. As Hill (2004) argues, shared gender is not always an advantage over ethnicity. As a British White researcher, Hill reflected on her experience of conducting interviews with South Asian women who were immigration applicants in West Yorkshire, England. Drawing on her experience, Hill (2004) identified that because of her ethnicity, she was automatically placed in an 'outsider' position and her shared gender did not entail any advantage in accessing the participants. My membership to my participants, however, was not static, it was changing and shifting as I engaged with their different contexts. For example, for Muslim participants, I was viewed as a Muslim PhD student conducting research on women from a similar religious background. And, for participants from Hindu, Christian and Sikh background, there was a clear line of 'difference' as I belong to another religion.

Evidence in the literature shows that there are several advantages of being insider. Tariq and Syed (2017) being Pakistani, conducted their research with South Asian women, and Hamzeh (2011), a Muslim Arab researcher explored how Muslim girls negotiate visual, spatial, and ethical hijabs. With regards to this research, I received a positive response from my participants and their families. However, I was aware that participants in my study had diverse backgrounds based on three ethnic groups (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) and four religions (Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Christian). My study was more about the social experiences of education, employment and culture relevant to explain young women's social spaces of multiple negotiations in their lives.

In order to maintain a non-hierarchical approach to data collection, I shared some personal information about myself to my participants so that a fair exchange of views can be established. Lichtman (2013: 164) argues that the researcher as a dynamic force adapts and modifies a position which best suits to the research process. Most of the participants who were the second and third generation of South Asians spoke English fluently and tended to be less fluent in Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. My situation was reversed, I spoke

Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi fluently and English with a foreign accent. It was that my positionality a first-generation Pakistani woman, placed me at a prominent 'outsider' context. Therefore, I kept an open approach so that there was a level of equal power division with the participants. Hence, basic mode of communication between me and my research participants was only through English.

Looking at my early educational journey in a traditional and religious commodity in a small town in Pakistan, I felt that the basic essence of ethnic ties in me still remain the same. More specifically, narratives of some participants mirrored many of my own life experiences. Issues like having a privileged choice option of education of a typical South Asian woman had a very thin line of difference when it came to family's expectation. For instance, despite being conservative Pakistanis, my parents supported me to accomplish my educational goals. I noticed similar patterns of support and expectation from all parents for their daughters in my study to do well in education in the UK.

By doing this research, I became aware of the unanticipated challenges in the field work researcher may come across. It has helped me to develop keen observation skills by perceiving my own experience differently as a South Asian woman and as a PhD student. The reflective writing helped me to uncover the interplay between changing power structures and contextual forces such as different social positioning of the researcher and the researched due to ethnic background, perceptions and experiences. Despite that fact that in mainstream society, all South Asian women are regarded similar as 'South Asians' sharing same culture, appearance and ethnic practices, I have learned that in South Asian background, every woman in my study was unique and had her own social experience and context which cannot be generalised to the whole community. This was also displayed in the ways they perceived their HE and employment goals. Being able to have the determination and derive to be consistent was the most significant thing I learned about myself. In other words, reflexivity is a process which made my positionality visible in the entire research process.

4.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethnographic work is often regarded as problematic (Hammersley, 2018) because gaining 'informed consent' is difficult and the nature of fieldwork changes over its course

(Lichtman, 2013). Ethnographic research may raise ethical concerns such as participants may become anxious about contextualizing their experiences (Angrosino, 2007). The subjective nature of social research in education can greatly contribute to the extent of generating bias (Silverman, 2017). Because qualitative research is naturalistic and 'context-specific' and findings are emerged as a result of interpretation of participants' worldviews (Patton, 2002), I was confident that the richness of data I collected indicate the 'transferability' to the readers (Cohen and Manion, 2002: 137). The following strategies that I used confirm the validity and reliability in this study:

- Use of data triangulation technique (Silverman, 2017) including interviews, participant observation and field notes provided grounds for the production of comprehensive findings. I critically reflected in the sampling and ongoing upon the depth and the relevance of data collection and analysis.

- Findings of this study are supported by rich descriptions from participant accounts as well as by the work of other researchers in the field. Participants' accounts were included in the findings chapter indicating well-defined perspectives of participants to ensure credibility.

- To ensure 'respondents' validity (Cohen and Manion, 2002) or 'member check', three participants (one from each group) were contacted to review the transcripts and summary of the main themes to ensure the data contains sufficient and relevant information, no major changes were suggested.

- Audio recordings were used to ensure that all the elements of interview conversation were accurately recorded.

- I pre-tested the questions with two participants in the pilot study to see if the interview questions produced different answers. This process was a constructionist approach to ensure there was cohesion between researcher and research participants' worldviews (Silverman, 2017).

- During interviews, each interview was tailored according to the specific background of each participant to ascertain that they understood the questions. This was supplemented by giving appropriate pauses and breaks to ease them.

- Social research requires to be viewed through the participants' viewpoint so that their specific context is fully understood (Cohen and Manion, 2002). The fact that I am a South Asian woman, in a way helped to ensure that cultural validity was checked whereby the researcher is required to understand the cultural values and practices of the researched culture.

Based on this knowledge and my experience of obtaining ethical approval during my Masters course, I was aware of the importance and the application process for ethical approval. At the initial phase, an ethical application form was filled out and revised on several occasions with my supervisor to ensure the information on the form is accurate. The application included an overview of my study, risk assessment, consent and a list of intended topics for the interviews, as contained in table 3 in appendix 3. Formal ethical approval was obtained from University of Southampton Ethics Committee in August 2017 in accordance with British Education Research Association (BERA) guidelines (see appendix 4 for ethics approval).

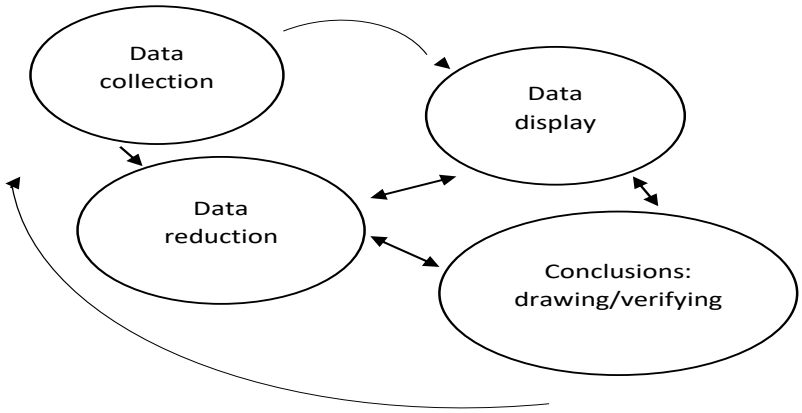
Prior to start the interviews, I sent out consent form and information sheet to the participants via email (see appendix 5 and 6 for participants' information sheet and consent form respectively). Through this approach, participants were able to read and understand these documents in their own time and decide on participation in the study. In a way, this also allowed them enough time to think and reflect upon the main agenda for the interview. Before each interview, consent was reinforced explaining how the information will be used. I notified participants about their general rights, particularly the right to withdraw from study at any point before data was analyzed (Parker, 2007). The process of gaining informed consent was formally repeated at the start of each interview, giving participants flexibility to leave the study if they were not comfortable for any reason. Confidentiality was assured throughout the recruitment and data collection process (Lichtman, 2013). In doing so, all the names and places used in the written representation were anonymized to safeguard the identity of participants (Gobo, 2008). It is crucial here to mention that pilot interviews were conducted with two participants before moving on to actual data collection. The details of pilot interviews are in section 4.6.3.1.

4.9 How I Analysed the Data

Through the data analysis my main aim was to draw well-developed theories to make sense of their social world. However, it was not aimed to draw any final conclusions but to gain a baseline understanding of the social lives of South Asian women to be further explored during interviews. The analysis of this study is based on the interviews, participant observation and fieldnotes. The interviews and the observational data are reported is a descriptive narrative structure (Marguerite, Dean, and Katherine, 2006). This technique was used by Bourdieu, who described it as 'discursive montage' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). The analysis process was adopted under Creswell (2013: 233) guidelines of organising data chronologically and thematically. This is to say that the generic analytic technique was carried out whereby the researcher collects data, analyses it to create themes and reports 3-5 themes (Creswell, 2007). The analysis also draws on some individual cases as well as some aspects of grounded theory, (Punch and Oancea, 2014), particularly in the inductive reasoning of synthesis of data, while the general analysis approach is informed by thematic analysis.

Organizing, composing and writing the narratives of the entire study is seen as an art in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). Indeed, it is the step by step coherence of the writer which takes the reader through the whole view of the study. Whilst there is an argument that suggest that qualitative research data must be explicitly written (Miles and Huberman, 1994), there is a debate on how ethnographic studies should be written. Traditional ethnographical writings, somehow, are considered writing styles that come across as uninteresting (van Manen, 2011). While narratives are not a new discovery (Riessman, 2007), they are a new way of writing ethnographic studies. I believe narrative writing not only informs the research process and findings, but it makes it be interesting and engaging. The analysis of this thesis is based on Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework suggesting data analysis as a reiterative process as shown in figure 2. After the data collection is done, the first phase is of data reduction by simplifying and abstracting the data from original transcripts, observations or fieldnotes. While in the second phase, the data is displayed by organizing it in the ways so that it can be understood. The final phase draws conclusions and verification of this conclusion.

Figure 2. Components of data analysis: Interactive Model



Adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.12

The above model shows that data analysis and data collection occur in a cyclic process. Within each phase, the researcher is required to make specific decisions which influence and connects these phases of analysis. From preliminary coding to drawing the conclusions, the researcher adds, modifies and shuffles the codes within the matrix. On these guidelines, the following sections deals with these phases of data analysis in great detail.

4.9.1 Phase 1 - Reducing the data

The first phase started by reading the transcribed interviews several times to achieve the familiarity with the data (Heath, Hindmarsh, and Luff, 2010; Lichtman, 2013) before starting to code and cluster for the themes. Even though transcribing the interviews was time-consuming, I found it a useful activity to get closer to my data and develop analytical insights (Heath et al, 2010). The familiarity achieved during transcribing the data facilitated the realization of key emergent components (Grbich, 2012). In this phase, the interview transcripts were carefully read so that a comprehensive insight of each narrative was achieved.

The interview transcriptions need to be detailed (Bailey, 2008) so that the selected data have the significance to capture all the aspects of conversation such as tone, pauses and speed. Later, these will serve as the key points in drawing an interpretation of the data.

While transcribing my interviews, I noted all the pauses and tones in participants' narratives. For example, a pause was indicated as dots [……] and emotions in the brackets (smiles). Appendix 10 shows an example of a coded transcript. While transcribing exact verbatim, particular attention was paid to changes in the non-verbal cues such as tone and pauses to identify emotions, persistent words and phrases.

I adopted a thematic analysis technique: 'a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes within data' (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.79), to illustrate how South Asian women perceive and experience their transition while relating to their previous experiences. Accounts of participants' narratives in the thematic analysis provided a multidimensional view of thematic patterns by linking them to the attributes and values of those patterns. (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010).

4.9.2 Phase 2 - Organising the data

After achieving reasonably familiarity with data, the transcripts were uploaded into NVivo 11.0, a qualitative software and gradually started to code the data. The process of data analyses was frustrating initially, however, using NVivo assisted me in finding themes and patterns in my data in a more organised electronic mode (Silver and Lewins, 2014). I found that there was a great extent of flexibility in coding using NVivo. For instance, the option to un-code excerpts and delete the code from a node (category) was relatively easy to learn which resulted in un-coding the quotations too. According to Saldana (2008):

> 'A code in a qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence –capturing and evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data' (p.3).

A combination of deductive and inductive approach was adopted to code the interview transcripts (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010; see also Saldana, 2016). The 'deductive coding' (top-down) starts with having some pre-determined codes, often based on the literature, whereas, in an 'inductive coding (bottom-up) codes are inductively driven from the analysis of transcribed data (Silver and Lewins, 2014). This study adopted a combined approach by deductive and inductive reasoning and theorising the data (Saldana, 2016). This is also referred to as 'iterative coding' in which the coding is achieved from predefined codes and data-driven codes (Boyatzis, 1998). The deductive codes were

adapted from the extensive literature guidance and data were coded under the concepts of ethnicity, gender and social class taking into account young women's social positions within their families and communities.

Saldana (2016) considered qualitative data analysis as a cyclical rather linear process in which data are compared to data, data to code, code to code, code to category, category to category and category back to data. As I progressed with coding, I realise coding categories were not fixed or mutually exclusive as mentioned by Miles and Huberman (1994). Researcher moves between the coding, modifying and merging the themes several times. I was constantly going back to the transcripts because I did not want to lose a sense of the context of the data in an attempt to put everything into closed categories. Perhaps, for such reasons, Saldana (2013) asserted, 'data are not coded, they are recoded'. The analysis of each interview transcript was useful to identify key themes. In order to reduce personal or subjective bias, transcripts and observational data were read and re-read to find similar themes.

As I spent time reading my data, the data led to new ideas as to what to include in the data display (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Moving on to the phases of coding, I used the two-cycle coding framework suggested by Saldana (2016) as contained in table 5 in appendix 8. The first cycle coding- the preliminary coding, consisted of several sub-themes and the second cycle coding composed of final codes leading to concepts or assertions. The example of the preliminary coding scheme achieved in this study is presented below.

Figure 3. First cycle codes (Preliminary coding)

Deductive codes	**First cycle coding**
Ethnicity	Cultural Impacts
	Family values
	Community Impacts
Gender	Equality of opportunities
	Outside world Impacts
	Family Impacts
Social Class	Parental support
	Community support
	Financial Independency
	In receipt of Student Finance
HE experiences	Positive and Smooth

	Negative and Challenging
	Mixed
	Changing Notions
	Ethnicity impacts
	Support received
	Choice of Subjects
Transition to work	Impact of ethnicity
	Career Goals
	Strategies / negotiations
	Perceptions / views
	Changing Notions
	Job Market challenges
	Impacts on Gender

After creating a preliminary list of themes, I also integrated my fieldnotes to the data from interviews, in order to find recurring and interconnected ideas which could be probed further. Although using NVivo was helpful in coding the interview data, I did not use it to analyse fieldnotes because I found it time-consuming. Also, in fieldnotes, I had an advantage of written notes with specific non-verbal cues, such as pauses, emotions, which was more useful by reading, reflecting and making the connection of the written notes to the coded data of the interviews.

As I progressed with the coding, I started to determine themes and categories in the coded data. I begin to organize the codes into themes and sub-themes which Hammersley and Atkins (1995) referred to as 'funnelling' process. That is to say that there was a series of analysis stages which allowed me to narrow down the categories that emerged from the data. While coding, I noted significant concepts and linkages to the previous literature review. Therefore, during 'funnelling' process, I was cross-referencing the data from different sources constantly to create a triangulation of information so as to further narrow down the themes. All codes were mentioned at least twice by each participant indicating the frequency of codes occurring in each deductive theme as shown in table 4 in appendix 7. Significant codes were then identified around those themes. The list of deductive and inductive codes is contained in table 6 in Appendix 9.

In addition, I used memos during data collection and coding process. While using NVivo, memos are not annotations (Silver and Lewins (2014), they are used to record the development of the analytic interpretations, especially in relation to inductive codes. I

used memos as a narrative tool to develop my ideas and to connect them to the underlying concepts of the codes. This helped me in writing about what and how it was going, noting important observations to return to later to build on the line of inquiry. An example of a memo is shown below:

> 02.12.2017: Been coding the interviews this morning, reached almost the second phase of coding so just started off exploring the word frequency of the Identified codes of family. Need to rationalize each code in relation to the potential negative/positive impact upon the family.

As my understanding of the early findings developed, the next step was to modify and merge similar and interconnected themes to create the key themes as illustrated in the following section.

4.9.3 Phase 3- Drawing Conclusion

Attaching 'meaning and relevance by linking the descriptive dimensions' is one of the main aims of the analysis process (Patton, 1987, p.144). This phase involves putting the whole picture together and explore the key categories more comprehensively. Here, it is important to acknowledge that my interpretation started as soon as the data collection process began and was continuously shaped during the entire research process. I started to look for consistent patterns and random but important concepts by asking the 'why' questions and gaining insights into the meanings.

The analysis revealed four key themes: the influences from the family, the community, university and the job market with an overarching influence from the interplay of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class. The next chapter presents the details of these themes and how the interconnected links were identified.

4.10 Summary

The chapter has illustrated the research methods directed by the aims of this research and influenced by epistemological positions. Using a qualitative approach was deemed most suitable to generate detailed insights, particularly by exploring the social experiences of

sub-groups within South Asian community. The use of the interpretive paradigm helped in developing an understanding of participants' perceptions of their HE trajectories. It was important to adapt and elaborate on ethnography as it was the best-suited method to study the context of this study.

Fieldwork in selecting and accessing the research participants created insight into sampling techniques in conducting an ethnographic study. The data collection methods: interviews and observations, supplemented by fieldnotes, provided a clear guideline as to how relevant data was to be collected for this study. In particular, engaging in reflexive writing illuminated my positionality in the study. I acknowledged the intersection between the boundaries of ethnicity, religion, and gender which enabled me to have a better insight into the relationship with my participants. Conducting pilot interviews was an additional advantage in getting familiar with the process of data collection and engaging with participants. I learned that the processes of data collection and data analysis were inseparable and occurred simultaneously facilitating the richness to generate theory grounded in the data. Use of NVivo was prompt and helpful in data reduction, condensation and distillation into themes and sub-themes. Hence, the findings from the gathered data are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Findings

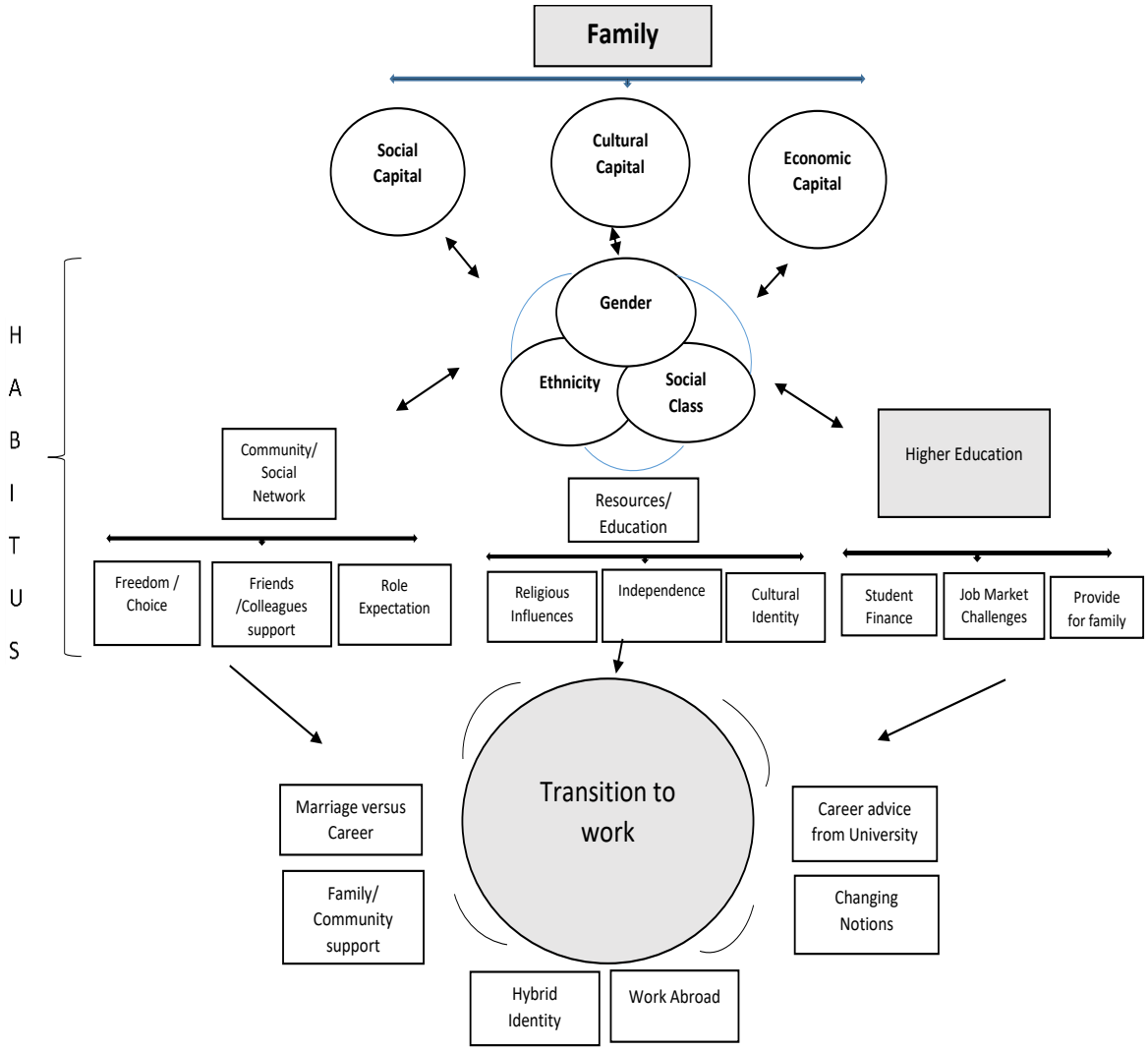
5.1 Introduction

This findings chapter discusses the influential factors in the lives of British South Asian women and how they negotiate their career in contrast to the families and their power relations within those settings. The analysis provides a framework to understanding the ways in which young women's perceptions of transition to employment are shaped. A number of factors were identified that South Asian women described as either enhancing or inhibiting their ability to pursue employment post-university. I looked at the questions around how their parents and communities respond to HE choices and employment goals. I examined the questions around how the families and communities of these women influence and support their choices of education and employment. I reflect on how young women are pushing their social and cultural boundaries as they navigate their future goals.

Particular attention was given to how young women are negotiating their career goals so as to navigate their family and community to meet the demands of mainstream society. The motivational factors leading them to participate in HE indicate how their navigations impact upon other life options such as career and marriage. To conclude the chapter, summary of analysis process, key findings and assumptions of interpretation based on my engagement and reflection with the data are highlighted.

For the philosophical grounds, Bourdieu's theory is applied to the concepts derived from the thematic analysis. The illustration in figure 4 illustrates Bourdieu's theory illuminating the concept of habitus, capital and field.

Figure 4. Key themes incorporated within Bourdieu's framework



Application of Bourdieu's framework- Deductive and Inductive Themes (*Own Illustration)*

This diagram shows different positionings of South Asian women in their existing social spaces within the family, community and HE. During observation, I noticed that young women negotiate their family and community boundaries to enter the new fields of HE. The highlighted grey shapes are the identified social spaces. While the oval shapes represent deductive themes derived from the predetermined knowledge from the literature, the rectangle shapes suggest inductive themes derived from the data. Here, the intersectionality indicating ethnicity, gender and social class comes into play with the habitus of these women, thus shaping their perceptions of transition to the future field of employment. Based on the theoretical concepts drawn from the literature and the list of approved topics for interviews, the major aim of coding was to identify relevant sub-categories within a particular topic. The category of 'family influences', for example, was significant in each interview. Other categories grouped together include 'parental support

in HE' and 'choice issues in HE'. Although the field of HE and work are situated outside the family and community ties, they are inseparable due to the intersectionality of ethnic, social and community influences. These categories are acknowledged as 'organisational categories' (Maxwell, 2005: 97) which serve as bins for sorting out the data. Hence, the data gathered for this study constitutes the following four central themes:

1. Family influences
2. Ethnic community influences
3. Mainstream society influences
4. The intersection of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class

Parental experiences and perceptions were found to be key underlying themes. In South Asians, a family is not only parents and siblings, but extended family members also are influential while taking an important decision about education and employment. This was identified as a common thread in identified themes which are considered crucial in the ways the parents view their daughters' education and career. Even though there is a strong inter-connectivity identified in the social experiences of young women in their families, ethnic communities and mainstream society, I have attempted to present the influences in each theme separately in the next section.

5.2 Influences from the Family

In this section the explorations of sub-themes emerging from and within the family where the habitus is shaped are discussed. The analysis identified 'family' as a fundamental unit where most of the social learning takes place through family interactions. The data indicate that a set of shared values about the importance of education within South Asian families was evident. This theme has following sub-themes:

- Family support from parents
- Choice and degree of freedom
- Marriage versus career
- Complex family patterns

The analysis of the participants' narratives is presented in the first section by denoting the examples of support young women had from parents and other family members. Here, participants were asked to describe how their parents and family play a pivotal role upon their views of future employment. The second section points out choices and decisions that determine the degree of freedom and independence these women have as a result of HE. This includes the issues around the choice of subject of study, the decision on moving away or staying at home and marriage. The examples explored their social spaces within family determining the extent to which these women felt independent as they negotiate HE and employment options.

The interviews indicate that marriage choice is a complex phenomenon displaying influences from the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class, and therefore, it is dealt with separately in the third section. Although most women described their social positions within their families as non-problematic, some of them found it difficult to explain their complex positions because of the sensitive nature of family interactions. Hence, the last section builds upon such excerpts of participants who experienced complex family interactions. Here, the experiences of those participants are highlighted who found themselves in complex negotiations due to the lack of family support over their choices. To analyse the reasons for these critical themes, I present interview data to elaborate the key findings in the following sub-themes.

5.2.1 Parental Support in Higher Education and Career

This section deals with how parental engagement in their daughters' education and career have influenced their experiences and perceptions. The interview data indicate that all South Asian parents encouraged their daughters to go to university and compete in the world around them. During participant observation, all parents indicated an awareness of the respect HE qualifications would bring to their family. They wanted their daughters to avail new opportunities for education because this will raise their social status and respect in the community. For instance, Farida from Bangladeshi background (see table 7 in appendix 11 for parental Information) mentioned how she was motivated by parents during the university:

> I have always wanted to make sure at least [I] have a degree because that's something that my dad has always been like very interested. Both of my parents, they always wanted me to have HE, they wanted me to go to university. They told me to do Master to be honest. So, they have always encouraged me (B10-FA, 1).

Another student, Haya from Pakistani background recalled how her family supported her to do well in the university. She mentioned how her father, a doctor, has been prime motivation throughout her education.

> I think one thing that keeps me motivated is my parents, because there is a lot of support from them. A lot of other people that I have met, don't have their parents support. They struggled a lot with that. So, that [support] definitely is given. My dad, because he is a doctor and I have seen him how hectic medicine is (P5-HA, 2).

Moreover, the data indicate that there was no difference in parental motivation towards their daughters' HE in the cases where they themselves were not educated. For instance, despite Tahmina's parents did not have an opportunity to go to university when they first moved to the UK, she mentioned that they insisted her to have HE qualification.

> You know with culture it is much respected in the family. I don't know I would not just leave or would not complete it (HE) to make them proud. They just really put no pressure; they were sort of really holding on to being proud like that's the main thing I like. My dad always said it's not about the money it's about the people, when they say to people oh! My daughter [has] gone to university so, for them it's just [a] pride thing. So, that really was kind of a motivation (B9-TH, 2).

Although it is clear from the above examples that all fathers motivated their daughters in their HE journeys, all mothers, particularly the educated mothers were also found influential in shaping young women's' trajectories. Maya, an Indian student, remembered her parental positive views about her education. As such, Maya's mother, in particular, wanted her to do well in HE and follow the footsteps of the wider family, in which most were academically successful.

> My mum and dad both are educated, they have done HE… Mum and dad like wanted me to go to university definitely, and also said [to] focus on your

> education… My dad helps me to join societies and they are funding me. That way, she [mum] is telling me make sure I have good grades too (I-7-MA, 2).

Similarly, in Sonia's example, her mother, a Nurse, helped her to cope with the stress of going through job search and finding a job when she completed her HE.

> Mum is not too pushy, [she] says you will find a job. Sister tries to help me but she doesn't really have time to help. So, they are not too pushy that you have to find job now. So, it makes them to look for some opportunities for me as well (P1-SO2, 2).

Most mothers believed that gaining HE will enable their daughters to financially support themselves in future. This expectation was significant among two Pakistani lone mothers who were educated and financially supported their families. These mothers played a more influential role in their daughters' education. Their HE journeys and efforts as single mothers were acknowledged by their daughters and were viewed as a fundamental driving force for them to pursue career leading to financial independence.

The first example of the inspirational role of the mother in the absence of the father was evident in Sanam's case. She lived with her mum following her parents' separation. Her mother was university educated and was working full time in a local office. In another scenario, Raheela's parents also separated a few years ago. Raheela and her two siblings lived with their mother who worked as a school teacher. In the following example, Raheela recalled the encouragement she received from her mother:

> … so, if mum and sister were not there for me, I would not have done so well in my life. Since I was born, my mum was always there. She would stay up till late with me so that I don't sleep and study… I want to give all the credit to my mum (P3-RA, 2).

In addition to this, it was compelling to note that along with parental support, participants had also drawn on the importance of having an inspiration from older siblings and aunts. The interviews suggest that those who had elder siblings already in HE, found it helpful to go to university because that way, they faced less negotiations with parents. Farida, a Bangladeshi student described her experience:

> When my sister first went to uni, my mum took it very bad. Like I know bad in the sense [that] she was more affected than she realised. Because me and my siblings are of similar age, there are four of us. Like you know how [it is] in English culture, they are like you go out, they try and make you independent in [the] young age. It's not Asian culture, it's the opposite. They keep you as long as they can… It's very different in our culture because you are very close to your parents and they protect you in your young age. But now its fine, its third year almost and my sister has also completed [her HE] so it has now become normal for her [mum] (B10-FA, 3).

The interviews suggest that some participants were motivated by their relatives to go to HE. In a way, going to the university also aspired their children to aim for HE qualification. In the following example, Tahmina's two aunts had encouraged her to do well in her HE studies because they believed that the university qualification of a Bangladeshi girl brought honour to the entire family. Tahmina, who worked for a local college as an assistant teacher recalled her experience:

> My aunts like when they heard that I have gone to the university and my brother is following the same route, they felt motivated for their children, and it's just a cultural thing … going to university, achieving jobs all of that is very good thing. You know they praise you so much for it as well (B9-TH, 2).

The key findings in this section highlighted the patterns of parental support across all sub-groups in HE and career of young women. The data analysis revealed a different pattern of support from educated and uneducated parents. In particular, lone mothers' encouragement set out inspirational examples for their daughters to continue HE and career aspiration. Likewise, other female relatives- siblings and aunts, had a crucial role in motivating young women in their HE trajectories.

5.2.2 Choice and the degree of freedom: A Gendered Perspective

In this section, the examples from interview data are explored determining the freedom of choice available to South Asian women in choosing HE and career. I also focus on what impacts upon the choices South Asian women make within their lives. The section, therefore, present examples of how family influenced upon women's choice of subjects and place to live during HE. I also present the exploration of the issues around choosing

the career path and the suitable hours of work.

During interviews, I found that participants engaged in important discussions with their parents over choosing the subject of the study before entering the field of HE. Most parents (Indian and Pakistani) were flexible and had given their daughters independence to choose subject of study and place to live during university. However, degree of parental involvement differed among three groups and was dependent upon parental education levels. For example, Tina, an Indian woman, who had recently completed her undergraduate degree in interior designing, talked with her parents about what she wanted to study. She mentioned that her parents expected that she would study science subjects in college because everyone else in their family was in the medical profession. Not that her parents were against her choice, they suggested that studying science subjects will bring better career options for her.

> The thing is when I was choosing my A' level options, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. So that's when my parents stepped in like they were like so should do sciences because that's what everyone does sort of thing. So, I did that, but I really didn't like it. Because I didn't like it, my grades weren't so great either. And then I decided that's not what I wanted to do. So, when I started researching all the different options, choosing interior architecture was solely my decision (I-6-TI, 1).

Different from Tina, Baljeet was given more freedom of choice from her parents. To Baljeet this was more of a flexible approach by her parents as well as she was able to exercise great responsibility as a grown-up adult.

> As I grew, I felt my parents stopped being hard on me, rather I pushed myself enough… So, in uni, they had taken a step back, they thought it was important to them, but we [family] do a mix of discussion to make everyone happy ((I-8-BA, 1).

In a similar example, Raheela's (Pakistani) family expectation was that she should study those subjects leading to the valuable professions such as a doctor. She explained how discouraged she felt when her family did not value her choice of studying Psychology. Raheela described how her family was gendered- biased to her choice. She explained that if her brother chose Psychology, her father would have supported him. She also recalled the response of her grandfather, who pointed out the potential consequences on her future life. He tried to convince her not to continue Psychology.

> He [grandfather] called me and said why you [are] studying Psychology and he thought if I study Psychology, I would be dealing with crazy people and that's not good for a female. I was really surprised because he was a teacher in Pakistan. He said one day when you get married this is not going to be a good profession for you. And I never understood what he meant by 'it's not going to be a good profession'… My dad was also upset he wanted me to do medicine. He was not very happy. But at the end of the day, I do what I want to do, [but] he never had true respect for this subject that I wanted to do (P3-RA, 3).

Sonia, in contrast, had a positive response from her when she chose to study Psychology. Even though her parents showed flexibility in her choice of subject, her father suggested choosing a subject which will earn a better job in future. She explained that her parents would not make any gender difference in the subject choice with her brother.

> …. in term of my opportunities in my family, like my family would not make it any different if I was a boy or a girl…I would have been treated the same (P1-SO2, 5).

Moving forward, the interviews suggest that educated and economically independent mothers also demonstrated much flexibility in their daughter's choice of subject. Sanam's mother was one such example:

> Well my parents are separated so I live with my mother. She told me chose what you like to do, so… and other family members are abroad so ok. I don't really talk to them much but as long as they know I am doing something and studying, they are fine (P2-SA, 1).

The above examples show intra-group differences of symbolic capital within Pakistani families in a similar scenario relevant to Raheela's and Sonia's subject choices and supplemented by the family structure in Sanam's example.

5.2.2.1 Staying away versus staying at home

In this section, I highlight young women's choices in terms of staying or moving away from home to pursue university degree. There were mixed views on the choice of staying at home or away, something considered fairly common in Western culture while young people attend university. Half of the participants were allowed to stay away from home whilst the remaining half stayed with their parents. Some described the potential

challenges and conflicts within the family processes that may arise if they lived away to study. This was in opposition to something considered usual and desirable in British culture.

All fathers were not inherently against their daughters' moving away from home, worried that with limited parental support, their daughter may be exposed to the unfavourable environment. Farida who lived in the university halls, mentioned many of her friends stayed with their parents, even though they wished to live away from home. She described:

> [The] thing is a lot of my friends stay at home. Their parents, I don't know why they don't trust [them]. I don't know why a lot of parents want them just [to] stay at home. Whereas my parents do like it [staying away], specially my dad. My dad, when it comes to education, he would let us go anywhere so, he is not kind of like other parents (B10-FA, 1).

Whilst some fathers were encouraging their daughters to choose where to live, most mothers were concerned that by 'living away' young women could acquire problematic behaviour that may affect their moral values. Indeed, these mothers felt it was their responsibility that their daughters should possess good behaviour. This was more prominent in the examples where mothers themselves had not gone to the university. Even though some parents had concerns over their daughters losing moral values, the examples below show that Haya's parents acknowledged her wish and allowed her to stay in university halls during her HE.

> I was the first girl in my family, who had to live away for education, and some of my uncles didn't like the concept and they called my dad and said oh, is she actually moving away from home? And do you think that doesn't happen? So, it's just that thing like that they don't understand. But if any of my male cousins would have said that, they probably wouldn't have an issue with it. But I think because I have my parents' support, that was ok (P5-HA, 3).

Importantly, some women were given the options to decide. Those who stayed at home believed that they were able to concentrate better on their studies without compromising on family and community socialisation. The interviews indicate that some women found staying with parents more convenient so as they were able to enjoy the care of parents

and had nothing to worry but studies. For instance, when Maya (Indian) was given the options, she chose to stay with parents, assuming that living in halls will make her HE studies difficult. For Maya saw comfort, emotional support and saving by living with parents.

> I am very lucky in that sense to having to stay with my parents and save in that way. They do house [work], food and those kind of things, very nice things… I might would not have had peaceful life. Like horrible people, landlords, rents, it would have created added stress, but I am happy I am living at home (I-7-MA, 4).

It was compelling to note that some participants shared their experiences of living with parents from an ethnic perspective, in the sense that they were bullied by their White colleagues for choosing to stay at home. This was related to the cultural differences of been so-called 'adults' when one goes to university. Some of these women, such as Sanam, were teased by the university colleagues for being immature, or as they said 'still being a baby' to live with parents. The quote below describes her experiences.

> Well, to be honest, some [White colleagues] have made fun of me like in my second year, they would say oh, so you are still a child. And I [because] look younger than my age, so they used to tease me that oh, yeah, you are twelve years old so, you are not allowed to drink anyway or stay away from home. They used to make fun of me (P2-SA, 3).

The above examples indicate that in the choices of moving away or not, the participants negotiated within the context of power relationships in their families. In doing so, some participants had to negotiate their choice to stay away from home while others stayed at home while attended university. However, in either way, young women had to engage in complex negotiations, within the family or with university colleagues resolve the complexity of the decision.

While exploring the views on how working or studying on late evenings and weekend have impacted the social spaces of South Asian women within their families, I attempted to understand their perspectives from family and community expectations. In Tahmina's conversation, for example, her family was concerned over her late staying at the university.

> … sometimes for some reason we had late lectures, my dad would worry a little bit. Even [if] the bus would still be available; my dad would pick me up. [For] social events like there were societies and I joined quite a few, so, staying a bit late was a concern for my parents… like staying in the library… it wasn't that I was not allowed, my parents knew where I was but they would worry if I stayed in the library for like too long (B9-TH, 2).

Different from Tahmina's case, Haya's parents seemed to challenge her socialization with or around men in the university. Because Haya had joined a few student roles in the university for which occasionally she had to work late hours or on the weekends. This situation was conflicting with her family's views.

> It is very difficult for me to explain sometimes, because they [parents] think I am too modern for my education or me working or staying at library for whole night. And those who are here [Westernised colleagues], they find me very conservative that I don't really drink or go out, or I generally talk to them in the same level where they can cross any limits they don't talk, or physically I just remain to have some distance. So, they just don't understand it (P5-HA, 4).

The key findings here indicate that the choice of working late hours and on the weekends was a concern for some women because it was not encouraged by their families. Such conflicting views between young women and parents were important to highlight the challenges in their trajectories. The next section elucidates the examples of those participants who had more challenging HE trajectories than rest of the group due to inevitable conflicts in the choice process.

5.2.3 Complex Family Patterns

While majority of the participants believed their experiences were positive during HE journeys, some dealt with additional challenges arising from the family, ethnicity and personal choices. This section, therefore, highlights the complex patterns of social interactions of three participants, Tina, Kanwal, and Raheela who experienced additional burdens in their HE trajectories.

Tina, for example, who was expected to study science in her college to become a doctor because everyone else in her extended family was in a medical profession. However,

because she was forced to study the subjects without her interest, she did not get the required grades. As a result, she had to quit the science subjects. At that time, Tina was broken and expected her parents to understand and help her but she didn't receive much support. On the follow-up interview, I noticed that she started to use the time we spent together as an open space for discussing her experience how her parents enforced her to choose science subjects against her wish.

> I don't know if I should say this but he [father] always expected anyone and everyone to know everything [to] get it in first time. So, I just kind of avoided going to him, but I did ask for help every now and then when I really struggled but it didn't really help. And, mum is really good at teaching, but she never did. She couldn't help with the subjects I had taken. Because she didn't really have the background of science (I-6-TI, 2).

Later in the conversation the critique emerged that she always wanted to study arts and become an actress, therefore, and did not want to study science subjects. Although now, she was offered a full-time job placement in a local company as an interior designer, she missed out on the opportunity of what she wanted to really do. Hence, she mentioned that to fulfil the desire of her dream career, she attends dance classes on the weekends as a coping strategy.

The complexity related to the dynamics of family was also significant in Kanwal's case, who recently married against her parents' wish during her HE. She had always lived in halls and had experienced an unknown reluctance to talk to her parents of her being not happy at the university. Staying away from parents and not able to make close friends in university resulted in her to make her own choices in her life, such as marrying at a young age. Marrying against parents wish and not be able to make close friends had contributed to making her HE journeys complex. However, she mentioned that despite the fact that she had to do an extra year in the university, she was determinant to carry on achieving her HE and career goal:

> I feel like there wasn't great understanding and that's where it went wrong. They (parents) did want to give me support and I can see that they wanted to give me support but I don't feel it was in the right way for me. She (mother) would actually ask me after lectures like have you met new friends so on. Or have you met this girl

> from Pakistani society and do things with her. So, I feel like I couldn't completely convey to her that I am struggling, and I couldn't also say. I couldn't give her any alternative to make things work (P4-KA, 2).

In the next example, Raheela had arguments with her family when she did not choose to study Medicine but Psychology. Raheela questioned her parents' reasoning behind reinforcing the gendered views and prohibiting her from pursuing so-called 'less valued' profession. She expressed the distress she went through and how that created future role ambiguity. She also realised and felt guilty that she did not meet her parents' expectation to become a doctor. She remembered how her father who was a doctor, got upset with her choice of subject.

> My dad was upset he wanted me to do medicine. He was not very happy. But at the end of the day, I do what I want to do. So, he never had true respect for this subject that I wanted to do. If my brother would choose any subject like psychology my dad would support him. I think people treat differently. Boys are given more rights, they can do what they want they can have girlfriends but girls cannot have boyfriends, but why? (P3-RA, 3).

Even though the above examples show the conflicting relationships with parents, Tina, Kanwal and Raheela kept their questioning alive and began to look for strategies to cope. The data indicate that despite these women missed out on the benefits of having full parental support in their educational trajectories, they believed their experiences were emotionally challenged but not affected. Nonetheless, they demonstrated ambition in pursuing a career because they believed that their experiences taught them that they had to find their own ways to be successful. Moreover, when the questions around HE choices were explored, most of the women viewed marriage as an important topic for its potential impacts on the present and future family structures. The following section deals with marriage and related themes.

5.3 Marriage and Career

Th section explored the issues around arranged marriages and how young women viewed their career. The notion of marriage in South Asian culture has been considered as a significant aspect of young women choices when it relates to their career. Marriage choice

within South Asian culture symbolises and directly relates to the status and the honour of the family. All participants agreed that HE qualification will increase their marriage prospect. In particular, most of the Bangladeshi women mentioned that their parents believed having HE qualification will help their daughters to find a good match.

Out of twelve, three participants were married, two Bangladeshi and one Pakistani. Bangladeshi married participants, Rufaida and Tahmina had arranged marriages, whereas Pakistani participant, Kanwal, recently got married against parental approval. Both Bangladeshi participants went to Bangladesh to marry and returned to the UK so that they can sponsor their spouses in line with UK government immigration guidelines. Despite being UK-born, both the girls said they were happily married to their overseas partners. Indeed, both respondents characterised their husbands as understanding and supportive than other men Bangladeshi background. Rufaida shared her experience:

> When my parents started looking someone for me, they started to look in the UK. However, because we didn't have any immediate relatives, like uncle and others, we didn't know if these families were good families, and the boys that came over, the language was very different. So, we couldn't work out would it be a good marriage or not. So, then I ended up getting married in Bangladesh and I think that was the best decision for me at that time I have made (B12-RU, 7).

Tahmina mentioned although she had an arranged marriage, her parents gave her the choice of accepting or rejecting the proposal. She described how she got married:

> I am allowed to choose. My parents always used to say u know, always talk to the person, get to know the person before you married to them. So, it was an arranged marriage, he [husband] was a family friend, it's kind of arranged as in family. But we were, me and my husband, able to talk. My dad personally asked me would you like more time or you want to marry now. I said I want more time so, I had one year talking to my husband, getting to know him. And upon my decision, we got married. My parents have been very supportive (B9-TH, 3).

In contrast, Kanwal, Pakistani women, recently married a non-UK born Pakistani man, whom she met locally. Her marriage decision was against her parents' approval because her parents were highly educated and wanted her to complete her HE studies first. Kanwal

however, went ahead and got married during her studies. She believed that married life would not influence her HE and career goals. She described her experience:

> I got married really young, it was my choice and not my parents' choice. My parents got shocked when I said there is a rishta (proposal). They were sort of expecting me to get married at 25-26 years. But I feel that I am more homely type girl so, it won't affect my personal goal to become an English teacher (P4-KA, 3).

The interviews suggest that most young women do not view arranged marriages will affect their career. Although these marriage patterns were more common among Bangladeshi culture in comparison to Indian and Pakistani, it is clear that all parents demonstrated much flexibility to their daughters' marriage choice in accepting or rejecting the arranged proposal.

The above examples indicate that Bangladeshi women valued parental involvement in arranged marriage and it turned out to be the right decision for them. Depending upon the degree of parental involvement in the choice of marriage, some young women from Pakistani background mentioned that they had the choice of whether or not to marry an overseas partner from their home country. For example, when asked about her arranged marriage, Raheela had concerns if marrying an overseas partner will work:

> I want to work and not marry until five years. I am also bit concerned about marrying partner from Pakistan in future who has not lived in the UK and he has Pakistani qualification. So, not sure whether he will find a good job or not but, I don't plan to live in Pakistan after marriage. Yeah, it's been mutually agreed already within our families (P3-RA2, 1).

Likewise, another Pakistani young woman, Haya described marrying an overseas partner was an ambiguous choice for her. She explained that it can bring more conflicts in a relationship from two different cultural perceptions and practices. In Haya's views, the religion has given Muslim women the equal choice of marriage as men, but she thought people in the community interpret it differently. According to her, it was more of an expectation of the Pakistani community to abide by the cultural practices than the parental demand or religious assertion.

> The other thing is today it is not considered for a woman to say I want to marry this guy. But from Islamic point of view, 'Hazrat Bibi Khadija' (wife of Prophet Muhammad) did show her [marriage] interest for Prophet Mohammad. So, it is the thing like that [marriage choice] had been allowed but culturally people are not given that right (P5-HA, 4).

The above examples suggest differences of opinion between women from Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups on arranged marriages with overseas partners. While most of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani women believed that arranged marriages lead to smoother future life without compromises and conflicts, none of the Indian women agreed with the ideas of arranged marriage. For example, Baljeet an Indian woman, described her parental liberal approach in her choice of marriage:

> My parents are like there is no way we can pick a husband for you, so you will have to find your own husband. So, for them it's not going to make so much difference if they find someone for me. Obviously, it's my choice and if [suppose] I am 35 and don't meet anyone, I would ask them: such as do you have any suggestions. So, I will still have the final decision (I-8-BA, 4).

Turning to the issues arising as a result of arranged or chosen marriage and affecting their career, most women mentioned they would continue to work even after they get married. Sanam, (Pakistani) mentioned that she will not marry someone who would not support her in her career. In the following example, she explained her thoughts when asked about the option of not working after marriage. She thought she would receive family support for her choice:

> I studied all my life [and] concentrated to become something. So, I would want to work. I don't care about his [husband] money, otherwise I won't marry him. I don't think my family will force me to marry such a person (P2-SA, 4).

Baljeet's response was not different than Sanam when asked about how her marriage plans may impact upon her work:

> I will not say that I am asking your [husband's] permission to work but I would say that I just want to make clear that I would work. If my husband works, I can work too, if I am asking [for] dinner, he can also make dinner. So, we need to have that

> conversation before marrying and I would definitely have that conversation before I marry (I-8-BA, 4).

Thus, in the above theme, the family is identified as the basic social space of young women in shaping their HE trajectories. The key issues found in this section are related to young women's successful negotiations within their families for HE and arranged marriage choices. The examples indicate that these women are prepared to deal with the challenges with regards to HE choices, marriage and career. They also seemed willing to transform their choices by maintaining a balance between the issues arising from their culture and religion in the pursuit of a career.

5.4 Influences from the Ethnic Community

This section highlights how South Asian community impacted the perceptions of British South Asian women as they evolve their positions within the fields of HE and employment. This theme is divided into two sub-themes representing an understanding of the social spaces of these women and how they create a balance between the demands of the community and their education and career goals.

- Enforcement of ethnic values
- Benefitting from the community

Subthemes, therefore, determine role of community in enforcing the ethnic values and religious practices and whether or not young women are benefiting from their parental social networks in the community. Later section illustrates how young women negotiate the challenges posited by ethnic community. I summarize the section by highlighting the significant influences from ethnic practices within and between South Asian communities and to what extent young women are navigating their education and career aims within these groups.

5.4.1 Enforcement of Ethnic Values

The data highlighted in this section highlight the ways in which South Asian communities enforce and perpetuate ethnic and religious norms upon young women. South Asian community was found useful in re-enforcing cultural norms and values. All women in this

study held strong views about their traditional values and ethnic ties characterised by common norms and practices within their communities. One of the modes was through organizing cultural festivals and events for the younger generation. For example, Tina attended ethnic events with her parents regularly Indian community. She viewed participating in such events as an acknowledgement and remembrance of the ethnic values.

> I get involved with Bengali (from west Bengal, India) community quite a lot especially during festival season. So, it's *Durga Pooja* [annual Indian-Bengali festival] in October and I know already that I will be performing heretical [religious dance]. I also do Odissi dance [ancient Indian classical dance] (I-6-TI, 4).

The ethnic community provided opportunities for some women to represent their cultural norms and made them stand out in the crowd. While observing participants from Muslim community, their religious practices such as wearing hijab came as something attached to their cultural identity.

> With Muslim participants, my positionality as of 'sameness' and 'difference' was uncertain and not fixed depending upon the varied religio-cultural practices among Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups. I noticed I was not very comfortable for not wearing the hijab in the mosque so were those women unknown to me. This was opposite with women from Hindu, Sikh and Christian backgrounds where I was viewed as an obvious outsider (Participant observation: 10.11.2017).

Maya, Sanam and Kanwal shared their enriching experiences which they proudly shared with their White colleagues. Maya explained about Indian events:

> I am very traditional in that sense. They [White colleagues] don't associate me straight with British Indians, they associate me with India (I-7-MA, 4).

Sanam, Pakistani, admired the dressing from South Asian culture, which she usually wore while attended community events. She found such events useful to her photography project on diversity. Likewise, Kanwal remembered how her cultural upbringing in the Pakistani community has been influential over the years in shaping her views which otherwise she may not have learnt. Although Kanwal categorised herself as a non-participating in usual community activities, she believed by regularly interacting with the

community, she had understood that the community values were an important part of her identity. Following quote from my observation explains my positionality and perspective while I observed young women in their community.

> Among my daily frustration, a key challenge is the loyalty to my participants. Even though I participated in their social lives and events, it was difficult to question their actions and perspectives. I feel I am still accountable to show that these processes and practices have led to specific conclusions (Fieldnotes: 28.11.2017).

Pointing to the changing notions of adapting Western culture by South Asian women, Haya explained that the new generation of Pakistani women was a matter of concern for many in Pakistani community:

> They [community people] are going to say oh, the girl seems to be westernized, don't you think she needs to be connected to her roots again? So, there are these little things that do come in the play or somebody is trying to set limits for you. [They] make fun of your British accent but there are little things I do agree. At the end of the day, it is something that makes me (P5-HA, 5).

Turning to the religion, all Bangladeshi women and most Pakistani women were Muslim (except one Pakistani Christian), whereas, Indian women were Hindu and Sikh. While most Muslim women had restrictive religious boundaries with regards to adopting Western culture, Hindu women held non-restrictive cultural values in terms of mixing with Western culture. And according to them, most of their South Asian friends had similar parental attitudes. In the following quote, Baljeet, (Indian Sikh), mentioned how her parents were flexible in terms of asserting ethnic values upon her:

> As I grew, I felt my parents stopped being hard on me, rather I pushed myself enough… and I didn't have to argue or anything with my parent that I want to go out (I-8-BA, 2).

All women believed that in South Asian culture, religious values were mixed with cultural values. Muslim women had differences in the perceptions of ethnic and religious practices within their families. Pointing to the notion of how cultural practices and beliefs may differ within the Pakistani community, Haya, a Pakistani participant shared her views:

> We have come to know lots of Pakistani things not reflective of Islam as a religion. For example, women and education, Islam says every man and woman can go to any length of education, that is a very common concept, but the culture doesn't allow it (P5-HA, 4).

I noticed three women wore hijabs (head-cover), while others thought their parents had given them flexibility in choosing to wear a hijab, so, they chose not to wear it. While meeting Muslim women during participant observation, I realised that women not wearing hijab were not socially approached by those who wore it. This very well may be because I did not wear hijab and could feel the tension.

> I attended the Muslim women community meeting in the mosque where every woman was wearing a hijab, I felt a distance from them and could sense an uneasiness in myself (Fieldnotes: 27.10.2017).

The above examples indicate that South Asian communities enforce and perpetuate ethnic norms upon young women through cultural events and festivals, which provides a sense of cultural identity to young women. Most women were motivated and supported by the community in adapting ethnic values. However, due to differences within and between sub-groups, women continued to fulfil their community expectations. Whilst Indian women believed they were supported by their community and encouraged blending in modern society, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women faced restrictions for the same. Thus, these women tried to create a balance between traditional values asserted from the community and the modern society through the use of individual agency. The next section illustrates the examples of how community sources were beneficial to South Asian women in their educational journeys and career.

5.4.2 Benefiting from the Ethnic Community

Although all women I interviewed were motivated to participate in community social events, they had different views on the usefulness of community resources in their HE journeys and career. The most prominent benefit was the encouragement and motivation young women received towards their HE. By acknowledging community social events as a platform for support and belonging, some women mentioned that in such interactions, parents usually shared the stories about their children's education and career with other

parents. In the example below, Sanam remembered her experience of attending Pakistani community events where she was acknowledged as a creative fashion photographer by other parents:

> They [people in the community] always ask me to take pictures, I do get support from them also in a way that they tell me I am inspiring, that I am doing good job and stuff like that. They are very encouraging (P2-SA, 4).

Rufaida, a Bangladeshi, would usually meet other Bangladeshi women from the neighbourhood in religious gatherings. She explained how having a HE qualification and a job was acknowledged by other women in her community which made her feel more valued than other girls in the community.

> When I talked to neighbours and when they come and see me, there is that extra bit of respect you get when they speak to you because they know you have been to HE and you are working (B12-RU, 6).

The above examples indicate that some women benefited from community engaging with the ethnic activities arranged by the community. Whilst some young women agreed that ethnic community was helpful in motivating them during their educational journeys, eight of twelve women felt they receive little or no support when placing their experiences against finding the work.

Here, Sonia's situation is of particular relevance. She finished her HE studies in Psychology six months ago and yet was unable to find work. Sonia's parents were actively involved in the Pakistani ethnic community, albeit, she did not receive any support in finding her work. Besides searching for a job through various online portals, she also maintained contact with her other South Asian friends in the community who were facing similar circumstances:

> They [community people] just kind of give like emotional support and verbal support … I don't know, I don't think they are very useful like… my other friends who don't have jobs are like oh yeah, we are all in the same boat (P1-SO2, 2).

On the contrary, three Bangladeshi women (Rufaida, Tahmina, Maria) whose parental contacts had helped them to find work, mentioned that the types of jobs they found were temporary and not career-oriented, so as to provide them with some work experience. In

the following example, Rufaida, who now worked for the local council, remembered her initial struggle to find her first job. Later, she was referred to a city council position by her Bangladeshi relative who worked there. Despite acknowledging her parental contacts as a major source of emotional support, Rufaida felt her uneducated parents were unable to help her find work of her calibre. Therefore, her father asked someone from the community to help her daughter find work. For this reason, Rufaida believed it was not what she studied but who she knew had helped her.

Along these lines, parental education and occupation determined the degree of involvement and belonging of young women with the ethnic community. Hence, it was evident that Bangladeshi women relied more upon their parental social networks compared to Pakistani and Indian women whose parents were more connected to mainstream society. While interpreting data, I noticed that social networks within the community represented social spaces where ethnic practices and values enabled members to access cultural capital. For example, Haya viewed her ethnicity as one of her main strengths for her academic success:

> Because the values that you have or any thoughts that make you different, and if you take the difference as something odd, there is no way you are going to progress rather [it is] difficult. But if you take it as something your strength, it does help you a lot (P5-HA, 2).

Tina's excerpt below highlights some of the beneficial aspects of engaging with South Asian community, albeit not in finding work. Tina felt being from Indian origin and having the cultural knowledge had been helpful in her interior designing field:

> When you are in design subject, it's actually quite good to have like that kind of edge [and] having that sort of background where you are aware of different cultures. That in a way has helped me in some of my subjects while I was in university. For example, in my first year at university, I designed an Indian restaurant that was shaped like a train, because trains in India are just so much of fun than here (I-6-TI, 1).

The analysis of interview data in this section suggested what goes on within and between sub-communities of South Asians (Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi) forms the basis of their similarities or differences and influences the perceptions of young women. Most

young women did not use community resources to find work, rather they connected with the community for their parents and to fulfil the cultural sense of belonging. For educated parents, the most common mode of community participation was by attending the cultural and religious festivals and events. Uneducated parents on contrary used community social networks for informal socialization and therefore, spent more time engaging in informal conversations resulting in stronger community influences on their ethnic values.

5.5 Influences from Mainstream Society

This section points out how career perceptions of South Asian women are shaped by taking influences from the wider society into account. The examples in the first section discuss the two aspects of women's social lives in mainstream society: in the university life and at work environment. The examples indicate the range of influences based on participants' current occupational status. Six of them were students, five had employment and one was looking for a job. In the first section, I pay particular attention to women's 'negotiating boundaries' and how these processes are contributing to the development of new identities in the university environment. The second section details how these women view their career in the competitive job market in association with the factors related to the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class.

5.5.1 University Life

In this study, one of the important focuses is how young women perceive their experiences at university as it determines their participation in the new social spaces which are not monitored by their families or community. There is no doubt that for South Asian women, HE qualification not only opened doors for employment in mainstream society, it also provided them with the opportunities to learn professional development skills. Some women were more engaged in social, cultural and religious groups than others who were more concerned about their academic performance in the university.

Most the participants who engaged in ethnic societies were still students in the final year of study. While most women did not get these opportunities to gain professional development skills in their family and community, a few women availed the opportunities

in the university. For example, Maya, Raheela, Haya and Rufaida worked as the presidents of ethnic societies, while Sanam acted as a course representative. Given that, this section provides examples of how some women were successful in developing these skills through the opportunities in the university.

> … with this present [role] of Pakistani society and academic president, now I have come to a point where people know me, but I don't know them. And it feels horrible that there is somebody I don't know but at the end of the day, I have challenged people socially that I am at the same academic level that they are, but in a different way (P5-HA, 3).

Pointing to the ethnicity and social class, all women mentioned that although there was a consummate change in mainstream society in how South Asian culture was perceived, some women mentioned that there are assumptions related to the ethnicity which still persist. During interviews, all women expressed that White colleagues were interested to learn more about their ethnicity. Following is the extract from my fieldnotes on this aspect:

> I noticed most of them did not show much interest in going out in alcohol parties, this may well be due to how their familial habitus has influenced their socialisation preferences. Maya (Hindu, Indian) however, believed it might help her in making close friendship with White colleagues. Perhaps her embedded disposition (habitus) led her to incline to young people with similar ethnic and religious background (homophily) and she ended up developing closer friendship bonds with South Asian students in her university (Fieldnotes: 26.09.2017).

Identically, Raheela explained that despite being aware of ethnic differences, her university colleagues were very curious to know about her religious practices and were supportive.

> If I didn't meet good people in university, I might have ended up in depression or giving up the university. So, my message is don't judge people when they come to university, just be friendly and open (P3-RA, 4).

Whilst most women explained having overall positive and enriching HE experience, some believed that their ethnicity remained a major point of difference while interacting with university colleagues. Sonia shared her views that even though she was British-born, her ethnicity was the first thing her White colleagues noted while she studied in the university.

> They might think we are very traditional, but we have been brought up very Western like others who have been brought up in this country. I was born here so, that helps but my parents are traditional and it's [something] I can't change. People also assume that if you are White British you understand the educational system here better (P1-SO2, 1).

On the basis thereof, all the participants believed that they were not able to make close friendships with White colleagues. One of the main reasons they identified was cultural differences such as alcohol restriction. Most women explained that during the initial time in the university, most students engaged in informal meeting with other students in order to get to know each other. Going out late night and drinking alcohol was one such example where students developed friendships. Young women maintained that it was within these groups where most of the bonding would occur which then continued throughout their university life. In this context, following Muslim participant, Kanwal recalled her experience:

> Like in the fresher's week, everyone goes out, everyone goes clubbing, and that's something I can't take part in. I noticed that that's huge part of university. I would notice that people generally have their study groups, they are the people they go out with. (P4-KA, 1).

Another Muslim participant, Farida, explained that she did not join alcohol parties because her faith prohibited alcohol consumption. Although she used to feel singled out sometimes, she needed to abide by her religious beliefs and therefore, did not join such gatherings.

> I know there is always things in [religion], religious wise there are things you are restricted doing and you feel like you are missing out. But especially when it comes to social norms at university like going out, getting drunk, that's one thing that is because of my religion and culture. That's one thing I haven't been able to do (B10-FA, 1).

Hindu, Sikh and Christian participants had more flexibility from their parents with regards to adopting Westerns culture. Maya (Hindu) for example, having liberal religious boundaries, described that her parents encouraged her and did not restrict her from adopting Western culture. That said, although she attended late-night parties and drank

alcohol, she failed to build a friendship with ethnic majority colleagues. Indeed, she had more South Asian friends in the university.

> Somehow, I made more Asian friends since I have come to this university, which is really weird for me (I-7-MA, 1).

Indian Sikh woman, Baljeet, mentioned similar experience related to her ethnicity in university. Although not obvious, Baljeet believed that she was more inclined and comfortable to make friends from same ethnic origin than White origin.

> Most of my friends are brown so I tend to stick around them. That's' the way I feel comfortable. Also like I don't drink so when you go in uni first when, it's all about drinking and that is how people socialize even the shy people. But when they are drinking, they are getting loose and loose and start talking to people and make friends. I didn't have that, I was just me (I-8-BA, 2).

With regards to 'gender discrimination' during university, none of the participants believed that they suffered it. The results suggest although discrimination was not tangible in most examples, it had been a matter of concern for some in shaping their perceptions of employment. While most did not face any obvious difficulties relevant to their ethnicity, religion and gender in their university, some experienced gender discrimination within their ethnic community. In the following example, the influences from gender had indirectly impacted Sanam's HE experience by showing how gender intersected with ethnicity:

> So, where I am now [photography course], it is not male dominated any more, I see more girls doing photography than men. Most of my class mates are females. But the community I belong to, it is still male dominated because I don't know any Asian girls who are doing photography other than myself (P2-SA, 1).

From a religious perspective, although the general opinion about Muslim women is that Islam restricts them from entering the labour market, my interviews show that, for working Muslim women, their families supported them to continue their education and work. Out of five, four of the working women were Muslim, three had positive experiences related to their ethnicity and religion at their workplace. However, Rufaida who worked in local city council had different views about how her ethnicity was perceived at her work. She

mentioned at times, she felt discriminated against her ethnicity as she was the only South Asian in the entire team. The main difference she felt was in terms of getting extra benefits of employment such as travelling abroad for official work and attending conferences for which, she was barely considered by her supervisors.

> I think that because I didn't get the opportunity where I work. And these [the management team] are highly educated people who have travelled the world, they have that mind set (B12-RU, 9).

In another contrasting example, Tahmina, a Muslim participant who worked as a teaching assistant at a local college, claimed to have no discrimination against her ethnicity and religion. She described how she had been fortunate at her workplace because the concept of diversity was encouraged by her colleagues.

> …the environment we work here is thankfully fantastic, really good. Because they really emphasise on cultural diversity (B9-TH, 5).

The above data suggest that although most of the Muslim women who were employed, enjoyed their work and had not faced any obvious issues from their ethnic and religious background, one Muslim woman felt her career progression was restricted because of her ethnicity and religious obligations. The next section illuminates further examples of career perceptions of these women in the light of their social experiences in job market.

5.5.2 Perceptions of Career

This section analyses how young women see themselves in the UK job market. This sub-theme has two central views: first, the perceptions of young women about challenges within the job market and how they meet the desired employment criteria to increase their career prospect. And second, the views of these women as to how the interplay of ethnicity, social class and gender affects their social spaces in the employment field. The key findings in this section indicate that although most young women acknowledged the challenges in the current job market, they believed those challenges were not directly related to their ethnicity, gender or social class. Therefore, the following sections explore their understanding of the demands of the current job market.

5.5.2.1 Job Market Challenges

This section describes examples of how young women viewed their career with regards to working in mainstream society. While they continue to face challenges within family and community, most women mentioned that entering a successful career was another challenge for them. Despite two participants, Raheela and Tina managed to find jobs soon after graduation, the majority had to face different obstacles. Both of them mentioned that they were rejected by many employers before getting acceptance for their current jobs. Indeed, Tina considered herself lucky in finding work:

> I wasn't really sure how long it was going to take, so I was really prepared to wait for a long time before I could actually get a job. I have been quite lucky with this one (I-6-TI, 3).

Another participant, Sonia, who had recently finished her studies, had been searching for work for six months. She was also concerned about the current job market situation and mentioned that there were fewer opportunities for work. She described that if she did not get an employment offer in a few weeks, she would consider working for any role for which she might be overqualified.

> …regardless of so many people these days are going to university and so many people think oh, I will just get any job. So, that makes it ten times harder to get a job… and I think it's important for them to have life experiences in other…but to need a job you need experience, then to get experience you need a job, so, it's hard. So, it's like a vicious cycle (P1-SO2, 3).

Many women pointed to their colleagues at university who still could not find jobs. In the following example, Sanam was concerned that some of her colleagues were still searching for work.

> When I talked to people [colleagues] when I was in my second year, I still talk to them, none of them got job yet. That scares me a bit but then I can apply to other places. (P2-SA, 2).

Parents also displayed an awareness of the changes in the labour market from their time that now limited jobs were available for qualified youth. However, their views were

embedded in their own experiences. For many parents HE was seen as a means to achieve social mobility.

> I could see a great sense of influence from all parents, particularly mothers of how they were discriminated during their work experiences. Certainly, it was beyond any limits when young women shared and related their own perceptions of job market with that of their mothers. Some women (of educated mothers) however, seemed believing that time has changed (Fieldnotes: 15.10. 2017).

Maya recounted that because her mother experienced discrimination in finding work related to her ethnicity, she believed she may have to face similar challenges in the job search.

> I think it would be harder for me to get job because I am brown, because mum sort of faced it, so I know from her experience that I will probably face it too (I-7-MA, 2).

Here, Farida's experience was not different. She related her father's experience of initial hardship he came across in setting up his business. However, Farida believed that education is becoming increasingly common in Bangladeshi community, thus, explains the changing notions of paid work of youth.

> My dad would say that it took a lot for them. He said before they had businesses and they expected their sons to go into businesses. And girls would marry when they were like 18. But now it's a lot changing, education has become common (B10-FA, 3).

Comparably, Pakistani and Indian women described the success stories of their educated parents who worked in high profile jobs. When Kanwal was asked about her perceptions of her future employment, she directed her to answer to her mother's successful employment experience without any support from the community. Kanwal saw her mother's experience as an inspirational force and therefore, she was confident that she would be successful too.

> I can also give example like my mum was born here. She did PhD here in her time, it was as she was only Pakistani girl who did PhD in that time. But until now, she is

> in higher position. Her ethnicity, her religion none of this has come into the play to get her academic job and give her those opportunities (P4-KA, 3).

The participants who were still studying felt doing a master's degree would increase their chances of employment. Haya explained that she wanted to apply for graduate schemes and internship roles in the university but, if she did not receive a job offer in a few months, she had plans to apply for a Master course. Farida was identifying ways in which she could improve her career prospect. She believed that because a lot of students tend to have undergraduate degrees, therefore, having a Master's degree will distinguish her position in the job market.

> I want more qualification for the field that I want the career in…But then I felt if I have a Master's degree, it will be easier to get higher position than just that I have bachelors. Because a lot of people these days have degrees (B10-FA, 3).

Sanam agreed that having an additional qualification may increase her career prospects. According to her, the confidence level and additional qualification accounted for securing an employment therefore, she wanted to do Master course first and then find work.

> In terms of future, I would like to study more because there is so much competition in photography and I want to do fashion so, I am thinking of doing Master next year. So, then I might go a level up than them. So, when there is competition, Masters may help me in future than just Bachelors (P2-SA, 2).

This was not different for those who were already working. Both Raheela and Tina although found work after searching for a few months, they shared their wish to study further after gaining some work experience. These examples indicate that the majority of South Asian women believed having an additional qualification along with some work experience would boost their employability. This was true for both working women and those who were still studying in the final year of their studies. Nonetheless, most participants wanted to study further regardless of their current employment status.

5.5.2.2 Ethnicity, Religion and Gender

In this section, the excerpts show how the interconnected issues from ethnicity, gender and religion shaped the perceptions of South Asian women. Even though the majority of them did not believe that their ethnicity, gender or religion were inhibiting factors in their

career, the analysis of interviews suggests that for Muslim women, the religious beliefs guided their choice of profession. For example, Maria, a Bangladeshi Muslim, worked in accounts field with mostly men. She explained how uncomfortable she was at work because of working with opposite gender colleagues.

> My first accountancy job was male kind of, like the whole office was males… I struggled actually to keep up with that (B11-MR, 2).

Another Muslim woman from Pakistani group, Haya, had a different perspective of interacting or working with men. According to her, it was not the religion but the culture prohibiting women to work and compete with men in society. She believed there was nothing wrong in Muslim women working with men but because culturally, it was not encouraged, Muslim women tend to avoid working in the male-dominated fields.

> Islam says every man and woman can go to any length of education. That is a very common concept but the culture doesn't allow it. That is why education is so important in my life, if we don't educate women that they have those rights, they will never know they have those rights (P5-HA, 4).

In relation to dressing styles of Muslim women, participants in my study conveyed parental approval for wearing jeans as long as they maintained modesty. Even though Farida, who wore a Hijab, felt singled out at the university. She acknowledged the privilege Hijab offered to sustain her family expectations by practising modesty. She shared her views:

> I think in [a] culture, parents make very big part of your culture. So, that's why when I came here [university], I thought I definitely want to wear Hijab because I am not a party girl or something…don't want to do stuff like that. So, I don't really… culture definitely influence the way I am at university (B10-FA, 1).

Farida related her career perceptions to her religious beliefs and explained how she had overcome the stereotypical image in the wider community attached to her faith. She also related that people's assumptions about Muslim women are also shaped because of how the media portrays the Muslim community. She expressed that her major concern is that because she wears Hijab, it may present her as unapproachable by the employers.

Turning to the ethnicity-related perceptions, most of the participants seemed aware of the ethnic challenges they might come across in their transition to work. For example, Sonia perceived that the multi-layered issues related to her 'minority status and gender may contribute to making her job search difficult.

> First, you are woman and second you are [from an] ethnic minority, so, that is a worry. Just from my name they [employers] can't assume but when they see me, they will know. I know it and definitely it is something I worry and it's good to be aware of it (P1-SO, 1).

The above examples suggest that cultural practices and religious values are important for most South Asian women and therefore, have been influential in shaping their career perception. However, most women have used negotiations to balance parental expectation in line with cultural practices and their career in mainstream society. Thus, next section highlights the strategies young women used to overcome such challenges in mainstream society.

5.5.3 Strategies to Find Work

This section seeks to highlight the examples of how South Asian women navigate their career aims in order to fit into the wider society. They used various strategies to gain work experience and to avoid longing lengthy gaps in their employment. Whilst a few of the women mentioned working in the student-roles and volunteering at university, others planned to work in temporary roles in the family businesses to gain some experience for a better job. Sanam and Tina used social media to build their online portfolios and create professional networks. Raheela did an internship at the university that helped her in finding a job. She suggested that it is all about how the job application is written which makes an impact upon the recruiters. Baljeet in a similar vein, showed awareness of how competitive job search might be. She mentioned her strategies:

> I am hopeful to get a job. If I don't get a job, I will still apply in summer, or I am thinking of doing some volunteering, or I may be thinking of taking one whole year gap… But like that's going to be my last resort, but first I want to get a job (I-8-BA, 4).

In response to the question about how they searched for jobs, most responded that they

used online search engines and social media networks. In the following quote, Maria shared her experience:

> I looked at like recruitment [online] agencies. I looked at where and what I want to do really. And then I did little bit of research on what they [employers] are looking for (B11-MR, 2).

In contrast, the following participant, Tina who had recently started to work in a private company, explained that she did not find any help from her ethnic community. She believed that using online social media regularly was more helpful to her in building a professional network.

> I directly emailed people, employers, and as a part of our degree, we had to actually build a website and a blog… So, whatever project I was working, I had to write it in the blog every week and [I was] commenting on different inspirations I found and different elements of designs and all these kinds of things in a blog. And, [I was] just making sure that whenever I send my CV and my cover letter, and my CV had a link to my current website and my blog (I-6-TI, 4).

While Sanam, Tina and Raheela benefited from the online job search, Rufaida (Bangladeshi) was employed through a parental contact or temporary positions in their family businesses. The next section presents the examples of some of the alternative strategies South Asian women mentioned they might consider achieving their career goal.

The earlier family theme in section 5.2.2 illustrated how five participants were able to challenge their family boundaries and lived away from home in the university halls. This section provides examples of Maya, Haya and Sanam who, being aware of the current job market crises in the UK, were considering working abroad after finishing their studies. Like Haya, Sanam described working abroad will bring new avenues for career development which may provide professional growth and a chance to live independently. That being the case, Sanam mentioned she may travel abroad if she did not find work locally in future.

> I will apply to Dubai, New Zealand and Paris, everywhere. So, wherever I [will] get job, I will go. I want to get out of my comfort zone (P2-SA, 3).

Maya described her thoughts about how working abroad or in a diverse environment would place her at more comfort.

> … another thing [is] I want to travel. So, even if I do my placement in Japan, China or probably in India or like… if I stay in the UK, probably it will be somewhere around London. Because London is really good in terms of Jobs opportunities for females, and there is loads of diversity when you go, so you fit in. So, you don't feel pressured or you don't feel isolated in like job or work environment (I-7-MA, 3).

Although Baljeet and Sonia preferred to work locally, they mentioned that relocating anywhere in the UK was a doable step in finding a better job. For Baljeet, it was something her parents would happily agree to, as well as she was confident about her choice.

> They [parents] will be ok [for me to go abroad] and find my way like in studies as well, so, they will be ok. I am kind of traditional and I believe to be sticking to those [cultural] values around (I-8-BA, 4).

All of the Bangladeshi women, in contrast, expressed their preference of working locally. That said, three Bangladeshi women were already working within the same locality they lived in while the fourth one, Farida, who was still studying, mentioned having a similar preference to work within the nearby locality.

The data reported in this section suggests that young women are using various approaches to gain the additional qualification, work experience and professional skills to enhance their employability. Alongside, some of them are negotiating the perceived disadvantages attached to the interconnected issues of ethnicity, gender and social class. The comparative results indicate that most Pakistani and Indian women were considering travelling abroad or relocating within the UK to find a better job offer. Bangladeshi women however, preferred to work closer to their home location.

5.6 Summary of the Findings

This chapter presented the detailed findings of the interviews with twelve women from South Asian heritage. While exploring their social experiences during HE journeys, the analysis of interviews illuminated that the interplay of gender, ethnicity and social class had significant influences in shaping their views of employment. That said, young women's perceptions that determine their transition from university to work are classified under three major themes, each with several related sub-themes. These themes are as follows: 1)

family influences, 2) community influences, and, 3) mainstream society influences. The influences from the interplay of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class have been identified as influential at all the stages of young women's journeys having a central place.

The first theme, 'the family influences', suggested that most South Asian parents were enormously supportive to their daughters in achieving HE and employment goals regardless of their own educational, ethnic or social status. It elicited that although all fathers valued the HE qualification, they had different views on their daughters' employment, mainly due to the issues related to ethnic and religious beliefs. Three groups of mothers were significant, the educated and working, educated and non-working and the uneducated and non-working. Educated mothers were more influential in their daughter's HE journeys, particularly in the absence of the father. This was evident in Pakistani and Indian mothers particularly those who were divorced/separated. In contrast, Bangladeshi mothers had no or minimal education and were responsible for childcare and household activities. Although Bangladeshi mothers were equally supportive to their daughters' education and career, they tended to have no specific knowledge to guide their daughters in HE or in the job search. The analysis indicated that the family support was not only limited to the parents, but elder siblings and relatives in the extended family also encouraged these young women to pursue HE and employment.

The sub-themes exposed a number of issues around the subject of 'choice'. Although all parents and extended family members supported the decision of young women to go to university, there was evidence of family negotiations in choosing what to study and where to live. Some women had chosen subjects of study which their parents did not approve, which affected their relationship with the family. Whilst most fathers encouraged their daughters to stay away from home to attend university, a few mothers believed this will impact on their daughters' moral values and marriage prospects. Educated and economically independent mothers, however, were more flexible over their daughters' choice of living away than uneducated mothers who themselves did not attend the university. Unlike Bangladeshi women, most Pakistani and Indian women had negotiated their choice to stay away from home.

In the sphere of choice, another influential factor was related to marriage: arranged, semi-arranged and chosen. These marriage trends were found highly influential on women's HE and employment. Bangladeshi women tended to have more arranged marriages than

Indian and Pakistani women. All Bangladeshi women in this study agreed that in their culture, a woman with a university degree and a source of income would have more valued marriage proposals. The trend of marrying someone from home country was also common, particularly in Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups. Despite the consistent popularity of arranged marriages, the findings indicate that all participants were ambitious to continue to work in future, even after the marriage. The conflicting relationships with parents mentioned by three of the participants who claimed that they did not receive enough family support in their educational trajectories, set out the grounds for further discussion. These women believed that their experiences were emotionally challenged but not affected because they continued to demonstrate ambition in HE and career aims. They viewed their experiences as the opportunities to become mentally stronger so that they find their own ways to be successful.

The second theme, 'the community influences' highlighted the role of the ethnic community in shaping the perceptions of South Asian women's transition to employment. The findings suggest that ethnic communities act as social spaces where ethnic ties enable members to access community resources and information. Cohesive ethnic ties and common values identified in this study enforced ethnic values among young women. However, there were differences between the three subgroups and how they operate within each community. Pakistani and Indian women mostly connected with their ethnic communities to celebrate cultural events and festivals, whereas, Bangladeshi women joined them for religious and cultural affiliations and to get help to find work.

The findings in this section outlined the impacts and expectations of the ethnic community during educational journeys of South Asian women in shaping their perceptions of employment. Whilst for most young women their parental social networks in the community seemed to provide emotional support and encouragement for education and employment, a few women described having weak ethnic ties with these networks in the community. This was more evident in parental social networks of educated Pakistani parents and single mothers who lived independent lives with minimal or no involvement with the community. For most Indian parents, however, their family organizations within their ethnic community were constructed to accommodate the demands of contemporary society.

The findings suggested that ethnic communities act as social spaces where co-ethnic ties among members enforce access to community resources and information. Cohesive co-ethnic ties signified by common values and strong trust in this study tended to enforce ethnic values among participants. However, there were differences between the three sub-groups, Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi, and the routes they followed to fulfil their community expectations. Pakistani and Indian women mostly connected with their communities to celebrate cultural events and festivals, whereas Bangladeshi women joined them for enhancing their religious practices and to get help to find work. Overall, Indian and Pakistani young women spent more time socializing outside their communities, with education or employment colleagues. Therefore, they were found more likely to face challenges from connecting to people in the community, who feared that these women might lose their ethnic norms. Excerpts of Bangladeshi women suggested that they had stronger ethnic connections with their community. There was a slight change noted in the way Bangladeshi community implied cultural norms on young women as compared to previous research evidence. However, Bangladeshi women tended to socialize more within their community than other South Asian groups or outside society and therefore, were expected to abide by their cultural norms.

Correspondingly, educated and uneducated parents had differences in how they interacted with their ethnic communities. Educated parents, mainly Indian and Pakistani, joined the community for cultural events celebrations and religious festivals, Bangladeshi parents showed their belonging to the community via ethnic and religious practices. Thus, they were more influenced by social networks within the community. Furthermore, the ethnic community displayed a distinct pattern of approaches towards HE and career. Indian women acknowledged that they received motivation from the community to help them blend in mainstream society. This was opposite in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, particularly for Muslim women who faced restrictive boundaries for the same. Hence, these women were encouraged to adhere to ethnic and religious values within the community.

The third and the final theme associated with the perceptions of employment of these young women, 'the mainstream society influences', had three main areas of focus: the university life, the work life and the participants' perceptions of the Job market. All women in this study agreed that there was a great extent of change in how their culture was

viewed by mainstream society. The findings suggest that the transition was mentally processed and transformed during university. Shifting from the college to university life was a period of rapid and intensive change for all participants. That said, most participants believed that their colleagues in the university were willing to accept and explore their diversity, alongside, some of them were negotiating the perceived disadvantages attached to the interconnected issues of ethnicity.

In terms of socialisation within university most participants found it challenging to build friendships with other ethnic majority colleagues. The main reason they noted was related to the early university life bonding which mostly occurred during late-night parties and by drinking alcohol. Most participants, mainly those from the Muslim faith, did not join their colleagues in such get to gather for religious restrictions. In fact, most women also did not prefer such a social life as a personal choice. Alongside, because half of the total participants stayed at home while attended university, they were not allowed to go out late in the night or drink alcohol.

The university was not only a means of acquiring HE degree, but it served as a platform for many to transform as a person. The transformation they noticed was mainly through working in the leadership student-roles in the university ethnic societies and by representing the course they studied. These opportunities helped young women to enhance their professional skills and the confidence level. Some of these women were capable of generating their own social capital within university social networks as a means of resources of information and support.

These findings raise intriguing issues for discussion that despite having HE qualifications, some South Asian women tend to face disadvantages in finding work. However, the majority of the participants seemed aware of the current competitive job market. However, they did not believe that these challenges were directly related to their ethnicity, gender and social class. Indeed, some of them already had found work soon after their graduation. Those women who were already working were able to draw positive energy from their ethnicity, religion, and gender at work. Those who were still studying maintained that having higher qualification and some work experience would boost their chances of employment. On that premise, they seem willing to accept any job offer, even the temporary student roles or volunteering. Some Pakistani and Indian women shared their views on finding work abroad if they become unsuccessful in future in the local job

search. Turning to the different modes of job search, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women used university career schemes, online portals and social media websites, Bangladeshi women, in contrast, found jobs through their community referral or by the help of a relative. In essence, most Pakistani and Indian young women wanted to continue their studies in future regardless of their employment status.

The analysis was concluded by examining the interplay of multiple social relations, for example, how religion shapes the educational and career aspirations of these women. Although there is no obvious discrimination reported in the university or work environment, some women believed that the intersection of ethnicity, gender and social class was associated in general perceptions of their ethnicity and faith in the mainstream community. Another significant finding which indicated that some South Asian women found discrimination against their gender and ethnicity from their ethnic community and men from the same ethnic background than from ethnic majority.

Muslim mothers in this study, such as two Pakistani mothers had highest levels of education (PhD). The analysis suggested that for most Indian and Pakistani women, the levels of independence and freedom of choice were much higher than that of Bangladeshi women. Bangladeshi Muslim women's HE and career progression, however, was found restricted due to the religious values and practices related to the ways of dressing (hijab), socialising, food choices and alcohol consumptions. Women from Hindu, Christian and Sikh faith had no evidence of such restriction during their HE journeys. Bangladeshi parents are motivated towards their daughter's HE but their views on their employment are blurred due to ethnic and religious ties they have in their community. These women are trying to find ways to bridge and merge both the cultures together and yet pursue their education and career goals. So, the critical point is that the perceptions of South Asian women, particularly Bangladeshi women, are deeply rooted in their ethnic and religious practices within their families and communities. This also includes their family ties in the home countries as most of the South Asian parents were first generation and emotionally attached to their extended families back home. However, it is true to say that young women have come a long way to reach this level of engagement through constant negotiations to achieve HE and careers goals.

The chapter after this presents the discussion of the key findings. Due to the emergence of comprehensive and multi-layered issues in the findings, the discussion chapter is divided into two parts.

Chapter 6 Discussion Part 1

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main findings in accordance with the objectives of this study and the academic literature on British South Asian women's educational trajectories. It is in this chapter that I bring back Bourdieu's concepts that I introduced in chapter three, to interpret the in-depth meaning of participants' social experiences. That is to say that the concept of habitus, capital and field remain the primary theoretical influence to understand the social lives of these women. This research journey has brought me to the point where I have to look back at the research questions that I asked at the beginning of this thesis and evaluate how far the findings have answered these questions:

- In what ways have ethnicity, gender and social class shaped previous educational trajectories of South Asian women in this study?

- What are the perceptions of these South Asian women, as to how the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class impacts their ability to transit from university to the work environment?

Given the depth of the findings, discussion chapter is divided into two parts so as to develop profound insights into the issues surrounding the social experiences and perceptions of the participants in four overarching themes. This first part of discussion chapter covers two themes: (1) the influences from the family and, (2) ethnic community, and the second part discusses the influences from mainstream society: (3) the university life and, (4) job market experiences. It is important to note that throughout the discussion, these themes are recurring and overlapping and therefore, are referred to each other repeatedly in the context of the study. As Putnam (2000) says, it is not always so straightforward to 'pigeonhole' the examples into one of the above four themes, therefore, there will be some overlap in the discussion. The findings in this chapter are particularly valuable as the studies have shown that South Asian families and communities play a pivotal role in defining the access and acquisition of HE and employment of South Asian women (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016; Dale and Ahmed, 2011; Modood, 2012; Shah et al, 2010).

A brief introduction as to how Bourdieu is used in this study is presented, albeit this is not the place to discuss Bourdieu's work in detail as it has been debated exhaustively in chapter three. The focus of this thesis, therefore, is on the social spaces of these women in their families, communities and in the field of HE where the interplay of habitus and capital, determines how they seek their future fields such as employment. Given the ethnic background of these women, their own social space- family act as a field which has specific positions determined by the symbolic capital such as family relations and ethnic community networks. However, not everything is a field where the habitus of these women is shaped, it is rather a social space. The social space determines the relative position these women have, by possessing the right amount and forms of capital: cultural, social and economic. Women in this study hold symbolic capital (cultural, social and economic), however, their ethnic background impacts upon the choices they make during their HE trajectories. Therefore, to get into the field of employment, they need the right amount and forms of capital because what they have will determine how and where in the future field (employment), they will position themselves.

Habitus of these women as a cultural capital in embodied form is understood as an interrelated concept in the social fields. Bourdieu's (1991) assertion that habitus has capacities of improvised human conduct in social spaces is relevant to explain the embodiment of socio-cultural contexts of women: ethnicity, gender and social class, making their social life possible. In essence, by using Bourdieu's trilogy of habitus, capital and field, I sought to answer: (a) what capital these women had in entering the field of HE, (b) what capital they are left with and (c) what capital they deployed to move into the world of work. In doing so, how these women differed as being successful and unsuccessful, as well as how they view their position in the future field. Having this understanding as a base, I now turn to the discussion of the key findings drawing attention to the similarities and the differences between three sub-groups of British South Asians (Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi).

6.2 The Similarities

This section provides important discussion into the similar patterns identified in women's HE trajectories within and across three South Asian groups. South Asian groups in Britain are considered homogenous in most research by a vast majority (Khattab et al, 2011).

Parallel to the other evidence that suggests they differ in several ways within their family and community structures, this study has identified two key areas of similarity which are important to the context of this research. Here, I do not aim to discuss the natural forms of parental or community support, rather highlight those aspects which had minimal attention in the previous research such as the role of extended family members and the way ethnic community created the sense of belonging in young women's lives. These aspects are discussed in the following sections.

6.2.1 Family Support and Encouragement

Bourdieu (1990) emphasises the role of the family in the development of young people's habitus by bringing together elements of field, social class and culture. Women's early experiences provide the foundation of their habituses, more accurately 'dispositions' in Bourdieusian term, which are then accumulated layer upon layer. Bourdieu views the family as 'the field of relationships' comprised of 'dispositions' which are displayed, reinforced and maintained by the efforts of the family, presenting specific relations of interdependency (Atkinson, 2014). The early encounters of women predispose their habitus as to act in the ways of 'family culture' in their existing field of HE without being conscious of their doing so. Habitus thus generates the 'feel for the game' or their natural response. Based on this understanding, the following section presents the similarities among the three sub-groups of South Asian women.

One of the most notable similarity emerged among all groups was relate to the high levels of parental support and encouragement for their daughters regardless of parents' own education and occupation. Consistent with the findings of this study, several previous studies such as Hussain and Bagguley (2007), Ahmad (2003) and Abbas (2007), confirmed that South Asian parents have a higher educational expectation for their children and they invest more financially and emotionally. In this study, South Asian parents expected much from their daughters' education, achievement and ambition such as to find professional jobs and become financially independent. This approach matches with Pike and Kuh's (2005) views that parents want their children to go to the university to gain the knowledge and skills that lead them to high profile career. This idea also relates to the cultural explanation and orientation embedded within society towards education. As in my study, women's HE qualification is considered a channel for achieving the change in social class

and status from that of the parents (Katsillis and Armer, 2000; see also Wong, 2007). Support from South Asian parents is also highlighted in the work of Bhopal, (2009) who argue that not only parental support help South Asian women achieve HE, it allows young women to have a great say in determining how they wish to live their lives.

Here, relating to Bourdieu is crucial to building an understanding of how parents strive to maintain or improve their social position and that of their children. Bourdieu (2000) saw the family as a child's training ground for future field struggle, or for the search for recognition, which is shaped by distinguishing others within the field. Thus, in a family social space, trust, values and interests are influenced and exchanged. The relationship between parents and their daughters in this thesis is based on the construction and consumption of symbolic capital. University education is perceived as an important factor in 'prestige and prosperity' mirroring Bui's (2002) research that gaining HE demonstrates bringing honour and respect to their families. Hence, sending their daughters to universities was constitutive of the use of economic and symbolic power by the parents.

Gaining HE was seen as family honour, rather than an individual matter in South Asians. By considering how culture and religion intersect to produce expectation in social lives, religious values of young women are typically influenced by patriarchal views such as disapproval of chosen marriages, not allowing to live away from home to attend university or engaging in pre-marital intimate relationships (Inman, 2006). In line with previous studies on South Asian parental motivation for their daughters' education (Ahmed, 2001; Shah et al, 2010), all fathers in this study were also highly supportive to their daughters' HE. By allowing their daughters to go to university, fathers were not only assured for the economic stability of their daughters in future, but they also gained prestige and honour within their social networks in the community. This is linked to Bourdieu's concept of habitus and cultural capital required to facilitate individuals' achievements despite parents' academic and social class background (Modood, 2006). Indeed, Shah et al (2010) viewed strong parental engagement as a form of aspiration and a mode of combining community networks in the form of 'ethnic capital' through which uneducated fathers transmit their aspirations and goals to their daughters.

While engaging with community members, these parents described themselves as 'modern' and liberal which in a way, helped them to overcome from the stereotypes of the patriarchal and traditional background depriving young women of education and career

success (Ahmed, 2001). For example, Raheela was aware that her first-generation father and grandfather were anxious of her university choice and later, how they could change their perspectives on university education. In addition, HE also served as a route to get decent marriage proposals from the ethnic community of similar or above social class which fathers thought was something to be proud of their educated daughters. This is in contrast to the previous research of Bhopal (1997) in East London that situates South Asian families exercising patriarchal boundaries to educate their daughters. While her work mainly relied upon theories of patriarchy, she also highlights the process of increasing empowerment of the younger generation through education and employment. Bhopal points to the use of agency by young South Asian women in a patriarchal family construct. However, to be successful in mainstream society as Bhopal views, may result in distancing these women from their cultural and religious affiliations.

For women in this study, going to HE was a positive and transformative experience as well as it brought honour and respect for their family. Young women saw their time in HE as an opportunity to make independent choices and develop professional and personal skills for future employment to become confident for the competitive job market. For some, HE was a favourable setting to construct new identities apart from ethnic and religious identities that they were born with. Indeed, by choosing HE, some women (Bangladeshi and Pakistani) were able to delay arranged marriages and the demands and responsibilities marriage would bring to their lives.

Moreover, intergeneration transmissions of cultural, social and educational values are important considering family as 'mentor' and 'strategists' (Croll, 2004, p.397-98). According to Bourdieu, the cultural capital elements of transfer; the knowledge, competence, education, values, beliefs and lifestyle were significant to this study. The intergenerational transmission in this study is interpreted as the transfer of cultural values accumulated and owned by the parents to their daughters. These intergenerational resources match with how Crozier and Davies (2006) identify that family members provide sources of information by sharing their knowledge and experiences with their daughters. This study, therefore, suggests that the direct support from parents in the form of financial and moral support provide women with the opportunities to exercise independence as symbolic capital, in choosing the way of life.

Another consistent and productive pattern of support in the construction of habitus of these women was the encouragement from the extended family in contrast to the previous claims which often portrayed them as negative and restrictive (Ballard, 2003; Becher, 2008). Their inspirational roles were seen as a support network serving to overcome the limitation of parental social capital in preparing them for the university. The extended family members encouraged these women by sharing their success stories and providing career advice. Some had a number of educated uncles, aunts and older siblings who worked in professional jobs. For example, Tahmina who wanted to become a teacher cited the positive influence of her aunt who was also a teacher. Tahmina was supported by her aunt during to cope with the academic demands at university and to find her first job. This finding points out that even though young women did not inherit habitus, it developed from and influenced by their surroundings (Reay, 2004). This evidence, therefore, indicates the importance of external factors (Wentworth and Peterson, 2001) in young women's HE trajectories that positive roles played by the extended family are likely to increase women's career aspiration.

Pointing to the research claims for 'career role modelling' (Lander and Santoro, 2017; Karunanayake and Nauta, 2004), this study suggests that young women in this study learn from watching other successful women in the family or community to pave their career paths. The role of extended family in this context relates to the concept of 'high-status role models' that Crozier and Davies (2006) used in their work. They illuminated the role of other family members particularly females, as inspirational to younger women. Crozier and David linked to support from aunts, uncles and older siblings as intergenerational resources implicated in women's HE decisions. In this way, the knowledge about university subjects and expectations were transmitted by those who already had been to university, for example, Sonia's sister who recently did master's course and set an inspiration for Sonia to follow (see section 5.2.1 in chapter five). This result is parallel to other research such as Lindstrom, Doren, Metheny, Johnson and Zane (2007) and Karunanayake and Nauta (2004) affirming that university students tend to benefit from role models of similar gender and race as their own.

These findings, therefore, suggest the need for family support to be acknowledged, encouraged and viewed as a strength of young women. Combined with parental support, the role of extended family members must be recognised as an important factor in

women's HE trajectories supporting the claim that encouragement from significant others in the family is likely to increase young women's career aspiration. Given the evidence of family support in all sub-groups, the following section presents the discussion of the similarities in relation to the ethnic community belonging in young women's HE trajectories.

6.2.2 Community Belonging

Community networks in this study refer to the connections of loyalty, mutual obligations and encouragement to young people for education and career (Gold, 1995). Community networks are meaningful for the identification, production and the use of social capital (Takhar, 2006). Community is a generic concept with numerous meanings and contexts in sociology. Stebbins (1987) defines that 'community is a social group with a common territorial base; those in the group share interests and have a sense of belonging to the group" (p. 534). South Asian communities in Britain are viewed with regards to their 'ethno-religious' diversity rather than 'ethno-national' identities (Peach, 2006: 140). Researchers have pointed out that educational and career aspirations of these groups are hugely shaped by their religio-cultural norms and practices (Ahmed, 2003; Shah et al, 2010). While defining community of South Asian groups in this study, I considered contexts of each ethnic community within which South Asian families are situated. More recent research (Shah, 2017) shows that this social context has created opportunities for the development of communal identities, and a proliferation of new ways of settlement among second generation of South Asians.

As a process of symbolic struggle, the culture of South Asian community is embedded within the power relations that strive to define a hierarchy of values to sustain their cultural meanings. As Bourdieu (1985) explains, the work of symbolic struggle is the 'work of producing and imposing meaning, hence, the legitimate vision of the social world'. Thus, the relational power that defines the hierarchy of values, structure a social field: 'South Asian community' as in this study, and is referred to as 'logic of the field' (Grenfell, 2009, p. 20). South Asian community served as a 'social field' consisting of social spaces within which young women's social experiences and perceptions were shaped.

This study finds the significance of social networks as 'ethnic capital' proposed by Crozier and Davies (2006) and Modood (2004, cited in Shah et al, 2010) which are useful in transferring cultural norms and values among young people. Dissemination of these values is evident by young women's belonging to the ethnic community. Agreeing with what Zhou (2005) believed, the components of 'ethnic capital' such as familial relationships, socialisation such as celebrating cultural festivals are the forms of ethnic capital in this study. This result resembles with prior research of Shah et al, (2010), Hartas (2015) and Dale and Ahmed (2011) proving the importance of social networks of family and friends in the community that operate as resources to direct young women to success. The forms of capital were conceived and exchanged across different social fields in the community (Russell, 2016), however, the ways of access to different capitals and how they operated in different social contexts, created advantages and disadvantages for young women.

To understand the positioning of women, I relate to how Bourdieu (1977) invokes the term 'disposition' in different contexts to first describe habitus as a system of lasting, transposable dispositions by integrating past experiences and then explains the embodied cultural capital as 'long-lasting disposition of the mind and body' (p.47-48). Although accumulation of embodied cultural capital and development of habitus appear as two separate but distinct processes, they are rather connected with each other in the same process (Moore, 2008). Accumulated capital adds to the existing dispositions of agents as valuable assets that can be utilised in the fields of social action. To take the example of parents in this study, their interactional dispositions manifested in social contacts in the ethnic community may benefit their daughters. There is evidence that suggests that the disposition of parental involvement such as support and respect are considered legitimate and more likely to positively affect educational journeys of their children (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014).

Furthermore, some researchers, such as Nash (2005a:15) use the term 'cognitive dispositions' referring to a set of mental dispositions to process symbolic information. This explanation highlights that the cognitive dispositions of these women are part of their structured dispositions which are acquired in their cultural setting whereby these women are expected to adopt the established practices of their communities (Nash, 2005b). To elaborate on this point, Bourdieu (1992) associates the term 'cultural nobility' to the

struggle between different social groups regarding the ideas of culture and their legitimate relation to culture. In line with this argument, the most consistent form of symbolic capital in the community was the support to young women by enhancing the sense of belonging to South Asian culture. More specifically, these parental networks helped women shape the meanings that define their attachment to the values of South Asian culture, such as respecting and obeying the parents. It was in this context that these women were able to define and redefine their cultural identities in British society. However, all women cited that community support was not specifically directed towards HE or to find qualified jobs.

In one sense, although this finding confirms the importance of social networks within the community to enhance cultural norms and values, young women expected specific support in their career which was lacking. A study conducted by George and Chaze (2009) found similar results that highly educated South Asian women do not merely rely on ethnic community networks for career support, rather they create their own social networks by exercising agency in looking for and finding employment. This result also resembles with Bhopal's (2009) work, she concluded that by achieving HE and employment in mainstream society, South Asian women gain social mobility and they are able to adapt and negotiate their identities in their communities. This evidence perhaps explains why these second-generation South Asian women differ from their first-generation parents in associated themselves more with the wider society than the cultural practices defined by the ethnic community. More on the contrasting views between young women and parents in this study are discussed in section 6.3 of this chapter.

This study, therefore, suggests that although entering university education is a great achievement for South Asian women and their families, the assumption is that these women create 'bonding capital' within their communities and 'bridging capital' with other groups in the society. Putnam (2000: 22) defines bonding social capital as 'exclusive' and 'inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups'. Bridging capital, on the other hand, is 'inclusive, 'outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages (ibid). In this study, the bonding capital was associated with women's informal interactions with community people with similar characteristics such as ethnicity, language and religious background. Bridging capital, on the other hand, provided young women access to external networks and resources allowing them to 'get

ahead' (Holland, et al, 2008: 101). My study relates bridging capital of women in the university interactions with students from the wider community. Reference to university experiences of women is discussed in part two of discussion chapter in section 7.2.

The evidence in this study suggests that the fundamental capabilities and capacities of South Asian women's habitus are contingent upon the structure of the ethnic community directing their practices as individuals. The unique contribution of this study, therefore, although limited in its generalisability, is that the high levels of education of South Asian women, enhance their ability to generate forms of social capital inside and outside ethnic community. That means the concept of habitus as a system of durable and largely unconscious dispositions helps to conceptualise on one hand, how social relations of these women are internalised as 'natural', and how the principles of social organisations; ethnic communities on the other, are embodied such that these women are capable of generating forms of capital (education and employment).

To extend my discussion on women's social positioning in South Asian sub-groups, following section discusses different influences from their families and communities.

6.3 The Differences

The findings in this section attempt to add a unique contribution to the literature by pointing to the differences in the ways South Asian families and communities influence young women's educational trajectories shaping their perceptions of transition. The differences are not only experiences of women's sense of identity in ethnic community, but they augment the relationship between habitus and field (Noble, 2013). For example, in Bourdieu's view (1991), the differences are crucial to the constitution of a field and therefore, are understood as the extent to which current fields, Family, ethnic community and HE, for example, permeate new fields of employment. The discussion is based on two key themes; the family influences and the community influences organised into two categories: family structure and family process. The structural influences focus on parental education and occupation and lone-mother families, and the influences from family processes highlight the choice issues and the role of parental social networks.

6.3.1 Influences from the Family Structure

Despite the argument in the literature over Bourdieu's limited emphasis on family (Reay et al, 2005), Bourdieu offers a clear and robust means of conceptualizing family as a 'field' for a relatively autonomous system of relations between agents (Atkinson, 2014). For Bourdieu (1996) family's structure, both immanent and transcendent to individuals, is being rooted in social structures and mental structures to enhance their learning. In this study, family is seemed as a part of the social structure, which is bound by social expectations in terms of reciprocal obligations and bonding among family members (Atkinson, 2014). However, family is also regarded as having subjective dimensions of individual dispositions as 'family habitus'. This means that family is both 'an objective social category' (a structuring structure) and 'a subjective mental category' (a structured structure) used by the individuals to bring together representations and actions coming from the social world (Bourdieu, 1996, 1998). In other words, family on one hand is capable of constructing individuals' habitus and on the other, is shaped by the individuals' habitus. Applying this concept to my thesis, the dual nature of the family reveals the existence of family habitus, which includes common dispositions.

Taking this understanding further, I argue that individual's own trajectory may also play a role, not just in terms of the shifts in the relative power of each member, but it includes all the possible disappointments, and evolutions of the family from conflicts, separation and reconstitution (Brown, 2010). The following discussion clarifies how the differences in the structure of South Asian families influence young women's perceptions of transition by (a) parental education and occupation and (b) the role of lone mothers.

6.3.1.1 Parental Education and Occupation

Parental involvement is seen as having positive influences upon their in children's educational experiences (Lefevre and Shaw, 2012). Parental engagement particularly from educated parents, is more beneficial in young people's aspiration (Felliciano, 2006). The interconnectivity of family influences and parental education was revealed from how different parental roles were exercised in HE choices. For example, educated parents (Indian and Pakistani) were involved more in their daughters' HE decisions in comparison to uneducated parents (Bangladeshi) who although encouraged their daughters to achieve HE, they were not able to provide direct and specific support in choosing the career. This

finding is consistent with the work of Richardson (2015), and Crozier (2006, 2009) who concluded that uneducated parents tend to have less access to high-quality resources in mainstream society and therefore, are unable to motivate and encourage their children. Educated parents were involved in strategic planning and conversation about HE choices and hoped their daughters to obtain professional roles such as doctors or teachers. These parents had exposure to the field of HE and therefore, displayed an independent approach by allowing their daughters to explore the choices themselves. Heath, Fuller and Johnston's (2010) research is consistent with this finding indicating that the educated parents usually do not engage in lengthy discussions with their children pertaining to HE choices, rather encourage them to make own decisions with minimal guidance.

Moreover, women born to educated parents cited having certain benefits from a home environment that encouraged their cognitive and social skills development. The example of parental support Maya (Indian) and Haya (Pakistani) talked about, such as the provision of resources, books and computer at home and the encouragement to do well are the examples of deliberate parental actions of support. This result resembles with previous studies by Bodovski (2010) and Nisbett (2009) who concluded that high levels of parental education enhance their involvement in their children's education and career decision making. Another relevant match is the study by Vincent, Rollock, Ball and Gillborn (2012) on Black ethnic minority students in England considering the respective roles of race and class in shaping parents' educational strategies. They concluded that ethnic minority parents in professional roles, deploy a range of social, cultural and economic resources as strategies to defend and resist misrepresentations of themselves and their children based on discrimination and stereotypical perceptions of parental social class. They suggest that parental strategizing can lead to the remaking of racial meaning in their children's lives as they present purposeful, knowledgeable and engaged parental identities to counter the dominant White stereotypes of lacking in these attributes. On the bases thereof, this study re-emphasises that educated South Asian parents positively influence their daughters' education and enhance their career aspirations.

Looking at strategies of uneducated parents such as informal support by providing a comfortable home environment and encouragement to their daughters to continue HE is relevant to women's perceptions of transition. Bourdieu (1991) argues that not all family appropriations gain symbolic recognition and may only display possession of some

resources. Some of these women mentioned that their parents want them to have a better position in the labour market than what they had to face in their time. Here, the previous challenging employment experience of uneducated parents seem to be converted into high expectations from their educated daughters. Thus, even though uneducated parents lacked cultural capital to cultivate their daughters' education, they used other forms of capital such as emotional support and encouragement to their daughters, which is crucial for young women's achievement and mental wellbeing (Pallais and Turner, 2006). This result shows that the lower socio-economic status of uneducated parents sparked a desire for their daughters to achieve HE and be different from their parents.

This result contrasts to the previous research claims that parental social class and low socio-economic status may limit young people's career aspirations (Blustein, 2006). Consistent with other studies (McCarron and Kinkelas, 2006; Pascarella, 2006), this study suggests that uneducated parents although are unable to offer specific advice on career, their support and motivation is a fundamental element for the success of their daughters. These patterns of support from uneducated parents seemed to make a difference in breaking the cycle of early economic instability of their families. This evidence also counters the work of Saunders (2002) who argues that 'able parents will be more likely to produce relatively able children and these children will often, therefore, emulate the achievements of their parents'.

Along with parental education, the patterns of parental support have a clear distinction between the role of fathers and mothers among the three groups. As this study suggests, the flexible approach by educated Indian and Pakistani fathers can be assumed as an early sign of the shift of power relation within the family structure. As Bourdieu (1990) posits, the notion of a field in a family is an autonomous system of relations among family members displaying unequal power possessions (capitals). South Asian parents and their daughters in this study, in the 'relational field of family, although united by specific family doxa, had different levels of authority, which Bourdieu calls 'symbolic power'. However, educated parental strategies were aimed at empowering their daughters to lead an independent life. These fathers believed that their daughters have enough cultural capital (knowledge, values and respect) and therefore are able to make sensible choices.

Bangladeshi fathers, however, lacking own cultural capital (as being uneducated) showed restrictive patterns of accepting their daughters' choices. For example, Bangladeshi women

cited that by being restrictive, their father aimed for protecting them from the liberal influences of Western culture on their moral development (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010). Maria's father, for example, showed concerns about her daughter working with men. This might be related to the assumption that Muslim women are prohibited to interact with men who are not from close family and women's marriage prospects might be affected by working with males. In another example, where Rufaida's father did not allow her to stay late in the evening in the university, assuming that she might not be safe among male colleagues in the university in the late hours. These examples draw attention to the influences of familial habitus among educated fathers who appeared highly influenced by the cultural patterns of patriarchy (Charsley and Shaw, 2006) to have control over women in the familial structures. Similar results were found by Crozier's (2009) who argue that uneducated South Asian fathers in their research did not want their daughters to go away and rather attend the local university.

Roles of educated and uneducated mothers also brought a significant difference among the three sub-groups. As findings indicated, educated mothers (Indian and Pakistani) played influential roles in young women's HE in contrast to uneducated (Bangladeshi) mothers who themselves did not attend university, neither worked outside the home. At a deeper level, uneducated mothers may have unwittingly foreclosed discussing career options with their daughters based on their limited autonomy and experience. This corresponds with the prior study of Bhopal (2011) suggesting that married mothers spend a great deal of their time and energy on caring for immediate family and have limited opportunities and interests to form social networks outside of the household. Similar results are reflected in Khambhaita's (2014) work concluding that economically inactive South Asian mothers are reluctant to play a strong role in their daughter's education due to the lack of the skills and confidence. Thus, this study suggests that family obligations and objections for South Asian women are stricter for daughters of uneducated parents than those who have educated parents (Bhopal, 2011). Based on these findings, this study adds to the body of research by highlighting the relevance of parental education as a form of cultural capital, enhancing the independence of these women.

Previous research evidence mainly highlighted South Asian fathers' support in the education and employment of their children (Shah et al, 2010; Castillo and Fenzl-Crossman, 2010). To this must be added that many of these studies tend to focus primarily

on certain perspectives of family structures, such as parental working-class (Shah et al, 2010) or marriage issues (Charsley and Shaw, 2006). Most Bangladeshi fathers had financial roles and therefore, were withdrawn from the responsibilities of looking after children, yet overseeing the educational side of children. Indian and Pakistani families, on the contrary, had shared family roles between mother and father. Indeed, in some families, mothers held higher qualification than fathers and therefore, were in the lead role, as in Maya's case (see section 5.2.1 of chapter five). It also proves that parental education is a more significant factor than parental occupation or socio-economic status in the education of their children (Anderson and Minke, 2007). This particular finding, therefore, is the indication that by living in the Westerns culture in the UK, the gendered roles in South Asian families, particularly amongst educated and working families are evolving and becoming more interchangeable.

This study proposes that while parental education is the key to young women's high career aspiration, it is not a totally negative situation for a South Asian woman to come from a disadvantaged background, as there are many other forms of capital (such as parental support and motivation) that could assist them in achieving social mobility (Crozier and Davies, 2006). Further to this, whilst most of the families were of the traditional structure with married parents and siblings, the distinctive roles played by two lone-mothers are important to discuss in relation to the impact upon HE trajectories of their daughters. The following section illustrates the discussion in much detail.

6.3.1.2 Lone-Mother Families

Being married in South Asian culture increases the likelihood of creating social networks within the ethnic community as marriage integrates individuals into larger family networks and provides opportunities and resources for exchanging support with relatives (Oliker, 1989). In this study, ten out of twelve families were of traditional structure, with married parents (mother and father) who relied on one another for emotional and instrumental support. In the light of the fact that mothers are often primary caretaker after divorce or separation (Castillo and Fenzl-Crossman, 2010), two Pakistani families in this study were run by lone mothers. Lone-mother families are characterized differently by the researchers and policymakers in the UK than families with mother and father. Among several categorizations of lone parenthood, one example is that almost half of the White lone

mothers have never been married (Gregg, Harkness and Smith, 2009) and often come from disadvantaged groups, dependent upon State (Rowlingson and McNay, 2014).

Pakistani lone mothers in this study were previously married and possessed high levels of education and full-time jobs. Their education had a powerful impact upon their daughters' (Sanam and Raheela) progress to HE and career which supports the findings from Strand (2011). The emotional support, encouragement and expectations they had from their lone mothers made them realise their family responsibilities and why they must have a high career. This was exemplified in their narratives showing commitment and inspiration by the determination of their mothers who raised and educated them. This also means if these women were not successful in their HE and career, it would disappoint their mothers and may lead to psychological distress among family members (Amato, 2000). This evidence is in contrast to the prior claim that single-parent families are often lower educated and lower achieving families (Artis, 2007; Boyle, Georgiades, Racine and Mustard, 2007; Dale, Lindley and Dex, 2006). Here, I contend that there is little evidence of research pertaining to the social positioning of lone mothers within South Asian families and the communities. Above studies reflect the results of White lone mothers and not exactly represent South Asian lone mothers.

Unlike lone mothers from the White background, Pakistani lone mothers face rejection and disapproval from their families and ethnic community where a divorced woman is not respected in the same manner as a married woman (Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw, 2014). Thus, to increase the feelings of competence, personal worth and self-confidence, women in this situation, seek support from informal networks, family for instance. However, when support from informal networks is insufficient or not available, individuals tend to seek support from formal networks (Castillo and Fenzl-Crossman, 2010). By contributing information, resources and access to career opportunities to lone mothers who are coping with various stressors, formal social networks may assist and support them in fulfilling their parental responsibilities of maintaining engagement with their children's education (Wills and Shinar, 2000). This explanation relates to lone mothers in this study who were coping with the combination of psychosocial, familial, cultural and religious hardships, may be at an increased risk of not having enough supportive resources. These educated lone-mothers created social ties with external sources where they were not judged against their marital status, which is rarely tackled in previous research showing that Pakistani

families tend to rely on ethnic community resources. The study of Freistadt and Strohschein (2012) on lone mothers reflected similar findings marching this study that lone-mother families generally do not respond to the local community in the way married parents do.

On one hand, although lone mothers had HE qualification which is considered prestigious in South Asian culture, on the other hand, there are explicit views on the stigma of divorce and how South Asian families try to avoid it (Bano, 2007). Given the stressors men and women experience at or after the dissolution of marriage, these women may be susceptible for stigma and rejection from family and community for not abiding with cultural and religious expectations (Shah-Kazemi, 2001). Many authors have looked into these issues more closely (Bano, 2011; Shah-Kazemi, 2001; Qureshi et al, 2014) debating over the stereotypical assumption that a Muslim woman must not demand the divorce from man. One reason pointed out in previous research is related to lack of education and economic independence of women from these groups (Castillo and Fenzl-Crossman, 2010; Khambhaita, 2014). These claims are disqualified in the present study because both lone mothers were university educated and had professional valued jobs in mainstream society. In other words, given HE qualification, and stable employment, these mothers have higher levels of human, social, cultural and symbolic capital, all of which may contribute positively to understanding and acknowledging their roles within their families and ethnic communities. This result corresponds with the work of Boyle, and colleagues (2007) claiming that high levels of parental education and resources are associated with successful family functioning.

The position of lone mothers in their families and community, therefore, is to be understood relative to the traditional arranged marriage practices within South Asian families. Whilst arranged marriages were previously seen safer than chosen marriages, women's narratives in this study marked arranged marriages as riskier resonating the views of Qureshi and colleagues (2014). For example, along with Sanam, Raheela, and Farida believed that they will not be able to cope up with an arranged marriage in future if their spouse asked them to not go to work. These women considered arranged marriage as a threat to economic and personal independence. More on changing patterns of arranged marriages amongst South Asian groups is discussed in section 6.4 of this chapter. Although exploring the exact cause of divorce of these lone mothers was out of

the scope of this study, the fact that both these mothers had arranged marriages raises questions on the outcomes of arranged marriages. This finding draws attention to the marital instability and recent increase in divorce rate among South Asian families in the UK (Bano, 2011; Qureshi et al, 2014). Most of the marital instability is seen as a result of arranged are aligned with cultural and family expectations, albeit do not bring personal fulfilment (Shah-Kazemi, 2001).

This study, therefore, suggest that although educated lone mothers hold added responsibilities in the family field, they are able to set examples for their daughter's that being equipped with the right amount and the form of capital (such as education and skills), family functioning can be improved which equals to the families who have support from mother and father. This study adds to the literature that by having informal support networks, both from within and outside the ethnic community, South Asian lone mothers may come to identify multiple resources (Lin, 2000), available to them to positively shape their daughters' perceptions of transition to work.

6.3.2 Influences from Family Processes

This section discusses the influences from the family processes in young women's educational trajectories. The discussion focuses on HE decisions and parental social networks in the career success of these women. Although previous literature has indicated the importance of family processes in young people's life choices, particularly education (Lindstrom et al, 2007; Whiston and Keller, 2004), the nature and the extent of the influences within South Asian families upon the choices of educated young women yet to be determined and fully described. Consistent with prior research documenting the importance of family influences, and as argued by Freistadt and Strohschein (2012), the findings of this study confirm that the patterns of family interactions have great impact on educational trajectories of British South Asian women. The discussion in the following section throws light on the value participants attribute to their choices of education and employment, and their determination to re-work gender identities within the social fields of their families and communities.

6.3.2.1 The Choice Issues

Although career thoughts of young people are formed from their childhood, they became particularly important when they start university education (Lustig, Xu and Strauser, 2017). The section starts with a focus on capital, I explore the nature of the resources that are used by South Asian families to support their daughters in the university decisions. I consider the extent to which parents are involved, and what form their involvement takes. These women had to negotiate parental and community expectations directing their HE choices. In line with other studies on HE choices of South Asian students, such as Modood (2005) and Richardson (2015) women in this study differed in making HE choices from White students who appeared more independent in making decisions.

As indicated in section 5.2.2 in chapter five, the perceptions shaped during family negotiations influenced HE decision of women and contributed to their post-university choices, employment and marriage for instance. As Bourdieu (1984: 471) asserts, perception of the world is shaped by the family place within the social structure, and in the processes of socialisation individuals learn what hopes and aims are reasonable, as 'objective limits become a sense of limits, sense of one's place which leads one to exclude oneself from the goods, persons, place and so forth from which, one is excluded'. Based on my understanding of Bourdieu's concept, it is not only the availability or the lack of capitals (for example economic capital) that shape young women's choices, it also depends upon how these capitals are operationalised within and across different social fields (for example the negotiations by women) whereby forms of capitals can be exchanged due to the influences from familial habitus. The biggest impact upon their likelihood of being independent in their choices, as also found by Dale and Ahmed (2011), was related to whether and to what extent they themselves were motivated to pursue their career aims. Bourdieu (1986) asserts that it is within the varying forms of capital- cultural, social and economic, within which individuals' choice is embedded and contrasted across the lifetime. This concept was highly influential in shaping the choices of these women as their habitus was shaped within their families and from the outside world where they engaged in HE and work.

While all parents encouraged their daughters to go to university, they expected them to do so by maintaining the religious and cultural modesty. They expected their daughters to

accept and value their opinion because symbolically as parents, they held more power. However, as Bourdieu argues, family members are not always regulated by the family principles which are asserted as *symbolic power*. They rather develop their own worldviews, in addition to the primary habitus formed within the family field, through schemes of perceptions and experiences- objective and subjective schemes of the world around them (Atkinson, 2014). Women in this study had more cultural capital in the form of HE compared to their parents, particularly, Bangladeshi parents. Their career choices were shaped more by their social encounters in the university and by working with White majority groups rather than their parental culture. Moreover, being the UK born and educated, these women expected the same career prospects as their White colleagues as reflected in the views of Basit (2017). They felt they are no less in capabilities, qualification and language proficiency than White students.

Despite all parents wanted their daughters to go to university, the evidence of family negotiations in choosing the subject of study and the place to live during university are important marks of family interactions. Clearly, ways of family negotiation varied across three sub-groups. Bangladeshi parents being non-directional to their daughters' HE and specific career choices indicate lack of family interaction and support to these women resulting in high confusion and decision-making abilities resembling Smith's (2011) study who concluded that insufficient family processes are the main reason for blurred career choices and lack of commitment in young people. Pakistani and Indian parents on the other hand, although had an important discussion with their daughters, they expected them to make their own choices promoting the idea of independence (Abbas, 2007; Bhopal, 2009; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010). Some exceptions are the examples of Sonia and Raheela demonstrating contrasting views between parental expectation and young women's choices discussed in section 6.5 in more details. These results echoed with the study of Anderson and Minke (2007) pointing to the importance of parental involvement in the education and career of their children. This study suggests that while positive family interaction can help young women to become competent and confident individuals in decision making, the lack of family interaction in relation to specific career advice may lead to confusion and inability to make decisions among young women.

Some family negotiations turned out to be useful for women such as parental concerns over the affordability of allowing young women to stay away from home during their

university. The fact that financial constraints may result is decreasing the academic performance of young people (Crawford and Greaves, 2015), participants who stayed with parents benefited from family negotiation such as Maria, Tina (Indian), Sonia and Sanam (Pakistani). These women cited that staying at home not only fulfilled parental expectation, but it also freed them from worries of paying rentals and bills during the period of their studies. This could be understood as for why most young South Asian people tend to live with parents until they get married, unlike their White counterparts who leave the parental house for many other reasons (Heath, 2008). These results are consistent with what Khambhaita and Bhopal (2015) argue that lower-income South Asian students may not move away from home to attend university because of the costs associated with relocation and cultural constraints. This study, therefore, adds to the literature that although economic barriers may restrict young women to live away from parental home and exercise independence, they can benefit greatly on the other aspects such as parental support and saving money on rentals and travel.

It can also be suggested that even with intergenerational transformations within South Asian families marked by increased HE and employment of young women (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016; Dale and Ahmed, 2011), choosing the place to live during university remain major concerns for many families, particularly those with disadvantaged socio-economic background. With this understanding, I move on to the next section to discuss the relevance of parental social networks and highlight how young women's choice was shaped within these discourses.

6.3.2.2 Parental Social Networks

Parental social networks played important role in young women's HE and influenced their lives greatly. Social networks provided emotional and instrumental support to parents to help them meet parental responsibilities and overcome challenging conditions (Lin and Ensel, 1989-cited in Castillo and Fenzl-Crossman, 2010). Although ethnic community networks are not directly linked to post-university employment of women, this study discovered that there are important influences from parental engagement with the community impacting their daughters' HE and career.

Consistent with the previous work of Crozier (2009), this study suggests that South Asian parents with limited social capital create social networks outside the ethnic community to

support their children. The fact that educated Indian and Pakistani parents worked in professional roles in mainstream society, they had more social connections outside their ethnic societies. In contrast, Bangladeshi parental views on their daughters HE and employment were more influenced by the people in their ethnic community. These parents had limited cultural capital and lesser opportunities to develop social capital outside their community. Although some earlier studies support that parental networks in the ethnic community can help ethnic minorities find work (Dustmann, et al 2011; Patacchini and Zenou, 2012), in my study, it is partly true. Parental connection with the ethnic community was helpful to some Bangladeshi women in getting non-qualified roles, however, working in such roles did not produce a huge impact upon increasing job prospects in mainstream society.

Arguably, the effectiveness of ethnic community connections with wider society may be diminished by working in non-qualified roles within the ethnic community (Hartas (2015). For example, Bangladeshi women who spent most of their post-qualification time within their own community by working in family businesses, had limited access to the information and resources about jobs in mainstream society, leaving them far behind in their professional career. This result resonates with what Battu, et al (2011) found that when ethnic minority young people are not assimilated with wider society, they are likely to use parental social networks within the community as the main method of job search.

This finding also proves that parental social capital created in the ethnic community can contribute to social inequality rather than a cure (Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne and Solomos, 2007) in the social cohesion of young women. The findings of this study are in contrast to the popular conception that all social connections contribute to social capital. Different compositions and effects in relation to South Asian parental participation in ethnic communities brought different outcomes. Parallel to the views of Cheong et al (2007), this study therefore suggests that the potential impact of parental social network on women's social cohesion is dependent upon the ways in which its effects are either enhanced or diminished with the wider society Hence, greater parental immersion within mainstream society will increase the likelihood of generating social networks that can help their daughters' find qualified job opportunities.

Conversely, Indian and Pakistani women mainly relied upon online job search engines as their major job search method. For example, parents of Tina (Indian) and Raheela

(Pakistani) had no obvious social connections with the ethnic community. These women acquired opportunities to develop their own social capital first, during the university period by utilising the career services, and then in the job market by benefiting from social media connections. This disapproves the previous claim by Pellizzari (2010), arguing for the effectiveness of using friends and family as a job search mechanism. Whilst this might be true for first-generation South Asian women who had limited cultural capital, women in my sample with HE and professional skills have the ability to explore several options to search for jobs matching their qualification and capabilities. In a way, this result also contrasts with Zwysen and Longhi (2018) that ethnic community networks increase the probability of finding jobs. Here, I distinguish that the argument I raise is not about finding any job- temporary or non-qualified for instance, young women in this study with university qualification, expect valued professional roles in mainstream society exemplified by Tina and Raheela who succeeded in securing jobs matching their qualification. That is to say that in order to maximise their capital- cultural, social, and economic, daughters of educated parents did not rely on community networks, rather used individual strategies to find jobs in mainstream society.

I, therefore, argue that the dominant form of cultural capital is parental education that determines the ways of these parents engage within and outside the ethnic community and create social networks that can help their daughters in finding work. This study suggests that although the degree and the nature of parental involvement in the ethnic community may strengthen social networks within the community, it reduces overall social capital outside the community. Hence, the study adds to the body of knowledge by emphasising the importance of parental education in parental social networks largely influence young women's perceptions of transition to work. Further to this, in the narratives of women signifying choice issues, marriage emerged as one of the most significant themes impacting young women's education and career as discussed in the following section.

6.4 The Changing Marriage Patterns

This study draws attention to some of the changing formation and negotiations occurring in marriage patterns among South Asian groups. Marriage in South Asian culture is understood as transferring and converting the forms of capitals between the families. For

example, educated women with cultural capital, get valued marriage proposals (symbolic capital) from their community as in Bangladeshi group. Earlier research on marriage traditions among South Asian groups demonstrates that marriages that are arranged by the families are essentially meant to strengthen the family-ties with relatives. However, the patterns of marriage and the related association with symbolic capital and cultural capital has significantly changed over a few decades. This change in arranged marriage patterns could be related to Bourdieu's concept in many ways.

By reading Bourdieu more closely, my understanding developed that habitus encompasses cultural capital, layers of knowledge and experience which provide the individual with the tools for change. Bourdieu (1990b) posits that habitus is open to possibilities and potentials rather than fixed certainties. Entry to a new field can be seen as providing the opportunity for habitus to change as individuals are confronted by the unfamiliar situation. That is not to say that habitus will necessarily change in response to the field, but that the potential is always there. Even though women's' behaviour in this study may be seen as patterned to the cultural practices of arranged marriages, it must be understood that their habitus holds the 'capacity for invention'. Thus, applying Bourdieu's concept of family as a 'field'; a structured space, it relies upon individuals' willingness to accept its rules and play its particular game. In other words, the structure of that field is produced and reproduced by its agents, holding necessary capitals as the willingness to accept the stakes on offer.

The changes in marriage patterns may play out in particular contexts of marital practices in three sub-groups. This study indicates that Indian and Pakistani parents were flexible and gave their daughters the choice of accepting or rejecting the arranged marriage proposals. While this is a significant change in parental views on arranged marriage, given the current instability of marriage patterns (Qureshi et al, 2014) exemplified by two lone mothers clarifies why South Asian parents have become aware of the consequences of forced marriages (Charsley and Shaw, 2006; Dale, 2008). This result marks a significant change, both in parental approaches and their overall undemanding expectation to acknowledge their daughters' choice of marriage.

Also, Bangladeshi married women (Tahmina and Rufaida) who had arranged marriages, did not regard themselves as oppressed or victims of the patriarchal system cited that their parents had discussed the marriage options with them. These women used their cultural capital to strengthen their social positioning in their families (Dale and Ahmed,

2011). More accurately, these women saw HE qualification as a means of having some degree of authority assuming that by holding the finance of the family, they might be able to exercise independence in family processes (Dwyer and Shah, 2009). This finding contrast previous research by Charsley (2005a) that South Asian men are dominant in carrying out money-matters in the family and therefore hold the power to decide how the money to be used. This study suggests that although resisting the traditions such as arranged marriages is like tearing the fabric of South Asian community (Takhar, 2006), in the present scenario, young women with HE qualification are able to generate other forms of capital (social, economic and symbolic) within these discourses.

Moreover, in an arranged marriage that brings family approval but not personal fulfilment, young people are increasingly supported to divorce and remarry (Qureshi et al, 2014; Shah-Kazemi 2001). Here, I argue that this change in parental approach could be a result of increased divorce rates and marital issues among South Asians altering women's image in the wider community (Mand, 2005), particularly among Pakistani and Bangladeshi families (Babb et al, 2006). This could also be associated with cultural beliefs that marriages are arranged to connect families and enhance cultural values. Previous research by Ijaz and Abbas (2010) found South Asian parental concerns about their daughters attending a Western school and being potentially corrupted by 'Western values'. These findings suggest that by arranged marriages, South Asians groups in the UK attempt to preserve cultural and ethnic values, particularly those of the younger generation.

Identically, increased economic migration of young people to different locations from parents may also contribute to the decline in arranged marriages. For instance, three young women in this study, Sanam, Sonia (Pakistani) and Maya (Indian) showed intentions of migrating abroad for better career options. By living away from parents, not only these women are likely to delay marriages arranged by their families, chances are that they may engage and assimilate with other diverse groups and acquire different values. Parallel to the work of Bhopal (1998; 1999), as a result of living away from parental culture, these women may also distance themselves from home culture and religious traditions. My findings reinforce this message and illustrate the relevance of marriage in shaping the transitional views of the study participants. However, this study suggests that with these intergenerational changes in marriage patterns, the family values and gendered roles in South Asians are becoming more complex. The discussion in the following section

highlights the popularity of shared marital roles among South Asian groups particularly among families where women are educated and working by drawing attention to the long-debated association of marriage with gendered roles in South Asian culture.

6.4.1 How Marriage defines Gendered Roles

Different from the previous assertion that South Asian men play a dominant role in marital relationships (Crozier, 2009; Eldred, 2013; Charsley, 2005a; Dale and Ahmed, 2011), my study indicates that as such there is no significant difference in the financial responsibilities between educated women and men. That is to say, that marriage preferences alone are not an explanation for an exercise of choice. It entails purposive strategies as Bourdieu posits (1977) that in matrimonial negotiations, agents who are involved; for example, men and women in this study, play an essential part within the structure of power relations, by being able to contribute to the success or failure of the of marriage. HE for example, as being the purposive strategy of these women, enabled them to rework their social structure of marriage roles. This study suggests that the expectation of shared marital roles is a means to exercise agency towards these women's much-needed empowerment in their families. All married women in this study, Tahmina and Rufaida (Bangladeshi) and Kanwal (Pakistani), financially supported their families. All these women expected their partners to have an equal share in all household and financial responsibilities. This evidence can be viewed as a solid basis for freeing young women from perceiving marriage as a hindrance to their career and personal fulfilment.

For women in this study, having HE qualification is a vehicle for their career as an initiative strategy towards sharing economic roles in the family. This may also lead to these women having more symbolic power of their position to renegotiate traditional gendered roles. This finding is parallel to the work of Charsley (2005a; 2008) and Liversage (2012) who concluded that arranged marriages enable British South Asian women to attempt to have equality in marital relationships. This study, therefore, adds to the literature that the economic stability of British South Asian women overcomes the traditional marriage assumptions that after marriage, men have the financial lead in the family. In a way, this finding also disapproves previous claim that marriage creates boundaries for South Asian women's education and employment (Bhopal, 1997; Dale et al, 2002) and therefore, they are unable to exercise their authority and power in mainstream society. One of the most

compelling findings in relation to the conflicting family processes was related to the narratives of three participants- Raheela, Tina and Kanwal, who faced conflicting family processes in making choices. The following section deals with the discussion related to these three cases elucidating their experiences through Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field.

6.5 Marginalised Cases and Choice Issues

The negotiation with the family over the choice is one of the main perspectives of the women' lives in this study. The findings show that the way women in this study managed their dependence and independence with respect to their choice, was highly influenced by the structure and the nature of the relationships within their families. The understanding of South Asian women's' conflicting experiences in the family is related to the stereotypical assumption that South Asian women often abide by their cultural and religious norms (Dale and Ahmed, 2011). However, these findings suggest that this is not the case always, differences in family processes and the individual trajectories may bring out different outcomes. Perhaps, this could be one of the reasons for the relative absence of literature about the marginalisation South Asian women in HE particularly those with conflicting family structure and family processes.

According to Bourdieu (1990), the children are not always passive recipients of inculcation in the family, they can be active participants, attempting to invalidate the parental orthodoxy in the struggle for recognition. Also, children may react and resist from an early age to the parental demands, and this can be exacerbated by divergent worldviews provided by the surrounding and peers. Bourdieu (1998: 68–70) believes that in a family process, family-specific doxa are situated as unequal division and so are family members experiences and perceptions, each having different levels of authority and intellect (symbolic capital) and engage in different struggle over them to construct a system of objective, structural relations of domination. Although most women were fortunate enough to benefit from parental support capitalised on opportunities of education and career, trajectories of three women; Raheela, Tina and Kanwal, took downward turn and prevented them to avail those benefits. In contrast to other participants who made HE choices with the mutual agreement with the parents, these participants made choices

which their parents did not approve. These women cited being negatively judged by their parents for their choices.

In Raheela's case, her position in the family was challenged on the account of gender bias whereby her brother was given more freedom of choosing the subject of study. Similarly, Tina wanted to study film and media to become an actress, but her parents suggested her to study science subjects. In both these cases, rebelling against the subjects they wanted to choose, turned out to be the main reason for the conflict with parents. Bourdieu's (1999) discussion of rebellious behaviour and the suffering caused by family conflicts between the orthodox parental expectations and the child's degree of success in education is especially relevant here. Bourdieu (1993) associates this clash not only to the 'adolescent rebellion', but more to the clash of perceptions and views in different life systems and educational and employment possibilities. The forms of capital Tina and Raheela had acquired from their previous educational journeys (symbolic and cultural) and how they operationalised them had shaped their choices which were challenged by their parental boundaries.

Moreover, a lone-parent status of Raheela's mother actually doubled her conflicts with her father. Raheela condemned her father for leaving her mother alone to struggle and not supporting her financially to take care of children. As a consequence, Raheela decided not to obey her father's wish to become a doctor. More specifically, the stigmatisation of divorce in South Asian communities (Bano, 2011) affected her mother's position in the family and ethnic community whereby a lone woman is not respected as much as married woman (Mand, 2005). These factors contributed to the complex family environment which resulted in great confusion in choosing HE subjects. This finding correlates with what Lustig and others (2017) concluded that increased family conflicts are associated with higher levels of decision-making confusion and commitment anxiety. They argue that lower levels of family cohesion and expressiveness lead to family conflicts resulting in young people having dysfunctional career thoughts.

Tina, on the other hand, used several strategies, trying to overcome the unhappy feeling of not been supported by her family in her career choice. Securing a job in a local company straight after her graduation proved to be a positive outcome of her choice which was against her parental wish. This result aligns with research that shows second - generation South Asian women are well aware of the demands of the job market and yet

they are able to make their career choices (Dwyer and Shah, 2009; Florea and Wells, 2015). For Tina, a desire to better oneself and getting a job without the help of her family and community motivated her to engage fully with her career. Using resources and endowments in such ways, according to Kabir (2010) is 'agency' which refers to an individual's ability to make effective choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes. Evidence in previous work on Fisher (2005) resembles Tina's situation that demonstrating capabilities of being responsible for one's own achievement and setting high expectations for oneself are the key aspects of the agency that can be used to generate the right forms of capital.

Different from Raheela and Tina, Kanwal who rushed into an early marriage before completing HE degree cited stressors from family possess (Lustig et al, 2017) altering her HE experiences. Kanwal had little support from her parents during her HE trajectory, particularly in her decision to marry. She admitted that she struggled initially with balancing married life and HE studies. Even though her educated parents eventually accepted her choice of marriage, they continued to maintain a distance from her. As a result of such conflicting family process, Kanwal was tussling between two different forms of symbolic capital- for being a wife which held much value and being a daughter who had disobeyed her parents. Growing up in a family where conflict is common and family members openly express disagreements, appears to increase the chances that an individual engages in negative career thoughts (Smith, 2011) and disrupts the ability to rational career problem solving and decision-making process (Shin and Kelly, 2013). This result resonates with Dodge's (2001) study with college students. The author found that higher levels of family conflicts were associated with career confusion, inability to make decisions and commitment anxiety among young people.

Situating these examples central to South Asian women's decision making not only suggests the complexity of the process but foregrounds the tension and contradiction which inevitably emerged in these cases. Partly, its value lies in making sense of their disrupted social positions that are integral to their family interactions. One insight is that the conflicting issues within the family arose not necessarily because these participants lacked cultural capital (education or parental support), but because the process of communication, which underpins parental involvement in the choice was disrupted within their families (Freistadt and Strohschein, 2012). That is to say, that the social rules within

the family which participants had to abide with, were not flexible enough for these women to exercise their agency to take independent decisions. Because habitus results from social interaction, the experiences and perceptions shared with other individuals or groups determine similar habitus (Ingram, 2011). These women attempted to adopt the new social spaces using their agency which Bourdieu (1986b) refers to as possessing a *cleft habitus* – where the views differ and not necessarily result in what was exactly desired.

This understanding is essential in making sense of why these women on the above occasions stepped outside and acted against their own values, and dispositions and those of their parents. Indeed, these may include class and ethnic differences which can produce conflicting perceptions of the possible and the desirable outcomes (Atkinson, 2013). It is relevant here to point out to the intergenerational ascent in social space and cultural capital women acquired through education by the deviation from parental worldviews recognised by Reay, et al (2005). My study highlights that the conflicting family processes can lead to disrupted family functioning putting huge impact upon young women's HE decision making and confidence. Future research in this area will be helpful to extend the knowledge on the contextual influences of family interactions to understanding the family conflicts and how people's career decision-making is impacted in conceptualization other employment environment.

6.6 Summary

The social experiences of South Asian women in this study are shaped by the complex interplay of collective expectations within their families and community. Even though in mainstream society South Asian groups are viewed homogenous, there are significant differences of the country of origin, religion and social class within and between these groups which form the basis of this study. Bourdieu's conceptual framework helped to visualise the in-depth meaning of young women's social positioning in different social fields- family, community and HE in determining their ability to generate appropriate forms of capital. The major determinants of the differences such as the level of parental education and occupation in HE decision making, the role of lone mothers and changing marriage patterns impact greatly upon the transitional views of young women. Whilst maintaining South Asian cultural and religious traditions remains significant to the majority of the participants, these women also demonstrate that they exercise choice,

control and agency in navigating cultural boundaries because of the independence and power gained from HE qualification.

As such, these women are bound to their families and communities, both emotionally and socially. Even if they have the ability to adapt the changes in mainstream society in order to be compatible with the Western world around them, their intention would lead them to deviate from their family and community expectations. Such actions may also affect their parental ties in the home countries with the extended family, particularly with regards to traditional arranged marriages. Nevertheless, these young women have the courage and motivation to reach this level of engagement in HE through constant negotiations to achieve their HE and careers goals. The next chapter, the second part of the discussion, deals with the remaining two key themes: university life and job market experiences emerging from the social interactions of South Asian women with mainstream society.

Chapter 7 Discussion Part 2

7.1 Introduction

In this second part of discussion chapter, my aim is to further unpack the findings and highlight the disparities and the tensions between participants' present social position as students, and future positions while they prepare to enter the field of employment. I highlight the importance of self-motivation of these women who are provided with parental support to go to university and how they position themselves in the field of HE. I also illustrate upon the strategies these women adopted as to navigate their HE and career, in Bourdieusian term, to generate the forms of capital. In doing so, I relate young women's situation with what Bourdieu (1999) explains that habitus embodies the relationship between social structure and subjective actions, the social interaction shared with other individuals and groups determine shared dispositions and similar habitus. The previous part of discussion chapter focused on the differences among and between three South Asian groups, within the families and in the way, they connect with the ethnic community. The discussion in this section is based on collective accounts because as such no major differences emerged in the analysis of women's experiences in mainstream society. Two key aspects of their experiences are significant to the context of this study as identified in the findings: (a) the university life and (b) the job market.

7.2 University Life Experience

This section discusses particularly important insights into the social experiences of South Asian women during university life which is an under-researched area in the UK (George and Chaze, 2009) and one of the most influential aspects in young women's HE trajectories. The key issues I discuss are relevant to explain how university experiences lead these women to generate social capital and new identities as they negotiate their familial habitus. First, I discuss the extent to which social encounters in the university influence social adaptation to the university life. Second, I concentrate on how these women are exploring their boundaries of culture and religion and gaining new skills and experiences to prepare themselves to enter the job market. In this relation, two main categories of

university experiences are discussed below: the social life adaptation and the transformation of these women.

7.2.1 Social life adaptation

This section provides important understanding of how South Asian women in this study adjusted themselves in the university environment which is considered a challenging period for most students (Johnson, Richeson and Finkel, 2011; Reay et al, 2009). I highlight the role of the peer group in creating social capital that works adaptation of social life in the university. The findings in this section are particularly valuable as previous studies have shown that the way South Asian women position themselves in HE fields, determine the degree of negotiations in their families and communities (Ahmed, 2001; Abbas, 2007; Bagguley and Hussain, 2016). This is to say that although participants' habitus is shaped within their families and community, they interact almost every day with White colleagues in the university who often carry different cultural values. The academic environment of the UK universities is predominantly 'White' representing dominant White majority group reflecting the cultural values, priorities and practices of that group (Lander and Santoro, 2017). Thus, the educational and emotional needs of culturally diverse students may remain unmet giving rise to social inequality in universities. This situation of South Asian women in the university environment relates to what Reay et al (2009:117) assert: a 'fish out of water' experience which may hinder young people's ability to navigate the university experience effectively, or to take full advantage of the opportunities that university has to offer.

Bourdieu (1996b) refers to the educational institutions as 'immense cognitive machines' where students' cognitive structures are constructed into social realities. Those with interest to 'play the game' have something to gain. However, not everyone has academic talent as Bourdieu (1979b) writes that it is in the educational institutions where students prove who they are and are not. It is in this sense that the influences from university play a crucial role in developing young women's perceptions of transition to work. Bourdieu (1999) also recognises that the process in which students engage may cause some suffering on the part of those who are dominated. The concept of 'symbolic violence' explains how individuals and groups struggle to dominate a particular field and impose meaning or judgement according to the capital of those at its centre. In focusing on the

'culture of the university' as both process and product (of symbolic struggle), the cultural capital of young women in this study can be seen as among the central concepts along with habitus. The mental structures (habitus) of South Asian women are embodied in cultural capital formed by their particular social world, as the university life in this study. More specifically, the concept of field in education offers an understanding of HE as a field in which dominant groups maintain their advantage through a layer of meritocracy (Swartz, 1997). Fields, HE, for example, become spaces of struggle, with students occupying positions according to their accumulation of capital and sites of symbolic violence as students seek to determine the stakes worth having.

More accurately, the symbolic value of capital within each field reinforces the capital of those who dominate it (Reay et al, 2005). In other words, as Swartz posits 'the fundamental logic of symbolic distinction operates socially and politically as well as culturally; it functions to differentiate and legitimate inegalitarian and hierarchical arrangements' (1997: 86). Bourdieu (1986) considers symbolic power the ultimate power because the power to name or define is also a power to construct reality. As a symbolic struggle, 'culture of the university' is a site of power struggle and resistance, and therefore, is an inherently political and dynamic process rather than static (Swartz, 1997). Applying this understanding to the social experiences of South Asian women in university is relevant because, in Bourdieusian view, their cultural capital is already bestowed on them in their home environment. Interacting with students from other ethnic backgrounds offers them opportunities to establish certain networks of association.

Of additional importance is the identity of these women as 'South Asians', adding complexities in adapting to the university social life. I will elaborate this in the light of Bourdieu's (1993) views that the dispositions of women reflect their social context in which they are acquired. Habitus has a 'power of adaptation', it constantly performs an adaptation to the outside world which only occasionally takes the form of radical conversion'. The internalisation of values, disposition and preferences of these women result for them to behave in a certain way: life expectations, ways to succeed, and responding to life situations (Bourdieu, 1986). This corresponds with what Baker and Brown (2008) referred to as 'aspirational habitus' explaining that these women adopt the new lifestyles yet retain their core. In so doing, however, most women often saw

themselves in a state of 'in-between-ness' which Palmer and colleagues (2009) say is an uncertainty of how things will work.

Also, Bourdieu's objectification of social relations that structure the relative consistency and continuity of the patterns of social experience is important to relate to women's position. A Bourdieusian study by May (2011) elucidates this conception of belonging that what is subjective is also objectified in the subjective experience of these women. Belonging is structurally organized based on the mutual constitution between self and society, a perspective that May draws from Bourdieu's habitus and field. The structural constitution of what is subjectively experienced speaks to the objectification of structural relations that organise the subjective experience of belonging (struggle to fit in) in this study. This objectification in the form of 'dominant norms' (Hsieh, 2007: 379), was evident in the experiences of women in this study, for example, the way women in the study consistently experience belonging and isolation at the same time.

Social networks in the university provide young women with the freedom and power to develop links out of their community and family circle. More accurately, the friendship and bonding achieved in the initial university period continue throughout the university life (Reay et al, 2010). Despite studying in a diverse and professional environment, all women mentioned that they were not able to create friendship bonds with White fellow students. Women who were not restricted from their parents to consume alcohol or go out also verbalised some difficulty of not been able to make friendship bonds, such as Maya, Tina, Kanwal and Sonia. Generation of social capital resources, such as information about education and career, was mostly limited to the networks of students similarly positioned in relation of ethnicity, religion and social class, in 'bonding capital' (Putnam, 2000). For example, as Maya reported, making South Asian friends was easier than making White friends in university. Even though she tried to adopt Westerns ways of socialising for instance, by accompanying White colleagues to nightclub several times, it didn't help.

This finding corresponds with previous work of Vincent, Neal and Iqbal (2015) who examined the importance of the support networks that are available to young people. They found that ethnic differences correlate in the socialisation of youth from diverse communities. Authors suggested that despite valuing ethnic differences, adult friendships tend to revolve around 'people like us' which is often defined by social class and culture. Another consistent example is the research among university students of South Asian

women by Bhopal (2011a) which shows that women relied more on their ethnic connection in the form of 'co-ethnic networks' (Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne, and Solomos, 2007) to establish social life in the university. She examined the support networks available to British Indian women in a university in the South-East of England. Using Putnam' ideology, Bhopal concluded that women used their support networks within their own communities at the university to develop 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. Thus, there is no straightforward explanation to assume that not socialising in the 'Western manner' is the main barrier in social bonding. This evidence indicates that some forms of capital are more salient for young women's participation in social life at university.

Bourdieu (1986) provides a critical stance towards social capital and its relationship with social adaptation and social cohesion. For instance, Cheong et al (2006) appropriately used the title of one of Bourdieu's books and argued that immigrant population in the host countries are often made to bear 'the weight of the world', bringing their social and cultural baggage into the established societies. Bourdieu (1999) in his work in France, regards social capital as the outcome of social and ethnic inequalities rather than a solution to them by relating to its roots in the economic capital. Bourdieu showed the day to day sufferings of the powerless who are denied the means of adaptation. This understanding of the forms and various operations of capital presents a contested view of women's situation in the university social life, who have the ability and ambition to form bridging ties with the majority groups. This study, therefore, reinforces the relevance of friendship and bonding as a motivational force in university life which contributes to shaping the perceptions of young women's career.

Furthermore, habitus of South Asian women incorporated their social position in dualistic dispositions that inclined them to act and react to social interactions in the context of their ethnicity, leaving them in a perpetual state of disjuncture. In a consistent example, Noble (2013) points out that habitus as being cumulative and generative in the new circumstances is both a stable of a conservative entity and a profound dynamic. She emphasises that the dual nature of the experiences of ethnic minorities in the host communities allows their habitus to learn the capacities of adaptation. Given this complexity, previous research such as Shain (2003) recognises the representation of South Asian women as the over-controlled victims of their oppressive culture portraying that it is

ok for them to be ignored or marginalised in social interaction in educational settings. The line of difference which was drawn in the initial university period between these women and White students, hence, can be linked with the complexities associated with the ethnic background.

In creating friendship bonds, the locality and regularity of social interactions of women were of important attention (Vincent et al, 2015). In the university where students are usually engaged in different academic activities throughout the day, women in this study reported limited social interaction by saying 'hi and hello', instead of conversation. Not that this type of interaction is not regarded as 'bonding' but in the context of this research, I am focusing on the significance of emotional support and friendship. Significantly, women who moved away from home to attend university (see chapter five section 5.2.2) found it easier to communicate with colleagues from other backgrounds. For example, Haya, Tina and Maya lived in halls of residents and shared apartments with other colleagues. These women found living away provided them with more social space and freedom to interact with students from other ethnic groups. This finding is in contrast to previous research by Ahmed (2001) that South Asian women faced difficulty in the advent of them deciding to live away because their parents remained wary of women's moral development in the different culture having more liberal values.

This study suggests that young women characterised themselves as 'strategic and ambitious' students to deal with university life challenges. Although ethnic and religious differences and assumptions influence university social life, the nature and the amount of the time spent in social interactions also determine the degree of friendships and bonding among students. This study, therefore, emphasises on the importance and the need for acknowledging the ethnic differences among university social life which may contribute to the lack of bonding and association among students from diverse backgrounds during their university stay. The next section highlights how the complex experiences of South Asian women contribute as to transform young women personally and professionally to help them prepare for their future success.

7.2.2 Transformation within the University

The university degree is seen as 'gatekeeper' to gain valued professional positions in the labour market (Berggren, 2011). Whilst the positive role of the university experiences in the transformation of young people is well documented in the literature (Abbott-Chapman (2007; see also Alloway et al, 2004), only a few studies in the UK focused on the university experience of South Asian students (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016; Mellor, 2011; Thapar-Bjorket and Sanghera, 2010). The findings of this study, therefore, are valuable in highlighting those aspects of university experiences such as engaging in extra-curricular activities, building the social networks and accessing the university career services, which entail positive reinforcement to personal and professional growth. Their involvement in extracurricular activities in the university allowed them to meet fellow students who shared similar interests, providing more social spaces to generate new identities. As I understand it, habitus in a new situation constitutes a complex composition of agency and structure and could be understood as the impact of a cultural group upon an individual's behaviour. Women's identities in the university were established and maintained through indirect cultural mechanisms as opposed to 'direct, coercive control' (Jenkins, 1992). This was reflected in the experiences of those women who had taken account of available resources and opportunities to adjust with the initial challenges during university.

Young women were able to create a positive identity, an identity which was more appreciated and socially accepted by the colleagues than the identity based on their ethnicity (Hamzeh, 2011). Holding a post in ethnic societies in the university or being in a lead role in the student representation were some of the platforms where they developed additional professional skills and confidence. These intentional career-related activities seem to make a difference in breaking the cycle of initial adjustment issues mentioned in the previous sections of this chapter. Their engagement in a range of activities in the university also overshadows the negative ethnic assumptions amongst their While pals that South Asian women are conservative and difficult to approach. In line with the prior work of Mellor (2011), working in student-roles gave young people access to the available resources to generate their social capital which is a paramount element in facilitating career success.

Despite young women's identities are modified, reinforced and transformed throughout the university period (Reay et al, 2010), the challenging experiences associated with their ethnicity, religion social class may affect different aspects of their identity which may form the basis for the perceptions of work life. The evidence from this study, therefore, suggests that university qualification with additional skills (Lindley et al, 2006) is essential for second generation South Asian women to alter their stereotypical image in the labour market that was previously formed by the education and employment patterns of first-generation South Asian women. This study also suggests that besides gaining HE qualification, positive university experiences by gaining additional skills and building social capital increases South Asian women's likelihood of employment. In the next section, I look more closely at the experiences of ethnic and religious discrimination during university and how those experiences impacted young women's HE trajectories.

7.2.3 Dealing with the Discrimination

The narratives of women voiced powerfully the symbolic domination that impregnates the interactions in the university where being South Asian emerged as the dominant standard, against which these women seemed to have been judged and inferiorised. The relations among peers were perceived as being hierarchically structured, with White students prevailing through the exercise of symbolic violence over non-white (South Asian women) who aspire to be members of the dominant group. Kanwal, Maya and Haya accounted in a rather assertively emotional language their experiences of being other-defined and positioned as somehow inferior to their White counterparts. To understand this, Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence is relevant here to explore the ways in which the discourses used in the university life help create and recreate the field, giving participants an entrenched legitimacy. Symbolic violence as viewed by Jenkins (2002), is the imposition of systems of symbolism and meanings upon groups 'in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate'. The fact that this domination was consistent (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977), here, culture became embodied, as women saw and understood their actions as 'sensible' and thus, carried them out routinely.

Clearly, not all individuals have access to capitals that are equally valued and valuable in particular social fields. In their study on black minority groups in England, Vincent et al (2012) examined how White power holders can interrupt a process of activation of

resources by denying validity and legitimacy to ethnic minority parents' capitals. Consequently, certain principles, for example, consuming alcohol and going out in late night parties, were internalized within the cognitive structures that in turn ensured the construction and reproduction of current social order. Thus, the concept of symbolic violence provides an understanding of how social class relationships are played out by the participants in the university life.

Although most women had an overall enriching HE experience, the study reports the evidence of unexplained differences and assumptions among White students that can be linked to their ethnic minority context and religious background, such as lack of independence in taking personal decisions such as going out and drinking alcohol. These assumptions created differences in university social encounters between South Asian and White students affecting their friendship and bonding. Some researchers associate this ambiguous and unintentional discrimination as 'racial micro-aggressions', a kind of racism in everyday life that is not only too ambiguous and nebulous in character for those impacted by it but is also too outside the level of awareness of the perpetrators (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, and Torino, 2007). This type of rejection is linked to their ethnicity in the previous research, for example, Archer and Hutchings (2003), which can contribute to racial discrimination (Wrench et al, 2016). This finding is also consistent with the research by George and Chaze (2009), who agreed that the most significant concern of South Asian women is ethnic discrimination leading to uncertainty in their experiences such as those in education and labour market. Thus, the initial conflict between previous identities in the current context affected young women who established a strong identity to meet the social expectations at the university.

Conversely, some women were unsure of understanding their new identities and were thinking of themselves as dependent students in the university due to the influences from their previous educational experiences. In chapter five section 5.2.3, Kanwal cited how she dealt with ethnicity challenges of 'not fitting in' with her White peers in school. I argue that although Kanwal's habitus shows a rich interlacing of past and present, she had developed her own ways to settle in the university environment despite having previous experiences of discrimination. Parallel with the work of Viadero (2005), Kanwal's initial difficulty in adapting the role of the independent learner in university indicates the adverse effects of discrimination from her past experience. These assumptions are also debated by authors

such as Tariq and Syed (2017), Lander and Santoro (2017) and Reay et al (2009) who argue that the social lives of ethnic minority women in the university environment are influenced by their previous experiences of discrimination impacting their engagement in the present experiences.

The findings, therefore, add to the literature that social interactions of South Asian women in the university are not only influenced by the degree of acceptance of ethnic differences by the majority groups, their previous educational experiences also play a crucial role in shaping their present and future perceptions (see section 7.31. and 7.3.2 for discrimination). In the following section, discussion of job market experiences is highlighted taking an account of the extent to which young women's capital (cultural and social) acquired during university helped them in meeting the demands of the job market.

7.3 Job Market Experiences

This section elaborates how British South Asian women have negotiated their way in the UK labour market having right amount and form of capital acquired from university (HE and work experience). Transition from university to work in this study is viewed as a complex occurrence that involves negotiations of young women at different levels of negotiations within families, communities and university, going through several adaptation processes.

Entering the employment and establishing financial independence were important career aims for most women in this study. Women placed tremendous importance upon HE as an option to bring financial benefits to their families that come out of it as an employment (Ahmed et al, 2003; Connor et al, 2004; Dwyer and Shah, 2009). In effect, Poveda, Jociles, Franze, Moscoso and Calvo (2012), claimed that objective outcomes of education are immersed in a web of discourses and practices within the social spaces of families, friends and educational institutions and show significant contradictions within students' trajectories. Bourdieu's (1977) assertion is useful here to understand that 'habitus is a strategy-generating principle', which allows agents to cope with unforeseen and evolving situations, such as transition process. If the agents are determined by anticipating the outcomes, there is a possibility that they may reproduce the objective structure. The habitus of these women, therefore, was not particularly shaped by what they learned from

their family traditions but also from their own experiences. Their habitus was modified and influenced by their motivational derives in the university where they were able to find their social space to prepare them for the job market. Substantively, this answers why the job market experiences of the second-generation South Asian women are different from their first-generation parents who often held overuses qualification and lacked familiarity with the UK job market demands (Franceschelli, 2014).

Despite being aware of the competitive job market, women expressed an ambition in finding meaningful employment. Although some women had no family tradition of women attending university and getting into paid work, in Bangladeshi group, for example, they demonstrated the ability to deal with the challenges in the competitive job market. The acquisition of core and transversal skills during the university period was clearly stronger attention towards increasing the employment prospects. They believed that their efforts to engage in temporary jobs may demonstrate to a potential employer that these graduates are confident, ambitious and resourceful. The confidence and ambition of women to work resemble with the research by Wigfield and Turner (2012) conducted on South Asian women in South Yorkshire England. The authors concluded that the second-generation South Asian women with university qualification are highly ambitious to work in any role and continue their career rather than just stay home and prolong the period of unemployment.

Moreover, working in student-roles may also lead to exploring the real experiences of problem-solving, using initiative and exercising judgment – precisely the skills employers are looking for (Florea and Wells, 2015). Moreover, it is becoming increasingly common that university graduates often have a diverse work experience background as their first job usually does not require university qualification (ibid). This result also corresponds with the work of Raffery (2012) and Abreu et al, (2014) concluding that ethnic minority graduates in the UK may take jobs for which they are overeducated in order to gain work experience which can later lead to achieving job roles equivalent to HE qualification. These studies point out that if ethnic minority graduates lack the right networks, they may have unexpected labour market outcomes compared to White British group (Zwysen and Longhi, 2018; see also Raffery, 2012).

This study, therefore, adds to the literature by emphasising the importance of work experience and additional skills for newly qualified South Asian women in order to find

better job opportunities. To elaborate further on young women's perceptions of the labour market, the next section presents the discussion of the complex intersection of ethnicity, religion and social class identified in this study.

7.3.1 Ethnicity and Job Market

To understand ethnicity in Bourdieu's terms, I take the definition of ethnicity as a 'discursive construct' which as Bourdieu would state is 'constitutive of reality, willing into existence that which they name,' (Fox and Idriss-Miller, 2008). This concept then can be applied to the realm of 'everyday ethnicity' and the same process can be investigated in ethnicity, by locating ethnicity within the peoples' experiences (Jenkins 1992). This is where Bourdieu's concept of the field comes into play, which is the context through which the habitus manifests itself and operates. This is essential in the broader sense of looking at the various contexts in this study in which ethnicity operates, such as in the university interactions and in the job market experiences. To conceptualise this to the context of women in this study, it would be the way they have internalized the ways of approaching, thinking about and acting upon their ethnicity in various contexts (university and job market interactions for instance). Therefore, a clear 'constructivist' view of ethnicity and identity should indicate the effective dimension of identity as an emotional product of South Asian women's interactions which is seen as constant and unchanging on the one hand, and their identities being ways of shaping their interests and thus constructed and shifting over time on the other.

In terms of ethnicity, the literature on these groups generally ranks Indians above Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in relation to their labour market outcomes and socio-economic attainment (Mason 2003; Cheung and Heath, 2007). Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to experience long-term unemployment, are under-represented within professional and managerial positions, and have fewer chances of socio-economic mobility than Indians (Platt, 2005). However, this study suggests no difference in the labour market success as an outcome of HE. A possible explanation could be related to the educational level of South Asian women from three subgroups in the previous literature. Women in this study, particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi, have shown a marked increase in their overall socio-economic mobility by means of adopting negotiation strategies within their families.

This study reports that even though negotiations within families loosened cultural ties for most women and enabled them to access the wider employment market, some women faced tension associated with their 'ethnic minority' status in the job market. Despite women witnessed a change in the ways their ethnicity was perceived in mainstream society as compared to the experiences of their parents, a few women felt these assumptions brought some unexplained and unintentional discrimination (for example, Kanwal, Haya, Raheela, Sanam and Rufaida). In other words, the power of social capital in the form of social contacts capable of bargaining and overcoming the gate-keeping of the labour market lacked in the participants' narratives. The latter were saturated with pessimism and mistrust due to what their parents voiced as being previously judged against their ethnicity. In this study, what exactly these young women seemed to be disposed of is the capability in Giddens's terms of 'colonizing the future' (1994, p.94). Their ability to future hope is fundamentally linked to their social positioning, most especially to the agent's objective ability to manipulate the potentialities of the present in order to realize future possibilities (McNay, 2008).

Consistent with several studies on racial discrimination against South Asian women in the UK job market (Anitha et al, 2012; Berggren, 2011; Lindley et al, 2006; Tariq and Syed, 2017), the evidence in this study indicates that even though these women are UK born and educated and expect similar treatment in the job market, they face some degree of racial discrimination. In line with previously mentioned work of Tariq and Syed (2017), that even though some highly educated South Asian women become successful in achieving managerial roles, their work experiences are not without some form of racial discrimination. Alongside, a recent study by Lander and Santoro (2017) suggest that despite Equal Opportunity policies in the workplace, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) academics in the UK universities encounter subtle everyday racism manifested by 'microaggressions' which leads to insecurity and vulnerability among these groups. Referring to the work of Pilkington (2009), the authors argue that it is generally assumed that in the universities equality policies and procedures are in place, hence fairness is assured (cited in Lander and Santoro, 2017). This study, therefore, argues that the issues of acceptance and career progression in the workplace are the most significant factors that South Asian women with HE qualification have to deal with as they pursue a career (Fearfull and Kamenou, 2006).

Women in this study appeared well aware of these kinds of job market challenges that can be related to their ethnicity, albeit they were not demotivated. Continual parental support and ambition to change their stereotypical image in the labour market that women from these groups are economically inactive, were some of the motivational forces to help these women develop coping strategies. This result is consistent with the research which relates positive reinforcement by South Asian parents (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010) in encouraging constant motivation to their children to achieve upward mobility by acquiring HE (Katsillis and Armer, 2000; see also Pike and Kuh, 2005; Wong, 2007). Despite evidence that ethnic minority youth suffer additional disadvantages of racism and cultural marginality (Modood, 2004), one of the strategies parents advised to their daughters and as argued by Modood (2012), that young women must adjust with the adversity because of their 'minority context' as 'making the best of a bad situation' (Shain, 2003). This could be one reason why these women felt discouraged neither gave up on their HE or career aims. In effect, the persistent rise in the numbers of South Asian women entering in the UK universities is one such example noted by Bagguley and Hussain (2016).

This study identifies correlation in ethnicity and religion of South Asians and suggests that these are the key markers of the identity of South Asian women (Modood et al, 1997). Hence, the aspects related to ethnicity and religious practices are greater salience than other factors in the job market experiences of these women. On the basis thereof, the following section deals with the important discussion on the impacts from religious background upon young women's position in the job market.

7.3.2 Religion and Job Market

In the analysis, religion emerged as an important influential factor in the interplay of multiple social relations shaping the values of young women and orienting them towards normative patterns of education and work. With regards to the employment patterns, the religious beliefs of South Asian groups are conspicuous to form the basis for asserting both positive and negative impacts upon their job market experiences.

A major concern in Social and Educational research on religious diversity seems central on Muslim communities (Shah et al, 2010) particularly after the tragic 9/11 and 7/2005 events and media representation. With this in mind, much of the research so far have focused on

South Asian Muslims and less attention is being paid to Sikhs and Hindus (Ahmed, 2003). Among a few studies on British Sikh women's education and religio-cultural impacts, is the work of Bhachu (1991), who explored how these women navigate their educational aims within class and caste norms in Sikh community. Bhachu (1991) argued that Sikh parents adopted strategies to help their daughters to get education particularly, those Sikh mothers who were already in employment. Although such patterns are distinctive, it can be related to the early migratory periods of Indians (Hindus and Sikhs) in Britain. However, despite higher job market participation, education and increased socio-economic status of younger generation, Sikh women have been presented as 'Indian women' in general rather than appreciating their religious and cultural individuality (Bhachu, 1996).

It has been argued that many South Asian women do not work even after having HE qualification due to various cultural and external factors affecting their sense of identity and professional career in job market (Asher, 2002a). While Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups have occupied more vulnerable positions in the labour market, Hindus and Sikhs are seen as adopting settlement values (Peach, 2006). Muslim women had been presented as less active in the UK labour market in contrast to the active labour market engagement of Hindu and Sikh women. Only a smaller number or Hindu and Sikh women (13-15%) are considered as 'looking after home and family' in contrast to their Muslim counterparts (40%). Thus, a social hierarchy in Britain places Hindu and Sikh women prior to Muslim women (Peach, 2006). This could be representation of conventional 'purdah' (seclusion) for Muslim women than Hindu and Sikh women. What is more important here is that such differences in labour market participation need to be fully and carefully investigated.

Even though the participants in this study came from diverse religious backgrounds such as Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Christian, the majority of them (eight) were Muslims. The discussion in this section, therefore, is more inclined on Muslim women's experiences in the job market for the fact that they are subject to more religious discrimination than other groups (Berggren, 2011; Franceschelli, 2013; Hamzeh, 2011).

As mentioned in the previous section 7.3.1, women in this study cited unexplained and complex forms of discrimination that could be associated with 'religious discrimination'. Their narratives match with the form of 'religious prejudice' which is attitudinal and can form a basis for exclusion, or 'religious hatred' which can result in discriminatory actions. Although ambiguous in nature, Weller (2011) affirms that it can certainly wound

individuals. This study points out that the religious values of Muslim women were guided by the strong influences from their religio-cultural practices, such as the way of dressing, socialising and the food preference. Religious discrimination can also put Muslim women in this study who hold a particular characteristic, wearing a Hijab for example, a disadvantage compared with others who do not share those characteristics. In this study, even though only three women wore Hijab out of eight, women who wore contemporary fashion clothing were consistently disciplined by parents to dress modestly.

Despite being the personal facet of modesty in Islam, the choice to wear a Hijab signifies the social and political conceptions of Islam (Winter, 2008; see also Hamzeh, 2011), which encourage diverse reactions about the meanings of Hijab from the society. It is crucial to note that women from Hindu, Christian and Sikh faith, on the other hand, had no evidence of defined dressing style from their religion neither the discrimination they faced could be linked to religious grounds. This issue is further complicated with the lack of existing literature in the relative public perceptions relating to Hindu, Sikh or Christian faiths across South Asians in the UK with a few exceptions (Shah, 2007; 2017).

Equally, food choices of Muslim women, for instance, restriction to 'Halal' food, which further complicated their positionality in the job market. The term Halal specifically refers to the food items and products that are permissible, lawful and are unobjectionable to consume (Salman and Siddiqui, 2011). Muslim women in this study avoided social gatherings where they believed that Halal food was not served, hence limiting their socialisation with ethnic majority groups. These findings are reflected in a fairly consistent body of research evidence showing that relative to other religious groups in Britain, Muslims report and experience discrimination of a greater frequency and seriousness in more complex and refined forms of racism, which are subtle and hard-to-prove in the workplace (Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach, 2008; Tariq and Syed, 2017; Weller, 2011).

Previous research portrayed Muslim women as subordinates to patriarchy who were more likely to be unemployed than women from any other religion (Dobbs et al, 2006; see also Kundani, 2007). However, Muslim women in my study, through the acquisition of HE as a cultural capital, were able to gain some form of symbolic power and freedom exemplified by studying in the university. This finding is rarely seemed to be the case in the research on Muslim women examining their early experience and claimed that Muslim women in Britain are economically inactive and do not engage in paid employment (Pio and Syed,

2013) because Islam does not value education and freedom of women (Zine, 2006). The results of this study challenge this evidence portraying stereotypical 'Islamic image' of Muslim women and suggest the importance of religion in young women's self-definition through which, Muslim women were able to draw positive energy in their lives. This is exemplified by Muslim women's high career aspirations. They saw religion as a source of the agency with regards to the interpretation of Islam in mainstream society, increasing their confidence and access to the rights (Mellor, 2011).

Women's agency was evident in the construction of self in the intersection of multiple spaces in the job market to recognise how their positionality and identity was constructed, through a complex articulation of ethnicity, gender and social structures (Brah, 1996). For example, Tahmina (Bangladeshi) who worked as a teaching assistant in a local college, found her colleagues more supportive to her religious background. According to Tahmina, her colleagues saw her as a motivation for other Muslim women to negotiate her religious identity by wearing a Hijab and working in a professional job. They acknowledged her struggle through the cultural and religious barrier in her families she might have dealt with, and the religious hatred in the society, to reach this level, particularly in the current 'Islamic image of Muslims' through the influence of media. This finding matches with the work of Liebler and Sandefur (2002) who suggest that those with high levels of education are likely to exchange high levels of emotional support with their work colleagues from diverse backgrounds than those in non-qualified roles.

The findings, therefore, add to the literature that despite having particular religious restrictions, and stereotypical assumptions related to Muslim identity in the society, Muslim women with HE qualification are equally motivated and ambitious to work as are women from other religions. The study implies the acknowledgement and acceptance of religious diversity, at least to some extent, by those with high levels of education and in professional jobs. However, the fact that only a few women were working and most were still studying in university, it is difficult to affirm how far this finding is relevant to another aspect of religious hatred at the workplace. This is because recent evidence from the work of Tariq and Syed (2017) proves that even highly qualified South Asian women in supervisory and managerial roles reported some forms of discrimination at work place. These findings, however, are important to point out to the early signs of change in the

perceptions of Muslim women's employment in the wider society that these women are able to negotiate the ethnic and religious challenges in mainstream society.

7.3.3 Social class and Job Market

Another noticeable influence upon young women's perceptions of transition was brought by the analysis of social class. Parental socio-economic resources in this study can be understood in terms of Bourdieu's concept of capital that every individual has some amount of economic, social and cultural capital, however, possession of capital does not necessarily mean that an individual can realize a social advantage from those resources Lareau (2008). Bourdieu (1997) writes about the investment strategies employed by different families for their children. The central point here is that there are different forms of capital, so it is possible for a family to lack one form of capital and have enough of another form of capital (Modood, 2012). For South Asian women, access to other forms of cultural capital came as encouragement from parents whose socio-economic background seemed strongly related to the expectations of their daughters. Parents viewed education, especially a university qualification, as a means of achieving social mobility or to overcome the economic disadvantages (Modood, 2005). Such parental aspirations mirror with the results of Pike and Kuh (2005) in which parents wanted their children to have HE degree and skills so that they can get professional jobs. This scenario illustrates Bourdieu's point that social fields are the settings for competition over positions of advantage and also highlights the taken-for-granted centrality of White assumptions of what counts as valued capital.

Previous work of Modood et al, (1997) claim that educational experiences are different for South Asian groups who are from different social classes as in n my sample where parental social class appears to be inconsequent when it came to the importance and emphasis placed on daughters' education. Indeed, the intrinsic value of education and the prestige it entails is recognised by all women regardless of parental occupation and socio-economic status. Identically, students from working-class backgrounds are seen as lacking essential capital such as the knowledge, experiences, and resources to succeed (Archer et al, 2003; David et al, 2008; Thomas and Quinn, 2006). In my study, however, although women from working class had limited resources due to limited or no education of their parents, these women were encouraged by parents to go to university and achieve HE. Their efforts and

motivation in education are linked to their self-efficacy and positive attribution suggesting that these women are able to overcome the effects of parental socioeconomic status (Grabau, 2009).

Moreover, their desire of studying at university and aiming for a career can be seen as an effort to empower their working-class families. Women from working-class background (Rufaida and Maria for example) consistently referred to their parental sacrifices and struggle to get them into HE. These women hoped to gain professional jobs so that they can pay back the support to their parents. This evidence contrasts the research claims which show that the social class is a determinant of educational aspirations which tend to be higher for middle-class families (Reay, 2010; Reay, Crozier, and James, 2011). My study results alongside other research evidence (Archer, 2001), did not find such social class pattern amongst South Asian groups, all women had high career aspiration and were supported throughout from their parents in all possible ways. This result also disqualifies the previous claim by Richardson (2015) that ethnic minority students in the UK have lower aspiration than White British students with similar qualifications upon entry to the university and career.

Further to this, a noticeable aspect of the parental social class was related to young women moving away to study at a university which remained an issue for working-class parents whilst middle-class parents were readier to allow their daughters to live away. This finding aligns with what Reay et al, (2005) say that middle-class parents tend to give flexible HE choices because they can afford their children's living away. This is consistent with Ahmad's (2001) views that acquiring an education is 'not simply a middle-class strategy' because women from working-class backgrounds are being encouraged by their parents to enter HE thereby deconstructing the notion that HE remains a middle-class venture. In my study, although working-class parents encouraged their daughters to study, albeit both parents and their daughters realised the financial constraints in staying away from home. Hence, these women looked at the positive aspects of staying home such as saving money and parental support during studies so that they can concentrate on their studies. This result shows that women who had lack of financial capital, Bangladeshi for example, were able to convert other forms of cultural capital to go to university, such as the advice and support from aunts and uncles mentioned in section 6.2.1 in chapter six. These findings match with the research by Katsillis and Armer (2000) and Lindley (2009)

who argue that the university qualification leads to' intergenerational social mobility' and changes in class or status from that of the parents.

More recent work of Zwysen and Longhi (2018) and Zuccotti (2015) point out that parental social class can affect the labour market outcomes of ethnic minority graduates in the UK. The authors assert that parents from higher socio-economic background transmit skills such as confidence, problem solving and independence which are valued in the job market. Other studies (Patachhini and Zenou, 2012) however, view high parental social class as a means of having valuable parental networks as effective resources to help children find work. Highly educated middle-class parents helped their daughters to gain the skills and competence required by the employers by sharing their own success stories. Receiving financial support from parents after completing HE allowed young women to search for a longer time for better jobs and be selective in accepting the offers. Working class parents in contrast, were at an economic disadvantage and thus their daughters had limited access to resources and information. These parents although used their social networks in the ethnic community to help find work for their daughters, the aim was to fulfil the economic needs of the family rather direct the career progression of their daughters.

The study, therefore, suggests that it is the factors associated with the interplay of ethnicity, religion and social class that explain young women's social space in the labour market. Social class differences are important in determining the labour market success of South Asian women; however, this study suggests that they do not operate independently ethnicity and religion. According to research evidence, type of person's employment relations, or a class position, is likely to be affected by his or her ethnicity (Khattab et al, 2011). Indeed, ethno-religious background and social class in this study, interwoven to the extent that separation between them turned out to be very hard in relation to the labour market experiences of the participants. The results add to the literature by re-emphasising the significance of these aspects as major determinants impacting women's perceptions of the job market. The following section discusses the strategies these women used to navigate their social positioning within different social fields in their HE trajectories in order to achieve a successful career.

7.4 Strategies for Career Success

The findings indicate that the labour market success of South Asian women in this study was dependent upon a number of factors including familial and cultural negotiations, parental education and occupation, women's own experiences and exposure to the work environment the job search methods these women used. Relating to the concept of field is helpful here to understand the negotiation strategies these women adopted as they ensure the development of capitals and put themselves in the best position to acquire them. This study particularly emphasises that as the 'rules of the game', the fields shift and adapt, how aware are these women of the changing nature of the game and whether those strategies help them to succeed. Bourdieu (1993: 40-41) posits that the nature of the social fields is relational and characterised by the struggle for different types of capitals. He argues that all fields are 'fields of struggle' in the sense that they are defined by the interests that are at stake and include different areas such as, culture, housing, intellectual distinction (education), employment, power, social class and prestige. In other words, the internalisation of the 'field-specific rules' enabled young women to anticipate future tendencies and opportunities such as employment.

To 'play the game' successfully, young women enhanced their 'employability' through additional activities including gaining work experience and professional skills. Women who worked in temporary positions in university (see section 7.2.2), were able to secure permanent job roles within less than six months post-graduation (Raheela and Tina for example). In a way, this result points out to the importance of finding the first job in the process of transition to the labour market as prolonged employment gap can have long-lasting effects on the employment probability that can further complicate their transition process. This finding resonates with the study of Battu et al, (2011) suggesting the importance of reducing the initial employment gap. They found that six months after graduation, ethnic minority graduates are substantially less likely to be employed than White British. Nevertheless, being aware of the 'rules of the game', that is, in order not to prolong the unemployment period, a few women worked for student roles and temporary positions.

The previous study by Fisher (2005) on Black students finds that the desire to be responsible for one's own life as well as possessing high expectations for oneself is the key

contribution to achievement. Participants in this study possess the same attitude, despite coming from families lacking in both economic and dominant cultural capital. Bourdieu views the struggle in the field of cultural production as inseparable from the struggle within the dominant class, in which agents who have specific capitals (for example education) are constantly weakened by the competitors, both within and outside the field. Thus, the idea of struggle comes from the fact that the agents have to develop strategies, maintaining and modifying their social positions with respect to the defining capitals of the field. Agents always act intentionally without intentions in accordance with the 'rules of the game' and their relative position on the field as explained by Wacquant (1989: 45): 'individuals make choices, but do not choose the principles of these choices'. And therefore, the principles of the game are strongly influenced by the structure of the field. By applying this concept, the evidence of the negotiations between women and parents enabled some of these women to gain permission to stay away from home while they attended university (see section 6.3.2). This negotiation is understood by Bourdieu's (1993) as an agency-structure bridging concept of field in which people manoeuvre and struggle in the pursuit of desirable resources.

The example of intentional career negotiations such as plans for delaying marriage or saying no to the traditional arranged marriages. All women cited that the outcomes of HE will, in fact, provide new spaces for them to redefine their future life options. Delaying marriage, for example, will open up possibilities for women to assert new gender identities. Firstly, their motives revolve around the desire to become financially independent. Secondly, women mentioned the benefits gained from the university as opposed to immediately considering marriage after completing HE. Research by Dwyer and Shah (2009) confirms this finding that young Muslim women link the gain of HE qualifications to better employment prospects, where women aspire to get more freedom and independence in their family matters. To understand these strategies, as Swartz observes that Bourdieu adopts the language of 'strategy' to distance himself from strict structural forms of determination by stressing the importance of agency within a structuralist framework (Swartz, 1997). The language of strategy is an attempt to incorporate the sense of an individual's game-awareness, or how they understand the rules of the field. These are not rational cost-benefit calculations, but the practical logic that individuals accumulate over time. These findings challenge the over the simplistic stereotypical image of university educated South Asian women that they are being

oppressed by their families and communities, as a result, they are unlikely to continue to work.

Another meaningful strategy was related to the intention of finding the work abroad if they were unsuccessful in securing local job offers, for example, Sanam, Sonia and Maya. These participants believed that they may not get jobs matching their qualification and experience in the highly competitive UK job market, and hence, they were planning to consider geographical relocation to get better career opportunities. However, these women had to go through a series of discussions with parents before they were granted permission to consider the options pf relocation or going abroad. This result resonates with the work of Faggian, Corcoran and McCann (2013) who concluded that the UK graduates with higher levels of human capital tend to consider migratory options for job search because they are more focused on their career by targeting specific jobs instead of any jobs.

Other studies such as Abreu et al, (2014) and Whistler et al, (2008) illustrate the potential risks involved in working abroad and the return of UK graduates to the job market after a certain period. However, this study, in contrast, views this option differently. First, because these authors focus on all UK graduates, and not particularly address this issue among South Asian groups, it does not represent socio-cultural issues of these groups. Second, young women's aim to go abroad or relocate would be to gain financial and personal independence to overcome the stereotypical image of dependent and oppressed women. Indeed, this study recognises the obvious lack of existing studies on South Asian women graduates' geographical migration. This study, therefore, although on a small-scale, adds to this imperative gap in the existing literature on the career migration and relocation as important strategies of women graduates from South Asian graduates to pursue a specific career away from home. This study also suggests that in the complex interactions within their families, ethnic community and mainstream society, young women were able to use their agency to create balance in their lives by means of adopting hybrid identities. The following section discusses the relevant findings of this sub-theme in great detail.

7.4.1 Balancing Cultural and Job Market Expectations

The conceptualisation of the complex negotiations of British South Asian women in family commitments, dealing with stereotypes of ethnicity and discrimination in mainstream society, implies having multiple identities which resulted in reconciliation process so that new identities can be formed. The interpretation of these new identities determines how these women identify their positionality in the social field in which they felt comfortable or constrained. Previous work of Dwyer (2000) and Hamzeh (2011) noted that South Asian women identified their compound identities as being both British and Asian which Modood (2005) refers to as 'hyphenated' or multiple identities. However, both individually and collectively, there appears to be some indication of tension among women in balancing culture at home and outside the home.

When habitus operates on multiple social fields different from the one where it first originated, it changes and produces novelty (Reay et al, 2009). The resulting habitus and identity in this study can be internalised as overlapping exhibiting through hybrid identities. This is to say that the generation of hybrid identities requires binocular vision, to go outward and to move inside and outside experience, allowing for the new identities to be adopted yet maintaining the core. In the context of South Asian women, hybridity refers to the ways in which their experiences are shaped by racial encounters and discrimination both by their culture and the culture from mainstream society emphasising the preservation of their home culture (Bhatia and Ram, 2004). These relational identities can be called as 'natural attitude' (Holland et al, 2008) and therefore, recurring of the same action can be taken for granted, which in Bourdieusian terms refers to as doxa.

The results suggest that these identities had a significant bearing on young women from all sub-groups both in terms of their upbringing in their families and as an outcome of their social experiences. That is to say that on one hand, women wish to conform to British culture, yet on the other, they want to maintain their cultural identity as South Asians. This was something Ahmad (2001) refers to as 'women continually negotiating and re-negotiating their cultural, religious and personal identities'. These findings are placed in the context of other research such as Mellor (2011), Bhopal (2009) and Dale et al (2002) suggesting that ethnic minority groups tend to associate themselves with British identity.

These authors recognise that educational experiences of South Asian women manifest complex affiliation with British and Asian cultures.

Women in this study strongly relied on internal (from family and community) and external factors (from university and workplace) when taking decisions in their social lives such as making friends, choosing the subject and place to live during university and marriage. In doing so, the participants in this study had to deal with internal and external threats to their social identities. However, they realised that balancing in such situations did not come easy, it required to engage in own reflections and individual efforts while operating in social fields. Here, I return and relate to the work of Tariq and Syed (2017) mentioned in chapter two section 2.3, whose investigation of British South Asian women in professional and managerial roles revealed the tension faced in balancing their domestic and work lives, more accurately, home culture and Western culture.

To take it further, women in this study did not passively accept parental restrictions, albeit critically reflected upon the benefits and challenges of abiding cultural norms. They believed parental restrictions were aimed at protecting them from the negative influences of society. This understanding of what was behind parental restriction led them to critically assess the situation and meet cultural expectation. For example, during interviews and observation, I noticed that participants were exploring new gendered identities as they strategically employ dress codes to signify particular strands of their gender identities. For instance, most of them wore jeans and tops instead of Shalwar Kameez (traditional South Asian dress) as a sign of adopting the Western culture. This finding resembles with the view of Holland et al (2008) that hybrid identities are 'positional identities' which are relational with regards to dealing with the social relationships.

This finding resembles with other research such as Butt, MacKenzie and Manning (2012), that although retained some aspects of cultural and religious attributes, South Asian women acquire Westerns norms in the ways of dressing and sense of independence, from outside culture. In a way, this finding partly mirrors with Dwyer's (2000) work which focused upon young South Asian women aged 16 to 18 years. She pointed to women's previous educational trajectories were hugely impacted young women in her study. I argue here that the age group of 16-18 years is of dependence of young people mainly upon parental cultural, religious and familial norms. In my study, the age group of women between 19 to 26 years and in university education, indicate the time of independence

and awareness of young adults of their social world outside parental Boundaries (Battu et al, 2012).

Some previous researchers have opposed the idea of hybrid identities and associated it with confusion and contestation in the adaptation of young people from an ethnic minority in the society. For example, Hall (1992) argues that ethnic communities 'must learn and inhibit two identities, to speak two cultural languages to translate and negotiate between them'. This study, in contrast, suggests the positive outcomes of adopting hybrid identities and disapproves previous views that hybridity may be a sign of negativity and a threat to the cultural originality (Maylor, 2010). Precisely, engaging in negotiations is evidence that young women critically reflected on the ways that can be modified and articulated to their career success. The findings, therefore, add to the literature that not only hybrid identities create a more confident self of South Asian women to pursue new opportunities for achievement, but these identities also help them to build a sense of accomplishment of fulfilling parental and cultural expectations.

7.5 Summary

I have just taken you through the chapter that highlighted the discussion of the findings of this thesis with regards to how South Asian women's perceptions of transition are influenced and shaped within the lives they live. Their experiences in mainstream society: in the university, for instance, shape them to exercise power and create social networks and prepare them for the anticipated challenges in the job market. It was by addressing and integrating the implications of Bourdieu's theory that I was able to relate the findings to understand the issues in women's HE trajectories, particularly those originating from the intersection of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class. In mainstream society, these women negotiate different spaces and encounter with colleagues from diverse backgrounds and explore how ethnic differences may lead to their identities being essentialised.

The discussion illuminated how women are dealing with the opportunities and the challenges which are constantly exerting forces in two overlapping and interacting spheres: from inside: the family and community culture, and from outside: mainstream society culture. Young women reiterate their feelings about ethnic and religious

differences and lead them to re-negotiate their social positions in response to social contexts by means of adopting hybrid identities. Substantively, it is apparent that even though these women are ready to maintain cultural practices, they make a clear distinction between their parental views and perceptions of ethnicity, religion and social class and hence, display intergenerational changes in the ways their perceptions of transition to work are formed. It can be concluded that educated British South Asian women are self-determined and are re-negotiating their perceptions of gender, ethnic and religious identities by developing hybrid identities so as to maintain the balance between the demands of their families, communities and mainstream society. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendation on the social experiences and perceptions of British South Asian women's transition to working and identifies the implications for theory and practice.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The chapter provides an overview of the thesis by revisiting the main aims of the study and outlines the key findings from the thesis. It identifies the empirical, theoretical and methodological contribution and its implications for British South Asian women, HE and job market practices and the policymakers. The chapter also presents the limitations and suggestions for further research. I began by highlighting that South Asian women's position within HE and employment have been presented within racialized discourses portraying stereotypical assumptions such as leaving HE and not pursuing a career due to their familial and cultural constraints. Using a socio-cultural approach enabled me to examine the similarities and the differences within and across British South Asians different from studies which tended to consider women from particular religion, e.g. Muslims (Ahmad, 2001; Mellor, 2011; Tariq and Syed, 2017), or ethnic group (Thapar-Bjorket and Sanghera, 2010).

Bourdieu's theory was crucial in shaping the key components of my research process. While the source of this thesis is grounded in the social experiences of women, understanding meanings of findings was not possible without integrating Bourdieu's theory to the context of my study. I would like to bring back and relate to the two research questions that I ask at the beginning of this thesis and justify the extent to which this study has answered these questions:

- In what ways have ethnicity, gender and social class shaped previous educational trajectories of South Asian women in this study?

- What are the perceptions of these South Asian women, as to how the interplay of ethnicity, gender and social class impacts their ability to transit from university to the work environment?

Out of four overarching themes discussed in this study, the first research question is answered by the discussion of two themes: (a) the influences from the family and the community and (b) the university experiences; social life adaption and the transformation of women within the university. The second question is answered from the key findings of

(a) job market experiences and challenges and, (b) the negotiation strategies of young women for their career success. In the following two sections, I present the synthesis of the key findings and the issues identified in this study.

8.1.1 Family, Community and University: Influences and Challenges

The social lives of South Asian women in this study revolved around their interactions within families and ethnic community determining important social fields within which women contest and construct their habitus to gain recognition and independence. Existing research argues that the role of family is critical in providing continuity of support as young women move to HE. This support then contributes to the emotional well-being of young people (Wintre and Yaffe, 2000). The key aspect in conforming parental strategies was the culture within the family within which young women socialised, predisposed by the level of parental education and their socio-economic background. The socialisation outside the family was influenced by clear parental boundaries characterised by setting high expectations of maintaining and communicating cultural values. To this, relying on the members from extended family to help transmit cultural and religious values to young women can also be considered as 'South Asian' parental strategy.

The important finding from this theme demonstrates that all women have to engage with family negotiations in order to pursue education and career. With the concept of habitus, the tendency to represent young women's decision making through their capital accumulations leave little room for the emotional dimensions of practice. Women's negotiations within families are the ways in which women exercise independence over their HE and career. Their negotiations are evidence of their alternative future in which they would act as an independent person within their culture and processes pertaining to HE, career and marriage choices. Therefore, in pushing familial and cultural boundaries, young women are producing new gender identities as they negotiate parental and community boundaries.

Importantly, parental liberal approach by educated parents allowing their daughters to critically decide on choices while being aware of previous parental experiences of struggle can be understood as an attempt to make their daughters realise their position relative to

their parents. Women in this study illustrate their navigations of HE and career as they actively negotiate agency and choice which determine their perceptions and expectations of future after gaining HE qualification. The new spaces of HE and employment provides them with increased sense of independence to re-assess family, community, cultural and religious structures and their position within these constructs.

It was striking to note the differences in the attachment and belonging to the ethnic communities between parents and young women. In most of the cases, their multiple identifications as South Asian and British women, were accounted to distance them from their co-ethnic community groups, mainly formed on the basis of religion and ethnic background. The cultural influences such as those from ethnicity, religion and social class were found highly influential, altering young women's career decisions. Most recent literature evidence points out to the changing notions within these groups, such as increasing HE participation, high career aspiration and more flexible marriage options for educated women of South Asian heritage. This change shows that the younger generation of South Asians is focusing on choosing HE and career rather than traditional gendered roles within their families. Even though the literature identified that there are barriers in entering and retaining in the work (Battu et al, 2011; Franceschelli, 2013) this study suggest that women overcome these challenges by family negotiations, using individual agency and range of strategies during their HE trajectories. Ironically, through independence and experience gained through HE and employment, young women demonstrate ability to navigate their career options, delaying marriage plans and relocating to pursue a career.

8.1.2 Mainstream Society: Influences, Challenges and Strategies

In mainstream society, British South Asian women are re-working upon their social spaces as they assess the possibilities and limitations of career negotiations. Social experiences in the university have had significant impacts in shaping their views of a future career as well as in preparing them for the competitive job market. To certain this context, although in the university they become an independent individual, albeit they are challenged by the ethnic and religious identities. Inability to make friends with the White group is considered a fundamental aspect not only during university adaptation but also in the future career of these women.

As young women navigate their future employment, they are framing or outlining the ethnic and religious boundaries in many ways. In the accounts about contesting parental culture and mainstream society culture, assumed a positive connotation, and came to represent freedom, opportunities, modernity and change. However, young women's concerns over racial and religious discrimination in mainstream society remain an important area for their career progression and emotional wellbeing. Despite equal opportunity legislation and other institutional rules and regulations operating against discrimination at workplace, South Asian women, Muslim women, in particular, face complex challenges in the UK job market. The differences between parents and young women's perceptions add another level of complexity in their social interactions in mainstream society. Moreover, their parental attachment to the traditional cultural heritage appeared as leading to the negative stereotyping and misconception about their ethnicity in mainstream society, particularly those related to religious assertions, cultural restrictions and arranged marriages. Thus, the educational and career outcomes and transformations of these women in mainstream society entail complex forms of resistance, negotiation and compromise across the intersecting factors of ethnicity, religion, gender and social class.

In essence, I contend that through their re-workings of ethnic values, HE qualification, professional skills and work experience, young women are altering their social positions within families, ethnic community and mainstream society. My study suggests that such issues have not discouraged these women from progressing in their HE and career aims. They adopt strategies such as work experience and additional professional skills during university to master their learning, thinking and interpersonal skills, to deal with these challenges. Maintaining motivation and having realistic expectations of themselves and being positive about the outcomes of university qualification, coupled with a sense of being what they wanted to be, helped these women to overcome the barriers represented by their background.

8.2 Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by theoretical and practical levels that can be classified as addition or conformation to the current knowledge. The main contribution is the added knowledge on the complex HE trajectories of British South Asian

women and how their social experiences shape their views of transition to work. The study further contributes to the literature by examining how HE trajectories and HE outcomes of South Asian women graduates differ across three sub-groups. The notion of 'difference' has been the key element in the construction, transformation, and mobilization of ethnic, gendered and classed identities (Brah, 1996). The distinct contributions that can be characterised as the new knowledge from the aspects of young women's HE trajectories are presented in the following sections.

8.2.1 Empirical Contribution

This research is first of its kind to highlight British South Asian women's social experiences in HE in shaping their perceptions of transition from university to work. By reporting the experiences and perceptions of this group of women, the thesis offers a contribution to the knowledge that by possessing the right amount and the form of capital (cultural, social and economic), South Asian women are benefiting from the opportunities in their families, communities and mainstream society in many ways. Firstly, the present research extends the literature associating young women's negotiations with their families and ethnic communities as to how educational and social class backgrounds remain prominent factors in their educational and employment trajectories. The differences in parental influences such as the level of education, employment status, social class and their involvement in the ethnic community contributed greatly towards shaping women's perceptions. For this reason, these women began to re-evaluate past experiences of their first-generation parents, particularly mothers for re-framing prior notions of their identities according to their new social and professional roles. Importantly, the study underlines that while most of these educated women are not actively resisting ethno-religious values, hence, in reaching compromises with family, young women find the new spaces of HE and work to the formulation of hybrid identities.

Secondly, this study contributes that young women's career choices are not only influenced by having successfully completed HE, but it also involves contributing to the way in which they negotiate their existence through the societies in which they are in the minority. One of the contributions this study offers is by acknowledging the changing nature the social lives of South Asian women in Britain over the past few decades. In Bourdieusian terms, the grid of dispositions of young people that make up their habitus is

constantly transforming through a process of 'dialectical confrontation' (Bourdieu, 2001) with external conditions. This includes increasingly high numbers of their HE participation (Bagguley and Hussain, 2016) changing patterns of arranged marriage (Qureshi et al, 2014), modification of gendered roles into more shared roles (Bhopal, 2009) and high career aspiration (Ijaz and Abbas; Hussain, 2017). What also merits restating at this point is that some young women identified themselves as members of certain families attesting to the significance that family-membership holds for their developing sense of who they make of themselves to be and become. In more detail, the changing notions of marriage and gendered roles, from traditionally defined roles to more shared gendered roles, young women are expecting equal rights. The discussions I raised about the status of divorce and lone-mother families in Pakistani Muslim women's lives remain an important new area of research as it indicates how educated South Asian women are dealing with their family and community challenges and interpreting their daughters' career success.

Thirdly, evidence from this study determines the extent to which the intersection of ethnicity, gender, religion and social class influence perceptions of transition of these women. This study suggested that British South Asian women with HE qualification view their religion and career as crucial to their upward social mobility even though they are facing ethnic challenges from the competitive job market. In effect, I stressed that Bangladeshi women placed their religious identity over other social identities. I illustrate this by the evidence of hijab being commonly worn by Muslim women. Modesty in clothing was perceived as an empowering value because it enabled them to be viewed beyond their physical appearance and with respect. The fundamental factors such as the structure of the labour market and the attitudes that receiving majority holds towards ethnic minorities, figured as re-forming the habitus of these women. This study has evaluated how the independence gained through the new spaces of HE and employment, lead young women to understandings and expectations of future employment. There is evidence of increased awareness among young women of the complexities pertaining to their culture as they recognise the need to redefine their social positions to articulate their future success in the job market.

Fourthly, this research helps to understand how these women, within the spaces of HE and employment, are exercising greater agency so as to become independent in their future lives. The study has demonstrated that ethnic community ties are important for young

women's sense of belonging and ethnic identity. However, possessing cultural capital super passed the traditional notion of dependency on community social networks to facilitate job search, particularly, qualified roles in mainstream society. Under the new social conditioning, young women are engaged in a process of adaptation and adjustment to a greater or lesser extent, which can be said to take a smooth lead to the desired outcome of upward social mobility. This is not to argue that reproduction occurs in a linear manner whereby young women perform their social destinies. As Lareau and Horvat (1999) see, the process of social reproduction is not a continuous, deterministic one, rather, it is shaped moment by moment in particular social fields. This will particularly benefit those young women whose parents, not being able to convert their cultural capital to corresponding occupational posts, faced downward socio-economic mobility, for example, in Bangladeshi group.

Finally, the study adds a unique contribution to the literature by pointing to the career migration and relocation options available to educated South Asian women. This will be certainly an area of research which needs further exploration of the underlying dynamics of family, culture and young women's negotiation strategies for career success. However, this study recognises previous studies that have shown that despite the recent increase in South Asian women's HE participation over the last decade, the labour market figures of Pakistani and Bangladeshi remain lower than other ethnic minorities in the UK (Crozier, 2009; Dale and Ahmed, 2011).

8.2.2 Theoretical Contribution

Among the key contributions of the thesis is developing the understanding of Bourdieu's theory of practice which was extended and applied to the intergenerational perspective of young women's negotiations within their social lives. The conceptual model of habitus, capital and field was adopted to extend the understanding of the social construct of these women. As Bourdieu affirms, habitus is continually modified, learned and adapted as a result of social interaction in a context of power relations within a social field. The social experiences of women are hence, understood as interconnected processes of their interaction in the social world around them.

To treat Bourdieu's concepts individually is to be aware of their meaning in relation to another that each concept is dependent on the others. For example, the volume and the type of capital possessed by South Asian women must be understood in relation to their dominant capital of the field within which that capital is being deployed. Thus, in my attempt to work with Bourdieu's concepts relationally, this study acknowledges the contingent and dependent nature of each concept in Bourdieu's trilogy. For example, I highlighted that the relationship between habitus, capital and social fields (family, community, HE and specific employment), is essential in understanding 'the logic of practice' within it. More accurately, shaping young women's understanding (habitus) of the outcome of HE (capital) that is, as an employment (field) and how these women see themselves within these positions. This is not to argue that my own attempts to put Bourdieu's concepts into this study have illuminated their flaws, limitations and ambiguities, however, I recognise that the promise offered at the beginning of the thesis does not always translate to empirical reality. Thus, in drawing together the conclusions from my research, I illustrated that by engaging more closely with Bourdieu's underlying principles, a more nuanced representation of practice will distinguish itself more clearly in the social lives of the participants.

I also highlighted the fact that the social construct of the participants' embedded habituses is influential in shaping their transitional views, so are their familial and cultural influences. I contended that social experiences are shaped by the interplay of embedded habitus and the individual agency of these women to generate forms of capital for success. By employing Bourdieu's conceptual tools to deconstruct the field of HE, it became clear that young women's HE decisions are caught up within the socially constructed hierarchy of ethnicity and social class.

Above all, particular attention is drawn to the way in which social, cultural and symbolic capitals are reproduced through what are very ordinary behaviours and decisions. Social class conflict within a Bourdieusian framework is characterised by the struggles for legitimacy and for the right to classify others. He emphasises that class is not ready made in objective reality, rather class boundaries are made and remade by continual processes of classification. The concept of symbolic violence provides a way to understand how class relationships are played out through practices and all that they signify. The relationship

between parents and young women constructed and consumed symbolic capital. Through sending their daughters to HE, the parents are engaged in a process of classification, and, it is nevertheless constitutive of the use of economic and symbolic power. More accurately, the differences that were elucidated by parental education and occupation.

I understand South Asian culture as a process and product of symbolic struggle, embedded within power relations that strive to define a hierarchy of values to sustain the meaning of their social system. As Bourdieu (1985: 731-732) explains, the work of symbolic struggle is 'the work of producing and imposing meaning', hence the legitimate vision of the social world. This understanding of South Asian culture as such enables me to think beyond the defined power that defines the 'logic of the field'. Likewise, the power struggle (or symbolic struggle) defines the system of meanings and values (culture) of a field which is predicated on a dialectical relationship between habitus and field in a constant state of power struggle and resistance. Moreover, given the minority status, Bourdieu's original focus in his early work which is a form of 'indirect exclusion' mediated through cultural capital and developed in the French context, can be adapted to South Asians in the British society as long as the distinctive 'exclusivist functions' is preserved. Thus, the potential role of the concept of cultural capital might provide 'a framework for the contribution of culture to the elimination of social exclusion' (Allin and Selwood, 2004, p.3).

The research conceives young women's negotiation as concerned with reconciling a habitus that operates and originates in different fields, such as in family, ethnic community, university and in the employment field. Findings from this thesis suggest that these women have negotiated between habitus and field throughout their educational trajectories in generating dispositions and lack of fit between habitus and field. They have used their individual agency in order to attain success in mainstream society and create a balance in their future social spaces by adapting new hybrid identities. The combination of their habitus, capital and field helped them develop academic dispositions to generate opportunities and academic successes (Reay et al, 2009).

8.2.3 Methodological Contribution

Methodologically, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the benefits of ethnographic research by detailing an in-depth understanding of the social

experiences of British South Asian women. Using an interpretive paradigm was appropriate to fully explore and provide a complex picture of women's social positioning in their social lives. The study explored the social experiences and perceptions of transition of the participants through the combination of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and fieldnotes by offering a comprehensive understanding of their social lives.

The data were analysed as situated products of a discursive, cultural and social class context. The study participants were seen as located in multiple levels, firstly in the South Asian cultural particularities and their specific renderings in the ethnic community. Secondly, in the two certain settings in mainstream society, one in the university and the other, in the labour market including the interactional context of the research process itself. In doing so, whilst some women used strategic yet natural reproduction of advantages as asserted by Bourdieu (1976), for others, their trajectories reflect the layers of constraints and struggle.

The study suggested that the intergenerational perspective is embedded in the methodological approach. Thematic analysis has contributed by the analysis of themes within and across family groups so that different perspectives of parents and daughters were captured (Brannen, 2006). Given the context of my study, I considered the more generic approach of thematic inquiry that supports key elements of the analytic process (e.g., coding, constant comparison, memo-writing). In fact, Riessman (2007) shows that thematic analysis has been adopted by researchers who explicitly acknowledge the influence of theoretical perspectives: personal values, ideologies, and research objectives. This makes thematic inquiry of my study more aligned with my methodological considerations discussed in chapter four. I choose the deductive and inductive theming procedure and applied both across different transcripts and within individual transcript which represented shared themes, and a pattern of objective social structure by which phenomena are organised (Bourdieu, 1981). At the same time, implicit in my research question (social experiences of South Asian women in HE) is also an assumption that there is enough shared experiences or shared reality among the participants in this study through which reality was captured in the themes. More precisely, I have taken a more hermeneutic view that recognizes the big picture as a pivotal element in interpretation (Patton, 2002).

A further methodological contribution of the study stays in prioritising young women's lifeworld through reflexively to describe the subjective nature of the research process and my positionality as a researcher and as a Pakistani Muslim woman from both insider and outsider perspectives. Although it was an advantage of being a South Asian woman to access the participants, the complexities of different cultural and religious backgrounds and expectation were challenging. It was through reflexivity that highlighted a clearer picture of my positionality to the research. By using fieldnotes, I was able to reflect upon participants' social structures as well as my own context as a researcher. The use of fieldnotes complementary to the interviews has contributed towards a re-distribution of power relations between me, as a researcher, and the participants who revealed aspects of their embedded habitus that otherwise would not have been possible.

8.3 Limitations of the Study

This research although has several strengths and has revealed a number of important findings, there are limitations that need to be acknowledged and can be suggested for future research. It is important to notice that the findings presented and found in this research do not necessarily apply to or fit larger audience because the aim of the study was not to generalise the findings in any way but to gain a deeper understanding of HE trajectories of British South Asian women. Therefore, very little can be predicted of the nature of outcome on a larger sample. Also, the findings may not be similar to South Asian women in other HE settings in the UK or elsewhere. This may be due to the individual context of the research and the unique social experiences of the study participants in their families and ethnic communities. This study, therefore, could be extended on analytical rather statistical grounds.

Undoubtedly, time and resources affected the data collection process. As a PhD student, I had limited time (five months) and resources. First, the study perhaps would have been more effective with additional time spent with the participants to monitor their future progress in the job market in a longitudinal process. Second, it is important to study the career progression of these women as previous research indicates disadvantages in labour market for ethnic minorities in terms of employment gaps and increase earning over time (Zwysen and Longhi, 2018). Besides, interviews with parents from different educational and occupational backgrounds would have benefited the study in providing the multi-

dimensional aspects of young women's lives. In effect, direct contact with other people from the ethnic community, leaders, for example, may provide useful information on how ethnic community resources could be improvised to help young women from South Asian background who are university educated to find qualified jobs.

Further, this research is limited by focusing only on the second-generation of South Asian women. It would be beneficial to study the differences in the transition experience of third-generation of South Asian women to see how their ethnicity, gender, religion and social class influence their career perceptions. This is particularly important because, in reality, these third-generation women will have very different trajectories with regards to the possession of the amount and forms of capital from their second-generation parents. More research in the different social context will, in fact, be helpful to refine and further elaborate these findings such as involving British South Asian men both at individual and group level to explore their views on employment of women from their own ethnic background.

8.4 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

Understanding the social experiences and perceptions of university educated South Asian is potentially beneficial for informing practice and theory. Following sections highlight the key implications of this study to HE and job market, South Asian women and policymakers.

8.4.1 For Higher Education and Job Market

The thesis suggests that failure to meet challenges in the initial university period impact young women's ability to engage and perform in the university. In order to provide a supportive environment, universities should consider introducing induction programmes in every faculty as a mechanism to help ethnic minority students to integrate into university life (Salesha, 2012). I suggest that the induction week should address issues of acknowledging diversity in university, at the same time, engage students in informal social interactions particularly inviting students from ethnic minority groups to speak about their experiences and success stories to the new students.

The influential factors in young women's university experiences identified in this research can be taken as a valuable reference to their social space in the job market. Critical aspects

that need to be acknowledged by the employers include the strategic skills such as self-confidence, leadership skills, motivation and willingness to adapt and adjust to the potential challenges. The importance of parental socio-economic background suggested that part of the ethnic differences in employment and earning are due to a lack of networks and support which could help facilitate these women in transition to the labour market. This may be an indication of the need to providing support in terms of career advice to women from ethnic minorities in order to help reduce ethnic differences in employment at least at the beginning of their career.

In effect, future research should consider these mechanisms related to the lack of career advice and training in how to apply for jobs and find degree-related internships. Proper guidance may impede finding appropriate work for newly graduate women. Furthermore, some of the hiring practices of large graduate employers may indirectly discriminate against ethnic minorities, for instance by targeting their recruitment at universities which fewer minorities attend (Connor et al, 2004; Nandi and Nicoletti 2009). Universities should maintain fairness and equality in such opportunities for all graduates regardless of their ethnic, religious or socio-economic backgrounds as supported by Zwysen and Longhi (2018). Therefore, within the current policy debate, the employment issues of university educated South Asian women should be cast as issues of social cohesion in the educational institutions which is largely ignored (Anitha et al, 2012).

Thus, in the present scenario, it seems that the correlations between a HE degree and its promise in the labour market are questionable when it comes to South Asian women. Despite government discourse and the policy rhetoric of widening participation, the evidence in this study points out to the early signs that the field of HE may be offering uneven benefits to South Asian women with regards to HE qualification outcomes. In order for HE institutions to take an active approach when it comes to diversity, strategic networks may be set up to mentor and guide these women in their careers, preferably by female advisors and role models from their own ethnic background.

8.4.2 For South Asian women and other Ethnic Minorities

This study suggests that failure to meet expectation and demands of parental culture and contemporary society may impact on young women's ability to engage and perform well

in their lives, and it might contribute to low self-esteem and lack of motivation to employment. The important aspects that need to be acknowledged are the patterns of socialisation, acquisition of strategic skills such as self-confidence and leadership skills to career building and willingness to adapt and adjust to the potential challenges in mainstream society.

Furthermore, at the start of university, young women should be given a more accurate picture of university social life to overcome the false assumptions they might have developed, particularly related to ethnic diversity. In doing so, the universities may consider collaborating with further education colleges and schools and if possible, with ethnic minority students prior to entry to ensure that they have received sufficient support to be prepared for the university life. Universities should also acknowledge the concept of ethnic diversity by focusing more on the diverse needs of women from ethnic minorities, particularly, from South Asia, and create opportunities to encourage the informal interaction with White majority groups.

Future research can be conducted with a more varied and wider sample of South Asian women from other parts of Britain where these groups live in great majorities such as London, Birmingham and Manchester. It is probable that these implications may produce different findings and act as a case for comparison and to investigate the differences between South Asian groups. Also, it would be relatively important to investigate the differences in the perceptions of women from White majority groups to compare HE and job market experiences of the UK graduates regardless of their ethnicity. This is particularly important because these young students have very different perspectives of the job market; there would be dissimilar factors shaping their perceptions of transition to work. Women in this, as Lander (2014) suggests, can be 'advocates for change' in their workplace.

Given that young women's engagement in the ethnic community has a great impact on their sense of ethnic belonging, it is important to continue to examine how such participation helps to form social networks. It also would contribute to explore whether there are differences in the use of social networks among other ethnic minorities and whether this can partly explain their views of future employment. Therefore, it will be extremely important to follow these women in their journeys in future and find out whether they have achieved what they were hoping for, or what new strands emerge.

While this study identified the changes in arranged marriage trends particularly in Bangladeshis, the fact that Indian population appears to lag behind in the trend of increasing single parenthood (Qureshi et al, 2014) raises questions about underlying dynamics. Indeed, the discussions I raised about the status of divorce among Pakistani lone-mother families remain important areas of future research as they indicate how women are restructuring the expectations of family and community and maintaining their career in Britain. This thesis, therefore, takes an initiative to argue for need to shift research lens on British South Asian women from notions of familial and cultural practices to specific cases and processes of negotiation, identities and strategies which situate these women differently within the society.

That said, I acknowledge that thesis has not addressed directly on in-depth issues that are often associated with South Asian groups in general, including social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination. However, these issues go beyond the scope of this thesis and were not the primary concern in the topic. A substantive issue for future research could therefore also examine what young women think of ethnic debates in mainstream society, and how they position themselves within such discourses. Certainly, there is a need for deeper analysis that records comprehensive reasons for young women's termination of HE and career.

8.4.3 For the Policymakers

Bearing the spirit of this thesis in mind, it can be further argued that educational research and policies seem to narrowly follow current orthodoxies of individualized and Psychologized approaches to diversity that is geared at and legitimizes a version of a 'disconnected pluralism' (Biesta, 2006). The over-emphasis on individual-centered matters, such as the 'needs' and 'particularities' of ethnic minority young people, seems to displace the focus of responsibility from the educational policies by indicating lack of resources to young women themselves. Focusing on the 'needs' and the 'differences' of South Asian women as inclusion group may plaster over the inadequacy of high caliber job opportunities particularly for ethnic minority women with university education.

Given the Federal and State government's interests in lone parenthood policy and practice cultivating healthy families (Rowlingson and McNay, 2014), the important discussion about

South Asian lone- mother families raise concerns of added socio-cultural complexities pertaining to young women's economic independence and their positions as marginalized groups. Hence, policymakers and social service agencies should be introduced with the awareness of different dimensions of social, emotional and cultural challenges experienced by South Asian families.

Additionally, this study provides implications to the recruiters to acknowledging desirable professional skills South Asian women acquire in preparation for their career so that they can be assessed against their skills and qualification and not their ethnicity. Attention could be paid on recent diversity policy debates in the UK pertaining to the employment prospects of university educated South Asian women to examine that how far having a university qualification and professional skills are helping them secure qualified jobs. The UK government could encourage recruiting organizations by offering incentives for enabling and promoting ethnic minorities, particularly women from South Asian groups who have HE qualification.

8.5 Concluding Thoughts

The influential factors in young women's trajectories identified in this research can be taken as a valuable reference to their critical social space in current HE and job market. In this material and perceptual grid, the educational decisions made and career pathways followed are part of personal trajectories of familial habituses and of their evolving understanding of themselves and their places in their world. They have conditioned access to economic and socio-cultural advantages, resources and social networks. Some of them are played out as a strategic yet natural reproduction of advantage (Bourdieu, 1976) yet for others reflect the pragmatic evaluation of the multi-level necessities and constraints. This is not to argue that social reproduction occurs in a linear manner, rather, it is continuously shaped in the social spaces, where these women are positioned in terms of privileges and assets that lend to their voices unequal authoritative power. That brings dimension of power relations of unequal distribution of power and resources at the centre of the debate on their career perceptions. However, second-generation South Asian women with HE qualification and high career aspiration must not be seen as vectors of integration of their communities, rather as active participants in the labour market in their own right. It is very probable that in near future, more South Asian women, Bangladeshi

women in particular, will enter employment with HE qualification. The hope is that they will have different and balanced social positions in the UK job market. Thus, it is suggested that Educational and Social research should continue to shed light on lived realities of young women from Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi backgrounds as they locate themselves and form their active participation in the UK job market.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Ethnic minorities in the UK

All categories of Ethnic Groups in the UK

White:

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveler
- Other White

Mixed/multiple ethnic group:

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Other Mixed

Asian/Asian British:

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Other Asian

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British:

- African
- Caribbean
- Other Black
- Other ethnic group

(Online source: ONS, 2017, www.ons.gov.uk)

Appendix 2

Table 2. Participants' Biography

No.	Name	Ethnicity	Religious Orientation	HE (undergraduate)	Occupation	Code*
1	Sonia	Pakistani	Christian	Completed	Searching work	P1-SO
						P1-SO2
2	Sanam	Pakistani	Muslim	Final year	Student	P2-SA
3	Raheela	Pakistani	Muslim	Completed	Working	P3-RA
						P3-RA2
4	Kanwal	Pakistani	Muslim	Final year	Student	P4-KA
5	Haya	Pakistani	Muslim	Final year	Student	P5-HA
6	Tina	Indian	Hindu	Completed	Working	I-6-TI
7	Maya	Indian	Hindu	Final year	Student	I-7-MA
8	Baljeet	Indian	Sikh	Final year	Student	I-8-BA
9	Tahmina	Bangladeshi	Muslim	Completed	Working	B9-TH
10	Farida	Bangladeshi	Muslim	Final year	Student	B10-FA
11	Maria	Bangladeshi	Muslim	Completed	Working	B11-MR
12	Rufaida	Bangladeshi	Muslim	Completed	Working	B12-RU

*Code explanation

Example: (P1-SO2, 3)

P= Pakistani (Ethnic background)

1=Serial number

SO= Sonia (First two letters of participant's name)

2= Second interview (Follow up)

3= Page number

Appendix 3

Table 3 List of Topics / Questions

Please note following are the main topics and not the exact questions

1. What challenges and opportunities have you experienced during your higher education experience?
2. In what way your gender, ethnicity and social class have impacted upon your higher education decision / experience.
3. The links between ethnicity, gender, religion and social class.
4. Other cultural and religious influences.
5. Motivation and engagement in Career and its impact on future and general wellbeing.
6. Could you describe your family's involvement in your studies, your mother's and father's roles?
7. How your transition may have affected your personal and family goals.
8. How do you see your transition from student life to work life?
9. What challenges do you anticipate in pursuing your career? Where do you see yourself fitting in?
10. Social networks of parents and participants across ethnic groups: patterns and implications
11. In what ways inter-ethnic networks / organizations influence your transition to work or career choice.
12. What strategies would you use to overcome those challenges?

Appendix 4

Ethical approval Application

This version updated December 2013

SSEGM ETHICS SUB-COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM

Please note:

- ***You must not begin data collection for your study until ethical approval has been obtained.***
- ***It is your responsibility to follow the University of Southampton's Ethics Policy and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.***
- ***It is also your responsibility to provide full and accurate information in completing this form.***

1. Name(s): **Laila Khawaja**

2. Current Position **PHD RESEARCH STUDENT**

3. Contact Details:

Division/School Southampton School of Education

Email L.Khawaja@soton.ac.uk

Phone 07593657333

4. Is your study being conducted as part of an education qualification?

Yes ☒ **No** ☐

5. If yes, please give the name of your supervisor

Dr Chris Downey / Dr Cristina Azaola

6. Title of your project:

Transition from University to Work: the lived experiences and perceptions of South Asian women in Higher Education in England

7. Briefly describe the rationale, study aims and the relevant research questions of your study

This study will focus on how gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status issues interrelate in South Asian women's higher education trajectories and therefore, how they view their transition to work. It will explore both how these students negotiate the process and attempt to understand the meanings they ascribe to their lived experiences and the interplay of social and cultural issues within it. This study will be conducted with three South Asian groups in England, Pakistanis, Indians and Bangladeshis. The main reason for choosing these groups is because they share similar socio-cultural and religious backgrounds. Other ethnic minorities of Black Caribbean, Black Africans and Chinese are not included.

The study aims to examine, through the students' perceptions, various mechanisms of social and cultural networks which operate to reproduce existing differences within and between South Asian women and affect the process of their transition to work.

Research Questions

- In what ways have gender, ethnicity and social class shaped previous educational trajectories of South Asian women in this study from their early childhood to university?
- What are the perceptions of these South Asian women, as to how the interplay of gender, ethnicity and social class impact upon their ability to transit from university to the work environment?

8. Describe the design of your study

The study will take a pragmatic philosophical stance which gives flexibility of using qualitative research method in data collection, data interpretation, presentation, integration and discussion of the research findings. The study will present a qualitative analysis of South Asian women's narratives as they relate to their lived experiences within a raced, classed and gendered world. The interview guide will be given to experts for reviewing before the commencement of data collection. This process will allow me to re-look at the questions and remove those which will be ambiguous. I have already performed pilot interviews with 2 participants in January 2017. The essence of piloting was to revise the questions before data collection is done as well as to get familiar with the process of data collection. The following instruments for data collection will be used in this proposed research:

Observation

This method of data collection will enable me the opportunity to gather live data from naturally occurring situations. Observation are inductive process to see things that might otherwise be missed or participants may not talk freely in interviews. My observation will focus upon facts, events, and non-verbal behaviours. My expectation is to enter and understand the social situation which is to be described in my investigation. After obtaining ethics approval and participants consent, I will be accompanying participants as per their convenience to some of the social activities and interactions as they occur in their day to day lives. In case where people other than my research participants may be involved, a verbal consent will be obtained just before the observation process. I intend to follow a semi-structured observation schedule, having the main agenda of the issues with less predetermined aspects of observation. An unstructured observation may also be carried out, the aim is to enable me to observe any new aspects of participants which may not be captured through interviews and take notes for revision and data analysis.

Field Notes

Taking fieldnotes involves keeping a written record of the happenings and observations in the field. It allows researcher to record descriptive information to accurately document factual data, settings, actions, behaviors and conversations that are observed. The reflective information enables researcher to record ideas, questions, and concerns while conducting the observation.

I believe fieldnotes are a form of representation of social constructionist views. They do not capture some fixed, geographical “field” but present researcher’s own constructions of something which is produced in the process of interactions with the participants. I will take fieldnotes during the observation and immediately after the observation as well as during the interviews and immediately after the interviews.

In-depth Interviews

In this study, I intend to use in-depth interviews for the key respondents (informants). By using in-depth interviews, it is my expectation that the interviews will enable me to obtain the perceptions and clear testimony from my respondents, based on their lived experiences and perceptions of transition to work. A biographical narrative approach will be used to elicit the depth of their lived experiences and Higher Education journeys.

Data analysis

Qualitative data will be analysed by using thematic and content analysis with options of using a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package called Nvivo. Therefore, data from transcribed interviews will be grouped into various themes and contents informing the research questions for analyses. The qualitative data will be analysed using the principles and steps of the grounded theory. It involves rigorous procedures in research which leads to emergence of conceptual categories. For quantitative data from observations, and in-depth interviews analyses will be performed to understand and compare and interpret the perceptions of South Asian women's transition to work.

9. Who are the research participants?

South Asian women (Pakistani, Indian or Bangladeshi backgrounds) who are in their final year of Higher Education in the undergraduate or the postgraduate course will be recruited. They should be residing permanently in the UK and must not be enrolled in the university as international students. Those South Asian women who have recently completed their HE and are either looking for job or have just got into their career will also be included.

10. If you are going to analyse secondary data, from where are you obtaining it?

N/A

11. If you are collecting primary data, how will you identify and approach the participants to recruit them to your study?

A total of 12-15 South Asian students currently studying in three Universities (mainly Southampton, Solent and Bournemouth) will be purposively selected on the basis of being from South Asian diaspora preferably those who are second or third generation. The exceptions to this are those South Asian women who are not permanently living in the UK and are classified as international students. I will obtain a letter of authorisation from the Head of Postgraduate School of Education to allow me to conduct interviews in all the public institution that I am targeting as well as the private universities. I will make appointments with participants involved and leave them with letters of consent and on the agreed dates, meet them separately to conduct the interviews having read and accepted to be interviewed. The essence of leaving them with the consent forms is to allow them read and accept or refuse not to take part. Participants will also be sent information sheet prior to interviews so that they have understanding of the study and its aims (please find the attached participants information sheet).

12. Will participants be taking part in your study without their knowledge and consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people)? If yes, please explain why this is necessary.

All my participants will be given consent forms to read and sign. Participants will only take part with their full consent to do so willingly. In cases for example in observation where other people such as parents/ family members may be involved, a verbal consent will be obtained from them just before the observation process.

13. If you answered 'no' to question 13, how will you obtain the consent of participants?

All the participants will be literate. This means that they will be able to read the consent form accept or refuse to take part. Please refer to the attached consent form.

14. Is there any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?

Exploring lived experiences may be a sensitive topic and some participants might find it difficult if the explanation for doing this research is not clear. I will explain the overview of the study fully to all the participants that this exercise will be purely academic and their identity will be withheld. In case if they show any signs of uncertainty and unwillingness, I will respect their opinion and will approach someone else.

15. If participants are under the responsibility or care of others (such as parents/carers, teachers or medical staff) what plans do you have to obtain permission to approach the participants to take part in the study?

All the participants targeted in this study will be adults and independent.

16. Describe what participation in your study will involve for study participants. Please attach copies of any questionnaires and/or interview schedules and/or observation topic list to be used.

In-depth questions will be used for exploring participants lived experiences, insight, values and attitudes (questions attached).

17. How will you make it clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any point during the research without penalty?

The consent forms are very clear and explicit that participants are free to withdraw at any time if they so wish without giving any reasons, substantial or not.

18. Detail any possible distress, discomfort, inconvenience or other adverse effects the participants may experience, including after the study, and you will deal with this.

South Asian women in higher education may have busy schedule. I am likely to cause inconvenience to them from their busy schedules. However, I will rely on the specific dates and appointments. Talking about their personal lived experiences is sensitive and my assumption is that some participants might find it difficult to open up and give the true scenario. The positive part is that I will be dealing with people who have considerable understanding of higher education and issues related to transition as they might have experienced it at some point in time.

19. How will you maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality in collecting, analysing and writing up your data?

Confidentiality: Respondents' views will be dealt as highly confidential. There will be no need of bringing out the identities of the respondents. This means that information that will be given, will ensure privacy to the respondents. In any reports derived from the research, I will identify respondents' responses by giving them a number code to assure anonymity. All interview transcripts will be kept secure with no access to anyone.

20. How will you store your data securely during and after the study?

I have consulted and will follow University's Research Data Management Policy. All the data collected will be stored with care to protect the confidentiality of participants and institutions. The data will be secured with a strong password which will only be known to me and my supervisors, who will have access to my electronic devices during and after my data collection. My university computer is also secured that it's only me who have access to my computer.

21. Describe any plans you have for feeding back the findings of the study to participants.

I will prepare a brief summary of my research findings after my thesis has been accepted and send copies to each one of them.

22. What are the main ethical issues raised by your research and how do you intend to manage these?

I will take notes during the interview, the interviews will also be audio recorded, and transcripts will be returned to the interviewee for checking to add or remove. In other

words, this will enable my respondents to make any comments on the information they provided earlier. The following issues are also distinctive in my study:

With these ethical issues in mind, I will draw up an informed consent document in which issues about the research will be explained to every participant. All the participants will be asked to read and sign the document in order to indicate their willingness to participate in this study. For example, after information is anonymized, it is not possible to link new information to individuals within a dataset. When done with the writing of my thesis, the data and the analysis will be locked in my personal laptop with a password. I will protect data from unauthorized access, loss and modification.

23. Please outline any other information you feel may be relevant to this submission.

N/A

Appendix 5

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: **Transitions from university to the work: the lived experiences and perceptions of women of ethnic minorities in in Higher Education in England**

Researcher: Laila Khawaja **Ethics number**:29808

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

This study is purely academic. It is a fulfilment for my PhD qualification which I am currently pursuing at the University of Southampton in the UK. As an academic, the knowledge I will gain from this experience will help me to contribute effectively to the development of the Higher Education experiences of ethnic minority students. The study aims to find answers to the following major question:

- How in the lived experiences of ethnic minority students, do gender and socio-economic status interact in the context of higher education?

- What are the perceptions of ethnic minority students as to how the interplay of gender and socio-economic conditions has consequences their ability to study and to transit from university to work environment?

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen purposively to take part in this study as a key respondent. You have also been chosen due to your experience in higher education as an ethnic minority student living in the UK.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be interviewed, but be assured that your views will be kept strictly confidential. You will be interviewed for one hour (60 minutes maximum). In certain circumstance the researcher might request you for a follow up in order to clarify some of the issues that might arise from the interviews. The conversation will be audio recorded to be analysed later.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

You are likely to find this study interesting and make you reflect and think about the interplay of your lived experiences, higher education and transition to work. There is a direct benefit, as the study will contribute to the current existing body of knowledge of which you will be part although not directly.

Are there any risks involved?

There will be no risks involved by taking part in this exercise.

Will my participation be confidential?

As a researcher it is my responsibility to comply with the University of Southampton Data Protection Act. All the data collected from the interviews and questionnaires will be stored in a locked facility, accessible to the researcher and the supervisors only. Data will strictly remain confidential. Your views will remain anonymous in all the cases. Your identities will not be disclosed in this study.

What happens if I change my mind?

As you have already observed, participation is voluntary. If by any reason you wish to withdraw from this study, you are free to do so without asking for any permission or stating why you are doing so. However this must be done before the data is analysed. All the data will be stored securely in order to prevent access from any authorised person.

What happens if something goes wrong?

Appendix 6

CONSENT FORM

Study title: Transition from university to work: the lived experiences and perceptions of South Asian women in Higher Education in England

Researcher name: Laila Khawaja

Ethics reference: 29808

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (16/11/2016-Version 1) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	☐
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study	☐
I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research	☐
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without my legal rights being affected	☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Appendix 7

Table 4. Occurrence of Codes

*Number of occurrence

Theme	Specific Codes	Example	References*
Family influences			**290**
	Parental involvement and Support	Both of my parents, they always wanted me to have HE, they wanted me to go to university. They told me to do Masters to be honest. So, they have always encouraged me (B10-FA, 1).	124
	Choice / freedom	I was the first girl in my family, who had to live away for education, and some of my uncles didn't like the concept and they called my dad and said oh, is she actually moving away from home? (P5-HA, 3).	33
	Marriage versus Career	I am allowed to choose. My parents always used to say u know, always talk to the person, and get to know the person before you married to them (B9-TH, 3).	81
	Gendered roles	I will not say that I am asking your [husband's] permission to work but I would say that I just want to make clear that I would work. If my husband works, I can work too, if I am asking dinner he can also make dinner (I-8-BA, 4).	52
Community Influences			**144**
	Cultural influences	I think it would be harder for me to get job because I am brown, because mum sort of faced it, so I know from her experience that I will probably face it too (I-7-MA, 2).	43
	Impacts from Friends / colleagues	I do get support from them also in a way that they tell me I am inspiring, that I am doing good job and stuff like that. They are very encouraging (P2-SA, 4).	27
	Expectation	When I talked to neighbours … there is that extra bit of respect you get when they speak to you because they know you have been to HE and you are working (B12-RU, 6).	42
	Parental Social networks	They (community people) just kind of give like emotional support and verbal support … I don't know, I don't think they are very useful (P1-SO2, 2).	32
Mainstream Society Influences			**188**
	Perception of Transition	When I talked to people [colleagues] when I was in my second year, I still talk to them, none of them got job yet. That scares me a bit but then I can apply to other places. (P2-SA, 2).	79

Appendix 8

Table 5. Coding Phases

First Cycle Coding Methods		Second Cycle Coding Methods
Grammatical	Attribute, Magnitude, Sub coding, Simultaneous coding	Pattern Coding
Elemental	Initial concept coding, Structural, Descriptive, In Vivo coding, Process Coding	Focused Coding Axial Coding
Affective	Emotions, Values, Versus and Evaluation coding	Theoretical Coding
Literary and Language	Dramaturgical coding, Motif coding, Narrative coding, Verbal exchange coding	Elaborative Coding Longitudinal Coding
Exploratory	Holistic coding, Provisional coding and Hypothesis coding	
Procedural	Protocol coding, Domain and taxonomic coding, Causation coding, Outline of cultural material (OCM) coding	

(Adapted from Saldana, 2016, p. 68)

Appendix 9

Table 6. List of Deductive and Inductive Codes

Key: Deductive codes- Orange - Inductive codes- Blue

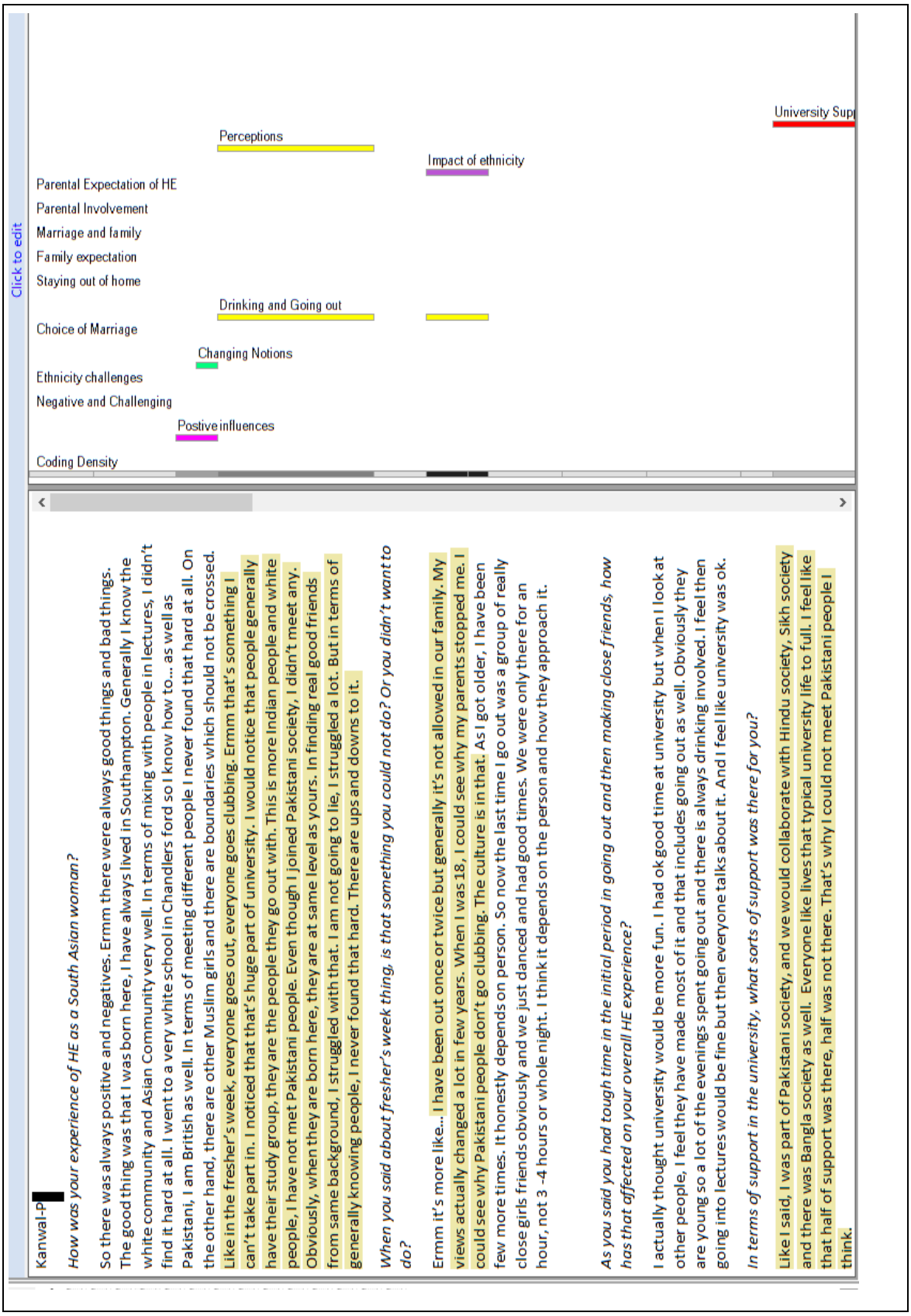
Name	Sources	Frequency
Impact of ethnicity	10	23
Friends-colleagues support	2	2
Family expectation	8	18
Marriage and family	10	18
Parental Involvement	10	15
Community expectation	7	11
Parental Contacts	3	4
Career Goals	10	13
Local work	4	4
Considering work abroad	6	6
Choice	7	10
Marriage choices	7	14
Arranged marriage	6	8
Plan for further Study	6	8
Strategies	11	28
Perceptions of career	13	76
Religious perceptions versus career	2	6
Changing Notions	8	12
Job market Opportunities	7	16
Job in the field studied	5	9
Challenges	12	30
Ethnicity challenges	8	13
Social Class	3	3

Parental support	7	15
Parental social network support	1	1
Working class	8	16
Middle class	1	1
Financial Independency	8	14
Provide for family	6	8
In receipt of Student Finance	5	6
Ethnicity	3	4
Cultural Impacts	11	24
Religious influences	6	8
Positive influences	7	17
Negative Influences	3	4
Family values	10	19
Community Impacts	0	0
Friends and Colleagues support	4	4
Drinking and Going out	7	9
Community Support	5	8
Gender Equality of opportunities	11	20
Career	5	8
Freedom	8	14
Staying away from home	5	8
Staying at home	3	4
Outside world Impacts	0	0
Outside family	4	7
Family Impacts	0	0
Role Expectation	6	7

Choice of Marriage	9	16
Career versus Marriage	5	8
Family	9	19
HE experiences	0	0
Positive and Smooth	8	16
Negative and Challenging	4	6
Mixed	4	7
Changing notions in HE	4	4
Ethnicity impacts	7	12
Support	0	0
Friends and Colleagues Support	7	10
Family support	11	20
Not supported	1	2
Parental expectation of HE	6	11
University support	7	9
Choice of subjects	4	9

Appendix 10

Interview Transcript



What could have been different if you think this didn't work?

That's a good question (laugh). I actually think about it myself sometimes but... I don't know we would go out to library sometimes and that would be fun. And we would go out for food that would be good as well. But I do feel most of the university experience I couldn't 100% involve because of all that.

What was your parents' response?

Ermm... no I didn't feel like I could tell them. My mum was born here, she went to university of London. So she's been through all that anyway. But I feel our generation is much more bigger thing compared to her time. She would actually ask me after lectures like have you met new friends so on. Or have you met this girl from Pakistani society and do things with her. So I feel like ermm... I couldn't completely convey to her that I am struggling and I couldn't also say.. I couldn't give her any alternative to make things work. Does that make sense? (*yeah*). (laughs). She wouldn't understand it the way I feel. Like she went to Imperial and even now she has so called Imperial group. And even now every single year, she still meets out her friends she did her Masters and PhD with. And I have not had that experience. And I think that's what she doesn't understand and at the same time I don't understand why I haven't had that experience. (*I think time changes*).

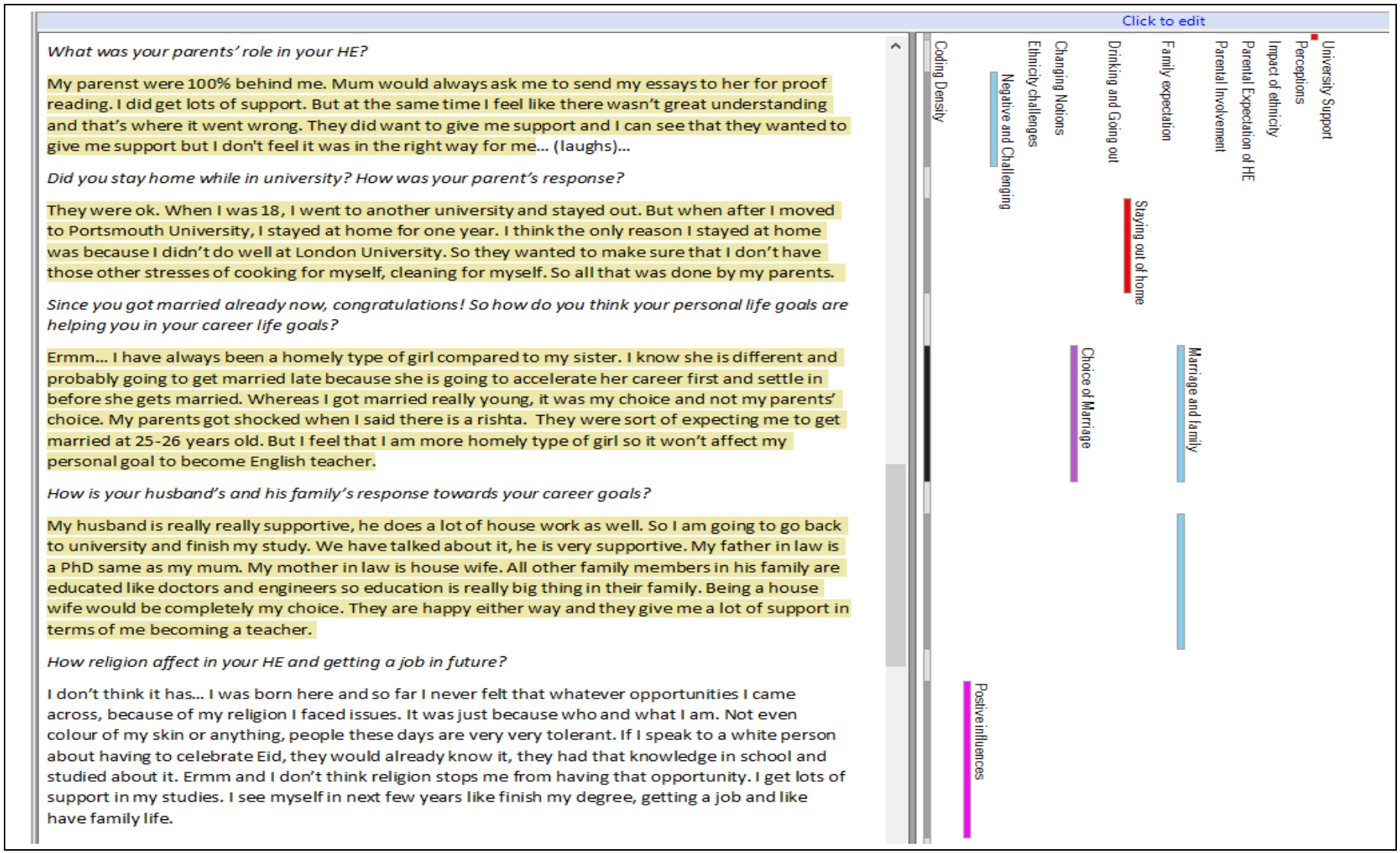
I think now it's generally more common for Asians to drink ermm... my mum has Punjabi Sikh friends and they don't drink. I think because when they were growing up, it wasn't completely accepted for girls to drink. Even that they are Punjabi, they had those boundaries. But now everyone is sort of different and that has become really really common.

So has not blending in properly affected your HE experience?

No, I do feel a sense of that. I ... have done an extra year of study at university. I haven't done 100% of university to get involved. And I feel that did have effect on me emotionally and mentally as well. And that has affected my grades. But in terms of future goals, I still have that goal, it's just that it is taking me longer to get there. Where people get it in three years, it will take me a little bit longer.

How about your experience of mixing with community and sharing experience apart from radio?

No... I mean I have always been a person who sticks to one thing and put 100% into that instead of doing lots of different things. Because I feel myself that I would get distracted too quickly. That's why I studied in summer holidays for my academic year. I do work slowly, some people take couple of hours to do that work, but I know I would need a longer amount of time to do the same. But having said that I did join Pakistani society to meet with people but that didn't work for me as well. And I left Pakistani society in my second year and did only one year. I would try and do a lot. But society members were all boys and very lazy. I would be one pushing them to do. We didn't even meet much. There would be more events happening in Indian society or Hindu society. And we used to go there but actually in Pakistani society, nothing much would happen. That is why I left it.


Click to edit
What was your parents' role in your HE?
My parenst were 100% behind me. Mum would always ask me to send my essays to her for proof reading. I did get lots of support. But at the same time I feel like there wasn't great understanding and that's where it went wrong. They did want to give me support and I can see that they wanted to give me support but I don't feel it was in the right way for me... (laughs)...
Did you stay home while in university? How was your parent's response?
They were ok. When I was 18, I went to another university and stayed out. But when after I moved to Portsmouth University, I stayed at home for one year. I think the only reason I stayed at home was because I didn't do well at London University. So they wanted to make sure that I don't have those other stresses of cooking for myself, cleaning for myself. So all that was done by my parents.
Since you got married already now, congratulations! So how do you think your personal life goals are helping you in your career life goals?
Ermm... I have always been a homely type of girl compared to my sister. I know she is different and probably going to get married late because she is going to accelerate her career first and settle in before she gets married. Whereas I got married really young, it was my choice and not my parents' choice. My parents got shocked when I said there is a rishta. They were sort of expecting me to get married at 25-26 years old. But I feel that I am more homely type of girl so it won't affect my personal goal to become English teacher.
How is your husband's and his family's response towards your career goals?
My husband is really really supportive, he does a lot of house work as well. So I am going to go back to university and finish my study. We have talked about it, he is very supportive. My father in law is a PhD same as my mum. My mother in law is house wife. All other family members in his family are educated like doctors and engineers so education is really big thing in their family. Being a house wife would be completely my choice. They are happy either way and they give me a lot of support in terms of me becoming a teacher.
How religion affect in your HE and getting a job in future?
I don't think it has... I was born here and so far I never felt that whatever opportunities I came across, because of my religion I faced issues. It was just because who and what I am. Not even colour of my skin or anything, people these days are very very tolerant. If I speak to a white person about having to celebrate Eid, they would already know it, they had that knowledge in school and studied about it. Ermm and I don't think religion stops me from having that opportunity. I get lots of support in my studies. I see myself in next few years like finish my degree, getting a job and like have family life.
Coding Density
Negative and Challenging
Ethnicity challenges
Changing Notions
Drinking and Going out
Family expectation
Parental Involvement
Parental Expectation of HE
Impact of ethnicity
Perceptions
University Support
Staying out of home
Choice of Marriage
Marriage and family
Postive influences

about having to celebrate Eid, they would already know it, they had that knowledge in school and studied about it. Ermm and I don't think religion stops me from having that opportunity. I get lots of support in my studies. I see myself in next few years like finish my degree, getting a job and like have family life.

How you see your ethnicity, gender or any other issues, which might be a concern in getting job in future?

No, in terms of career wise, I don't think these factors will play any role. I can also give example like my mum was born here. She did PhD here, in her time, it was as she was only Pakistani girl who did PhD in that time. But until now, she is in high role job. Her ethnicity, her religion none of this has come into the play to get her academic job and give her those opportunities.

Appendix 11

Table 7. Parental Information

Names	**Ethnicity**	**Parental Marital Status**	**Fathers Education/ occupation**	**Mothers Education/occupation**
Sonia	Pakistani	Married	High School - Taxi driver	HE degree - Nurse
Raheela	Pakistani	Divorced	HE degree - Doctor	College - Teacher
Kanwal	Pakistani	Married	HE degree - Retired	PhD - Lecturer
Haya	Pakistani	Married	HE degree - Doctor	High School - Home maker
Sanam	Pakistani	Divorced	Not living in the UK	HE degree - Teaching
Maya	Indian	Married	High school - Home maker	HE degree - recruitment officer
Tina	Indian	Married	HE degree - Teacher	HE degree – School Teacher
Baljeet	Indian	Married	College - Food business	Basic school - Home maker
Tahmina	Bangladeshi	Married	Un-educated - self employed	Un-educated - Home maker
Farida	Bangladeshi	Married	Basic school / self employed	Un-educated / Home maker
Maria	Bangladeshi	Married	Uneducated - Food business	Un-educated - Home maker
Rufaida	Bangladeshi	Married	Uneducated - self employed	Un-educated - Home maker

List of References

Abbas, T. (2003) The impact of religio-cultural norms and values on the education of young South Asian women. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(4), 411-428.

Abbas, T. (2007) British South Asians and pathways into selective schooling: social class, culture and ethnicity, *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(1), 75-90.

Abbott-Chapman, J. (2007) Improving participation of disadvantaged students in post-compulsory education and training: a continuing challenge. In Maclean, R. (eds). *Learning and teaching for the twenty-first century: festschrift for Professor Phillip Hughes*. New York: Springer.

Abreu, M., Faggian, A. & McCann, P. (2014) Migration and inter-industry mobility of UK graduates. *Journal of Economic Geography,* 15(2), 353-385.

Adkins, L. & Skeggs, B. (2004) *Feminism after Bourdieu.* (eds). Oxford: Blackwell.

Ahmad, F. (2001) Modern tradition? British Muslim women and academic achievement. *Gender and Education*, 13, 137–52.

Ahmad, W. & Sardar, Z. (2012) *Muslims in Britain: Making social and political space*. London: Routledge.

Ahmed, A. (2008) Marketing of halal meat in the United Kingdom: supermarkets versus local shops, *British Food Journal*, 110(7), 655 – 670.

Ahmed, M. (2011) Defining and measuring literacy: facing the reality. *International Review of Education,* 5(1-2), 179-195.

Ali, S. (2003) To be a girl: culture and class in schools correspondence: suki Ali, Goldsmiths College, University of London, Sociology Department, *Gender and Education*, 15(3), 269-283.

Alloway, N., Gilbert, P., Gilbert, R. & Muspratt, S. (2004) *Factors Impacting on student aspirations and expectations in regional Australia.* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Allin, P. & Selwood, S. (2004) Editorial: Cultural capital and social exclusion. *Cultural Trends,* 13(2), 1-5.

Amato, P.R. (2000) The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of marriage and family*, 62(4), 1269-1287.

Anderson, K.J. & Minke, K.M. (2007) Parent involvement in education: Toward an understanding of parents' decision making. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 100(5), 311-323.

Angrosino, M. (2007) *Doing ethnographic and observational research*. London: Sage.

Anitha, S., Pearson, R. & McDowell, L. (2012) Striking lives: multiple narratives of South

Asian women's employment, identity and protest in the UK. *Ethnicities*, 12(6), 754-775.

Archer, L. (2001) Muslim brothers, black lads, traditional Asians: British Muslim young men's constructions of 'race', religion and masculinity. *Feminism and Psychology,* 11(1), 79–105.

Archer, L., Hutchings, H., & Ross, A. (2003) *Higher Education and Social Class: Issues of Exclusion and Inclusion.* London: Routledge.

Archer, M.S. (2007) *Making our way through the world: human reflexivity and social mobility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Artis, J.E. (2007) Maternal cohabitation and child well-being among kindergarten children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69(1), 222-236.

Atkinson, W. (2014) A sketch of 'family' as a field: From realized category to space of struggle. *Acta Sociologica,* 57(3), 223-235.

Atkinson, R. & Flint, J. (2004) Snowball sampling. *The sage encyclopedia of social science research methods*, 3, 1043-1044.

Baert, S. Heiland, F. & Korenman, S. (2016) Native-immigrant gaps in educational and school to work transition in the second generation: the role of gender and ethnicity. *IZA Discussion Papers*, 8752, 1-41.

Bagguley, P. & Hussain, Y. (2016) Negotiating mobility: South Asian women and higher education. *Sociology*, 50(1), 43-59.

Bailey, J. (2008) First steps in qualitative data analysis: transcribing. *Family practice*, 25(2), 127-131.

Bailey, D., Cowling, K. & Tomlinson, P. (2015) *New perspectives on industrial policy for a modern Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baker, S. & Brown, B.J. (2008) Habitus and homeland: educational aspirations, family life and culture in autobiographical narratives of educational experience in rural Wales. *European Society for Rural Sociology*. *Sociologia Ruralis,* 48(1), 57-72.

Ballard, R. (2003) The South Asian presence in Britain and its transnational connections. *Culture and economy in the Indian diaspora*, 197-222.

Ball, S. J. (2003) *Class Strategies and the Education Market*. London: Routledge

Ball, J. S., Reay, D. & David, M. (2002) Ethnic choosing: minority ethnic students, social class and higher education choice. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 5(4), 333-357.

Bano, S. (2012) Cultural translations and legal conflict: Muslim women and the shari'a councils in Britain. In Hellum, A., Sardar A. S. & Griffith, A. (eds). *From Transnational Relations to Transnational Laws: Northern European Laws at the Crossroads*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Basit, T.N. (1997) I want more freedom, but not too much': British Muslim girls and the dynamism of family values. *Gender and education*, 9(4), 425-440.

Basit, T.N. (2012) I've never known someone like me go to University: class, ethnicity and access to higher education. *Social inclusion and higher education*, 172-192.

Bathmaker, A-M., Ingram, N. & Waller, R. (2013) Higher education, social class and the mobilisation of capitals: recognising and playing the game. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34 (5–6), 723–743.

Battu, H., Seaman, P. & Zenou, Y. (2011) Job contact networks and the ethnic minorities. *Labour Economics*, 18(1), 48-56.

Becher, H. (2008) Family Practices in South Asian Muslim Families. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
Berggren, C. (2011) Transition of higher education graduates to the labour market: are employment procedures more meritocratic in the public sector. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 33(2), 91-100.

Bhachu, P. (1991) Ethnicity Constructed and Reconstructed: the role of Sikh women in cultural elaboration and educational decision-making in Britain. *Gender and Education*, 3(1), 45-60.

Bhatia, S. & Ram, A. (2004) Culture, hybridity, and the dialogical self: Cases from the South Asian diaspora. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 11(3), 224-240.

Bhopal, K. (1997) South Asian women within households: Dowries, degradation and despair. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 20 (4), 483-492.

Bhopal, K. (1998) How gender and ethnicity intersect: the significance of education, employment and marital status. *Sociological Research Online*, 3(3), 1-11.

Bhopal, K. (1999) Domestic finance in South Asian households in East London. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 25(1), 81-93.

Bhopal, K. (2004) Gypsy travellers and education: changing needs and changing perceptions. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 52(1), 47-64.

Bhopal, K. (2008) Shared communities and shared understandings: experiences of Asian women in a British university. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 18(3-4), 185-197.

Bhopal, K. (2009) Identity, empathy and 'otherness': Asian women, education and dowries in the UK. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 12(1), 27-39.

Bhopal, K. (2010a) *Asian Women in Higher Education: Shared Communities*. London: Trentham.

Bhopal, K. (2010b) Gender, identity and experience: Researching marginalised groups. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 33(3), 188-195.

Bhopal, K. (2011a) We tend to stick together and mostly we stick to our own kind: British Indian women and support networks at university, *Gender and Education*, 23(5), 519-534.

Bhopal, K. & Myers, M. (2008) *Insiders, outsiders and others: Gypsies and identity*. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

Bhopal, K. & Preston, J. (2011b) Introduction. Intersectionality and race in education: theorising difference. In Bhopal, K. & Preston, J. (eds). *Intersectionality and Race in Education,* 1-10. London: Routledge.

Biesta, G. (2006) *Beyond Learning: Democratic Education for a human future.* New York: Routledge.

Blanden, J. & Machin, S. (2004) Educational inequality and the expansion of UK higher education. *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 51(2), 230-249.

Blanden, J. & MacMillan, L. (2014) *Education and intergenerational mobility: help or hindrance?* London: The London School of Economics and Political Science.

Blustein, D. L. (2006) The Psychology of Working. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bodovski, K. (2010) Parental Practices and Educational Achievement: Social Class, Race, and Habitus. *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 31(2), 139–156.

Bogdan, R. & Biklen, S. (2007) *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and practice.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1983) The field of cultural production, or: The economic world reversed. *Poetics*, 12(4-5), 311-356.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction.* London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) Forms of capitals. In Richardson, J.G. (eds). *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P. (1989) Social space and symbolic power. *Sociological theory*, *7*(1), 14-25.

Bourdieu, P. (1990a) *The logic of practice.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990b) *In other words: essays towards a reflexive sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991) The peculiar reason of scientific reason. *Sociological Forum,* 5, 3-26.

Bourdieu, P. (1992) *Thinking about limits- theory, culture and society*. London: Sage.

Bourdieu, P. (1993) *The field of cultural production.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996) On the Family as a realized category. *Theory Culture & Society,* 13(3), 19-26.

Bourdieu, P. (2000b) Making the economic habitus: Algerian workers revisited, *Ethnography*, 1(1), 17-41.

Bourdieu, P. & Passeron, J. (1977) *Reproduction in education, society & culture*. London: Sage.

Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L.J.D. (1992) *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998) *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. London: Sage.

Boyle, M.H., Georgiades, K., Racine, Y. & Mustard, C. (2007) Neighbourhood and family influences on educational attainment: Results from the Ontario Child Health Study Follow-up 2001. *Child development*, 78(1), 168-189.

Brah, A. (1992) Difference, diversity and differentiation. In Donald, J. & Rattansi, A. (eds). *Race, culture and difference,* 126-148, London: Sage.

Brannen, J. (2006) Cultures of intergenerational transmission in four-generation families. *The Sociological Review*, 54(1), 133-154.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Brown, S.L. (2010) Marriage and child well-being: Research and policy perspectives. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(5), 1059-1077.

Browne, K. (2005) Snowball sampling: using social networks to research non-heterosexual women. *International journal of social research methodology*, 8(1), 47-60.

Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, London: Routledge.

Bui, V.T. (2002) First-generation college students at a four-year university: Background characteristics, reasons for pursuing higher education, and first-year experiences. *College Student Journal*, 36(1), 3-9.

Butt, G., MacKenzie, L. & Manning, R. (2012) The career development of recently qualified British South Asian women teachers: Everybody's the same. I don't feel my ethnicity is an issue at all. *Educational Review*, 64(2), 181-194.

Caballero, C. Haynes, J. & Tikly, L. (2007) Researching mixed race in education: perceptions, policies and practices. *Race Ethnicity and Education,* 10(3), 345-362.

Caretta, M. A. (2014) Situated Knowledge in Cross-cultural, Cross-Language Research: A Collaborative Reflexive Analysis of Researcher, Assistant and Participant Subjectivities. *Qualitative Research,* 15(4), 489–505.

Castillo, J.T. & Fenzl-Crossman, A. (2010) The relationship between non-marital fathers' social networks and social capital and father involvement. *Child & Family Social Work*, 15(1), 66-76.

Charsley, K. (2005a) Vulnerable brides and transnational ghar-damads: gender, risk and adjustment among Pakistani marriage migrants to Britain. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies,* 12, 381-406.

Charsley, K. (2005b) Unhappy husbands: masculinity and migration in transnational Pakistani marriages. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11(1), 85-105

Charsley, K. & Shaw, A. (2006) South Asian transnational marriages in comparative perspective. *Global Networks*, 6(4), 131-145.

Charsley, K. S. Y. & Liversage, A. (2012) *Transforming polygamy: migration, transnational marriages and multiple marriages among Muslim minorities in Europe*, London: Global Networks.

Cheung, S. Y. & Heath, A. (2007) Nice work if you can get it. In Heath, A. & Cheung, S. Y. (eds). *Unequal Chances: Ethnic Minorities in Western Labour Markets*, 507–550. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cheong, P.H., Edwards, R., Goulbourne, H. & Solomos, J. (2007) Immigration, social cohesion and social capital: A critical review. *Critical social policy*, 27(1), 24-49.

Coghlan, D. & Brannick, T. (2014) *Doing action research in your own organization*. London: Sage.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2002) *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge.

Cole, M. (2012) *Education, Equality and Human Rights: Issues of Gender, Race, Sexuality, Disability and Social Class*. (3rd ed). New York: Routledge.

Connor, H., Tyres, C. & Modood, T. (2004) *Why the difference? A closer look at higher education minority ethnic students and graduates.* Nottingham: DFES Publications.

Cotton, D.R., Stokes, A. & Cotton, P.A. (2010) Using observational methods to research the student experience. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 34(3), 463-473.

Crawford, C. & Greaves, E. (2015) *Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in HE participation.* London: Crown.

Creswell, J.W. (2007) *Qualitative inquiry and Research Design: choosing among five approaches.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and Research Design: choosing among five approaches. (*3rd ed). London: Sage.

Croll, P. (2004) Families, social capital and educational outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 52(4), 390-416.

Crotty, M. (1998) *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage.

Crow, G. (1989) The use of the concept of 'strategy' in the recent sociological literature. *Sociology*, 23(1), 1–24.

Crozier, G. & Davies, J. (2006) Family matters: a discussion of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani extended family and community in supporting the children's education. *The Sociological Review*, 54(4), 678-695.

Crozier, G. (2009) South Asian parents' aspirations versus teachers' expectations in the United Kingdom. *Theory into Practice*, 48(4), 290-296.

Currarini, S., Jackson, M.O. & Pin, P. (2009) An economic model of friendship: homophily, minorities, and segregation. *Econometrica*, 77(4), 1003-1045.

Dale, A., Fieldhouse, E., Shaheen, N. & Kalra, V. (2002) The labour market prospects for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. *Work, employment and society*, 16(1), 5-25.

Dale, A., Lindley, J. & Dex, S. (2006) A life-course perspective on ethnic differences in women's economic activity in Britain. *European Sociological Review*, 22(3), 323-337.

Dale, A. (2008) Migration, marriage and employment amongst Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents in the UK. *University of Manchester, CCSR Working Paper*, *2*, 1-10.

Dale, A. & Ahmed, S. (2011) Marriage and employment patterns amongst UK-raised Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi women. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(6), 902-924.

Davies, C. A. (2008) *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. London: Routledge.

Day, S. (2012) A reflexive lens: Exploring dilemmas of qualitative methodology through the concept of reflexivity. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, 8(1), 60-85.

Decoito, P. & Williams, L. (2000) *Setting the course: A framework for coordinating services for immigrants and refugees in Peel Region.* Mississauga: The Social Planning Council of Peel.

De Grip, A., Fouarge, D. & Sauermann, J. (2010) What affects international migration of European science and engineering graduates? *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, 19(5), 407-421.

Delebarre, J. (2016) Unemployment by ethnic background. In Brown, J. (eds). *House of commons*, 6289, 1-4.

Delamont, S. (2009) The only honest thing: Autoethnography, reflexivity and small crises in fieldwork. *Ethnography and education*, 4(1), 51-63.

Dennis, B. (2010) Ethical Dilemmas in the Field: The complex nature of doing education ethnography. *Ethnography and Education,* 5(2), 123-127.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005) Introduction: the discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds). *The sage handbook of qualitative research. (*2nd ed). London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2011) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research.* (4th ed). London: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. (2017) *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. London: Routledge.

Dhar, R.L. (2012) Why do they bully? bullying behavior and its implication on the bullied. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 27(2), 79-99.

DiMaggio, P. & Mohr, J. (1985) Cultural capital, educational attainment, and marital selection. *American Journal of Sociology*, 90(6) 123-126.

Dronker, J. & Kornder, N. (2014) Do migrant girls perform better than migrant boys? Deviant gender differences between the reading scores of 15 years old children of migrants compared to native pupils. *Educational Research and Evaluation,* 20, 44-66.

Dwyer, C. (2000) Negotiating diasporic identities: Young British south Asian Muslim women. In *Women's Studies International Forum*, 23 (4), 475-486.

Dwyer, C. & Shah, B. (2009) Rethinking the identities of young British Pakistani Muslim women: educational experiences and aspirations. In Hopkin, P. & Gale, R. (eds). *Muslims in Britain: Race, place and identities*, 55-73. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Dustmann, C. & Theodoropoulos, N. (2010) Ethnic minority immigrants and their children in Britain. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 62(2), 209-233.

Dustmann, C., Glitz, A., Schonberg, U. & Brucker, H. (2015) Referral-based job search networks. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 83(2), 514-546.

Edgerton, J. D., & Roberts, L. W. (2014) Cultural capital or habitus? Bourdieu and beyond in the explanation of enduring educational inequality. *Theory and Research in Education,* 12(2), 193-220.

Eldred, J. (2013) *Literacy and Women's Empowerment: stories of success and inspiration*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Elliot, J. (2005) *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* London: Sage.

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A.P. (2000) Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds). *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* (2nd ed.), 733-768.

Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I. & Shaw, L.L. (2011) *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Eriksson, P., Henttonen, E. & Merilainen, S. (2012) Ethnographic fieldnotes and reflexivity. In *An ethnography of global landscapes and corridors*. Rijeka: InTech.

Faggian, A., Corcoran, J. & McCann, P. (2013) Modelling geographical graduate job search using circular statistics. *Papers in Regional Science*, 92(2), 329-343.

Faggian, A., Corcoran, J. & Partridge, M. (2015) Interregional Migration Analysis. In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Economic Geography*, Karlsson, C., Andersson, M & Norman, T. (eds). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Faggian, A., McCann, P. & Sheppard, S. (2007a) Some evidence that women are more mobile than men: gender differences in UK graduate migration behaviour. *Journal of Regional Science*, 47(3), 517-539.

Fearfull, A. & Kamenou, N. (2006) How do you account for it? A critical exploration of career opportunities for and experiences of ethnic minority women. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 17(7), 883-901.

Ferrare, J.J. & Apple, M.W. (2015) Field theory and educational practice: Bourdieu and the pedagogic qualities of local field positions in educational contexts. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 45(1), 43-59.

Field, J. (2003) *Social Capital.* London: Routledge.

Fisher, M.H. (2006) *Counterflows to colonialism: Indian travellers and settlers in Britain, 1600-1857*. London: Orient Blackswan.

Fried, T. & MacCleave, A. (2009) Influence of role models and mentors on female graduate students' choice of science as a career. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 55(4), 482.

Franceschelli, M. & O'Brien, M. (2014) Islamic capital and family life: The role of Islam in

parenting. *Sociology,* 48(6), 1190–1206.

Franceschelli, M. & O'Brien, M. (2015) Being modern and modest: South Asian young

British Muslims negotiating multiple influences on their identity. *Ethnicities*, 15(5), 696-714.

Freistadt, J. & Strohschein, L. (2013) Family structure differences in family functioning: Interactive effects of social capital and family structure. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34(7), 952-974.

Frosh, S. & Emerson, P. D. (2005) Interpretation and Over-Interpretation: Disputing the Meaning of Texts. *Qualitative Research*, 5(3), 307-32.

Georgalou, M. (2015) *Constructions of identity on Facebook: A discourse-centred online ethnographic study of Greek users.* Doctoral dissertation. Lancaster: Lancaster University.

George, U. & Chaze, F. (2009) Social capital and employment: South Asian women's experiences. *Affilia*, 24(4), 394-405.

George & Spindler, L. (2014) In Spindler, L. (eds). *Interpretive ethnography of education at home and abroad*. 17-36, New York: Psychology Press.

Gergen, K. J. & Wortham, S. (2001) Social construction and pedagogical practice. *Social Construction in Context*, 115-136.

Gibson, D.E. (2004) Role models in career development: New directions for theory and research. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 65(1), 134-156.

Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (1995) Living in a post-traditional society. In Beck, U., Giddens, A. and Lash, S. *Reflexive Modernisation: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, A. (2009) *Politics of climate change*. Cambridge: Polity press.

Gillborn, D. & Mirza, H. S. (2000) *Mapping race, class and gender: a synthesis of research evidence. Educational Inequality*. London: University of London.

Gobo, G. (2008) *Doing ethnography*. London: Sage.

Grabau, L. (2009) Academic motivation and student development during the transition to college. *Kentucky Journal of Excellence in College Teaching and Learning*, 7(1), 8-20.

Grbich, C. (2012) *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction*. London: Sage.

Gregg, P., Harkness, S. & Smith, S. (2009) Welfare reform and lone parents in the UK. *The economic journal*, 119(535), 38-65.

Grenfell, M. (2004) *Pierre Bourdieu: agent provocateur*. London: Continuum.

Grenfell, M. (2009) Applying Bourdieu's field theory: the case of social capital and education. *Education, Knowledge & Economy*, 3(1), 17-34.

Grenfell, M. & Lebaron, F. (2014) *Bourdieu and Data Analysis: Methodological Principles and Practice*, (eds). Bern: Peter Lang.

Grenfell, M. (2017) *Bourdieu and Field Theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2007) *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. London: Routledge.

Hammersley, M. (2018) What is ethnography? can it survive? should it?. *Ethnography and Education*, 13(1), 1-17.

Hall, S. (1992) The Question of Cultural Identity', In Hall, S., Held, D. & McGrew, T. (eds). *Modernity and its Futures,* 273-325. Cambridge: Polity press.

Hamzeh, M. (2011) Deveiling body stories: Muslim girls negotiate visual, spatial, and ethical hijabs. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14(4), 481-506.

Hartas, D. (2015) *Educational research and inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. (eds). London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Heath, A. & Martin, J. (2013) Can religious affiliation explain ethnic inequalities in the labour market? *Ethnic and racial studies*, 36(6), 1005-1027.

Heath, C., Hindmarsh, J. & Luff, P. (2010) *Video in qualitative research*. London: Sage

Heath, S., Fuller, A. & Johnston, B. (2010) Young people, social capital and network-based educational decision-making. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 31(4), 395-411.

Heath, T.J. (2008) Initial work experiences of veterinarians who graduated from Australian universities in 2005. *Australian veterinary journal*, 86(9), 357-364.

Hemmings, A. (2009) Ethnographic Research with Adolescent Students: Situated Fieldwork Ethics and Ethical Principles Governing Human Research. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics,* 4(4), 27–38.

Hennink, M., Hutter, I. & Bailey, A. (2010) *Qualitative research methods*. London: Sage.

Hewstone, M. (2015) Consequences of diversity for social cohesion and prejudice: The missing dimension of intergroup contact. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(2), 417-438.

Higginbottom, G.M.A (2004) Sampling issues in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, 12(1), 7-19.

Hills, J., Brewer, M., Jenkins, S. P., Lister, R., Lupton, R., Machin, S., Mills, C., Modood, T., Rees, T. & Riddell, S. (2010) *An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK: Report of the National Equality Panel*. London: Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion.

Hsieh, M.H. (2007) Challenges for international students in higher education: One student's narrated story of invisibility and struggles. *College Student Journal*, 41(2), 379-391.

Hobbs, D. (2006) Ethnography. In *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods.* (eds). 101–103. London: Sage.

Hoekstra, H.A. (2011) A career roles model of career development. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 78(2), 159-173.

Holden, M.T. & Lynch, P. (2004) Choosing the appropriate methodology: Understanding research philosophy. *The marketing Review*, 4(4), 397-409.

Holland, D., Fox, G. & Daro, V. (2008) Social movements and collective identity: A decentered, dialogic view. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 95-126.

Holloway, J. (2013) Book review: Reflexive methodology-new vistas for qualitative research. (2nd ed). *Management learning,* 42(1), 113-116.

Home Office (2016) Immigration Statistics January to March 2016. *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2016/family#family-immigration-latest-trends*

Hopson, R. & Dixson, A. (2011) Intersections, theories, and meanings of race, racism, and educational ethnography, *Ethnography and Education*, 6 (1), 1–7.

Hussain, Y. & Bagguley, P. (2007) *Moving on up: South Asian women and higher education*. London: Trentham.

Hussain, Y. (2017) *Writing diaspora: South Asian women, culture and ethnicity*. London: Routledge.

Ijaz, A. & Abbas, T. (2010) The impact of inter-generational change on the attitudes of working class South Asian Muslim parents on the education of their daughters. *Gender and Education,* 22(3), 313–326.

Inman, A.G. (2006) South Asian women: Identities and conflicts. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 12(2), 306-319.

Ingram, N. (2011) Within school and beyond the gate: The complexities of being educationally successful and working class. *Sociology,* 45(2), 287–302.

Jenkins, R. (1996) *Social Identity*, London: Routledge

Jenkins, R. (2002) *Pierre Bourdieu.* London: Routledge.

Jenkins, R. (2014) *Pierre Bourdieu*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, S.E., Richeson, J.A. & Finkel, E. (2011). Middle-class yet marginal? the influence of socio-economic status at an elite university on executive functioning. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 100(5), 838–852

Kabir, N. (2010) *Young British Muslims: Identity, culture, politics and the media.* Edinburgh: University Press.

Kamassah, S. (2010) Factors that Enable Women of South Asian and African Descent to Succeed in Leadership Positions in Higher Education. *College Quarterly*, 13(3), 1-17.

Kao, G. (2004) Social capital and its relevance to minority and immigrant populations. *Sociology of Education*, 77(2), 172-175.

Karnieli-Miller, O. Strier, R. & Pessach, L. (2009) Power relations in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research,* 19(2), 279-289.

Karunanayake, D. & Nauta, M.M. (2004) The relationship between race and students' identified career role models and perceived role model influence. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 52(3), 225-234.

Katsillis, J., &. Armer, J.M. (2000) Education and Mobility, in Borgatta, E.F. & Montgomery, R.J.V. (eds). *Encyclopedia of Sociology* (2nd ed). New York: Macmillan.

Khambhaita, P. (2014) Indian mothers' perceptions of their roles in their daughters' university course choices. *British Educational Research Journal*, 40(6),1019-1035.

Khambhaita, P. & Bhopal, K. (2015) Home or away? The significance of ethnicity, class and attainment in the housing choices of female university students. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 18(4), 535-566.

Khattab, N., Johnston, R., Modood, T. & Sirkeci, I. (2011) Economic activity in the South-Asian population in Britain: The impact of ethnicity, religion, and class. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(9), 1466-1481.

Kim, Y. (2011) The pilot study in qualitative inquiry: Identifying issues and learning lessons for culturally competent research. *Qualitative Social Work*, 10(2), 190-206.

Kohn, M. & Kazimierz, S. (1990*) Social structure and self-direction: a comparative analysis of the United States and Poland*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Kundani, A. (2007) Integrationism: the politics of anti-Muslim racism, *Race & Class,* 48(4), 24-44.

Kutty, F.M. (2014) Mapping the road to university: first generation students' choice and decision of university. *International Education Studies*, 7(1), 49-98.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Lancrin, S.V. (2008) The reversal of gender inequalities in higher education: on going trend. *Higher Education to 2030,* 1, 265-298.

Lander, V. (2011) Race, culture and all that: an exploration of the perspectives of White secondary student teachers about race equality issues in their initial teacher education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14(3), 351-364.

Lander, V. (2014) Special Issue Race Ethnicity and Education: Initial teacher education: developments, dilemmas and challenges. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 17(3), 299-303.

Lander, V. & Santoro, N. (2017) Invisible and hypervisible academics: the experiences of Black and minority ethnic teacher educators. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 22(8), 1008-1021.

Lareau, A. (2011) *Unequal Childhood: class, race and family life. Second edition*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Lareau, A. & Horvat, E.M. (1999) Moments of social inclusion and exclusion race, class, and cultural capital in family-school relationships. *Sociology of education*, 37-53.

Lewis, S. (2015) Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. *Health promotion practice*, 16(4), 473-475.

Lichtman, M. (2013) *Qualitative research for the social sciences.* London: Sage.

Liebler, C.A. & Sandefur, G.D. (2002) Gender differences in the exchange of social support with friends, neighbours, and co-workers at midlife. *Social Science Research*, 31(3), 364-391.

Lindstrom, L., Doren, B., Metheny, J., Johnson, P. & Zane, C. (2007) Transition to employment: role of the family in career development. *Exceptional children*, 73(3), 348-366.

Lockford, L. (2004) *Performing Femininity: Rewriting Gender Identity*, Oxford: Altamira Press.

Lustig, D.C., Xu, Y.J. & Strauser, D.R. (2017) The influence of family of origin relationships on career thoughts. *Journal of Career Development*, 44(1), 49-61.

Marguerite, L. G., Dean, S.T.; Katherine, V. H. (2006) *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice. Online resource:* http://www.josseybass.com

Mason, D. (2003) Changing Patterns of Ethnic Disadvantage in Employment, In Mason, D, (eds). *Explaining Ethnic Differences: Changing Patterns of Disadvantage in Britain*, 69–86. Bristol: Policy.

Mason, M. (2010) Sample size and saturation in PhD studies using qualitative interviews. In *Forum qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: qualitative social research*, 11(3), 1-19

Mathur, R., Grundy, E. & Smeeth, L. (2013) Availability and use of UK based ethnicity data for health research. National Centre for Research Methods, 1(13), 1-30.

Maxwell, J. A. (2005) *Qualitative research: An interactive design.* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Maxwell, J.A. (2012) *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* (41). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Maxwell, J. A. (2013) *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rded). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

May, V. (2011) Self, belonging and social change. *Sociology*, 45(3), 363-378.

Maylor, U. (2010) Notions of diversity, British identities and citizenship belonging. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13(2), 233-252.

McCarron, G.P., & Kinkelas, K.K. (2006) The Gap between Educational Aspirations and Attainment for First-Generation College Students and the Role of Parental Involvement. *Journal of College Student Development,* 47(5), 534–549.

McMillan, J.H. & Schumacher, S. (2010) Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry, *MyEducationLab Series*, 10-21.

MacMillan, L., Tyler, C. & Vignoles, A. (2015) Who gets the top jobs? The role of family background and networks in recent graduates' access to high-status professions. *Journal of Social Policy*, 44(3), 487-515.

McNay, L. (2008) The Trouble with Recognition: Subjectivity, Suffering, and Agency, *Sociological Theory,* 26(3), 271-296.

McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. & Cook, J.M. (2001) Birds of a feather: homophily in social networks. *Annual review of sociology*, 27(1), 415-444.

Merriam, S.B. (2002) Introduction to qualitative research. *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*, 1, 1-17.

Mellor, J. (2011) I really couldn't think of being married. Having a family with nothing behind me: empowerment, education and British Pakistani women. In Bolagni, M. & Lyon, S. (eds). *Pakistan and its Diasporas*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 217-37.

Miled, N. (2017) Muslim researcher researching Muslim youth: reflexive notes on critical ethnography, positionality and representation. *Ethnography and Education*, 1-15.

Mills, D. & Morton, M. (2013) *Ethnography in education*. London: Sage.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook, (*2nd ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mirza, H.S. (2003) All the women are white, all the blacks are men–but some of us are brave: mapping the consequences of invisibility for black and minority ethnic women in Britain. *Explaining ethnic differences: changing patterns of disadvantage in Britain*, 121-138.

Modood, T. (2003) Muslims and the politics of difference. *The Political Quarterly*, 74(1), 100-115.

Modood, T. (2004) Capitals, ethnic identity and educational qualifications. *Cultural Trends,* 13(2), 87-105.

Modood, T. (2005) *Multicultural politics: Racism, ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain* (Vol. 22). U of Minnesota Press.

Modood, T. (2006) Ethnicity, Muslims and higher education entry in Britain, debate section, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 11(2), 247 -250.

Modood, T. (2007) Multiculturalism. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 1-4.

Modood, T. (2012) Capitals, ethnicity and higher education. *Social inclusion and higher education*, 17-40.

Modood, T. (2015) State-religion connections and multicultural citizenship. *Religion, Secularism, and Constitutional Democracy*, 182-203.

Moore, L. & Savage, J. (2002) Participant observation, informed consent and ethical approval. *Nurse Researcher*, 9(4), 58-68.

Monteiro, A.M., Santos, P.J. & Gonçalves, C.M. (2015) Building a scale of the meanings of transition from higher education to work. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 23(3), 481-492.

Moore, R. (2008) Capital. In: Grenfell M (ed.) *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts*, 101–117. Durham: Acumen.

Nandi, A. & Platt, L. (2010) *Ethnic Minority Women's Poverty and Economic Well Being*. London: Government Equalities Office.

Nash, R. (1990) Bourdieu on education and social and cultural reproduction. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 11(4), 431-447.

Nash, R. (2005a) Cognitive habitus and collective intelligence: Concepts for the explanation of inequality of educational opportunity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(1), 3-21.

Nash, R. (2005b) The cognitive habitus: Its place in a realist account of inequality/difference. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 26(5), 599-612.

Nast, J. & Blokland, T. (2014) Social mix revisited: neighbourhood institutions as setting for boundary work and social capital. *Sociology,* 48(3), 482-499.

Nind, M. & Todd, L. (2011) Prospects for educational research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 34(1),1–2.

Nisbett, R.E. (2009). *Intelligence and How to Get it. Why Schools and Cultures Count*. London: Norton.

Noble, G. (2013) It is home but it is not home: habitus, field and the migrant. *Journal of sociology*, 49(2-3), 341-356.

Noy, C. (2008) Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. *International Journal of social research methodology*, 11(4), 327-344.

Office for National Statistics (2011) Labour Force Survey User Guide: *Background and Methodology*, 1, England and Wales.

Office for National Statistics (2013) *2011 Census: Ethnic group, local authorities in the United Kingdom*. Online source: www.ons.gov.uk

Office for National Statistics (2014) *Ethnicity and Labour market, 2011 census, 1,* England and Wales. Online source: www.ons.gov.uk

Office for National Statistics (2016) UK labour market: June 2016. Online source: www.ons.gov.uk

Office for National Statistics (2018) UK labour market: November 2018. Online source: www.ons.gov.uk

Oliker, S. (1989) *Best friends and marriage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Pallais, A. & Sarah, T. (2006) Opportunities for Low Income Students at Top Colleges and Universities: Policy Initiatives and the Distribution of Students. *National Tax Journal,* 59(2), 357–386.

Parker, M. (2007 Ethnography/ethics. *Social science & medicine*, 65(11), 2248-2259.

Parker-Jenkins, M. (2018) Problematising ethnography and case study: reflections on using ethnographic techniques and researcher positioning. *Ethnography and Education*, 13(1), 18-33.

Parmar, P. (1988) Race and power: the challenge of youth work practice. In Cohen, P. & Bains, H. (eds). *Multi-Racist Britain*, 58-63. London: McMillan.

Pascarella, E.T (2006) How college affects students: ten directions for future research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(5), 508–520.

Patton, M.Q. (1987) *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation* (4). London: Sage.

Patton, M.Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury

Park: Sage.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (3rd ed.).

Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Patacchini, E. & Zenou, Y. (2012) Ethnic networks and employment outcomes. *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 42(6), 938-949.

Peach, C. (2006) Islam, ethnicity and South Asian religions in the London 2001 census. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31(3), 353-370.

Pellizzari, M. (2010) Do friends and relatives really help in getting a good job? *ILR Review*, *63*(3), 494-510.

Pike, G.R., & Kuh, G.D. (2005) First and second -generation college students: a comparison of their engagement and intellectual development. *Journal of Higher Education,* 76, 276–30.

Pilkington, A. (2011) *Institutional Racism in the Academy A case study*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham.

Pio, E. & Syed, J. (2013) Our bodies, our minds, our men: working South Asian women. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 28(3), 140-150.

Platt, L. (2005) *Migration and Social Mobility: The Life Chances of Britain's Minority Ethnic Communities.* Bristol: The Policy Press

Pluss, C. (2013) Chinese migrants in New York: Explaining inequalities with transnational positions and capital conversions in transnational spaces. *International Sociology,* 28(1), 12-28.

Purdie-Vaughns, V. & Eibach, R.P. (2008) Intersectional invisibility: The distinctive advantages and disadvantages of multiple subordinate-group identities. *Sex Roles*, 59(5-6), 377-391.

Putnam, R. D. (1995) Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1) 64-78.

Putnam, R. D. (2000) *Bowling Alone.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Puwar, N. (2004) Thinking about making a difference. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6(1), 65-80.

Qureshi, K., Charsley, K. & Shaw, A. (2014) Marital instability among British Pakistanis: transnationality, conjugalities and Islam. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(2), 261-279.

Reay, D. (2004) It's all becoming a habitus: beyond the habitual use of habitus in educational research. *British journal of sociology of education*, 25(4), 431-444.

Reay, D., David, M.E. & Ball, S.J. (2005) *Degrees of choice: Class, race, gender and higher education*. London: Trentham Books.

Reay, D., Crozier, G. & Clayton, J. (2009) strangers in paradise? Working-class students in elite universities. *Sociology*, 43(6), 1103–1121.

Reay, D., Crozier, G. & Clayton, J. (2010) Fitting in or standing out: working-class students in UK higher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(1), 107-124.

Reay, D., Crozier, G., & James, D. (2011) White Middle-Class Identities and Urban Schooling. (eds). Basingstoke: Palgrave Press.

Riessman, C. K. (2007) *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Richardson, J.T. (2015) The under-attainment of ethnic minority students in UK higher education: what we know and what we don't know. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 39(2), 278-291.

Rowley, J. (2012) Conducting research interviews. *Management Research Review*, 35(3/4), 260-271.

Rowlingson, K. & McKay, S. (2014). *Lone parent families: Gender, class and state*. London: Routledge.

Saldana, J. (2008) *The coding manual of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Saldana, J. (2013) The coding manual for qualitative research (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Saldana, J. (2016) Goodall's verbal exchange coding: an overview and example. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 22(1), 36-39.

Salman, F. & Siddiqui, K. (2011) An exploratory study for measuring consumers awareness and perceptions towards halal food in Pakistan. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business,* 3(2), 639-651.

Samaluk, B. (2014) Whiteness, ethnic privilege and migration: A Bourdieuian framework. *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* 29(4), 370-388.

Saunders, P. (2002) Reflections on the Meritocracy Debate in Britain: A response to Richard Breen and John Goldthorpe. *British Journal of Sociology*, 53(4), 559–574

Savage, M., Devine, F., Cunningham, N., Taylor, M., Li, Y., Hjellbrekke, J. & Miles, A. (2013) A new model of social class? Findings from the BBC's great British class survey experiment. *Sociology*, 47(2), 219-250.

Schwartz-Shea, P. & Yanow, D. (2013) Introduction. In *Interpretive Research Design* (15-28). London: Routledge.

Seale, C. (2004) *Social research methods: A reader*. London: Routledge.

Seidman, I. (2013) *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. London: Teachers college press.

Shah, B., Dwyer, C. & Modood, T. (2010) Explaining educational achievement and career aspirations among young British Pakistanis: mobilizing ethnic capital. *Sociology*, 44(6), 1109-27.

Shah, B. (2007) Being young, female and Laotian: ethnicity as social capital at the intersection of gender, generation, race and age. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 30(1), 28–50.

Shain, F. (2013) Race, nation and education: an overview of British attempts to manage diversity since the 1950s. *Education Inquiry*, *4*(1), 63-85.

Shaw, A. & Charsley, K. (2006) Rishtas: adding emotion to strategy in understanding British Pakistani transnational marriages. *Global networks*, 6(4), 405-421.

Siisiainen, M. (2003) Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam. *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology*, 40(2), 183-204.

Silva, E.B. (2005) Gender, home and family in cultural capital theory. *The British journal of sociology*, 56(1), 83-103.

Silver, C. & Lewins, A. (2014) *Using software in qualitative research: A step-by-step guide*. London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2010) *Doing Qualitative Research.* (3rd ed). London: Sage.

Sin, I. L. (2013) Cultural capital and distinction: Aspiration of the 'other' foreign student. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34(5-6), 848-867

Shin, Y., & Kelly, K. (2013). Cross-cultural comparison of the effects of optimism, intrinsic motivation, and family relations on vocational identity. *Career Development Quarterly,* 61, 141–160.

Smith, C.L. (2011) *Family and Role Model Influence on Black Young Adults' Dysfunctional Career Thoughts*. Regent University.

Smyth, E. & Banks, J. (2012) There was never really any question of anything else: young people's agency, institutional habitus and the transition to higher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33(2), 263-281.

Spradley, J.P. (2016) *Participant observation*. Long grove: Waveland Press.

Stebbins, R. (1987) *Sociology. The Study of Society*. New York: Harper and Row.

Strand, S. (2011) The limits of social class in explaining ethnic gaps in educational attainment. *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(2), 197-229.

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007) Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practical. *American Psychologist,* 62(4), 271-286.

Swartz, D. (1997) *Culture and power: the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Sweetman, P. (2009) Revealing habitus, illuminating practice: Bourdieu, photography and visual methods. *The Sociological Review*, 57(3), 491-511.

Takhar, S. (2006) South Asian women, social capital and multicultural (mis) understandings. *Community, Work and Family*, 9(3), 291-307.

Tariq, M. & Syed, J. (2017) Intersectionality at work: south Asian Muslim women's experiences of employment and leadership in the United Kingdom. *Sex Roles*, 1-13.

Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (2010) *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*. London: Sage.

Thanh, N.C. & Thanh, T.T. (2015) The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. *American Journal of Educational Science*, *1*(2), 24-27.

Thapar-Bjorket, S. & Sanghera, G. (2010) Social Capital, educational aspirations and young

Pakistani Muslim men and women in Bradford West Yorkshire. *The Sociological*

Review, 58(2), 244-64.

Tomlinson, M. (2008) The degree is not enough: students' perceptions of the role of higher education credentials for graduate work and employability. *British journal of sociology of education*, 29(1), 49-61.

Turner, F. (2011) *Social work treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, J. (2011) The intimate insider: negotiating the ethics of friendship when doing insider research. *Qualitative research*, 11(1), 3-22.

Tyrer, D. & Ahmad, F. (2006) *Muslim women and higher education: Identities, experiences and prospects: a summary report*. Liverpool John Moores University for European Social Fund.

UCAS (2015) online source: www.ucas.com

UNESCO (2012) *World Atlas on Gender Equality in Education*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

UNESCO (2016) *World Social Science Report 2016, Challenging Inequalities: Pathways to a Just World.* Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Viadero, D. (2005) studies show high schools' shortcomings: young adults surveyed about their experiences. *Education Week*, 24(22), 1-12.

Vincent, C., Rollock, N., Ball, S. & Gillborn, D. (2012) Being strategic, being watchful, being determined: Black middle-class parents and schooling. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33(3), 337-354.

Vincent, C., Rollock, N., Ball, S. & Gillborn, D. (2013) Raising middle-class black children: Parenting priorities, actions and strategies. *Sociology*, 47(3), 427-442.

Vincent, C.J., Neal, S. & Iqbal, H. (2015) Friendship and diversity: children's and adults' friendships across social class and ethnic difference. *ESRC project report.* University of Surrey.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (1989) Towards a reflexive sociology: A workshop with Pierre Bourdieu. *Sociological Theory*, 7(1), 26-63.

Walther, M. (2014) *Repatriation to France and Germany: A comparative study based on Bourdieu's theory of practice*. Brussels: Springer.

Weller, P. (2011) *Religious discrimination in Britain: A review of research evidence,* 2000-10.

Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011.

Wells, P.J. & Florea, S. (2015) Navigating the transition from higher education to the labour market: a wake-up call for university students. *Management of Sustainable Development*, 7(2), 35-37.

Wengraf, T. (2001) *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Models of Research Design and their Application to Semi-Structured Depth Interviewing*. London: Sage.

Wengraf, T. (2009) *Qualitative Research Intervie*ws. London: Sage.

Wentworth, P.A. & Peterson, B.E. (2001) Crossing the line: Case studies of identity development in first-generation college women. *Journal of Adult Development*, 8(1), 9-21.

Whiston, S. C, & Keller, B. K. (2004) The influences of the family of origin on career development: A review and analysis. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 32, 493-5

Wigfield, A. & Turner, R. (2012) South Asian women and the labour market in the UK: Attitudes, barriers, solutions. *Journal of Community Positive Practices*, 12(4). 1-32.

Wills, T.A. & Shinar, O. (2000) Measuring perceived and received social support. *Social support measurement and intervention: A guide for health and social scientists*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wintre, M.G. & Yaffe, M. (2000) First-year students' adjustment to university life as a function of relationships with parents. *Journal of adolescent research*, 15(1), 9-37.

Winter, T. (2008) *The Cambridge companion to classical Islamic theology* (eds). Cambridge University Press.

Wohlfarth, T. (1997) Socioeconomic inequality and psychopathology: are socioeconomic status and social class interchangeable? *Social Science & Medicine*, 45(3), 399-410.

Wood, W. & Eagly, A. H. (2002) A cross-cultural analysis of the behaviour of women and men: implications for the origins of sex differences. *Psychological bulletin*, 128(5), 699.

Worrell, J. (2001) Feminist interventions: Accountability beyond symptom reduction. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 25(4), 335-343.

Wrench, J., Rea, A. and Ouali, N. (2016) *Migrants, ethnic minorities and the labour market: integration and exclusion in Europe*. (eds). London: Springer.

Zhou, M. (2005) Ethnicity as social capital: community-based institutions and embedded

Networks of social relations. In Loury, G.C., Modood, T. & Teles, S.M. (eds). *Ethnicity,*

Social Mobility and Public Policy: comparing the US and the UK. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zimdars, A., Sullivan, A., & Heath, A. (2009) Elite higher education admissions in the arts and sciences: is cultural capital the key? *Sociology*, 43(4), 648-666

Zine, J. (2006) Unveiled sentiments: Gendered Islamophobia and experiences of veiling among Muslim girls in a Canadian Islamic school. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39(3), 239-252.

Zwysen, W. & Longhi, S. (2018). Employment and earning differences in the early career of ethnic minority British graduates: the importance of university career, parental background and area characteristics. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 154-172.