ASIAN 'BRITISHNESS'

A study of first generation Asian migrants in Greater Manchester

Andrew Thompson with Rumana Begum

About ippr

Established in 1988, the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) is the UK's leading progressive think tank. Its role is to bridge the political divide between the social democratic and liberal traditions, the intellectual divide between academia and the policy-making establishment, and the cultural divide between government and civil society. It is first and foremost a research institute, aiming to provide innovative and credible policy solutions. Its work, the questions its research poses and the methods it uses are driven by the belief that the journey to a good society is one that places social justice, democratic participation and economic and environmental sustainability at its core.

About the series

Asylum and migration issues have never been higher on the political and policy agendas. The unprecedented scale of movement of people for reasons of protection, employment and family reunion to both the UK and Europe as a whole poses economic, social and political opportunities and challenges. This is an area of policy making that is fast moving and involves many different stakeholders at the international, national and local levels. ippr's *Asylum and Migration Working Paper Series* has been established to provide a vehicle for examining the evidence in relation to specific aspects of policy and practice in this area. Authored by academics, experts and policy specialists from across the public policy arena, the working papers provide an overview of key policy issues in a timely and easily accessible format. The aim is to encourage the exchange of ideas about asylum and migration issues and ensure that policy making is underpinned by empirical evidence about the nature and causes of migration, the impacts on different countries and communities and the effects – both intended and unintended – of policies that might be introduced in response. An important objective of the series is to get the findings out quickly, even if the presentations are less than fully polished.

The *Asylum and Migration Working Paper Series* has been very generously funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. The papers carry the name of authors and should be used and cited accordingly. The findings, interpretations and conclusions are the authors' own and do not necessarily represent the views of the staff, Directors or Trustees of either the Institute for Public Policy Research or the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Electronic versions of all working papers are available free of charge on the ippr website. A limited number of working papers are printed for distribution. Please contact ippr by the following means to order hard copies or for further information. Please allow four to six weeks for 'printed matter' delivery.

website: http://www.ippr.org
email: f.hopwood@ippr.org
post: 30-32 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7RA, United Kingdom
telephone: +44 (0)20 7470 6100
fax: +44 (0)20 7470 6111

Contents

List of tables

List of figures

Editors' preface

This working paper is the result of an exciting collaboration between an academic (Andrew Thompson), Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and the ippr. Unlike others in this series, this working paper is unique in the sense that it emerges from a research project commissioned by ippr and therefore contains new evidence and information which has not previously been available.

Although there is heightened interest amongst policy makers and the public about minority integration, social cohesion and identity, the voices of migrants themselves are often missing from discussion and analysis. By contrast this paper provides a contemporary 'snapshot' of what migrants themselves think about these issues. We believe that the result is an important contribution to the literature on the experiences of migrants in the UK. It makes no pretence of dealing with all of the complex and sometimes contradictory issues surrounding minority identities in the UK, but the evidence, its analysis and the policy prescriptions arising from that analysis are firmly rooted in local experience and may have broader relevance and appeal.

Notions about identity continue to be central to discussions of migration, race and ethnic relations in the UK and elsewhere. This working paper highlights the importance of understanding the complexity and nuances of 'Britishness' in one particular context. The result is reassuring in many ways – most of the British Asians interviewed seem to feel 'British' – but is also a reminder of the work that needs to be done to integrate migrant and minority communities.

The working paper also points to the importance of local characteristics. Not only do interviewees identify the importance of local issues but differences between Tameside and neighbouring Oldham, site of rioting in 2001, seem to reinforce that importance. In Tameside, strong political leadership, relatively low rates of unemployment, less residential segregation and a more responsible press all seem to make for a more cohesive community.

Like the authors, we hope to use this Working Paper as a first step in a broader research agenda that delves deeper into issues surrounding the integration and identity of ethnic minorities in the UK. The Working Paper brings to mind questions that seem deserving of further exploration: how much are the views of Tameside's Asians reflective of the whole British Asian population? do younger generations and newer arrivals conceive of identity differently? what are the implications of this research for promoting social cohesion?

Heaven Crawley and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah

Editors, Asylum and Migration Working Paper Series
January 2005

Authors' preface

This project grew out of a conversation about the experiences and attitudes of first generation Asian migrants in the north of England. We approached the subject from somewhat different perspectives, one of us working in a university History department, the other in a local authority's equality and diversity unit. However, we shared the same conviction that, if the life stories of first generation Asian migrants in Lancashire and Yorkshire[1] were not soon recorded, the opportunity may be lost forever. Our project has since developed in several unanticipated directions. We hope, however, not to have lost sight of our original goals, namely to explain why Asian migrants came to Britain, what life has been like for them since they arrived, and how far they now feel that they belong here.

Andrew Thompson and Rumana Begum

About the authors

Dr Andrew Thompson is a Senior Lecturer in Modern History, and pro-Dean for Learning and Teaching in the Arts Faculty at the University of Leeds. His research interests focus on Britain's experience of empire, on trans-national networks and identities and on international migration. He is the author of *Imperial Britain. The Empire in British politics, c.1880-1932* (2000) and *The Empire Strikes Back? The impact of imperialism on Britain from the mid-nineteenth century* (forthcoming, 2005). This paper arises out of his interests in the public memory of empire, and the impact of 'new Commonwealth' immigration on Britain.

Rumana Begum was born in Tameside and her parents are originally from Bangladesh. She is a second generation Asian who has extensive experience of community development work, including as a Strategic Development Worker in the Race Equality and Diversity Unit of Tameside Council. She also co-ordinated the publication of *A Moment in Time* and has worked with black and minority ethnic (BME) communities around reader development and on-line learning.

The authors now hope to secure funding for a follow-on study of the experiences and attitudes of second and third generation Asians in the Greater Manchester region.

Abstract

This working paper analyses the experiences and attitudes of first generation Asian migrants in the Ashton and Hyde districts of Greater Manchester. It is based on 30 interviews of Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani migrants, male and female, conducted by local authority co-workers employed by Tameside Council. Interviewees were asked about why they came here, the contacts they have maintained with their countries of origin, what they like and dislike about Britain, and which aspects of their culture and religion they have been most concerned to preserve. The primary focus of the paper is on how far a 'British' identity has emerged among Britain's Asian communities, and the forms that this identity has taken.

The idea of national identity, it has been suggested, is a 'search occasioned by its absence' (MacIntyre 2004: 201). Our paper does not endorse this view. It does, however, point to the considerable complexities of researching Asian views of 'Britishness', as well as highlighting the variety of factors that may have impeded the development of a 'British' identity among Asian communities. We then set out our policy recommendations. Here we begin by emphasising the need for a widespread and open debate about identity, shared values and citizenship in Britain, and explore the role of government in promoting such a debate. However, the report's three main recommendations relate to the issues of social integration and reduced racial discrimination – each of which we believe to be a *sine qua non* for established migrant communities to develop a real sense of belonging to Britain.

First, we recommend that government monitors more effectively the conditions promoting the mobility of ethnic minority communities, in particular their levels of educational achievement and employment rates. In both of these fields, there has been a huge range of policy discussions and a proliferation of policy initiatives in recent years. This report does not seek to add to these initiatives. Rather, it argues for the implementation of a more robust mechanism for measuring the success of existing government policy toward the integration of immigrants that is focused on 'outcomes' rather than on 'target-setting'.

There are several ways in which this might be achieved, including a regular annual joint review by the Home Office and the Commission for Racial Equality (the precedent here would be the Ethnic Minority Employment Taskforce), reporting directly to Cabinet; a review conducted within the Home Office (along the lines of the Foreign Office's Human Rights reports); or a senior level in-house review by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (which has already taken similar if smaller initiatives in the field of ethnic minority employment). This report favours the first of these options, but it is the *purpose* as well as the *mechanism* of such a review that is important. The review should seek to:

- provide a single reference point for all policies toward ethnic minorities that aim to facilitate their social integration;
- monitor properly the outcomes of existing policy initiatives, and not continually set new targets;

- ensure that lessons are learned from existing policy initiatives, and that those charged with their implementation feed back their experience into the policy-making process;
- ensure the maximum degree of continuity in successful policies and programmes, and the minimum degree of bureaucracy in funding applications;
- ensure that policy provision does not create antagonism or unhealthy competition between different ethnic communities for funding or services.

Second, we draw attention toward the sphere of local government, in particular the provision of education and housing. Here we recognise how a conflict between 'social' and 'ethnic' capital is implicit in the questions of whether to support separate schooling, and whether to try to break down ethnic segregation and encourage a greater social mix of housing. Though vital to policy formation and implementation, the dynamics of this conflict, and the strategies for negotiating or managing it, have attracted relatively little attention by the policy-making establishment or academe. This is flagged as a key area for future research.

There is also the further issue of clarification of the roles of central, local and regional government, and of the third sector, in education policy, language provision and housing regeneration. At the local level, there seems to be considerable frustration regarding the short-termism of many sources of funding; the way in which policy is often (perceived to be) imposed centrally 'from above' rather than organically grown 'from below'; the difficulty of managing community expectations in an unstable funding environment; and the extent of the third sector's responsibility (is it mainly there to get new programmes going, or should it play a bigger role in sustaining established programmes?). Here we recommend that central government sets out to local government more clearly its priorities regarding the integration of migrant communities; and that local government and the third sector then engage with those priorities, as far as their funding allows.

Third, regarding immigration policy, we reiterate the importance of both an effective procedure for the reception of new migrants that, *inter alia*, helps them to feel welcome in this country rather than rejected or resented, and a 'managed policy' of immigration, showing social justice towards asylum seekers, encouraging the acceptance of newer economic migrants, and benefiting migrant communities and race relations more generally.

Background

During the last year the debate about immigration in Britain has taken a new turn. The Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), Trevor Phillips, has put the word 'integration' firmly back onto the political agenda. Phillips argues that the tolerance of cultural and religious difference, as expressed by the doctrine of multiculturalism, is all very well; yet, in itself it is unlikely to prove a sufficiently strong buffer against social fragmentation and division, or to provide the 'glue' that will help British society to cohere. He urges that, instead of encouraging 'separateness', the state should be actively promoting a common citizenship based on the notion that there are 'core British values' which bind us all together.[2]

While some race relations commentators have expressed anxiety that Phillips' idea of 'integration' looks suspiciously like 'assimilation' (the denial of difference), others have welcomed his call for a more unified society in which people of all backgrounds fundamentally view themselves as 'British'. Indeed, the need for immigrants to belong to a 'defined community' and participate in a 'common culture' has been widely asserted in the media in recent months. For example, the final report of the Community Cohesion Panel, set up by government in response to the 2001 riots in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, emphasises the need for 'the development of shared values to support a new sense of belonging for all [ethnic] groups', and sees this as a vital part of the process of building cohesive communities (Community Cohesion Panel 2004: 11-12).[3] Nonetheless, we argue that two inter-related and important issues have been left begging in the debate about 'community cohesion' and 'common citizenship'. The first is the actual definition of 'Britishness'; the second is how far migrants will be able to protect their religious and cultural heritage while embracing 'core British values'.

The 2002 government white paper on migration rightly insists that the UK has for centuries been a multi-ethnic nation; to be 'British' has never meant belonging to any particular ethnic group (Home Office 2002: 10). Today few would wish to dissent from this point of view. Why, if one can be both Scottish and British, or Welsh and British, should distinctive Asian identities not continue to exist alongside a 'British' identity? Norman Tebbit famously criticised Asian immigrants for supporting Pakistan or India at cricket instead of England. Yet many people who live in England, and whose families originally come from southern Ireland, cheerfully back the Republic at football, without that causing any real tension. Need there be any inherent conflict between supporting Pakistan in a sporting event and a wider commitment to British values in, for example, the approach to politics? At the Athens Olympics in August 2004, the family and supporters of the boxer Amir Khan enthusiastically displayed perhaps the ultimate symbol of Britishness – the Union Flag. Yet one Asian man was visible in the crowd wearing an England cricket shirt and waving a Pakistan flag. Is there any problem with such multi-faceted identities; indeed, can we expect otherwise?

To gauge the issues involved, this working paper explores whether there really is a core of Britishness that is not the preserve of 'white' people; if so, in what does it reside? The former CRE Commissioner, Shahid Malik, recently commented that 'we know what British values are broadly-speaking', but went on to add that 'it would be nice to get them down on paper somewhere'.[4] Our paper attempts to do just that.

Its main premise is that the idea of core British values will be an empty one unless there is a greater understanding about what migrants themselves consider their identity to be. We focus on Asian migrants.[5] If the voices of migrants in general are all too rarely heard in public debate, the voices of Asian migrants have been heard even less than those of other ethnic minorities, not least because they do not always speak English as their first language. As a result too little is known about the experiences and attitudes of Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani people living in this country, in particular the first generation, for whom Britain was a largely alien society when they arrived, but who have now been living here for many years.[6]

The location

Asian people make up almost 4 per cent of the population of England and Wales. They come from three parts of the Indian subcontinent: 2 per cent are Indian, 1.4 per cent Pakistani and 0.5 per cent Bangladeshi. Regional concentrations of Asian people in Britain are highest in Leicester (where Indians form 25.7 per cent of the population); Bradford (where Pakistanis form 14.5 per cent of the population); and Tower Hamlets (where Bangladeshis form 33.4 per cent of the population). Meanwhile, the region of Greater Manchester, with a total population of 2.48 million people, has a combined Asian population of 131,182 people. Greater Manchester's Asian population is comprised of 35,931 people from the Indian ethnic group (27.4 per cent), 75,187 from the Pakistani ethnic group (57.3 per cent) and 20,064 from the Bangladeshi ethnic group (15.3 per cent).

We conducted our interviews in Tameside – one of nine local authorities that, along with Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Trafford and Wigan, comprise the Greater Manchester region. During our conversations with people involved in race relations in Tameside and the third sector it became clear that the responsible attitude of the local press, positive local government leadership, and relatively low rates of unemployment have all helped to prevent Tameside from experiencing Oldham's problems in 2001. Tameside also differs from Oldham in that it is an administrative creation: there is no focal town and, arguably, many residents identify more with their immediate locality, or Manchester, than Tameside itself.

The ethnic breakdown of Tameside's population is shown in Table 1 below. Approximately 6 per cent of Greater Manchester's Asian population lives in Tameside, a total of 8,176 people. There are 3,087 people in the Indian community, 2,596 people in the Pakistani community and 2,493 people in the Bangladeshi community.[7]

Tameside has a total population of 213,043 persons; 95 per cent of this population was born in the UK. Among Tameside's ethnic groups, 39.9 per cent of the Indian population was born in the UK, 45.9 per cent of the Bangladeshi population and 53.5 per cent of the Pakistani population. The geographical distribution of ethnic groups in Tameside can be seen in Figure 1. The majority of Indians and Pakistanis live in Ashton, and the majority of Bangladeshis in Hyde.

Tameside's Muslim population is almost equally divided between Pakistanis (44 per cent) and Bangladeshis (43 per cent). Meanwhile, 96 per cent of Hindu residents are Indian. Tameside's main ethnic minorities have age structures very different from the white group and from each other. All of the Asian communities have relatively fewer people in the higher age brackets. These demographics reflect national trends. Across the country, ethnic minority groups have a lower median age than the 'white' population: a higher proportion is under 20 and a lower proportion is over 60. Moreover, in Tameside, the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities have markedly more people in the younger age brackets than the Indian community. Hence there is likely to be a substantial increase in the size of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in Ashton and Hyde in future years, both absolutely and relatively.

Table 1: Tameside population by ethnic group

Ethnic group	Tameside		England
White	**201,468**	**94.6%**	**90.9%**
White British	197,487	92.7%	87.0%
White Irish	1,943	0.9%	1.3%
White Other	2,038	1.0%	2.7%
Mixed	**1,681**	**0.8%**	**1.3%**
Asian or Asian British	**8,467**	**4.0%**	**4.6%**
Indian	3,087	1.4%	2.1%
Pakistani	2,596	1.2%	1.4%
Bangladeshi	2,493	1.2%	0.6%
Other Asian	291	0.1%	0.5%
Black or Black British	**572**	**0.3%**	**2.3%**
Caribbean	348	0.2%	1.1%
African	160	0.1%	1.0%
Other Black	64	0.0%	0.2%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	**855**	**0.4%**	**0.9%**
Chinese	630	0.3%	0.5%
Other	225	0.1%	0.4%
Total	**213,043**	**100%**	**100%**

Figure 1: Tameside's ethnic minority communities
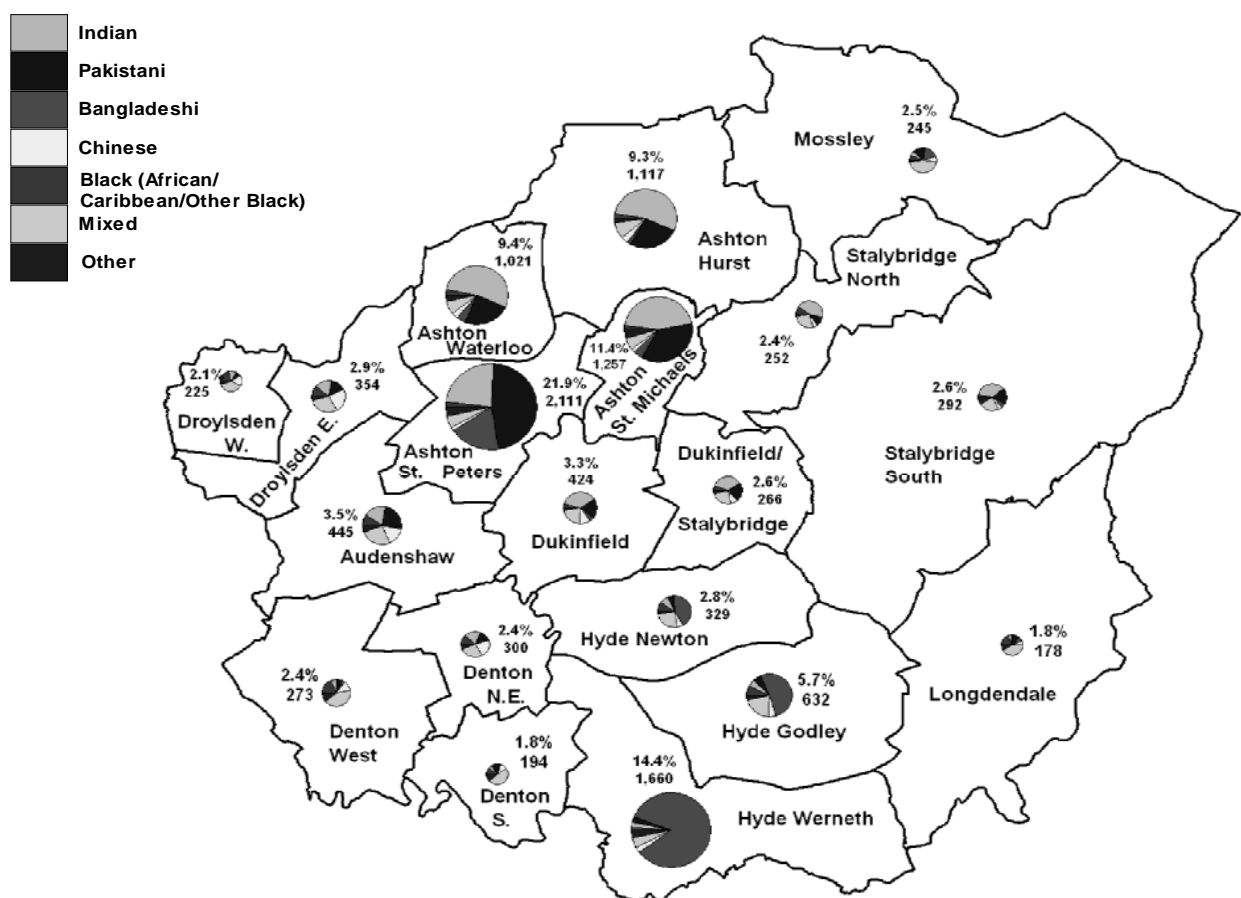
Figure 2: Age structure of Tameside ethnic groups
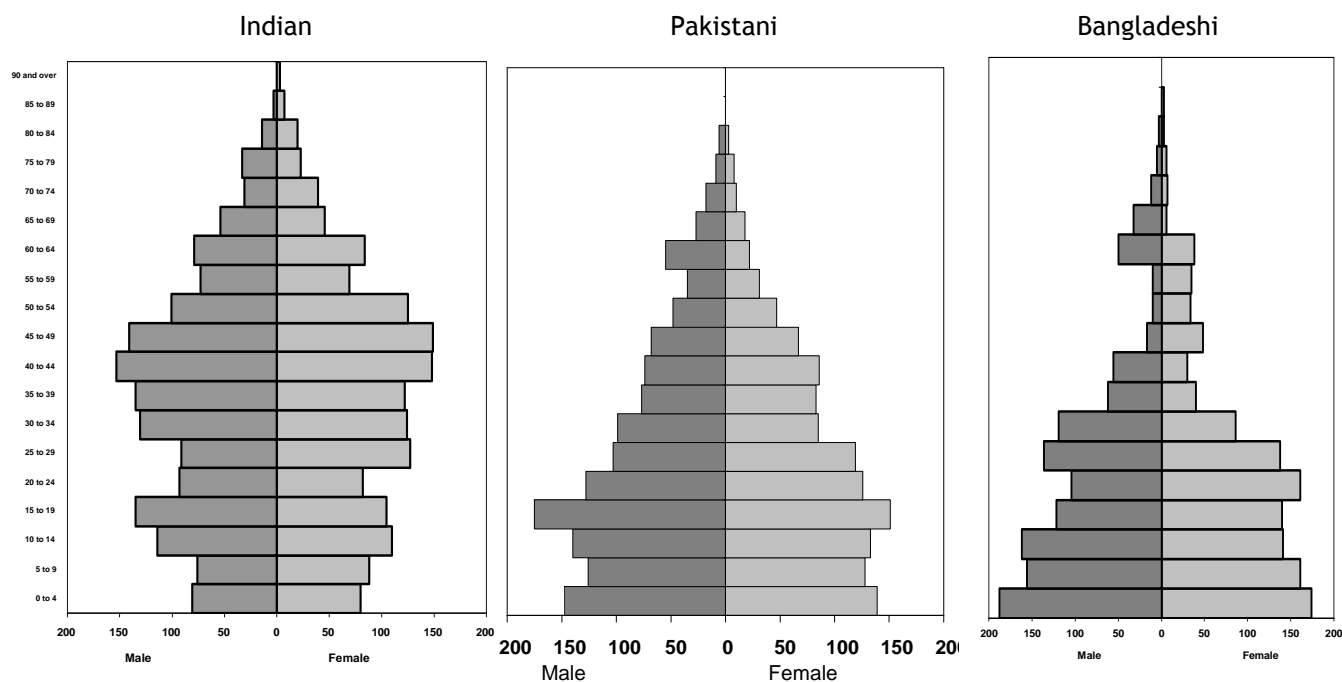
Average household size in Tameside is higher among ethnic minorities than among 'white' residents, for whom it is 2.3 persons per household. Approximately 3.1 people live in each Indian household, while there are 4.1 Pakistanis per household and 4.9 Bangladeshis per household.

Meanwhile, both Indian and Pakistani households are more likely to have central heating and the use of a car than either 'white' households or other ethnic minority households (though the latter only marginally so). Bangladeshi households are less likely to have central heating or the use of a car than 'white' households.

The pattern of economic activity among the Indian ethnic group in Tameside is not very different from that of Tameside residents as a whole. However, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men have much lower employment rates (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: Economic activity in Tameside: Males aged 16-74

	FT Employee	PT Employee	Self-Employed	Unemployed	Looking after home/family
All	54.4%		10.2%		1.1%
White	55.3%		10.0%		1.0%
Indian	49.8%		13.3%		0.6%
Pakistani	30.2%	7.9%	14.6%		1.5%
Bangladeshi	24.1%	17.8%	6.5%	11.8%	3.8%
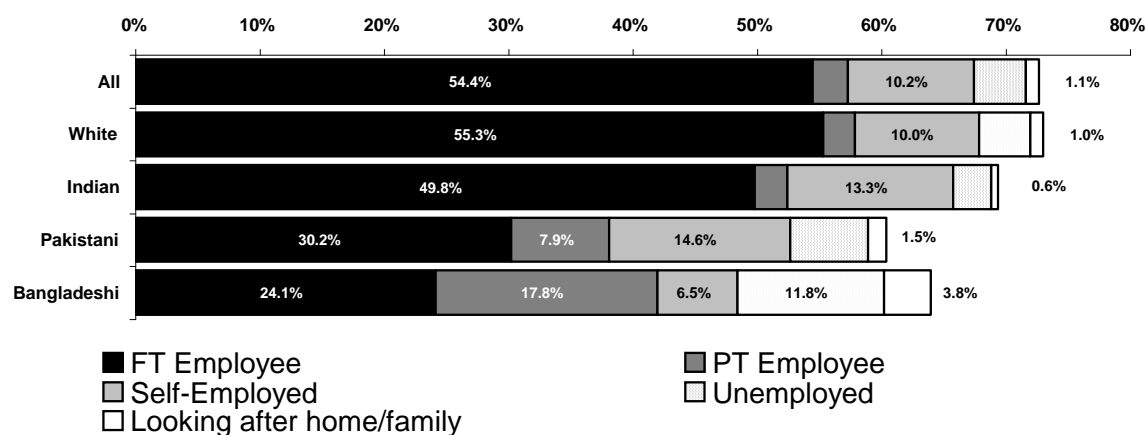
Pakistani, and even more so Bangladeshi, women in Tameside are far more likely to be looking after the home and family than they are to be in paid employment (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Economic activity in Tameside: Females aged 16-74

	FT Employee	PT Employee	Self-Employed	Unemployed	Looking after home/family
All	32.9%	21.2%			10.2%
White	33.4%	20.3%			9.6%
Indian	33.0%	17.2%			7.8%
Pakistani	13.6%	7.4%			30.6%
Bangladeshi	6.5%	5.9%			46.6%
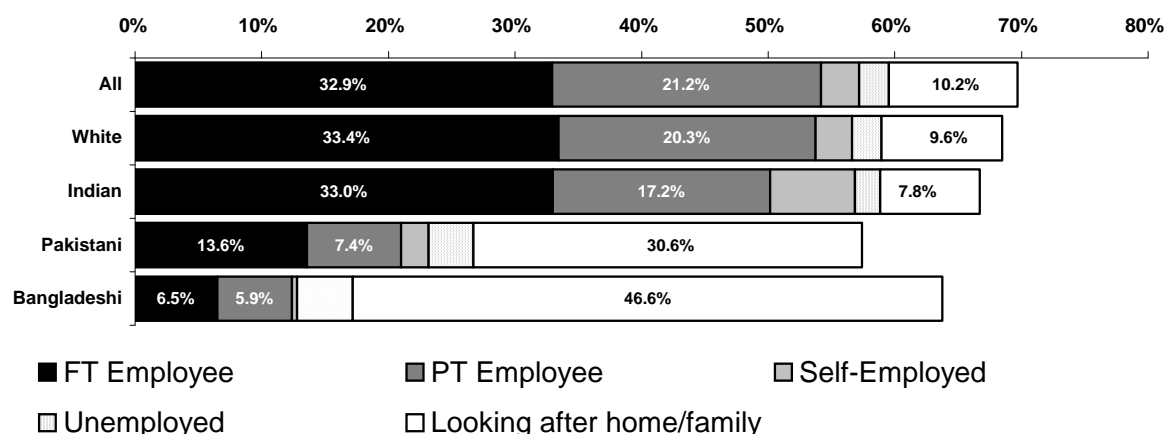
Tameside's Bangladeshi residents are the least likely to have qualifications (54.8 per cent have none at all), followed by Pakistani residents (41.3 per cent have none at all). Among 'white' residents, 35 per cent have no qualifications, and the percentage is almost the same for Indian residents (35.6); indeed, more Indian residents are educated to graduate level (22.9 per cent) than 'white' residents (11.1 per cent). Among Pakistanis, 16.4 per cent are educated to graduate level, but only 7.4 per cent of Bangladeshis.

Finally, rates of ill health are higher than average among Tameside's main ethnic groups, particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi people aged between 50 and 64. Again, this reflects national trends: for example, research by the Policy Studies Institute in 1997 showed that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were significantly more likely to report poor health than white people, and than most other ethnic minorities (Nazroo 1997: 130-1, 135).

The interviews and interviewees

The interviews were organised by Rumana Begum at the Diversity Unit of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. Over three days, we spoke to 30 people from the Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities of the Ashton and Hyde districts of Tameside. Many of our interviewees belong to community centres and welfare associations. However, in order to get a broader sample, we approached others who were not networked into these groups. Hence we saw a mixture of people, ranging from women who had little or no interaction with anyone outside their own community to a person who had recently received an MBE.

We deliberately did not concentrate on 'community leaders' – while they may be more vocal and articulate, their views are not necessarily those of the community, and there may be a tendency for some of them to say what they think outsiders wish to hear. We were also aware that people from ethnic minority communities had recently complained of being over-interviewed. We used several strategies to try to overcome interview fatigue, which centred around working closely with Tameside Council, local authority co-workers and local community centres in order to gain people's trust and to understand better their anxieties and aspirations.

A social profile of the interviewees

We interviewed an almost equal number of men and women.[8] The youngest of our interviewees was 49 and the eldest 86. However, the majority were in their sixties or early seventies, the average age being 68.[9] The first of our Indian interviewees arrived in Britain in 1956 and the last in 1972, though most came in the 1960s; they included four people from Kenya and two from Uganda – the former fleeing Jomo Kenyatta's policy of 'Africanisation', the latter expelled by Idi Amin. The first Bangladeshi person we interviewed arrived in 1957 and the last in 1979; again the majority came in the 1960s, only one arriving after the creation of Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971.[10] The first Pakistani arrived in 1961 and the last in 1975; one half of the Pakistani interviewees arrived in the 1960s, the other in the 1970s.

The average number of return visits to the Indian subcontinent was highest among Bangladeshis and Pakistanis (five), and slightly lower among Indians (three). But given that some interviewees could not remember precisely how many times they had returned, these figures are most probably an underestimate. Most of our interviewees continue to have close relatives who live in the Indian subcontinent, though a small number do not.

Bangladeshi interviewees have the largest number of children (on average seven); the family size of Indians and Pakistanis seems to be very similar (on average four children). The average age of the interviewees' children differs markedly, however. It is highest among the Indians we interviewed (at 42), lowest among the Bangladeshis (at 21), and 28 for the Pakistani interviewees. Nor can these differences be explained by date of arrival, the averages for which were: Indian community – 1966; Bangladeshi community – 1965; and Pakistani community – 1969.

This project benefited greatly from the experience and expertise of seven bilingual local authority co-workers from Tameside Council. They helped to frame the interview questions in the relevant Asian language (Gujerati, Urdu, and Bangla or

Bengali);[11] they gathered much of the above data through pre-interview questionnaires; and they conducted the interviews. Early on in the project we decided not to employ a professional polling organisation or a focus group company to undertake any of these tasks. In order to help our interviewees to speak openly and honestly about their experiences as migrants in Britain, we felt that they should be interviewed by people from within their communities whom they respected and who had their trust.

Moreover, local authority co-workers were able to converse in English as well as in Gujerati/Urdu/Bangla; they understood the communities from which our interviewees came; and they saw themselves as a part of those communities. We are not aware of any other migration studies having proceeded along precisely these lines, and would strongly recommend this methodology.

We have decided to preserve the anonymity of our interviewees. Thus they are not referred to by name or by initial in this paper. We state the ethnicity and gender of interviewees when we quote them but add nothing further in terms of their family background or personal characteristics. The reason for this is twofold. First, we do not believe that any more detail is required for the purposes of the paper. Second, several of our interviewees expressed anxiety about the repercussions of our research for them personally. In view of this, we wanted to ensure that their remarks could not be attributed. We do hope, however, to deposit a full set of anonymised interview transcripts, locally in the Local History Archive in Stalybridge and, nationally, in the Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol.

Key findings

Race, religion and culture were recurring themes of the interviews. Yet so, too, were housing and working conditions; wages and prices; food and clothing; climate; and family relationships. In fact, much of the material we gathered was about our interviewees' recollections of their initial struggle to survive. They were in an unfamiliar country (with the exception of some of those from Kenya and Uganda, few knew much about Britain before they left the Indian subcontinent); they were 'homesick' and separated from family and friends; and they needed to find a job and somewhere to live. Their emphasis on the practicalities of life is revealing. It points to the key motivation for Asian migrants coming to Britain (namely, to earn money, and if possible to remit some of it 'home'), and to the period of considerable financial and emotional hardship endured by first generation migrants after they arrived – in the words of one Bangladeshi man 'one day felt like a year'.

Hence the data we have gathered may raise a problem for migration studies. Such studies are often in danger of becoming overly concerned with issues of identity formation and racial discrimination. While these are clearly crucial aspects of the immigrant experience, they are manifestly not the totality of it. Practical issues related to day-to-day living – where is the next meal coming from? – emerge as primary concerns of our interviewees, rather than issues of identity, or even personal experiences of racism. We hope to tell their life stories in greater detail in an exhibition that will follow on from this project. Yet these life stories are also significant in terms of the purposes of our paper for reasons we will now try to explain.

The first point to stress is that first generation migrants have had to be versatile and flexible. This is especially true in terms of the employment they accepted but, in myriad other ways, migrants had to learn to cope with their new surroundings. This, in turn, has important implications for the ways in which migrants then negotiated the relationship between their 'home' and 'host' society. Only a small number of those we spoke to said that they did not feel 'British' at all – one Bangladeshi woman, for example, admitted to feeling a 'foreigner' even today. The majority, however, expressed a dual identity as 'British Indians', 'British Pakistanis' or 'British Bangladeshis' – their preferred mode of self-description. Some felt comfortable and secure in this identity; others were still trying to reconcile its two sides. Either way, it is clear that the majority of people we interviewed had adjusted psychologically as well as practically to living in Britain. To varying degrees, they see themselves as 'British' and this country as the place they belong.

The second point to stress is that integration into wider British society has also presented problems. Many expressed anxiety about maintaining their cultural and religious heritage, and about the possibility of the second and third generations losing touch with their 'roots'. 'Hinduism is going down and down', observed one of our interviewees, who then lamented how Indian youngsters only tended to go to temple during major religious festivals. In fact, concern about the younger generation, especially the respect they show toward their parents, was perhaps stronger among the Indian than the Bangladeshi or Pakistani community.[12] However, the response of our interviewees to shifting generational attitudes was not one of despondency or despair. Rather, they have tried to educate their offspring in their

language, culture and religion, while accepting that they will have to make compromises with the society in which they live. Thus, some of our Indian and Pakistani interviewees were ready to recognise the right of their children either to reject an arranged marriage altogether, or to accept an arranged marriage but more on their own terms. Similarly, some if not all of the Asian women we interviewed accepted their daughters' preference for western style clothing. Finally, many interviewees were reconciled to the fact that the greater educational and economic success of their offspring meant greater exposure to 'western' culture. Again, adaptability has been the key to survival.

We believe that studies of migrant identity must therefore take full account of the day-to-day aspirations and anxieties that give rise to them. Finding out more about the personal experiences of migrants is not just the task of the social historian: it is a requirement for policy-based studies. Why? Because the better we understand what life has been like for migrants, the better we can explain how they feel toward their adopted country. In particular, the roller coaster of setbacks and successes that almost all migrants have to ride is relevant to: (a) why feelings of Britishness have been slow to develop among some sections of Asian society, and (b) why, among those Asians who do now express a sense of belonging to Britain, their British identity has taken the forms that it has.

The key findings in this report are separated into two sections: 'integration' (the degree of involvement with British society necessary for a 'British' identity to develop); and 'identity' (the meanings of 'Britishness' to Asians living in the UK). These two sections are then followed by a discussion of experiences of racial discrimination.

Social integration

A recent CRE survey of 2,871 electors throughout Britain conducted by YouGov, revealed that 70 per cent of 'white' people, and almost as many non-white people (65 per cent), believe that ethnic minority Britons too often live apart from the rest of society.[13] It also found that black (especially mixed race) Britons are more likely to have a significant number of 'white' friends than Asian Britons. Meanwhile, the Community Cohesion Panel has expressed concern about the development of 'parallel lives' between some of our ethnic minorities and the rest of society, and the resulting ignorance, intolerance and fear (Community Cohesion Panel 2004: 7). Our study builds on these findings to show: (a) how integration, while increasing, is still far from complete; and (b) that integration is a complex process conditioned by a variety of socio-economic factors, some of which government may be able to influence, others of which it probably cannot.

Many of our interviewees implied, and a few explicitly stated, that it had taken years for them to integrate sufficiently into British society in order to feel a part of it. The key factors that appear to have affected their social integration were: access to public transport; gender; employment; education; and, above all, language.

Language
Less than a half of the people we interviewed considered themselves fairly or fully fluent in English; a larger number said that they had only limited English; and a few evidently spoke (virtually) no English at all.[14] The majority of those we interviewed

spoke their mother tongue at home; English, in so far as it is spoken at all, remains a 'public' rather than 'private' language, used with varying degrees of confidence when out shopping or at work. Some of those who cannot speak English are able to understand it.

Looking back on their lives, some interviewees regretted that they had not made more effort to acquire English. Others recognised how their difficulty with speaking English had prevented various forms of social interaction with 'white' or 'mainstream' British society. As one Pakistani man remarked, without language it proved much harder to make English friends and the feeling of being a 'pardesi' (stranger) was therefore that much stronger. Interestingly, some of the co-workers who conducted the interviews were the daughters of first generation Asian women who had struggled to learn English – they were particularly well-placed, therefore, to see the value of home-based tuition, which is not only easier for some Asian women to access, but tends to have the further advantage of developing friendships between immigrants and their teachers.

Clearly, it is the quality as well quantity of interaction that is at issue here. For those who struggle to speak English, the conversations they have with people beyond their communities tend to be short and superficial. In so far as English has been learnt by the first generation it has tended to be at the workplace, although several of our interviewees had benefited from local authority language classes. For Kenyan and Ugandan Asians, among whom there tends to be a high level of fluency, English was acquired prior to migration at (colonial) schools.

Education

Many of our interviewees felt that their children and grandchildren were much more firmly integrated into British society than they were, and went on to ascribe this to the education they had received in the UK. Education was valued very highly by all of our interviewees; indeed, some mentioned the schooling of their children as a key factor in their decision to remain in the UK rather than return to the Indian subcontinent.[15]

Employment

Experiences of the workplace were varied; nevertheless, it was here that many migrants came to acquire the rudiments of the English language and to learn more generally about English culture. Many textile mills, and some factories had ethnically mixed workforces. It was at work that friendships were forged, respect and understanding developed, and kindnesses were shown. For Britain's Asian migrants, the closure of the textile mills probably came at the worst possible time.[16] Just as the process of integration was beginning to gather momentum, unemployment among first generation Asians increased, and so did their sense of social isolation.

Gender

Many of the women we spoke to were largely or wholly responsible for looking after their children and the home. When they first came to Britain they lived in houses that had no central heating, washing machines or fridges. Responsibility for domestic affairs thus weighed heavily on their time, and frequently left little scope for developing relationships outside the family, let alone community. Some of the most socially isolated migrants we interviewed were Muslim women who had never worked (and who did not speak much English).[17]

Access to public transport

Unable to afford a car, the majority of migrants we interviewed were for several years reliant on buses and trains for journeys beyond their immediate locality, – for example, to Manchester city centre. In fact, this continues to be the case for many of the women. Moreover, the situation may now be worse. The residential concentration and segregation of ethnic minority groups has increased over time (see below). This, in turn, has limited the opportunity for Asians to mix: if they do not own a car, or are unable to drive, they are unlikely to interact much with 'white' people or wider society. Affordable and available public transport helps to promote social integration.

It is important to emphasise that none of the above factors appear to be prerequisites for the development of a 'British' identity. We interviewed people who had experienced long periods of unemployment and/or spoke little English, yet who still expressed a sense of belonging to Britain. Nevertheless, taken together, it is clear that low levels of literacy, education and employment, and poor public transport, are likely to inhibit the degree to which migrants perceive themselves to be 'British'. This point is explored further in the policy recommendations below.

Reception experiences

Finally, it must be remembered that integration into British society has to be studied in terms of the willingness (and not merely the opportunity) to do so. In particular, the reception of migrants on and immediately after their arrival seems to have been highly significant. Those people we interviewed who felt that they had been welcomed, or even simply accepted, found it a lot easier to begin to think of Britain as their 'home' than those who initially felt that they had been resented or rejected.[18] Though this report is intended to be more of a qualitative than quantitative survey, on balance more of the migrants we interviewed seem to have experienced a positive reception than a negative one.

Migrant identities

Dual or multi-layered Asian identities emerge clearly from our research.[19] By definition, migrants belong to more than one society: home is partly where they 'hang their hat', partly 'where their heart remains'. Here it is worth quoting from some of our interviews:

'I do feel that I belong here, but my feelings are attached to where I was born. It's the same for people all over the world.'

We came to this country; we should be loyal to it … I feel both British and Indian.'

'We don't wish to abandon this country or Bangladesh. We want both countries.'

'I am not one, but I am both' [ie British and Pakistani].

That said, many of the co-workers involved in our project found the concept of 'core British values' was not easy to interpret to interviewees. They did not regard the concept as redundant, yet they did feel that its application to Britain's Asian communities is perhaps more problematic than Trevor Phillips and others may be inclined to think. The core values of the people we interviewed revolved around

religion and commitment to the extended family as the main unit of social organisation. In so far as the caste system was part of their culture, it may well have impeded the development of a 'British' identity: if one does not believe that there are ideals that are widely shared within one's own community, then perceiving similarities with a wider British society is inevitably going to be more difficult. It should also be acknowledged that a few Muslim interviewees rejected the idea of there being *any* 'core values' because of the religious divide between Islamic and western culture.

The majority of our interviewees (more than four-fifths) described themselves as 'British Indian', 'British Pakistani' or 'British Bangladeshi'.[20] Some evinced a very sharp sense of their identity. For instance, one Bangladeshi man explained that he felt 'in the middle … half British and half Bangladeshi', while a Pakistani man said that he felt 'more than half British', on the basis of having lived here for 30 years and in Pakistan for only 20. Two other Pakistani men also attempted to weigh the two sides of their identity, though in opposite ways: one remarked that 'I am British, and secondly I am Pakistani', the other that 'I'd say British nationality was taken for a specific purpose, but I'd identify myself as Pakistani'.

There was a more diverse response to questions about identity from the pre-interview questionnaires. This may reflect the greater number of choices that interviewees were offered (see Appendix 1). Some people circled their ethnic identity only: five from the Pakistani community and three from the Indian community. Some circled their religious identity as 'Hindu' (three) or 'Muslim' (six), or as 'British Hindu' (six) or 'British Muslim' (five). From the Bangladeshi community, three people chose 'Asian', and one 'British Asian', as did one Indian interviewee.

One Pakistani interviewee described himself simply as 'British', two others as 'British Pakistani'. Three people from Bangladesh chose 'British Bengali'. When faced with more than one description, there was a tendency for some interviewees to emphasise their religious or ethnic identity, perhaps as much to distinguish (or distance) themselves from other parts of the Asian community as from the idea of being 'British'.

The majority of migrants we interviewed clearly saw Britain as their 'home'. This is potentially very significant for it can be argued that a sense of Britain being 'home' is the 'core' of all forms of Britishness. Indeed, ties to a specific geographic area have long lay at the heart of national identity.

A sense of Britain as 'home' means that very few now entertain the so-called 'myth of return'[21]. Much more commonly, our interviewees said that they were now 'rooted' in the UK. A key consideration is the fact that their children and grandchildren are here to stay – benefiting from English education and (in some cases) prospering in the world of work.[22] In the words of one Bangladeshi man: 'After I got my family here, I knew I wasn't going back'. Period of residence is also important. Interviewees from each community remarked that, having lived here for so long, they had come to accept that they were 'British' and that they belonged here. They now recognise that they are no longer in this country simply to make money (their main motivation for coming). Moreover, some actually prefer living in Britain to living in their country of birth; we even heard accounts of migrants who had made the return journey only to come back because their years in Britain had

changed them and they could not settle in India, or Pakistan or Bangladesh.[23] Others acknowledged that the degree to which they were connected to their country of origin had diminished over time. Interestingly, a number of people we interviewed insisted that they were different from asylum seekers and even from new migrants from the Indian subcontinent, who had not yet adjusted to their new environment or accepted that this country is where they belong.

Some of our interviewees adopted a legal definition of 'Britishness' – the right to hold a British passport. Not surprisingly, this was particularly marked among Asian refugees from Kenya and Uganda, though even among the Bangladeshi community expressions of 'Britishness' were evenly split between legal-citizenship based definitions ('people become British by getting a passport') and identity-consciousness based definitions ('we have mixed with their culture and by doing so we have accepted that we are British'). The tendency to define 'Britishness' legally in terms of the possession of citizenship may be the result of the increasingly restrictive immigration legislation in 1962, 1968 and 1971 (and the resultant 'beat-the-ban' migration). One Indian man referred directly to the speeches of Enoch Powell in 1968 ('He was a problem. He did not like us').[24]

Which, then, are the 'core British values' that our interviewees identified?

Religious toleration

Having the freedom (and facilities) to practise their religion was clearly something that was appreciated by many of the migrants we interviewed – indeed, in so far as they recognise 'core British values', respect for other cultures was toward the top of the list. For example, when asked about what he valued about 'Britain', one Bangladeshi man simply replied: 'They have never questioned me about my religion, which I have been able to practise freely.' Moreover, it seems that over time religious observance has become easier: community centres, temples and mosques have multiplied; the provision of halal food has improved; and so on. One Bangladeshi woman went so far as to say that it was easier for her to follow her religion here than in Bangladesh. Interviewees singled out the importance of prayer, fasting, diet, dress,[25] the Muslim festival Eid,[26] and the Hindu festival Navratri,[27] as part and parcel of their life in Britain.

There is, of course a paradox here. Many will take 'core British values' to mean what culturally we have in common. However, judging by the responses of our interviewees, they conceived of 'British' values in terms of respect for cultural diversity and not simply a search for sameness. This is hardly surprising. For first generation Hindu and Muslim migrants, religion is at the heart of identity: one Indian man even spoke movingly of he and his wife having attended the local church for a while because there was no temple.[28] And yet there may be a difficulty if and when 'white' society's belief in religious toleration is tested to the point of placing Christian and Hindu or Muslim culture on a par. One example of this would be the Muslim festival 'Eid', which several of our interviewees felt should be officially recognised, and a few seem to think should have the same status as Christmas in the British calendar. Another challenge for 'white' society may be that of tolerating behaviour that it finds alien: for example, the dress codes for Muslim women.

More worryingly, among some of the Muslims we interviewed there was a feeling that 'white' British people had a significantly different way of life – one they could never

share. A few went further and referred to 'England' (not 'Britain', interestingly) as a decadent culture that permitted too much social freedom (regarding alcohol, in particular). The strength of feeling here can only be conveyed by direct quotation:

> *'They haven't much fear of God in them.'*

> *'English people do believe as well but they do not want to devote themselves to it.'*

> *'If our children do something wrong we say that they have become "English".'*

These comments point to a conscious rejection of certain aspects of British culture – a rejection that legitimises separation, and stymies the discovery and development of shared values. It is possible, however, that some of our interviewees described these aspects of western culture as specifically 'English' so as not to weaken their own sense of 'Britishness'.

Welfare state

Many of our interviewees expressed their gratitude for the 'good support systems' that existed in Britain – by which they meant both local authority services (in particular, support from social workers) and centrally-funded social welfare (social security; national health; state pensions). As one Indian man opined: 'We are taking advantage of all its facilities, so obviously I have to say that I am partly British'. Indeed, our interviewees' view of the 'welfare state' was far more positive than anything we tend to hear from the metropolitan media nowadays. Why should this be the case?

According to a recent report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the number and proportion of older people from ethnic minorities has risen rapidly over the last two decades, with the impact of ageing on health happening 'at a comparatively younger age among many minority communities' (Butt and O'Neil 2004). The report goes on to state that 'black and minority ethnic older people are more likely to face a greater level of poverty [and] to live in poorer quality housing' than older white people, and to question whether there is necessarily 'an extended family which "looks after its own"'. These findings are supported by Messkoub's (2000: 222-48) research on ageing in the UK: ill health among ethnic minorities appears to be worse than in the 'white' population; so, too, is private pension provision (immigrants entering the labour market later in life, and often working in low paid jobs with low pension contributions). Messkoub further claims that ethnic older people in the Asian community are more likely to live in extended households while warning that this may be about to change: family loyalties and customs appear to be weakening – a fear expressed by several of our interviewees.

Hence it is not hard to see why first generation immigrants value so highly the social services provided by local authorities, and the 'safety net' provided by central social welfare: their livelihood depends on them. Any cuts in social and public services would be likely to have a disproportionate impact on older Asian people and, moreover, upon their feelings toward Britain. This also explains why first generation Asian migrants tend to be concerned about a possible breakdown of values among their children and grandchildren. In so far as the extended family system is a buffer against poverty in old age, it performs a vital economic as well as cultural function.

Law and order

When asked in the pre-interview questionnaire what they liked about Britain, a number of our interviewees mentioned 'respect for law and order'. For some this was clearly a matter of direct personal experience. One Pakistani widow spoke movingly of an episode of sexual harassment, of her shame about it (which prevented her from seeking help from family), and of her appreciation for the police's intervention. There was also a more general concern regarding the way in which children and grandchildren were willing to assert their rights, and to confront prejudice in 'white' British people. For example, several interviewees recalled how, when verbal abuse was directed against them, young Asian men were quick to spring to their defence. In general, the first generation deliberately avoided confrontation (a fact not perhaps sufficiently recognised). It is unrealistic to expect the second and third generations to follow suit. Some of our interviewees felt that this is why incidents of racial friction are increasing in some parts of the country, notwithstanding that, in several ways, the younger generation of ethnic minority Britons are more integrated.

There are also signs that youth, gun and drug crime among Asians may be on the increase. Shortly after the interviews were conducted, plans were announced for the formation of a new police task force to tackle crime in South Asian communities, led by Assistant Commissioner Tarique Ghaffur, in charge of the London Metropolitan Police's Special Crime Directorate, and backed by Lord Ahmed of Rotherham, Britain's first Pakistani peer. We would have liked to have been able to talk to our interviewees about these developments.

The monarchy

The pre-interview questionnaire showed a close identification between Britain and the monarchy on the part of almost two-thirds of our interviewees. Some 80 per cent of Indians, 70 per cent of Pakistanis and 40 per cent of Bangladeshis circled 'The Queen' when asked what best summed up what it meant to be 'British'. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to pursue this issue further during the interviews. We do know, however, that the royal family has given unstinting support for many Commonwealth projects, including the Memorial Gates on Hyde Park corner to mark the African and Asian soldiers who fought alongside Britain in the two world wars. Significantly, some of our interviewees had parents or relatives who had served, though we did not establish exactly how many.

Experiences of racial discrimination

Of those who spoke openly about racial discrimination, twice as many said that they had suffered from it as not. We would, however, urge caution here. There was a marked reluctance on the part of some interviewees to talk about racism in any form.

Of those who had experienced racism, the majority felt that it had been occasional rather than frequent. They were quick to point out that the actions of a few individuals did not necessarily represent the views of the wider population. 'A few people don't like us, but the majority are fine' was a commonly expressed sentiment; or, put more poetically by a Bangladeshi woman, 'I would say that the fingers on a hand are not all the same, as one is short, one long, another fat and another thinner. In other words, we can't count on everyone, but [generally] English people's behaviour [towards us] is good.'

Most of the incidents of racial hostility related by our interviewees took the form of name calling and swearing ('Paki', for example, is a term that has been directed at all of Britain's Asian communities, and not just those from Pakistan). There were other forms of racism (including damage to property and harassment at work) that were more vindictive. That said, it would be difficult to over-estimate just how distressing even verbal abuse can be, a point to which we return below.[29]

Interviewees told two types of stories about their experiences of racism that are not easily reconciled. Six people said that race relations were better now than when they arrived in Britain (one Bangladeshi, four Indian, one Pakistani). However, eight people said that they were worse (three Bangladeshi, three Indian, two Pakistani) and that racial hostility was on the increase – 'they don't like black people now, but before they liked us a lot'; 'before people were good but now it is very different'; 'when we first came we never came across racial discrimination, but now for some time there has been racial discrimination and it seems to be increasing'. Hence there appears to be a shift in some immigrants' perceptions of 'white' attitudes on race. An older generation of 'white' people are felt to have been more tolerant, while new forms of racial conflict are perceived to have emerged in recent years.[30]

How did our interviewees explain the racial discrimination they had experienced? Many saw it simply as a reflection of the particular personalities of those 'white' people who had insulted them. Some interviewees mentioned the lack of social integration of Asian communities as a possible factor. A few went so far as to recognise hostility to foreigners to be a part of 'human nature':

> *'It is human nature that the British saw us as foreigners – we came from another land and looked different to them. It is natural that the British people at first treated us as outsiders.'*

> *'It is the same when outsiders come to any country.'*

> *'This is their country. Do you remember when they came to India? Gandhi insulted them too.'*

The three most frequent explanations of racism, however, were the growth of the Asian population in Britain; jealousy of the progress made by Asian migrants at work; and their refusal to participate in certain aspects of English culture. Here it is important to stress that many of our interviewees recollected very positive relationships with fellow workers, and were appreciative of the consideration that they had been shown in the workplace. Nonetheless, there were others who felt that they had been resented by the 'white' workforce, not least because they had been prepared to work harder. Several interviewees also spoke of their refusal to go to clubs, pubs and dances, or to drink alcohol, and the resulting social divide. Explicit comparisons were made with the Afro-Caribbean community, which was felt to have integrated more easily into British society, partly because of the language factor, but even more so because of its willingness to adopt western cultural norms. On the basis of what we heard, there is little empathy among many first generation Asian migrants for West Indians – the antipathy of minority groups towards each other,

which is currently troubling the race relations veteran Darcus Howe, should be of wider concern.[31]

Several interviewees felt that asylum hysteria and hostility to new migrants was currently being displaced onto established migrant communities. While many were prepared to recognise the rights of asylum seekers, and to draw parallels between their reasons for coming to Britain and those of new economic migrants from eastern Europe, there was nevertheless a belief that recent immigration had put racial relations under increased strain.[32]

Interestingly, only one person raised September 11th and the 'problems in the Middle East', as a cause of racial intolerance, and only one person the legacy of colonial rule: 'The British were brought up to hate because they ruled India for so long. It is in-built in them to hate us.'

What are the implications of our interviewees' views on racism for their attitudes toward Britain? There are three key points to make here. The first is that experiences of racial discrimination do not seem to have been sufficiently widespread, or to have caused sufficient resentment, for Asian people to reject a 'British' identity altogether. The second is that there is no room for complacency. Enough of the people we spoke to were of the opinion that racism is worse now than when they had arrived, and should cause the government concern. The third is that 'mainstream' British society must take a positive view of immigrants if immigrants are to take on a 'British' identity. Some of our interviewees said that if 'they' don't think of us as being 'British' (and won't use the word 'British' to describe us), then why should we feel 'British' or use the word to describe ourselves? Acceptance by white people of the right of ethnic minorities to call themselves 'British', regardless of their racial or cultural background, is vital.

Implications for policy

One of the key recommendations of this paper is that there is an urgent need for a widespread and open debate about identity, shared values and citizenship in Britain. Moreover, this debate must fully engage ethnic minority communities and take on board their perspectives of what 'Britishness' means. Asian people have their own views on 'British' identity. If we do not take adequate account of these views, we are likely to end up with a notion of British nationality that, for them at least, has a hollow ring. To repeat: Britain's established ethnic minority communities must be fully involved in discovering and defining 'core British values'.

There is a sense in the media and among some of those concerned about race relations that government, while apparently wanting a debate about identity, shared values and citizenship, is not doing enough to engage people in it (Cantle 2004). Yet how far is it the responsibility of government to do so? What, indeed, can it actually do? New citizenship ceremonies and a 'citizenship curriculum' in education may help to develop more awareness of shared British values, while the introduction of 'heritage' or 'national' days (recommended by the Community Cohesion Panel) may have a role to play in developing a greater understanding of British traditions. In our view, however, it is far better for the debate about national identity in multicultural Britain to grow organically 'from below' rather than be imposed artificially 'from above'. Rather, what government can and should do is to tackle the basic inequalities and address the many disadvantages from which ethnic minority communities suffer. Migrants (new or old) need to have a 'stake' in British society if they are to feel that they truly belong to it. Thus the policy recommendations we set out below focus not on strategies for generating further debate about 'core British values', but on two key areas of race relations: integration and discrimination.

Social integration

The CRE's recent survey of attitudes toward social integration suggested that older people from ethnic minority communities are 'far more likely to integrate' than younger people, and that a majority of 'white' Britons feel that ethnic minority Britons 'too often live apart from the rest of society'. It further stated that large majorities of white and non-white people 'support specified measures to bring communities closer together'.

The data presented in this paper demonstrate that some parts of the Asian community in Britain have struggled to achieve the degree of social integration necessary for the development of a strong and secure British identity. Thus greater exposure to wider British society and culture is vital if first generation Asian migrants (and, indeed, any new migrants) are to feel that they truly belong in Britain. That said, so-called loyalty or 'cricket' tests are misconceived. The majority of the people we spoke to remain connected to family and friends in the Indian subcontinent, and continue to feel a sense of belonging to both societies. It is unrealistic and unfair to expect them to submerge their Asian identity in a core of Britishness. There were also some signs from our research that the Indian community in Britain is somewhat more integrated than either the Bangladeshi or Pakistani community. This is partly because it has been more successful (educationally and economically), and partly

because of religion (see the section, 'local government', page 31). Yet, from the evidence we have gathered, it does not appear to be markedly more integrated, and public policy should therefore be framed with a view to enhancing the integration of all of Britain's Asian communities, and not just British Muslims.

What, then, can the present government do to promote 'community cohesion' and 'commonality of citizenship', the stated aims of its white paper on immigration? We follow the government in rejecting 'assimilation to a prevailing monoculture'. Nonetheless we agree with Trevor Phillips that the toleration of difference (or 'multiculturalism') is, in itself, unlikely to prove a sufficiently strong buffer against fractured and divided communities or to provide the 'glue' that will help British society to cohere. Hence we would urge government to think in terms of a regular annual review (or 'audit') of all of those existing policies and programmes that are aimed at integrating ethnic minority communities more fully with wider British society, in particular in terms of their educational achievement and rates of employment. In addition, as we have seen, the provision of public transport networks in regions of high ethnic minority concentration may also affect social integration, especially for immigrants who cannot afford to run a car, or who for other reasons do not drive. In areas where public transport provision is poor, and ethnic minorities are concentrated, the situation should therefore be urgently addressed.

Part of the purpose of the annual review would be to take stock of recent initiatives toward new and established migrant communities, and to monitor their outcomes collectively and comparatively rather than in a piecemeal fashion. Progress toward the integration of immigrants needs to be benchmarked against these outcomes, and further target-setting needs to be resisted until government has a better grip on what is already being achieved. Thus the review would provide a single reference point for all social integration policies. It would also help to ensure that lessons are learned from existing policy initiatives; that those charged with their implementation at a local level feed back their experience into the policy-making process; that there is a maximum degree of continuity in successful policies and programmes and a minimum degree of bureaucracy in funding applications; and that policy provision does not create antagonism or unhealthy competition between ethnic communities for funding or services.[33]

Responsibility for this review could potentially rest with several agencies, including the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and the Home Office. However, here it is recommended that the review be undertaken jointly by the Home Office and the CRE, reporting directly to the Cabinet. If such a strategy were adopted, we believe that mobility among ethnic minority communities might be materially improved, and that this would in turn result in greater opportunities for them to develop a sense of belonging to British society and feel an integral part of it.

To begin with, the body charged with the responsibility for this review should pay particular attention to the language and employment.

Language
Among our interviewees, levels of literacy in English were lowest in the Bangladeshi community, a few of whom spoke very little English. However, language appeared to be almost as much of a problem for some of the Pakistani people we interviewed – a

point emphasised by many of the co-workers. Bangladeshi women, in particular, experienced difficulty in acquiring English language skills. The two ways in which they were likely to acquire them were through labour market participation and by taking English language courses. However, low rates of employment deprived them of the opportunity to learn the rudiments of the English language at work, while poor child care provision stood in the way of regular attendance at language classes. Together, these two factors go a long way to explain why so many female migrants struggle to speak English.

This is a major concern. Language is the 'gateway to all levels of day-to-day interaction in the public and private spheres' (Kerschen 2000: 11) and it has a key role to play in terms of improving 'access to citizenship'. While it is likely that second and third generation Asian migrants will acquire English through the schooling system and through speaking English to each other at home, the experiences of many asylum seekers and newer migrants are likely to mirror those of first generation migrants we interviewed. Here it is worth recalling how many of the people we spoke to came from rural regions of the Indian subcontinent with low levels of education and literacy – especially Mirpur (in Azad Kashmir, south-east of Rawalpindi) and Sylhet (in the north-east corner of Bangladesh).[34] The same situation – low levels of literacy and education in their mother tongue – will apply to immigrants arriving in Britain today from Somalia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslavia and Turkey. Clearly, they must therefore be prioritised for language training.

Moreover, new migrants must be able to access language provision. This means that there must be different mechanisms for delivering language tuition that take (greater) account of the variety of tuition needs, and that address some of the obstacles to the uptake of language tuition. Some groups may require more childcare or improved public transport to be able to attend language classes. Others may need more intensive courses to enable them to acquire proficiency in English as quickly as possible. Others may require tuition at home. In short, we should be aiming to increase the variety of courses and modes of delivery of language teaching, and not simply to increase the level of provision. For language teaching to be driven by migrant needs, it may also be necessary for more funding to come down directly to local councils, which may opt to work partly through local authority co-workers, rather than for language teaching to be increasingly professionalised and provided by educational institutions.

What, then, about the children of established migrant communities? As part of achieving the government's wider objectives on racial equality, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is already monitoring progress in narrowing ethnic minority disparities in educational attainment. The DfES's specific targets include a PSA that, by 2008, 60 per cent of children aged 16 achieve the equivalent of five GCSEs at grades A* to C, and in all schools at least 20 per cent of pupils achieve this standard by 2004, rising to 25 per cent by 2006 and 30 per cent by 2008. While we feel that these targets should be helpful in terms of improving English literacy among ethnic minority children, there may be an argument for setting targets pre Key Stage 4 which are more explicitly geared toward improving the ability of ethnic minority children to listen to, read, write and speak English. To make these targets more attainable, the DfES should consider moving toward a funding formula that explicitly

devotes more public resources to children from under-privileged backgrounds (including under-achieving ethnic minority children).[35]

Employment

Getting migrants into work is a key part of the process of social integration (see Bloch 2004: 5). As a recent paper from the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2003) made clear, although there are wide variations in the employment rates of different ethnic minority groups, all such groups occupy a disadvantaged position in the labour market relative to whites, with the probability of non-employment, or employment in lower level occupations, being particularly high among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Ethnic minorities tend to experience higher rates of unemployment, and to be under-represented in higher paid, non-manual occupations. Several of the people we spoke to seem to have paid this 'ethnic penalty' in the competition for jobs (Carmichael and Woods 2000: 71-98).

Employment is not just a means to livelihood. For many people, their sense of personal achievement, self-esteem and status in society derive in part from their work. Indeed, the findings of our report highlight how the labour market achievements of ethnic minorities have significant social consequences above and beyond their standards of living. Underemployment and unemployment exacerbate social isolation and exclusion – probably more so today than when the first generation arrived since, as ethnic minority communities have grown, they have also become more residentially segregated, thereby reducing the opportunity to mix with other sections of British society. Specifically, underemployment and unemployment lower morale, impede migrants from making social contacts outside their community and make it more difficult for them to learn or improve English language skills (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit 2003: 8).

Currently, the government is trying to raise the ethnic minority employment rate as part of its wider commitment to PSAs. To this end, an Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force was established in September 2003.[36] Its aim has been to work across government departments and with relevant stakeholders (eg CRE, TUC) 'to remove the barriers to employment success still facing many ethnic minority groups', and 'to reduce the difference between their employment rates and the overall rate'.[37] Much of the practical responsibility for addressing low employment rates among ethnic minority communities has rested with the Jobcentre Plus network. Local initiatives it has undertaken to help people from ethnic minority communities to find work include: increased consultation with ethnic minority groups by district managers; the Faith Communities Toolkit (London); the Careers in Childcare pilot project (Lambeth); the Ethnic Minority Outreach (EMO); and the development of contacts with the Asian Business Federation (Lancashire) (Department of Work and Pensions 2004). These are mostly pilot interventions in disadvantaged areas. Only recently (from 2004) has an additional £8 million of funding been secured to target specific ethnic minority groups, and an additional £14 million to extend ethnic minority outreach services. Such funding is clearly vital. Equally, however, the existing statistical data on employment also need to be improved. Here there is only scope to raise two issues: first, the persistent tendency to focus on unemployment (more measurement of underemployment, and employment in lower paid occupations, is required); second, the need for employment PSAs to be more directly related to social integration (eg the employment of migrants in ethnic minority firms appears to be increasing, but this may do little to increase their interaction with 'white' British

society). Agencies such as Jobcentre Plus might to do more to generate more precise and specific data on ethnic minority employment; the DWP might review PSAs with integration in mind.

Ethnic disadvantages in employment are long-standing; the figures for 2003 show little or no improvement over the previous five years. Moreover, unemployment among Pakistanis and Bangladeshis appears to be high even after taking account of their lower educational qualifications (Heath 2001: 3). The three most likely explanations for the lack of progress made in this policy sphere are: economic differences pre-migration and the cultural capital that migrants bring with them (Robinson 1990); the lack of social networks and contacts on the part of some ethnic minorities (a reflection of their lack of integration); and racial prejudice and discrimination. Hence, although anti-discrimination policies are likely to have *some* impact on the 'ethnic penalty' faced by ethnic minorities in the labour market, they are very unlikely to eliminate it. More general measures to increase social integration (targeted, in particular, at migrants who arrive in Britain from disadvantaged backgrounds) are required.

Summary

Government has no magic wand to wave. In recent years, plenty of effort has been put into improving levels of educational achievement and rates of employment among migrants, and while this paper makes some suggestions as to what more could be done, it primarily argues for a more rigorous assessment of the success of what is being done – in other words, it looks toward an audit of outcomes rather than a further round of target-setting. The responsibility of central government should be to ensure that integration is not impeded by factors that lie within its control. The more impediments to integration can be removed, the more established migrant communities and newcomers are likely to evince a sense of belonging to British society, and to espouse the 'core British values' that the CRE, the Community Cohesion Panel and others hope to see.

Racial discrimination

Local government

Local authorities have a statutory duty to 'promote good race relations' under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. The Community Cohesion Panel has also recently emphasised the leading role of local authorities as 'champions of the community cohesion agenda' in promoting integration and tolerance and a sense of belonging and common values (Community Cohesion Panel 2004: 19-20). Our report suggests that the perception on the part of some immigrants that 'white' attitudes on race have recently become more hostile has implications for a range of issues dealt with by local government, in particular schools and housing.

With respect to education policy, there are clearly difficult decisions that lie ahead.[38] Many of our interviewees were concerned that further integration could undermine their ethnic and religious identity; and all of them placed a high value on religious toleration. How, then, should local government respond to the call for more Islamic education and, specifically, for more Muslim schools?[39] This is an issue that has become more contentious in recent years, not least because some Muslims show

a strong preference for schools of their own religion, and yet there is a (perceived) danger of such schools (further) isolating Muslim youths. There is here an apparent conflict between improving social integration (which is required for feelings of 'Britishness' to develop) and respecting cultural and religious diversity (which, for many migrants, is a facet of their 'Britishness' or, at least, of what they value about the country and think that it stands for).

We are not the only commentators to have identified this problem. There is clearly some anxiety in local government about the way in which faith schools may be creating streams of young people who do not mix. Likewise, the Education Practitioner Group of the Community Cohesion Panel expressed concern regarding the increase in 'mono-cultural schools', and their effects on social cohesion. It urged the DfES first, to improve the educational performance of ethnic minorities; second, to develop common values among all children; and, third, to build good community relations through schools. However, one might legitimately ask if it is not going to be difficult to encourage the degree of interaction between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds that the achievement of the second and third goals requires if the number of mono-cultural schools continues to grow? If social cohesion does not focus on education, what is it to be built around? In reporting on 'faith schools', the Group rejected the argument that 'they are more likely to perpetuate divisions … than lead to more cohesiveness in society' (Community Cohesion Panel 2004: 31). Why? Because it concluded that the willingness of the wider community to fund faith schools has helped them to feel valued and included.[40] Some of these schools, moreover, can justifiably claim to be multi-ethnic in the sense that they operate an 'open faith' policy (children of all religious backgrounds can attend), and that they attract pupils from a reasonably wide range of cultural and 'national' backgrounds. The debate on separate schools is therefore a complex one. This seems to us an area of policy worthy of further research.[41]

A similar difficulty faces local authorities with respect to public housing.[42] We know that Britain's ethnic minorities are concentrated in a relatively small number of urban areas; that they live in wards with a higher proportion of ethnic minorities than do 'white' people; and that Bangladeshis have the highest levels of geographical segregation (or 'encapsulation') from the 'white' population, followed by Pakistanis (Peach 1996). Yet ethnic minorities do not appear to perceive ethnic segregation as a problem: in fact, many prefer to live alongside other ethnic minorities, and especially alongside people from their own ethnic group (Modood, Berthoud *et al* 1997: 221).

From the point of view of improving the social integration, however, residential separation is hardly desirable. To be sure, Britain may not have ethnic minority 'ghettos', in the sense that people from ethnic minorities rarely form a majority of the population of an area (Peach 1996: 232), but residential patterns are almost certainly reducing opportunities for contact between 'white' and Asian society, and their knowledge and understanding of each other. Should local authorities step in to try to restrain the residential separation of ethnic minority communities and prevent the so-called 'white flight' to mono-cultural neighbourhoods? Or should they look to the other services that they provide (employment, leisure services, schooling) to carry the burden of social integration? Several local authorities have been grappling with these issues, exploring whether to support 'white' people to live in ethnic minority areas, or to promote the building of bigger houses for larger Asian families.

Much depends on the precise nature of residential patterns. In Tameside, for example, there are few neighbourhoods that are preponderantly Asian, while many Asian people have moved into the social (private) housing sector by choice.[43] Thus there is a sense that the ethnic complexion of neighbourhoods is already changing with improving education and employment.

There are other reasons for local housing authorities to tread carefully here. Migrants tend to settle where there are practical support networks – such as shops, places of worship, community groups, local authority co-workers. Indeed, our study shows the strength of these networks among Tameside's Asian communities, and the way they are clearly valued. To the extent that such networks rely on Asian people living in close proximity to each other, local authority housing policy is faced with a difficult choice. Sociologists would call this a conflict between 'social' or 'bridging' capital' (the networks of voluntary association that embed cross-cultural contact, and bind communities together) and 'ethnic capital' (the trust and power of association within particular ethnic groups). This is a conflict that is inherent in many of the policy choices that local authorities continually face. It is also a conflict that needs to be much more widely debated in academic and policy-making circles if there is to be any chance of it being effectively negotiated, let alone resolved.[44]

Immigration policy

Our study underscores two key points regarding immigration policy toward new migrants. First, the experiences of first generation Asian migrants provide valuable insights that can be applied to the reception of today's refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants. In particular, the welcome extended to all recently arrived migrants is crucial, and is likely to have a direct impact on their identification with Britain or 'Britishness'. Social services, the third sector and central government must do everything that is within their power to ensure that new economic migrants do not feel as though they are resented or rejected by their host society. For asylum seekers and refugees, non-exclusionary treatment and the process of integration should start immediately on arrival and not on the grant of leave to remain. It is hardly surprising that migrants who reside in Britain and experience no serious or sustained attempt to integrate them into mainstream society find it difficult to develop a sense of Britain as their 'home'. The Home Office needs to take greater account of the issue of migrant reception when formulating immigration policy.

Second, there is an urgent need to tackle the racial hostility directed toward today's migrants. Britain's established migrant communities fear that the antagonism among 'whites' to current immigration is being displaced on to them – 'if too many come here, then the way that they call us "black" will happen more, and there will be more fighting and arguing'. Of course, the government is currently trying to persuade more people that it is operating a 'managed system of migration', that allows legitimate asylum seekers to enter Britain legally; that effectively tackles people trafficking, illegal entry and illegal working; and that distinguishes between those arriving for genuine and bogus marriages. But many people seem not to accept what they are being told. Indeed, the latest polls suggest that a majority of people in Britain continue to believe that there are too many migrants in the country. For as long as this belief persists, established migrant communities are likely to feel less comfortable and secure in their 'British' identity.[45] What is the way forward here? It may be that there is a more general issue of 'trust' (a public that is generally cynical

about what government is telling them on a range of issues); or that a greater degree of cross-party consensus is required for deeply-rooted public prejudices toward (ethnic minority) migrants to be undermined; or that the Home Office's apparatus of public relations and media management needs to be overhauled. Clearly, this report is not the place to try to unravel public hostility to current immigration, or the government's response to it. Equally, government needs to face up to the fact that public confidence in immigration policy needs to be restored, not only for the benefit of asylum seekers and new economic migrants, but for race relations more generally.

Future research

Several of the first generation migrants we interviewed suggested that this study should be followed up by a further study of the experiences and attitudes of second and third generations. We hope to undertake such a project. In our view, particular attention should be paid to:

- how far educational achievement and employment rates differ between generations;
- how far, according to generation, opinion differs on key social 'markers' (eg arranged marriages, whether at home and abroad);
- the extent to which a commitment to the 'extended family' endures;
- the religious practices that younger people perceive to be essential to the defence of their culture;
- the frequency (and forms) of racial discrimination; and how far and why the second and third generations believe that racism persists among 'white' society;
- contact with, and feelings toward, other parts of the Asian community, other ethnic minorities (Afro-Caribbeans especially), and newer migrants and asylum seekers.

Inter alia, such a study may help to shed light on disaffection among Muslim youth: do they really feel 'Islamophobia' to be ingrained (and increasing) in British society and, if so, why? It should also tackle the issue of how far attitudes to women and sexual equality have shifted among Muslims living in Britain.

These data are best collected collaboratively. Ideally, it requires a three-way partnership between policy makers, academia and local authorities. The results need to feedback into the communities concerned, in an accessible form. There is a danger of 'interview fatigue' among ethnic minority Britons, and it is vital to ensure that interviewees who participate in such studies share ownership of them and are made fully aware of what changes in policy emerge.

Appendix 1: Pre-interview questionnaire

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

(1.) What is your name?

(2.) How old are you?

(3.) Where were you born?

(4.) What year did you first arrive in Britain?

(5.) Why did you come to Britain?

(6.) How much did you know about Britain before you arrived?

(7.) Where have you lived in Britain?

SECTION B: YOUR COUNTRY OF BIRTH

(8.) How many times have you returned to your country of birth?

(9.) When was the last time you returned to your country of birth?

(10.) How many of your family members remain in your country of birth, and how close are they to you?

(11.) How do you stay in touch with them?

(12.) Have you ever sent money back to your family in your country of birth? If so, how frequently?

(13.) Do you still send money?

(14.) Do you intend to stay in Britain for the rest of your life, or do you hope eventually to return to live in your country of birth? What would stop you from returning 'home' to stay?

SECTION C: YOUR FAMILY IN BRITAIN

(15.) How many children do you have?

Name	Gender	Age	Highest qualification

(16.) Should Asian children in Britain's schools be able to learn more about (a) the history of India, Pakistan or Bangladesh? (b) the history of immigration into Britain?

(17.) Should the education system play a bigger role in helping all children to learn about other cultures?

(18.) Would you like them to go to university? Or are any of them already at university?

SECTION D: YOUR WORK IN BRITAIN

(19.) What jobs have you had in Britain (if any)?

(20.) Have you ever owned your own business? If so, what type of business was it?

(21.) Are you still employed, or have you retired?

SECTION E: YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT BRITAIN

(22.) What do you most like about Britain?

(23.) What do you least like about Britain?

(24.) Do you feel that Britain is now your 'home'?

(25.) Circle any of the phrases you would use to describe yourself:

Asian
Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
English
British
British Asian
British Muslim
British Hindu
British Sikh
British Bengali
Mancunian
Northerner
None of the above
Muslim
Hindu

SECTION F: FURTHER COMMENTS

If you would like to tell us about other aspects of your experience in Britain, please feel free to do so below.

Appendix 2: Interview questionnaire

(A.) YOUR IDENTITY

(1.) How do you identify yourself? Do you feel that you are Indian – Pakistani - Bangladeshi? Or do you feel that you are British? Or do you feel that you are both?

(2.) How well do you think that you speak English? How did you learn to speak English? What language do you speak at home?

(3.) Which aspects of your culture and religion would you most like to see acknowledged and accepted by the rest of British society?

(4.) What do you think are the core values that people in Britain have in common?

(B.) YOUR ATTITUDES TO BRITAIN

(5.) Did you feel an outsider in Britain when you arrived? If so, how long did you continue to feel this way? Were you pleased by or disappointed by what you discovered about Britain after you had arrived?

(6.) What has helped you to earn a living/be economically successful in Britain? What has made it more difficult for you to earn a living/succeed economically?

(C.) INTEGRATION INTO BRITISH SOCIETY

(7.) Which aspects of your own culture and religion have you been most concerned to preserve and protect in Britain?

(8.) In what ways, if any, do you feel that your children's attitudes to your culture and religion differ from yours?

(9.) Have you ever experienced hostility or racial discrimination from white people while you have been living in Britain? If so, has this been occasionally or frequently?

(10.) Why do you think some people in Britain have racist attitudes?

(D.) YOUR ATTITUDES TO OTHER IMMIGRANTS

(11.) What do you feel about Britain's new migrants? Do you think that these new migrants are different from you? Do you think they want to (or will be able to) integrate into British society?

(12) Do you think that the experience of Afro-Caribbean immigrants to Britain has been similar to or different from Asian immigrants?

(13.) How well do Hyde's different Asian communities get along with each other? Is there any tension between them?

Bibliography

Adams C (ed) (1987) *Across seven seas and thirteen rivers: Life stories of Sylhetti settlers in Britain*, London: THAP

Ansari H (2004) *'The infidel within'; Muslims in Britain since 1800*, London: Hurst

Anwar M (1979) *The myth of return. Pakistanis in Britain*, London: Heinemann Educational

Ballard R (ed) (1994) *Desh Pardesh; the South Asian presence in Britain*, London: Hurst

Bloch A (2004) *Making it work. Refugee employment in the UK*, Asylum and Migration Working Paper 2, London: Institute for Public Policy Research
http://www.ippr.org.uk/publications/index.php?book=246

Butt J and O'Neil A O (2004) *Let's move on: black and minority ethnic people's views on research findings*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation
http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialcare/564.asp

Cantle T (2004) 'Think tank', *The Guardian*, 11 September: 9

Carmichael F and Woods R (2000) 'Ethnic penalties in unemployment and occupational attainment: evidence for Britain', *International Review of Applied Economics*: 71-98

Clegg N and Grayson R (2002) *Learning from Europe; Lessons in education*, London: Centre for European Reform

Commission for Racial Equality (1996) *Roots of the future; ethnic diversity in the making of Britain*

Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (1997) *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all*, London: Runnymede Trust

Community Cohesion Panel (2004) *The end of parallel lives? The report of the Community Cohesion Panel*, London: Home Office

Cross M (1992) 'Black workers, recession and economic restructuring in the West Midlands' in Cross M (ed) *Ethnic minorities and industrial change in Europe and North America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Dahya B (1974) 'The nature of Pakistani ethnicity in industrial cities in Britain' in Cohen A (ed) *Urban Ethnicity*, London: Tavistock Publications

Denham J (2002) *Building cohesive communities: a report of the ministerial group on public order and community cohesion*, London: Home Office

Department for Work and Pensions (2004) *Progress report on realising race equality in the Department of Work and Pensions*, London: Department for Work and Pensions

Foner N (1979) *Jamaica farewell; Jamaican migrants in London*, London: Routledge

Heath A (2001) *Ethnic minorities in the labour market*, report to the PIU, London: Cabinet Office

Ho S Y and Henderson J (1999) 'Locality and the variability of ethnic employment in Britain', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*: 323-33

Home Office (2002) *Secure borders, safe haven. Integration with diversity in modern Britain*, London: Home Office

James W (1992) 'Migration, racism and identity: the Caribbean experience in Britain', *New Left Review*: 15-55

Joly D (1995) *Britannia's crescent: making a place for Muslims in British society*, Aldershot: Ashgate

Kalra V S (2000) *From textile mills to taxi ranks; experiences of migration, labour and social change*, Aldershot: Ashgate

Kerschen A (2000) 'Mother tongue as a bridge to assimilation?: Yiddish and Sylheti in East London' in Kerschen A (ed) *Language, labour and migration*: 11-38, Aldershot: Ashgate

Khan V S (1980) 'Asian women in Britain: strategies of adjustment of Indian and Pakistani migrants' in de Souza A (ed) *Women in contemporary India and South Asia*: 276-81, New Delhi: Manohar

MacIntyre S (2004) *The history wars,* Carlton: Melbourne University Press

Messkoub M (2000) 'Are the UK's ethnic minorities at a disadvantage when they get older?' in Kerschen A J (ed) *Language, labour and migration*: 222-48, Aldershot: Ashgate

Modood T, Berthoud R *et al* (1997) *Ethnic minorities in Britain; diversity and disadvantage*, London: Policy Studies Institute

Nazroo J Y (1997) *Ethnicity and Mental Health: Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities*, London: Policy Studies Institute

Peach C (1996) 'Does Britain have ghettos?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*: 216-35

Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2003) *Ethnic minorities in the labour market project*, London: Cabinet Office
http://www.number-10.gov.uk/su/ethnic%20minorities/report/07.htm

Ritchie D (2001) *Oldham Independent Review*

http://www.oldhamir.org.uk/OIR%20Report.pdf

Robinson V (1990) 'Roots to mobility: the social mobility of Britain's black population, 1971-87', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*: 274-86

Runnymede Trust (2000) *The Report on the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain - The Parekh Report*, London: Profile Books
http://www.runnymedetrust.org/projects/meb/report.html

Spencer I (1997) *British immigration policy since 1939. The Making of a multi-racial Britain*, London: Routledge

Seminar participants

Name	Organisation
Ahmed Ali	Tameside Racial Equality Council
Tracey Austin	Tameside MBC
Hazel Baird	Commission for Racial Equality
Trudi Burton	Citizens Advice
Moira Cunningham	Third Sector Coalition
Huw Davies	Tameside MBC
Shameem Eusuf	Greater Manchester Police
Francesca Hopwood Road	ippr
Sarah Kyambi	ippr
Khan Moghal	Manchester Council for Community Relations
Gareth Morrell	ippr
Lina Patel	Tameside MBC
Steven Pleasant	Tameside MBC
Joan Ryan	Groundwork UK
Cllr Margaret Sidebottom	Ashton
Danny Sriskandarajah	ippr
Phil Spence	Tameside MBC
Loraine Sweeney	ippr North
Andrew Thompson	University of Leeds
Kristen Walton	Government Office in the North West
Sharon Wilkinson	Government Office in the North West

Endnotes

[1] Initially we hoped that our study would cover both counties; on further reflection, we felt that it would be better to focus our efforts on one.

[2] Phillips is not the first person to have sparked a debate about the definition of 'Britishness' in relation to ethnic minorities. See, for example, Runnymede Trust (2000) *The Report on the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain - The Parekh Report* and Crick B (ed) (1991) *National identities: the constitution of the United Kingdom*, Oxford: Blackwell. But Phillips' intervention has been important (in terms of the amount of media attention it received) and distinctive (in the sense that he is openly critical of the concept of multi-culturalism).

[3] See also the (Denham) report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion (Denham 2002: Chapter 1).

[4] Channel 4 News interview, 5 April 2004.

[5] Following British usage, the word 'Asian' in this paper refers to the Indian subcontinent rather than the whole continent of Asia – hence the experiences of migrants from Hong Kong-China are not examined.

[6] For some recollections of Sylhetti settlers who arrived in Britain before the Second World War, see Adams (1987).

[7] All figures taken from the 2001 census.

[8] Apart from the Pakistani community, when we interviewed six women and four men: due to illness a male interviewee could not attend and was substituted by a woman.

[9] Seventy-two for the Indians, 63 for the Bangladeshis and 68 for the Pakistanis.

[10] Though two of the Bangladeshi interviewees could not recall their year of arrival.

[11] The spoken language of the Bangladeshi community in Hyde is referred to both as 'Bangla' and 'Bengali'. All of the people we interviewed were from Sylhet, and so all spoke the Sylheti dialect.

[12] As an elderly Indian woman pithily put it: 'nowadays nobody cares for each other'.

[13] For a summary see: http://www.cre.gov.uk/media/nr_arch/2004/nr040719.html

[14] Twelve felt that they were fairly fluent in the language (seven Indian, three Pakistani and two Bangladeshi); 14 felt that they could speak a little English (two Indian, six Pakistani and six Bangladeshi); three said that they could not speak English at all (one Indian, one Pakistani and one Bangladeshi). While men were much more likely to be fairly fluent, there were no obvious gender trends in the other two categories. Hence our findings are somewhat out of line with (and less optimistic than) those reported by Tariq Modood *et al*'s (1997: 60-1) larger and more rigorously quantitative survey: three-quarters of men in each South Asian group were reported to speak English fluently or fairly well; the highest level of fluency was among African Asians, and the lowest rates were among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. The difference may partly (but not entirely) be explained by the fact that our survey focused on migrants' perceptions of their ability to speak English.

[15] For the view that education of their children is the paramount concern of Muslim parents, see Joly (1995: 108).

[16] For the disproportionate impact of the decline of the old staple industries on the South Asian workforce, see Cross (1992: 77-93) and Kalra (2000: 131-3).

[17] For the uncertainty and anxiety faced by many Muslim women coming to Britain, see Khan (1980, 276-81).

[18] See here the CRE's observation in *Roots of the Future*: 'A sense of belonging grows out of the recognition, by individuals and society as a whole, that people from Britain's ethnic minorities are equally citizens and equally part of British culture' (1996: 2).

[19] We follow recent research in emphasising how migrants use many labels and identities to describe themselves, and in rejecting the notion of a fixed identity across all contexts. For a pioneering collection of essays on Asian identities in Britain, see Ballard (1994), in particular Ballard's introduction, 'The emergence of *Desh Pardesh*'. For support for our finding that British and Asian identities 'do not strongly compete with each other in the minds of most interviewees', see Modood, Berthoud *et al* (1997: 329).

[20] All ten of the Indians did so, nine of the Bangladeshis, and seven of the Pakistanis.

[21] The idea here is that migrants perceive themselves as resident in the 'host' country for a limited period only, after which they will return 'home'. Even though the prospect becomes more distant over time, the hope of one day returning to the 'home' country continues to influence many aspects of migrants' lives. See, especially, Anwar (1979).

[22] The 1970s appear to have been the key decade. The 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act put an end to the voucher system and primary migration from the Indian subcontinent. Only dependants of existing migrants were allowed into Britain, resulting in an influx of young men under the age of 16 to join their father. Meanwhile, new immigration legislation made movement back and forth between Britain and the Indian subcontinent more difficult. See, for example, Gardner K and Shukur A, '"I'm Bengali, I'm Asian and I'm living here." The Changing Identity of British Bengalis', in Ballard (1994: 150-1; 153-4).

[23] Locals sometimes dubbed such people 'foreign-returned'.

[24] On the effects of this legislation, see especially Spencer (1997).

[25] Only one of our interviewees referred directly to the case of Shabina Begum, a 15-year old girl sent home from school in Luton in September 2002 for wearing a jilbab, which covers all the body except the hands and face. A fortnight after we conducted our fieldwork, the High Court ruled that the headteacher had been right to bar the pupil for a breach of school uniform policy.

[26] *Eid* or *Id* meaning festival. There are two major festivals in the Muslim calendar: Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. The first celebrates the end of Ramadan (the month of fasting). The second is the 'festival of sacrifice', in memory of Prophet Abraham's sacrifice – for Muslims who can afford to go on the hajj it marks the end of the holy pilgrimage to Mecca; the majority, however, simply go to mosque and offer prayers.

[27] A nine-day religious festival, which falls in October or November (from the first to the ninth date of Ashwin Shukla Paksha in the Hindu calendar). It celebrates Goddess Durga, in particular her victory over the demon Mahishasur, and is a festival of worship, traditional dance and music, during which people fast and pray for health and prosperity.

[28] On the importance of religion in the lives of *all* of Britain's South Asian groups (Hindu, Muslim and Sikh), see Modood, Berthoud *et al* (1997: 300).

[29] See, for example, the report of the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (1997: 38) which emphasises the effects of verbal insults, threats and abuse: 'Episodes which may be relatively trivial in themselves but which have a cumulative effect on the victims, making them feel physically less safe and secure'.

[30] See also the recollection of a first generation Sylhetti settler in Adams (1987: 94): 'This country has changed so much – it is like living in another world from the old days. I think the reason for the change is that the young people, they don't understand why we are here – they have forgotten that we were born under the British flag, and we have come to our mother country – and they just want to get us out.'

[31] There is little in the literature on racism of minority groups towards each other. For brief but useful remarks, see Foner (1979: 147-8) and James (1992: 46-7).

[32] We do not, of course, reject the possibility that the opposition of some of our interviewees toward newcomers was partly based on the fact that they are in competition for scarce resources and public services, such as housing and school places – indeed, a few actually said that this was so. However, others rejected 'pulling up the drawbridge' to new migrants, whereas the fear of public hostility to asylum seekers, in particular, being transferred on to established migrant communities was widely expressed.

[33] For the danger of government grants and regeneration funds creating tensions between communities and pitting neighbourhoods against each other, see the Denham report (2002: 2.39).

[34] The building of the Mangla dam near Mirpur in 1960 (displacing some 100,000 people) had a marked impact on migration from the area; Sylheti migrants tended to be peasant farmers – owners rather than mere tenants of the land.

[35] For such a proposal, see Clegg and Grayson (2002: 12-3).

[36] See also the IPPR's employer-led Task Force on Race Equality and Diversity in the Private Sector, which reported in July 2004: http://www.ippr.org.uk/publications/index.php?book=426

[37] The Task Force is presently led by the Minister for Work, Jane Kennedy MP, and is supported by the Ethnic Minority Employment Division.

[38] For the campaigns to establish and the subsequent growth of voluntary-aided Muslim schools during the 1970s and 1980s, see Ansari (2004: 324-34) and Joly (1995: 155).

[39] In 1997, there were 58 full-time independent Muslims schools in Britain, catering for about 2 per cent of all Muslim children (26 primary and 32 secondary, the majority of which were for girls). In 2004, there were 120 full-time independent Muslims schools, five of which are state funded. Information provided by the Association of Muslim Schools.

[40] See also the report of the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (1997: 49), which called for government to review the criteria for providing state funding for religiously-based schools to ensure that they did not discriminate unfairly against Muslim bodies.

[41] A particularly interesting dimension of this debate is the question of how far policy and programmes should be formulated toward ethnic groups or toward faith communities. The thrust of policy in Britain has tended to be toward the former, and aimed at promoting racial harmony. But (some) Muslims have perhaps resented this, and there may be an argument for more attention being paid to promoting religious harmony. Certainly, during the symposium at which this paper was presented, several participants pointed to the growth of a Muslim faith community in Manchester that was pulling together different ethnicities. The difficulty here is how far the (Christian) religion – or a set of shared values stemming from this religion – still lies at the heart of a British identity. To the extent that this is true, there may be distinct drawbacks in making religion rather than ethnicity the focus of future policy. Moreover, it also emerged from the symposium that there are many Muslims who did not look toward the mosque as their primary social or meeting place, which suggests that, for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, their ethnicity is not synonymous with their Islamic identity. The relationship between religious and ethnic identity for Britain's Muslims is worthy of further exploration.

[42] For a pioneering essay explaining settlement patterns among South Asians in Britain see Dahya (1974).

[43] Compare with Oldham, where, in the wake of the 2001 riots, significant concern emerged about segregation in housing, which was also felt to have led to segregated schools: see Ritchie (2001). This report recommended that new housing schemes be racially mixed, with an urban regeneration company generating public and private investment for such schemes.

[44] For three of the drawbacks of the precedence of ethnic over social capital, see the Denham report (2002: 2.16).

[45] For example, a MORI poll of October 2000 found that 66 per cent of British people felt that there were too many immigrants in the country.