Non English speaking background migrant Muslim women and migrant English language provision

A. Rida

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Non English Speaking Background
Migrant Muslim Women and Migrant
English Language Provisions.

BY

A. Rida
Master of Education (TESOL)
1996
The purpose of this study is to define and delineate the factors which influence the decision by non-English speaking background migrant Muslim women to access or not access their eligibility for English language tuition, as set out by current policies governing the eligibility of migrants to participate in Adult Migrant Education programs. As such, the study is of particular interest to both key informants: teachers, community workers, coordinators, and to the target population themselves- Migrant Muslim women. It is also of benefit to those who are concerned with implementing language programs as it will provide them with an understanding of the issues facing Muslim women that may prevent them from accessing such classes. It is also of particular interest because it delves into and explores an area where much speculation has taken place, but where little research of significance has been directed.

The target population is defined as adult (over age 16) Muslim women from a non-English speaking background who are currently residing in the Perth metropolitan area. Two groups within this target population have been included in the study, the first being those women who have accessed migrant language tuition in a formal class setting (excluding those who have accessed the home tutor scheme). The second being those women who have not, with the objective of drawing a typology of the kind of Muslim women accessing classes- age, country of birth, family, socio-economic status, perceived need to learn English, level of education and aspirations and other relevant variables that were brought to light through the research process. Data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative research methods which involved the analysis of figures pertaining to the numbers of
women from Muslim countries of birth who have accessed English language 
classes through the Adult Migrant Education Program in order to arrive at 
conclusions about the relative absence of Muslim women in these programs. 
Qualitative data was collected using a structured interview with twenty three 
women from the target population as well as interviews with three key 
informants. The purpose of the key informant interviews was to gain an 
understanding of the external factors- accessibility, availability of information 
and practical considerations such as child care transport and provision of 
special arrangements that may affect the decision or the ability of Muslim 
women to attend classes.
I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature..........................
Date......10/7/96..........................
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Above all, I wish to thank the Muslim women who participated in this study.
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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background to the study and significance of the study.

Over the past decade, issues of access and equity have brought concerns over the language barrier of migrants to the forefront of government policies directed at minority groups. Multicultural policies have targeted the inequalities which stem from cultural, racial, religious or linguistic diversity. These policies are based on a recognition that Australia's present climate of ethnic diversity means that there exist barriers of language, culture or discrimination which continue to prevent some Australians from accessing essential services. Multicultural policies therefore "seek to ensure that all Australians have the opportunity to acquire and develop proficiency in English" (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989: 38). Despite this, there continues to be a backlog of immigrant women who remain amongst the non-English speaking minority in Australia. The 1992 Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia (FECCA) Congress Report acknowledges that migrant women are doubly disadvantaged by their gender and ethnicity (p. 170). Whilst equal participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the Australian community remains an important goal of the government's social justice policies, non-English speaking background (NESB) women continue to suffer from the disadvantages of a lower standard of English proficiency (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989:9). In the labour force, NESB women tend to occupy jobs which are lower paid and require less skill. In the domestic domain, they experience cultural and linguistic isolation as their English speaking family members undergo the process of participation in the wider Australian community. For NESB migrant Muslim women, the disadvantages of ethnicity and gender may be compounded by a third dimension associated with religious and cultural barriers to participation.
Almost 4000 Muslim women reside in Western Australia. Perhaps the most salient feature of this religious group is the extraordinary diversity of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds from which Australian Muslims hail, with over eighty different countries of origin being represented by the female Muslim population in Western Australia alone. It is both the linguistic diversity and the religious homogeneity that set Muslim women apart from other NESB migrant women. Despite this, migrant Muslim women have rarely been seen as a separate social group and have been viewed by government and community sectors as part of the wider group of migrant women. This study does not take this view, but rather is based on a recognition that migrant Muslim women do in fact form a group whose needs and whose status differ from those of migrant women in general by virtue of their religious and cultural belief system. Research of this nature is necessary if we are to come to some understanding of the factors that influence the decision by some Muslim women not to access English language classes which in turn limits their ability to participate in the wider Australian community.

1.2. The purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to explore both the external and internal factors which are influencing the absence of Migrant Muslim women in migrant language classes. A further purpose is to give Muslim women a voice by stating their situation regarding English language classes and current language policies. In doing so, this study aims to create a picture of the type of Muslim women who are and are not currently accessing classes or who have not accessed classes in the past. The research is essentially exploratory, it is not the purpose of this research to develop a theoretical stance but rather to
describe and explain the current situation. Finally it is also hoped that this research may identify ways of meeting the needs identified in the study and enhance the possibility of special provisions, such as classes held specifically for Muslim women at the Mosque, which may increase the number of Muslim women who access classes.

1.3. Research Questions

The aim of this research is to discover the extent to which Muslim women are accessing Adult Migrant English programs, (the present observation is that participation by Muslim women in these programs is relatively low), and to examine the factors that affect the decision by Muslim migrant women to take advantage of the language courses available to them.

The issues to be considered by this study include:

- Are Muslim women accessing the available migrant language classes?
- What are the factors affecting the decision by Muslim women to take advantage of the language services available to them?
- What are the long term language and literacy needs of Muslim women?
- To what extent do Muslim women perceive a need to learn English as a means of participation in Australian public life?

These issues prompt the main question to be answered by the study:

What are the factors which influence the decision by Muslim women to access or not to access their entitlements for English language classes?

This question is framed as such because of the exploratory nature of the research. The collection and analysis of data may provide answers to this
question in terms of the perceived need to learn English in order to participate in Australian society and the external and internal factors which may bear on the decision by Muslim women to partake or not partake in English language classes.

1.4. Theoretical Framework
The following is a diagrammatical representation of the variables impacting on the research question and the relationship between these variables. This framework was pre-constructed and derived from the experiences and knowledge of the author, the intention being to develop a framework that was flexible enough to allow for the addition of new variables and the alteration or omission of pre-supposed variables.

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE DECISION BY NESB MIGRANT MUSLIM WOMEN TO ACCESS OR NOT TO ACCESS ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES?

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework
EXTERNAL FACTORS

1. ACCESSIBILITY OF CLASSES (PRACTICAL FACTORS)
   • transport
   • where are the classes held
   • eligibility policies regarding the length of time allowed to lapse between
     arrival and access to classes
   • changes in AMES policies over the past 5 years need to be taken into
     account
   • availability of childcare

2. ACCESS TO INFORMATION
   • how is information obtained
   • availability of translated material regarding classes
   • information concerning procedures required for accessing classes
   • information regarding eligibility

3. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR MUSLIM WOMEN
   • classes held exclusively for Muslim women
   • provision of classes at Muslim community centres/ mosques etc
   • culturally sensitive childcare provisions
   • transport arrangements

INTERNAL FACTORS

1. CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS
   • fear of hostility from non-Muslims
• opposition by spouse
• apprehension towards mixing with non-Muslims
• cultural/religious beliefs pertaining to the role of women in the household
• status of English in home country- prestige associated with being able to speak English

2. DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE
• Is there understanding of the importance of learning English in order to participate?
• Personal attitudes about integrating with non-Muslims
• perceived role of the female in the household
• desire to gain employment or access further study

3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS
• domains in which English is used
• extent of family support network
• reliance of spouse on children and other support group members
• expressed need to learn English
• perception of language as a means to participation

4. INDIVIDUAL CONTINGENCIES
• home duties
• financial issues
• understanding of procedures and knowledge of available programs
• transportation difficulties
• time
• changes in immigration patterns over the past 5 years- recent influx of Bosnian immigrants
• policy changes

1.5. Limitations

Whilst the study will describe the factors which influence the decision of a particular sector of the migrant community to access classes, the capacity of the study to generalise will be limited by time constraints. Thus, no attempt will be made to generalise the findings beyond the sample population, although statistical data was used to generalise about participation rates of the target population at large. There are also certain exclusions which were necessary in order to maintain the scope of the research. The first of these is the exclusion of the male point of view and the male experience. It is not the aim of this study to explore the experiences of migrant Muslim males and hence they are, with the exception of a male key informant, excluded from the study entirely. Secondly it is also not the purpose of this study to explore the impact of English proficiency on the family network, although this may be alluded to throughout the study, particularly if the respondents are very dependent on their children and spouses to perform language specific tasks for them. The study was also unable to include migrants who may have initially settled in Perth but who have re-settled in areas beyond the Perth Metro area. Throughout the course of the study it also became apparent that some migrant Muslim groups, who constitute a large number of the total Muslim females residing in Western Australia, tend to congregate outside the Perth Metro area. For this reason, members of the Cocos Islands Muslim community have not been included in this study. Finally,
the research does not attempt to draw a comparison between Muslim women and any other minority group.

1.6. Level of Community Support

Several key informants and female members of the Muslim community have voiced their support for the project. It has been a well known fact among many service providers that Muslim women are not accessing their eligibility for language classes and that this category of NESB women has a relatively high drop out rate. There is much speculation as to why this could be. Reasons are given such as religious and cultural demands on female members of the family, but these are speculations put forward by those who stand outside the community, and whilst sympathetic, they may have little knowledge of the religion or the culture. The question regarding reasons for Muslim women's low access of the available language services remains unanswered as little research into this section of the migrant community has been undertaken. As a service provider myself, I hear the concerns of community activists and other service providers about the lack of Muslim women in their ESL programs; as a Muslim woman, I see many of my counterparts left behind as their husbands and children move on and are able to participate in Australian society. It is hoped that the data obtained from this research can facilitate discussions between service providers and Muslim community groups as to how English language classes can be made more accessible to Muslim women.

1.7. Definitions and Glossary of Terms

Following is a glossary of the terms used throughout the study. This glossary has been divided into two sections. The first defines terms relating to
government bodies and policies as well as some linguistic terms. The second defines words or phrases commonly used in Islam and for which there are no English equivalents. These are referred to as Islamic terms.

ABS  Australian Bureau of Statistics
ALLP  Australian Language and Literacy Policy
ALBE  Adult Literacy and Basic Education
AMEP  Adult Migrant English Program
AMES  Adult Migrant English Service
ASLPR  Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating
BIPR  Bureau of Immigration and Population Research
CES  Commonwealth Employment Service
DEET  Department of Employment, Education and Training
DILGEA  Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs
DSS  Department of Social Security
ESL  English as a Second Language
FECCA  Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
LANGUAGE DOMAIN  An area in which language is used to fulfill the tasks associated with that particular area of social or domestic life
L1  The main home language or mother tongue

Islamic Terms
HEJAB  The veil worn by some Muslim women as either a headscarf covering the hair or a more complete covering of the hair, neck and ears
IBADA  The Arabic word meaning "worship" used in Islam to denote the duties of a follower to worship ALLAH through living a Muslim way of life
IMAM  He whose job it is to call Muslims to prayer at the Mosque
1.8. Plan of the Study.

This study is presented as six chapters. The first chapter, the introduction, is designed as a preface to the study and introduces the issues the study seeks to explore.

The second chapter presents a review of the available literature in the general areas of Muslim women, literacy/language learning, NESB women, AMEP policy and the status of the Muslim community in Western Australia. It also addresses some issues which are pertinent to the target population and which may impact on the findings of the study.

The third chapter deals with the methodology utilised in the study and opens with a review of the literature available regarding the methods of social research. This chapter details the process used to gather and interpret the data collected throughout the research procedure.

The fourth chapter presents the results of the data collection. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the analysis of statistical data regarding the characteristics of the Muslim population in Western Australia and the participation rates of women from Muslim countries in AMEP classes for the time frame 1990-1994 (inclusive). The second section deals with the data
obtained through the use of the research instrument. This data pertains to the case studies undertaken in this study and the key informant interviews.

The fifth chapter discusses these findings at length and draws on the available literature to shed light on the findings. This chapter also discusses the issues presented in the introduction and explains any patterns or relationships brought to light in the analysis of the raw data.

The final chapter concludes the study by answering the main research question presented in the introduction. In doing so, the issues discussed in the discussion section are summarised and their impact on the main question is investigated. Based on the findings of the research, recommendations to address the needs of migrant Muslim women are made in this chapter.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

An extensive review of the literature has been undertaken in the general areas of literacy/language learning, NESB women, AMEP policy, and the status of the Muslim community in Australia in order to give an overview of previous findings that would impact on the study being undertaken. The aforementioned areas of literature impact on the target population of this study and their relevance to the study will be covered in this chapter. Whilst a substantial body of literature was available in the areas of language learning, literacy, NESB women and AMEP policy, very little information was available which directly addressed the needs or characteristics of Muslims as a group. That which was available was not gender specific and much of the literature available on Muslim women was either newspaper or magazine articles which sought to either dispel the many misconceptions surrounding Muslims in Australia or to propagate the stereotype of the Muslim woman. The literature which was available regarding NESB women was, for the most part, directly concerned with their barriers to employment as much attention has been given to this issue over recent years. A substantial amount of material was also available concerning the changes in AMEP policy over recent years and the effects these changes have had on minority groups. Whilst most of the literature appears to reflect discontent with current policy regarding its ability to address the needs of displaced minorities, some authors have offered a more optimistic view. Of the two studies which did address the needs of Muslim women, the first was directly concerned with the settlement of Lebanese migrants in Australia and did not address language learning or literacy needs except as part of the wider area of settlement needs.
The second concerned the literacy needs of long term resident Turkish women and did not specify religion as an aspect to be focused on, nor did it focus on how religious beliefs might impact on the ability or desire of these women to access classes. Literature pertaining to the methodology employed in this study will not be covered in this section but will be dealt with in detail in the section entitled Methodology.

2.1. Muslim Women in Western Australia

Figures obtained through the 1991 Census recorded a total 3889 Muslim females residing in Western Australia, representing approximately 0.5% of the total female population in Western Australia. Of these a total of 2576 (66%) were aged 16 years and over, making them eligible to access Adult Migrant English classes funded by the Department of Employment Education and Training. The figures also reveal that a total of 665 Muslim females (17%) responded to a question seeking their level of proficiency in English with "Not well" (523 respondents, 13%) or "Not at all" (142 respondents, 4%)\(^1\). Four hundred and forty two of the total Muslim females recorded in the Census had migrated to Australia in the years 1990 and 1991. Out of a total of 6309 Muslims residing in the Perth Metropolitan area, 2982 or 47% of them are female. The major countries of origin are Afghanistan (123 females in WA); Christmas Island (215); Cocos (Keeling Islands) (175); Indonesia (307); Iran (87); Lebanon (154); Malaysia (326); Pakistan (70); Singapore (279); South Africa (199); Turkey (166) and the Former Yugoslavia (148). Figures also

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\(^1\) The categories of English proficiency level- “Not well” and “Not at all” are used in the 1991 census. These categories reflect, albeit in very general terms, the populations own perceptions of their English language proficiency (bearing in mind the method of data collection for the census). It is not possible to equate these categories with ASLPR ratings and hence their relevance to this study cannot go beyond providing a general picture of the make up of the Muslim population in Western Australia.
showed that for all Muslims in Western Australia, 588 females or just 15% of the total number of Muslim women were wage or salary earners compared to 1232 males, which represents over 28% of the total Muslim males in Western Australia; 50 females (1.2%) were self employed compared to 128 males (2.95%) and 25 females (0.6%) were employers compared to 81 males (1.9%). Unemployed Muslim females looking for full time work totalled 212 (5.5%) compared to 524 males (12%) and 1590 (41%) females were not in the labour force, compared to 895 males (21%).

These figures need to be interpreted against the backdrop of changes in AMEP policy that occurred during the years 1990-1994. The changes in policy which were brought into effect during this time period concerned significant issues such as the entry and exit conditions of migrants who had already been accessing classes and those who were to access classes in the future. They also dictated the priority functions of the AMEP as a service provider to migrants.


The multicultural policy which Australia has embraced since the years following the Gallbally report on Post Arrival Services for Migrants in 1978, is an idea grounded on a secular society in which individuals and groups may separate the demands of a private realm from those of a public realm. The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs' *WA Settlement Plan* (April 1995) states its aim as being to facilitate the participation of migrants in the community "through the provision of necessary settlement services for the community to reap the economic and social benefits of the immigration program" (p.7.).
English proficiency has, in the past, and will continue to be one of the most important criteria for social and economic participation in the wider Australian community. (Dexter 1987; Hartley 1989) The National Agenda for Multicultural Australia (1989) acknowledged that “Language and cultural barriers prevent many NESB immigrants gaining equal access to the education, training, employment and social welfare services available to others” (p. 7).

A fundamental assumption of this study is that proficiency in English language is tantamount to acculturation and for the opportunity to participate fully in Australian society. Considering the status of English as the lingua franca in Australia and the contemporary direction of language planning in Australia towards ensuring that all Australians have sufficient English language skills for employment purposes, it would appear that proficiency in English is essential for economic participation. The White Paper, released in August 1991, replaced the National Policy on Languages with an Australian Language and Literacy Policy entitled Australia’s Language. The Australian Language and Literacy policy is based on the premise that:

- English proficiency is of fundamental importance to effective participation in Australian society in all aspects, including work, leisure and successful education and training, and

- a recognition of the potential of [English] language skills to contribute to individual, community and national development

(DEET 1991a, p.1.)

However, Helen Moore of La Trobe University (Moore 1991), argued that this shift of emphasis represents a displacement of multiculturalism, with its emphasis on pluralism and minority rights, with a new economic assimilationism, “according to which worth is measured in terms of usefulness
to the economy" (Cited in Malcolm 1991: 7). Kaplan (1990:5) observed that such movements in language planning have the potential to “disenfranchise some segments of the population” by treating the linguistically different members of the community as linguistically handicapped and by failing to accommodate for multilingual education. Proficiency in English then, has the ability to empower the non-native speaker. It affords him or her the power to interact in social situations, to enter gainful employment, to participate in Australian society and to achieve inter-personal solidarity. The debate over the language rights of immigrants has given rise to an opposition between the uniformist view that immigrants “give up their rights to their languages and their cultures by migrating” (Wardaugh, 1993: 349) and the pluralist view that migrants should not be required to give up a mother tongue. Both UNESCO and the United Nations have declared that ethnic minorities have the right to maintain their languages (Wardaugh, 1993 : 350).

2.3. Muslims and English

With the current emphasis on a multicultural Australia where the individual may separate the linguistic demands of public life from those of the private domain, this issue becomes compounded by the complex interrelationship of language and domain for the Muslim community. For most migrants, bilingualism becomes a matter of reserving the mother tongue for the domestic domain whilst English becomes the language of the public domain. For Muslims, language is not only tied to culture and tradition, but also has strong links with religion and religious practices which in turn impact on both the domestic and public domains. The language of the religious domain, for most Muslims, is different from that of the private domain where the mother tongue may
This is further complicated by the impact Islam, with its strict doctrines on the role of men and women in domestic and social life, has on the public and private domains. This may be represented as:

![Diagram showing language use and Muslims]

**Figure 2. Language use and Muslims**

For migrant Muslim women this issue may also be compounded by the role their religion gives to women in society. The issue for them then becomes one of being torn between their commitment to Islam, the cultural norms of their countries of origin and the need or desire to take part fully in Australian public life. The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs' WA Settlement Plan (April 1995), asserts that migrant and refugee women experience more barriers to access than migrant and refugee men. The plan goes on to assert that “Should they [migrant/refugee women] be from a traditionally male dominated culture, it is unlikely that they will ever participate fully in Australian society” (p.19).

Associated with this is research related to domain analysis and the use of language in the social and private or domestic domain. Bagshaw et al (1984) produced a study regarding the distinction between objective and subjective needs of learners and how, in the context of ESL, the learner’s needs are related to the current and future patterns of English use. By examining the domains in which Muslim women currently use English it is therefore possible to ascertain whether or not they perceive a need to learn English in order to be able to participate in Australian society.
2.4. The Status of NESB Women

2.4.1 The disadvantages faced by NESB women

Much literature and research has been dedicated to exploring the disadvantaged place of NESB migrant women in Australia (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989; Foster & Rado, 1991; Griffith, 1990; Knight, 1990; Alcorso, 1991; Gillespie, 1985). Of particular concern are issues of equity and access and how they operate in government policy in relation to economic viability. In a paper entitled *Non English Speaking Background Immigrant Women In The Workforce*, Alcorso (1991) compared the status of immigrant women in the nineties to that of migrant women in the 1950's and 1960's. Her claim that little has changed to improve the status of NESB women was based on the findings of a study to examine the experiences of non-English speaking background migrant women in the workplace. Gillespie (1985) reiterates Alcorso's concerns when she refers to the "triple disadvantage of migrant women" for reaching the proficiency levels necessary for participation in Australian society. The disadvantages faced by migrant women are ethnicity, class and gender. A lower standard of English proficiency is one of the main factors which reinforce immigrant women's disadvantaged place in Australian society. It deputes them to the lowest paid and least skilled jobs and serves to encumber their isolation by alienating them from English speaking family members who are undergoing the process of participation in Australian society (Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1985). At the Bureau of Immigration Research, "Women in Migration Conference" held at the University of Melbourne in February of 1992, both Phillip Ruddock (1992) and Moira Raynor (1992) presented papers on the issues faced by migrant women. Ruddock claimed that the effect of Australia's 'policy induced recession' would
be greatly borne by ethnic women who had little opportunity to improve their English or other skills. In April 1994 the first national conference organised by the Association of NESB Women of Australia (ANESBWA) reiterated this concern and acknowledged that NESB women were carrying the burden of the current economic climate. Raynor (1992) urged the Commonwealth government to re-examine its policy of excluding migrant women from English courses. "It can not be emphasised too often that immigrant women face loneliness, language problems, homesickness, financial difficulties, disillusionment, non-access to government services and culture shock. Australians need to realise they are human beings with human rights, and not just an eminently exploitable labour resource." A survey of the literature pertaining to NESB migrant women by McRobbie and Jupp (1992) led them to the conclusion that these women appear as "doubly marginal".

They are added on to accounts of NESB needs and services, often along with the elderly, youth, the disabled, refugees and residents of remote areas... This creates the false impression of women as a 'minority', a term currently used in a most confusing way be some sociologists to embrace groups who constitute a clear majority of the population in numerical terms (p.28).

There appears to be widespread agreement that English proficiency is tantamount to advancing the participation of NESB women in Australian society and more specifically in the workforce (Moss 1993; Federal Race Discrimination Commissioner, 1994; Hartley, 1989; Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989; Hausen, 1992 and MacDonald, 1994). After an extensive search of the
literature Foster and Rado (1991) found that many other sources (Bottomley, de Lepervanche and Martin 1991, Eliadis et al. 1989, Grieve and Burns, 1986, Yeatman and Bradley, 1990 all cited in Foster & Rado, 1991) have asserted that NESB women are a migrant group with "both special needs and problems as well as skills, talents and abilities" (Foster & Rado 1991: 19).

2.4.2 NESB women and access to classes

Of particular concern is the current status of NESB women in relation to English proficiency and the potential barriers they face which may limit their ability. A 1986 study undertaken by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs on the needs of isolated women presented an extensive list of these barriers and asserted that a fundamental task of agencies offering ESL programs should be to minimise those barriers which prevent women from accessing and reaping the benefits of ESL instruction (p.73). Both the 1993 and the 1994 State of the Nation Reports confirm the disadvantages faced by NESB women for gaining access to English language classes and acknowledge that recent changes in funding allocations have failed to address the needs of NESB women by identifying 'job seekers' and 'new arrivals' as priority groups (Moss, 1993: 75). State of the Nation (1994: 111) also cites a number of recommendations made in the July 1994 submission by the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW to the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs concerning the education and training needs of women. Among these recommendations was that DEET should ensure that ESL classes are flexible enough to allow parents with children to be able to access classes. Another recommendation was that DEET should specifically target NESB women through a multi-lingual sign-on campaign through CES.
In 1994, Helen MacDonald undertook research on behalf of the Federal Government to answer questions regarding literacy barriers to employment, job promotion and training experienced by jobless women and to make recommendations to reduce these barriers. Her research was conducted by talking to women in ESL and literacy classes and through consultation with practitioners, policy makers, unions and employers. Whilst the group discussions were held mainly in Victoria, her research covered national issues which emerged from the implementation of the ALLP. A number of people consulted in MacDonald's study expressed concern about the impact of restrictions to English language programs on women. CES officers, Vocational Orientation Centre counsellors and course providers commented on gaps in program provision as a result of ALLP guidelines which give priority to job seekers with NEWSTART agreements. The concern was mainly that spouses of job seekers on NEWSTART are excluded and, as these are often women, are also unaware of their eligibility and rights.

The *Western Australia State Settlement Plan* (1995: 21) also cites four categories of migrants whose English language needs remain unmet. Among these are long term residents whose language needs were not met earlier and non-job seekers who require further language tuition despite having accessed AMES provisions. The plan also cites community identified priorities for 1995 as "Migrants...unable to utilise their 510 hours English training entitlement or... who are not eligible for DEET English training programs" (p. 21). In light of changes to AMEP policies, it is probable that a large portion of this group are migrant women.
2.4.3 Factors affecting lack of access to classes

In a study which sought to identify categories of NESB women currently accessing ALBE courses and to explore ALBE provisions, Foster and Rado (1991) adopted a methodology which was essentially qualitative in nature, combining secondary analysis, fieldwork and consultation with key informants (counsellors, teachers, administrators, students, members of ethnic group associations) employers, volunteers and academics. Foster and Rado found that

"structural or systematic as well as personal factors account for the disadvantages many NESB women experience as regards the fulfilment of their literacy, education and training needs. This is especially salient at a time when strong forces (including government department and the union movement) are attempting to develop a nexus between language, literacy and skill training for adult workers" (p. 21 Their italics).

It will be interesting to see which of these factors- structural or personal, exert more influence on the decision by Muslim women to access or not access classes. Whilst there can be no argument, considering the substantial body of literature supporting this, that Muslim women along with other NESB women are disadvantaged by current policy provisions (see previous sections), it may also be the case that Muslim women, by virtue of the religious and cultural boundaries they are subject to, may have more personal barriers to fulfilling their literacy and language requirements than NESB women as a whole. Of particular relevance to this study is Foster and Rado's finding that there were
specific categories of NESB who were likely to miss out on ALBE courses. These categories were as follows (p.24):

- single women especially new arrivals
- sole parents
- new arrivals who are housebound because of young children
- women with longer than three years residence
- women whose husbands are unsympathetic to their educational and/or employment aspirations
- new or older arrivals who are afraid to venture away from their immediate environment
- older residents with high oracy and low literacy skills
- women in the country; and
- refugee women

Foster and Rado suggest that these findings are in part due to changes in AMEP policy which no longer caters for women outside the workforce and the re-delegation of the responsibility for this category of the migrant sector to community and ethnic organisations, often the most under-resourced and lowest funded division of English language providers. They also point out factors such as access to child care, transportation and counselling for traumatised refugees as contributors to the problem. However, it may be argued that such factors would have little relevance to categories such as the fifth category, “women whose husbands are unsympathetic to the educational and/or employment aspirations.”

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2 Foster and Rado’s study, entitled Literacy needs of NESB women: Implications for education and training, sought to identify categories of NESB women engaged in adult literacy and/or ALBE courses. The study was undertaken in Melbourne where AMES, TAFE, CAE, Tertiary Language Centres, Multicultural and Migrant Resource Centres and Community centres are among the providers of such courses for NESB people.
The relevance of Foster and Rado's classification of NESB women liable to miss out on their entitlements to this study is the possibility of respondents falling into one or more of these categories. Of particular interest, is the fifth category which cites women whose spouses may be unsympathetic to their aspirations. This category, along with the sixth category, "new or older arrivals who are afraid to venture away from their immediate environment", appear distinct from other categories in that they are representative of subjective rather than extraneous barriers to access. More particularly, an individual may fall into the fifth category as a result of strict religious or cultural restraints, which translate into an unwillingness by either the individual or the individual's spouse to engage in activities which they perceive as defiant of their religious doctrines or cultural beliefs. In light of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) suggestion that an individual's attitude towards the people and culture represented by a language may either impede or promote the acquisition of that language by the individual, it is conceivable that ethnic and religious partiality may indeed prove to be a barrier which may prevent some women from accessing ESL provisions. Of notable absence in Foster and Rado's list is a category which addresses this directly. This category could be titled "women whose cultural or religious beliefs prohibit them from engaging in activities which may not coincide with their perceived roles in society". It may well be that this category is exclusive to Muslim women and this study will seek to explore this possibility.

2.4.4 Muslim women and ESL provisions

Whilst a significant volume of the literature reviewed deals with the disadvantages of NESB women as a whole, very little literature or research has been devoted to studying the needs of NESB Muslim women as a minority
within the larger group of NESB women. The National Agenda for Multicultural Australia (1989) affirms that many NESB women are confronted with the dilemmas of poverty, isolation and the tensions arising from being torn between their own cultural beliefs and the need or desire to take part fully in Australian public life. The Agenda also points out that "Recent expressions of hostility against Aboriginal, Asian, Muslim and Jewish Australians suggest that prejudice and racism continue to threaten many Australians, and possibly lead to discrimination in access to employment and housing" (p.7). For NESB migrant Muslim women then, the disadvantages of ethnicity, class and gender are further compounded by a fourth disadvantage which is often manifest in open hostility and discrimination and is related to religious and cultural norms (Jamrozik, 1994: 49; Hassan, 1991). Despite this, there have been no studies of significance carried out in Western Australia which seek to address the needs and perceptions of Migrant Muslim women as a group. It is however possible to turn to the Eastern States to find studies of relevance to the topic. Labaki's (1989) account of Lebanese immigration to Australia since the 1970's, provides a general description of the Lebanese community in Australia, and whilst a majority of migrants from Lebanon are Christian, there has, as Labaki asserts, been a recent influx of Muslims. Labaki's study is devoted to outlining the economic and sociological characteristics of the Lebanese community in Australia. Of particular interest to this study are Labaki's findings that:

- 48% of the Lebanese Muslim population attend religious services at least once a week
- Most men speak English, but 92% retain their Lebanese Arabic language at home
- Native cultural traditions are retained
• Recent immigrants tend to have come from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds

• The social assimilation of Lebanese in Australia is limited to their participation in the workforce

This final point is of particular relevance to the target population in this study as, if indeed social assimilation is limited to participation in the workforce, those women who face barriers to entering gainful employment because of a lack of English proficiency, would therefore also face barriers to social assimilation. It therefore follows that, for Lebanese Muslim women who are not accessing classes because they do not want to be employed outside the home, two possibilities exist. Either

1. The lack of English proficiency and consequent inability or unwillingness to join the workforce totally prevent these women from assimilating, the result being that these women do not assimilate, or

2. Lebanese Muslim women who are not gainfully employed outside the home and who have not accessed classes with the ultimate goal of finding gainful employment, have some other way of achieving social assimilation, the result being that these women do assimilate but do not do so through participation in the workforce.

It is one of the aims of this study to explore these possibilities even further and to shed light on the needs and desires of Muslim women to achieve social assimilation as well as to explore the place English proficiency has in the process of assimilation for such women.

Bala Mudaly’s (1992) study entitled *ESL Literacy Needs of Long-Term Resident Turkish Women* details research undertaken at the Springvale Community Health Centre in Melbourne. The study sought, through a semi
structured interview of six long term resident Turkish women, information regarding family and language, perceived ESL needs and expectations, and experience of the Community centre's program. Mudaly used a format of questions adapted from Kessler's (1984) interview schedule and interviews were conducted in both Turkish and English with the aid of an interpreter. The target population was Turkish women attending the Community Centre's ESL classes who had been resident in Australia for an average of sixteen years. The average age of the respondents was forty-two and all had had only minimal primary school experience. All respondents, except one, were on social benefits for health reasons.

Among the findings of Mudaly's study were that:

- All six respondents were dissatisfied with their English proficiency
- Only one respondent felt a need to learn English from her first arrival in Australia. All other participants felt the need to learn English much later when their support network was no longer available and they "had to get by on their own" (p. 33)
- All women were conscious of a lack of independence once their support networks (mainly spouses and children) were no longer available to provide help and all expressed regrets at not having attained a greater command of English.
- "The strongest expression of needs for ESL was in the arena of personal empowerment. Literacy in English would help them to negotiate and engage their everyday English-speaking world with an enhanced measure of freedom, confidence and with a sense of self-reliance" (p.35).
• There was no evidence of strong ethnic partiality among the women. The respondents felt that exposure to English and mainstream life had not threatened their cultural identity.

Whilst Mudaly's study focussed on long term resident Turkish women, he asserts that the responses of the women present a "familiar picture of the background and circumstances of NESB migrant women, [and] their ESL needs and experience of learning English..." (p.32). However, it may well be that some of the feelings and opinions expressed by the six women in Mudaly's study are not consistent with those of more recently arrived migrant women who may still be experiencing difficulties with being exposed to mainstream lifestyles and maintaining their cultural identities. Younger, more recent arrivals would also be more likely to have strong support networks, particularly if they have school aged children and hence may feel, as the women in Mudaly's study confirmed, less of a need to learn English upon their first arrival.

Furthermore, five of the women in Mudaly's study had been in paid employment and, with an average of sixteen years residency in Australia, had obviously had more time and experience to settle into a life-style where they could maintain their cultural identity whilst partaking in some aspects of Australian public life. Thus, whilst Mudaly's study presents a profile of long-term resident migrant women, it will be of interest to compare these outcomes with those of a study which focuses on more recent arrivals. Of particular concern is the assertion by the women in Mudaly's study that they did not feel a spontaneous need to learn English when they first arrived in Australia. In light of recent changes to AMEP policy which limit the time period for newly arrived migrants to enrol in formal ESL classes to three months, it would appear that, if more recent arrivals hold the same view as those in Mudaly's study, they would be clearly disadvantaged
by such time constraints. As part of this study the perceived needs of NESB Muslim women to learn English will be explored in order to ascertain whether or not more recently arrived participants feel a spontaneous need to learn English.

2.5. Policy Changes and the Disadvantages for NESB Women

2.5.1 Policy changes

In 1990, The Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs put forward the National Plan which was to take effect over a two year period and would have been fully enforced by 1992, but was overtaken in August of that year by the Federal Government's August Budget Legislation which designated the AMEP an initial settlement program to provide for 'functional' language development up to the level of ASLPR 2. The National Plan originated from the research outcomes and recommendations of the Campbell Review (1985) of the AMEP and the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies (1988). In the process of formulating their recommendations, both committees sought consultation with the service providers and the community at large. The Campbell Review concluded that the AMEP at that time had "fuzzy criteria and priorities" and that a more lucid system of indexing need was imperative (Pilmer p.56). Following the Campbell review, DILGEA commissioned research on setting precedence in the AMEP. Pilmer (1990) outlines the findings of this research as revealing that the prevalent view of the 400 or so AMEP teachers consulted was that the Commonwealth needed to state clearly its own priorities and guidelines for entry to the AMEP. In 1988, the Fitzgerald Review also received a number of calls for a more efficient system of provision for the AMEP and as a result it
recommended that it was necessary for the AMEP to operate in accordance with the objectives of the migration program. The Fitzgerald inquiry took the recommendations made by the Campbell Review one step further and suggested that the AMEP could operate more efficiently by providing classes for migrants within the first two years of their arrival in Australia. It recommended that they should then become the responsibility of DEET. Knight (1990) argues that “This was not presented as an educational argument but as an economic one: people who have been in Australia for two years should no longer be considered migrants, and are therefore no longer the responsibility of DILGEA” (Fitzgerald 1988, p.59).

The focus of the National plan was to have the AMEP as a settlement program and to ensure the undertaking of responsibilities towards NESB migrants by other service agencies. This objective was expressed as “To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the AMEP as an initial settlement service by providing English language learning opportunities to adult migrants in priority categories consistent with government immigration policies” (p. 9). The plan put forward that this would be achieved by:

1. Prioritising services and resources for migrants up to 55 years of age who had resided in Australia for up to five years. Thus allocating 90% of resources to people resident for less than 5 years including 80% to those resident for less than 3 years.

2. Providing enrolled students with a sequence of learning arrangements aimed at assisting them to reach a proficiency level of at least ASLPR 1+ in all four macro skills.

3. Allocating at least 20% of resources to students seeking employment or further study who require a level of proficiency higher than ASLPR 2.
4. Facilitating the provision of settlement information to recently arrived migrants through the AMEP, and

5. "Reserving 10% of program resources for people with more than five years residence concentrating on courses for migrants at work and for people (particularly women) who did not participate in the program earlier due to family responsibilities" (p.9).

In order to fully understand the impact that such changes would have on the AMES and how it functioned and ultimately to be able to draw conclusions about how such changes may have affected the participation figures to be cited in this study, it is essential to examine the state of the AMES prior to the deployment of the National Plan. Prior to 1990, access priorities to the AMES were loose. They were established at state level in response to commonwealth priorities. Funding and demand motivated the policy and there were no formal period of residence restrictions and no restrictions on the amount of tuition or exit levels of participants. This meant that migrants could access the classes at any time and continue accessing them for an unlimited period of time regardless of their residency or English proficiency level.

In 1992, the Federal Government's August Budget Legislation replaced the National Plan and the responsibility for all other language provisions, apart from initial settlement programs which remained the responsibility of the AMEP, was given to DEET. Among these provisions were programs such as vocational, labour market programs and special intervention programs. These programs cater for clients whose English language proficiency is beyond the level of ASLPR 2 and are not initial settlement services, as such these programs do not directly concern the target population of this study.
In a recent innovation to the policy outlined above, the Federal Government has removed the 510 hour ceiling on English language tuition for newly arrived migrants. This change has occurred during the course of this study, and as such will not affect the statistical data used here. The changes were announced by Immigration Minister Nick Bolkus who confirmed that “Access to English language tuition is not only a key factor in migrants’ employment prospects, but it also makes a significant difference to how well people settle into and participate in their new communities” (The West Australian, September 4, 1995). The changes would be introduced progressively over the next six months and are the outcome of the Commonwealth’s review of adult migrant English programs. Priority for extra hours of tuition would be given to people with learning difficulties, such as migrants with low literacy skills in their own language, and survivors of torture and trauma. The effects of these changes on the number of Muslim women accessing classes is yet to be seen and is beyond the scope of this study, however, the change has been welcomed by the Refugee Council of Australia and the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia. Of particular relevance to the target population of this study is the innovation brought about by the lifting of the 510 hour limit which will allow recently arrived migrants who are not immediately seeking employment to access more than 510 hours of tuition.

2.5.2 The impact on women

The plan itself was received with a mixture of enthusiasm and hostility by those involved in Migrant Education. Of particular concern was the debate over whether or not the plan catered for long-term migrant residents, especially the women and how changing the focus of AMEP policy to more recently arrived
immigrants would effect some minority groups. Commenting on the change in AMEP policy, both Margaret Griffith (1990) and Lynne Knight (1990), call attention to the phasing out of long-term residents from Adult Migrant English Services classes. Griffith believed that this amounted to "economic discrimination", a view also held by Knight who wrote "[i]f prioritising means that there is no provision of classes for certain groups, then it has become a euphemism for discrimination" (Pilmer 1990:55). Both Griffith and Knight provide a cogent vindication to explain why many NESB women resident for less than five years could not access classes. Knight (1990) argues that, by allocating a majority of the available funds to services for newly arrived skilled migrant workers, the changes in AMEP policy would favour migrants already in an advantageous position, whilst ignoring the needs of long-term residents currently seeking language tuition, particularly the women. Knight suggests that, rather than being in line with multiculturalism, the new policy with its imposition of artificial time limits, would better fit in with post-war assimilationist ideologies (p. 51). Both writers also argue convincingly that the English language needs of long term resident NESB women are no less significant than the needs of recent arrivals keen to join the workforce. Hampel (1990) attacks the plan, stating that the policy of allocating 10% of resources to migrants who have been resident for longer than ten years represents a prioritising of time of arrival rather than need, to which he refers to as being "clearly at odds with other federal policies on industry and training that emphasise performance-based criteria" (p.4). Hampel cites a number of reports on ESL provision (Campbell, 1986:198, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1983, DILGEA, 1990B:20) as identifying a significant 'backlog' of long-term resident migrants who have not yet accessed English language tuition. He reports that
sixty percent of this backlog are women (DILGEA, 1990:25). According to Hampel, "When the National Plan is applied to these earlier settlers a sort of 'statute of limitations' appears to be operating; social justice in their case would appear to have a 'use-by' date" (p.5). Hampel's interpretation of the National Plan offers an insight into the concept of social justice and he uses the National Plan as an example to demonstrate how social justice in government policy, defined in terms of 'access' and 'equity', is often overshadowed by attempts to achieve economic efficiency. He blames this on the inadequate funding available for ESL programs and whilst his argument is based mainly on economic considerations, he nevertheless raises some significant issues about the status of long term residents and NESB women in relation to ESL provisions and the implications of the National Plan for such groups.

Whilst Hampel believes that the National Plan has failed to address the problem of the backlog of non-English speakers in Australia, Pilmer (1990) argues that by prioritising services to accommodate for new arrivals the Plan ensures that these people are not added to a marginalised ethnic workforce: "The AMEP Plan, therefore, aims at serving all new arrivals who need English as quickly as possible and as effectively as possible so that they are not added to the backlog of non-English speakers in Australia" (p.57). Pilmer's argument alludes to the extensive research and consultation that preceded the development of the Plan. He argues that the Plan accommodates for longer-term residents and NESB women by allocating responsibility to other agencies, such as community organisations and providers, delivering English language service. He cites the Working Party report on 'Post-Secondary English Language Training' which suggested that the needs of long-term residents and NESB women would best be met through community organisations and
providers as "local communities and organisations are closest to these people and best placed to assess their needs."

Despite Pilmer's validation of the National Program and his acknowledgment that the concerns of Griffith and Knight are pertinent, he fails to address these concerns directly and provides little reference to the research and literature concerning the disadvantaged status of NESB women. Whilst he argues that the National Plan will cater for displaced minorities, he does not specify exactly how expanding ELT provisions to involve community organisations will address their needs and does not offer any insight as to the likely success or failure of such programs as viable alternatives to formal classes at the AMES. Unlike Hampel, he does not take up the argument of social justice and overlooks the fact that 90% of funding under the National Plan would be allocated to newly arrived job seekers.

Despite the comparatively large body of literature available on the AMEP policy changes and their effects on various sectors of the migrant community, none of the published works cited here offered a statistical analysis of AMEP figures for participation rates of participants in AMES programmes. As part of this study, such an analysis will be undertaken, covering participation rates from the years 1990 to 1994 [inclusive]. In doing so, this study will thus be able to provide validation for the claims made by those authors cited here. The figures will elucidate to what extent, if any, migrant women and longer term residents have been disadvantaged by the changes, and whilst it is not the purpose of this study to examine participation trends for migrant women in general, the participation rates for women from predominantly Muslim countries will be examined as an indicator of the extent of the absence of Muslim women from formal language classes. Of particular interest will be a comparison of trends
before and after the implementation of the National Plan and an examination of whether any changes were due to internal factors (i.e., reflect a decision by Muslim women not to access classes), or were the result of the inability to access classes because of ineligibility to access the available programs.

2.6. Muslim Women

In order to portray how Muslim women are perceived by non-Muslims in Australia, the following vignettes are presented:

Whether your family has been here for five generations or you have just got off the plane from Lebanon, as a Muslim you repeatedly experience deep regret every time you are reminded that many non-Muslims in Australia feel hostility towards Islam and, indirectly, towards you (Deen 1995:124).

Six years ago, Maha Abdo was transformed from a suburban mum to an object of fear and hostility. How? She put on hejab, the headscarf and loose clothing believed by some to be the only proper attire for women. The change was immediate. Shop assistants checked her handbag for stolen goods. Bank tellers assumed she had difficulty with English. By putting on hejab, she had become alien, suspect, dangerous. She had become, publicly, a Muslim (Jamrozik 1994:48).

It hurt me so much in the Gulf war when I was told, ‘Go home, you wog,’... I mean, when I travel overseas, I get terribly homesick for Australia (Jamrozik 1994: 48).
These insights into the world of Muslims in Australia are substantiated by research by the Federal Government’s Office of Multicultural Affairs which found that Muslims were the least popular religious group in Australia, with a “social distance” score of 54, compared with 49 for Buddhists and 38 for Jews (cited in Jamrozik, 1994: 50).

In her book Caravanserai, Deen (1995) relates the experiences of some 200 Muslims—known as ‘Australian Muslims’. In her preface, she states her motivation for writing a book dedicated solely to Muslims living in Australia, “I wanted to give Muslims a human face, ... to engage the interest of an untouched, unmoved audience whose images of Muslims are really reflections from a ‘distorted mirror’”. Deen refers to the one-sided media coverage Muslims have received which perpetuate stereotypes and focuses on Muslims as a problem minority, obscure and divergent from mainstream Australia. While her book is dedicated to revealing the true face of Australian Muslims, it deals, for the most part, with the experiences of Muslims in the Eastern States. Unlike their Eastern State counterparts in Sydney’s Lakemba and Melbourne’s Preston, Muslims in Perth do not congregate in one or two suburbs (Jamrozik, 1994: 50). Whilst the Muslim population is heavily skewed to NSW (77,800) and Victoria (49,600), Western Australia possesses the third-largest settlement at 8,700 (Jamrozik 1994: 50). Despite this, there have been few studies or reports of significance which focus on Perth Muslims. Perth Muslims do not reap the benefits of the irrevocable transformations that have overcome Sydney’s Lakemba from an area where the monocultural outlook reigned supreme to a bustling Muslim ‘village’ where “Muslims show no signs of not belonging. They own the pavements... Arabic is heard in the streets, the shops, the banks and...
the hard looks and nasty words are far and few between" (Deen 1995: 101. See also Jamrozik 1994: 50). In Caravanserai, a long term Muslim resident recalls the early days of settlement in Sydney: "I remember the way it was...when my husband and I arrived from Lebanon in 1976. We were in shock. We didn't know how to cope...Allah forgive me, I was so frightened that I stopped wearing my own clothes, stopped covering, because when I looked in the mirror I looked all wrong for Australia- I was ashamed" (Deen 1995:101). It may be said that the Sydney experience of the late seventies and early eighties is akin to the Perth experience of the nineties. It is therefore, inaccurate to assume that Muslims in Australia are a homogenous group who enjoy the same lifestyle and 'sense of belonging' as those in NSW or Victoria. Indeed the demographic distribution of Muslims in Australia's capital cities plays a significant role in determining the experiences and outlooks of the Muslim community in any one city. Nevertheless, Deen's book and other literature which focuses solely on Muslims in the Eastern States provides a valuable insight into the dilemmas faced by both newly arrived and longer term resident Muslims in Australia. Much of the literature available on Muslims in Australia gives particular attention to Muslim women. Muslim women, whether here or overseas, are often regarded as a homogenous group. Non-Muslims tend to view them as victims, oppressed by the customary practices and cultural traditions which confine their lives. An unsympathetic media has often encouraged non-Muslim Australians to identify all Muslims with the horrors of female genital mutilation and domestic violence (Jamrozik 1994:50). However, Muslim women in Australia and elsewhere are not, as both Deen (1995) and Jamrozik (1994) assert, of 'one face'. The non-Muslim perception of Muslim women as victims has given rise to the existing tension between Muslim women and Western feminists and a
desire by Muslim women to solve their own problems in their own ways, using Islam to empower them and with a forceful acknowledgment that change can only be brought about from within Islam (see Deen 1995: 156,157; Deen 1994). Muslim feminists overseas are now reverting back to the Qur'an to bring about change, using the holy text as a weapon against oppression. Ironically, it is a male oriented interpretation of the text that confined the lives of Muslim women in the first place.

Perhaps the greatest point of contention between the Muslim and Western feminists is the wearing of the hejab or veil, which is often seen as a symbol of Muslim women's oppression and, for the West, has symbolised the inferiority of Muslim cultures since the nineteenth century (Hoodfar, 1993). In an article entitled *The Hidden World of Islamic Women*, Geraldine Brooks (1995) associates the return of the veil in Iran with the tyranny of the Shah and the rise of the militant Islamic brotherhood. She quotes Guy de Maupassant's description of Saudi women- "like death out for a walk" (p.20). A similar treatment is given by Jan Goodwin (1994) in an article entitled *The Iron Veil*. Her article begins “Imagine you are totally segregated from mainstream society, you can't choose whom you'll marry, how to dress or where to live. Educational opportunities are limited and few jobs- or any other activities- are open to you” (p.92). Both articles, along with a similar one also by Goodwin (1994), are devoted to expounding the horrors and injustices directed at Muslim women in various parts of the world. Neither Goodwin nor Brooks make any mention of the vast cultural differences that exist amongst Muslims throughout the world. Goodwin (1994) goes so far as to claim that such ill treatment of women is not confined to Pakistan (upon which her article is based), but is evident in many Muslim countries, where even when a females physical needs may be met, her
emotional needs are often ignored (p. 112). It is obvious from such treatments of the *hejab*, that for many non-Muslims the *hejab* is representative of Muslim women's oppression. For Muslim women on the other hand, it symbolises something much different- "a reaffirmation of faith, an assertion of Islamic identity, a rejection of Western values..." and ultimately for some a "feminist power statement by which women restrict access by men to their bodies, their looks and their personal space" (Deen 1995: 169). Regardless of the psychological or social reasons a woman chooses to don the veil, it is evident from Deen's book that for most women it is a personal decision. However, for those on the outside, it represents a clear and unquestionable assertion of identity, for nobody can deny that a woman wearing *hejab* must be Muslim. Deen (1995) writes at length on the sense of hostility and antagonism towards the veil. However, she asserts that intolerance and shortsightedness are not solely the domain of non-Muslims, and that religious dogmatism on the part of some Muslim women has led them to reject anything Western as tainted and imperfect (p. 165). This sense of religious superiority is often manifest in disapproval of Western ways with Muslim women speaking from "the moral high ground of the modest, chaste, homemaker confronting the 'painted Jezebel'" (Deen 1995: 162).

Whilst it is not the intention of this paper to explore to any great depth the attitudes of both Muslims and non-Muslims to each other or even to determine the nature of such attitudes, it is imperative to understand that such tensions do exist. Deen's book is laden with accounts of hostility towards Muslim women by their Australian feminist counterparts (see also Jamrozik, 1994). Both the articles by Brooks and by Goodwin mentioned here are testimony to the often one-sided media coverage to which Muslims are subjected. However, it is also
apparent that narrow mindedness exists within the Muslim community particularly in regard to Western values. The relevance of such attitudes to this study lies in the possibility that feelings of hostility and ambivalence from both sides result in an unwillingness or apprehension by Muslim woman to learn English. This may result from either fear of hostility from non-Muslims or from feelings of religious superiority and a denial of anything Western. In short, one of the aims of this study is to discover whether Muslim women perceive English proficiency as imperative to participating in Australian society and ultimately to discover to what extent the attitudes and feelings referred to above influence the decision by Muslim women to access classes.

2.7. What Muslims Believe

It is this author's contention that a basic understanding of the tenets of Islam is fundamental to understanding the full extent of the influence Islam has on a follower's way of life, both public and private. Without this insight into the beliefs of Muslims it is impossible to understand the far reaching impact the religion can have on the lives of its followers and in particular on its female followers. For the most part, Islam is misunderstood by non-Muslims and often its strict doctrines regarding male and female roles are seen as archaic and in contention with the ideals and values of Australian society. For this reason, as well as the fact that this study focuses solely on migrant Muslim women, the following section dealing with the beliefs of Muslims has been included. The following summary of the tenets of Islam is taken from a booklet entitled Basic Principles of Islam printed by and distributed through the Muslim Community School in Perth. The booklet is intended as a guide for those who wish to know more about Islam and the tenets of the Islamic faith.
Islam means submission unto the will of God and those that submit unto the will of God are called Muslims.\(^3\)

2.7.1 The Five Pillars of Faith in Islam

1. The Declaration of Faith which reads ‘There is no other object of worship but ALLAH and Muhammad is the Messenger of ALLAH.’ To this, all Muslims must bear witness.

Muslims also believe in:

- All the prophets and messengers of ALLAH: Adam; Noah; Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus (Peace Be Upon Them)
- All the revealed books of ALLAH, of which the Holy Qur’an is the last and perfect one.
- All the angels who are the spiritual beings of ALLAH
- The Islamic doctrine that the power of action proceeds from ALLAH and every human being is morally responsible for his own actions.
- The Day of Resurrection and of Judgement.

2. Obligatory prayers five times a day

3. Fasting during the Muslim month of Ramadan. This fasting takes the form of basically abstaining from all foods, drinks and sensual pleasures from dawn to sunset.

4. Zakaat which is an obligatory tax or ‘poor-due’ on certain assets above a prescribed quantity.

5. The Pilgrimage to Mecca, if one has the means of performing it.

\(^3\) Due to the nature of this kind of information and the fact that the author is of the Islamic faith it is necessary to consult a documented text which offers a guide to followers of Islam. It is not feasible to assume that I could give a knowledgeable account of the tenets of Islam without such consultation as there are strict guidelines governing these issues. Even as a follower of Islam, I do not presume to have the kind of knowledge necessary to write at length about the tenets of Islam and I wish to offer an informed and precise account.

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2.7.2 Women in Islam

Of particular significance to this study is the role of women in Islam. The following is an overview of the status of women in Islam according to the Holy Qur'an. Whether or not these ideals are upheld in practice is another matter and it is not the intention of this study to explore this issue. However, the issue of the status of Migrant Muslim women will be explored and it must be stressed that any issues brought to light which may appear to contradict what the Scripture dictates about women in Islam, are most probably due to cultural factors and not to religious beliefs.

• The Qur'an provides clear-cut evidence that woman is completely equated with man in the sight of God in terms of her rights and responsibilities.

• Each of the Five Pillars of Islam is as important for women as for men, as there is no differentiation of their reward.

• In Islam, both men and women are credited with the capacity for learning and understanding and teaching, and one of the aims of acquiring knowledge is that of becoming more conscious of God. "Knowledge" for a Muslim is not divided into sacred and secular, and the implication is that every Muslim boy or girl, man or woman, should pursue his or her education as far as it is possible.

• The Qur'an clearly indicates that marriage is sharing between the two halves of the society, and that its objectives, besides perpetuating human life, are emotional well-being and spiritual harmony, its bases are love and mercy.

• According to Islamic Law, women cannot be forced to marry anyone without their consent. As the woman's right to decide about her marriage is
recognised, so also her right to seek an end for an unsuccessful marriage is recognised. To provide for the stability of the family, however, and in order to protect it from hasty decisions under temporary emotional stress, certain steps and waiting periods should be observed by men and women seeking divorce.

- Man in Islam is fully responsible for the maintenance of his wife, his children, and in some cases of his needy relatives, especially the females. This responsibility is neither waived nor reduced because of his wife's wealth or because of her access to any personal income gained from work, rent, profit, or any other legal means.

- Apart from her role as a wife, the Muslim woman has a very important role as a mother. The status and value attached to parents in the Muslim world is very high and thankfulness to parents is linked to thankfulness to God.
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter will begin by exploring the current division in social research between quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. It is necessary to explore this area and the literature pertaining to it in order to substantiate why the particular methodology was chosen for this study and to gain an understanding of how both quantitative and qualitative methods can be integrated.

3.1. Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods

Traditionally there has been a division in social research between qualitative and quantitative research methods. The distinction between these two methods has been described using various terminology: Geertz (1973:6) described qualitative methods as "thick" and quantitative methods as "thin"; Rist, (1977:44) preferred the terms "holistic" and "narrow", whilst Sieber (1973) characterised qualitative and quantitative methods as "deep" and "generizable" respectively. This section shall begin by moving beyond these broad terms and presenting a more detailed discussion of the main features of qualitative and quantitative research design and illustrating how both these research methods were used in the collection and analysis of data for this study. Furthermore, the argument that quantitative and qualitative research need not be mutually exclusive will be expounded in order to provide a verification of the methodology chosen for this study. This approach is most succinctly summarised in Kaplan's (1964:214) caveat "Too often, we ask how to measure something without raising the question of what we would do with the
measurement if we had it” (cited in Downey and Ireland 1983: 179).  

For the purpose of this research, I shall adopt Webb, Campbell, Schwartz and Sechrest’s (1966) term and refer to this marriage of methods as “triangulation”. Qualitative methods have been described by Van Maanen (1983:9) as “an umbrella term” which includes a variety of analytical approaches that attempt to observe, describe, interpret “and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world” (p.9). Qualitative researchers are mostly concerned with how people organise themselves and their surroundings and how they come to understand these surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles and so on. Thus, qualitative research exacts methods of data collection that involve direct, intimate knowledge of the research context, such as participant observation and field research. These techniques allow researchers to take part in the understandings and notions of those being researched and to observe how these people structure and make sense of their social settings. Indeed observation, whether it be in the field, laboratory, school room or playground, is a fundamental method of qualitative research.

Qualitative methods of research are, in a sense, dictated by the focus and emphasis of qualitative methodology. The data which qualitative research seeks to collect is often subjective, “contextually embedded, cryptic and reflexive” (Van Maanen 1983: 10). As such, it is data which does not easily lend

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4 This stance has also been expounded by Moser and Kalton (1971:3) among others (Webb et al., 1966; Smith, 1975; Denzin, 1978). See Jick (1983: 135) for further references.

5 Jick (1983: 135) affirms that Webb et al (1966) actually coined the term “triangulation” to refer to the notion that qualitative and quantitative methods should be seen as complimentary rather than in opposition. Denzin (1978: 291) offers the best definition of this term as “the combination of methodologies in the study of the sample phenomenon.”
itself to interpretation by methods which seek to quantify and measure. Thus, group values, attitudes, conceptions and the nature of reactions to social and economic change are largely qualitative.

Typically the methods of collecting qualitative data and the nature of the data itself require the qualitative researcher to work with substantial chunks of "messy, unorganised data" (McCraken 1988:19). The crux of qualitative research does not simply lie in various intense methods of collecting data but also in the detection of patterns of interrelationship between the analytic categories that have been delineated and expounded throughout the data collection procedure. This ability of qualitative research to go beyond what is overtly manifested and delve into the data in order to seek out interrelationships and patterns is what McCracken (1988:16) called the "complexity capturing ability" of qualitative research.

Quantitative research yields data that are measurable and quantifiable. This "quantification" aspect of quantitative research has been defined by Forcese and Richer (1973:10) as "the assignment of numerical values to the phenomena under investigation...[quantification] permits the simplification and ordering of observations such that those features that given objects might have in common are distinguished from those that may superficially suggest the objects are different." (their italics) Typically, quantitative research techniques are constructed under strict guidelines and most commonly employ standardised measurement and sampling procedures in order to render the findings of observation more reliable; allow for replication of the research procedure; facilitate analysis of data based on numerical values; and permit generalisations of the data to wider populations (Mc Clintock, Brannon and Maynard-Moody, 1983: 150). Unlike their qualitative counterparts, advocates of
quantitative research claim that an experience of fact is valid “only when it is
independent of the observer, and when it can be reproduced by anyone who
takes the trouble of repeating the observation or experiment…” (Gopal, 1970:8).
Thus, objectivity is a salient and essential feature of quantitative research.
Another feature of quantitative research that usually demarcates it from
qualitative research is the ability to generalise. Whereas qualitative methods
rely on the indepth, descriptive and interpretive analysis of small samples,
quantitative methods rely on larger samples representative of the larger
population, in order to test the extent of a given phenomena. Indeed a
fundamental tenet of quantitative methods is that the greater the sample, the
more precise and mature the conclusions.
The goal of preciseness in quantitative research dictates a treatment of analytic
categories which is distinct from that of qualitative research. Whereas the
isolation and definition of categories is part of the qualitative research
procedure, clearly defined and isolated categories are the basis of quantitative
research. That is to say, quantitative research begins with the isolation and
definition of distinct categories and then proceeds to determine, as precisely as
possible, the relationship between them. For qualitative research “well defined
categories are the means of research”, but for quantitative research “they are
the object of research” (McCracken 1988:16).
Generally, differences between quantitative and qualitative methods are
detectable in the modes of research, the kinds of data, the focus and the goals
of research. This does not however mean that the two are mutually exclusive.
By combining the two approaches it is possible to obtain data and conclusions
that are at once precise and “generizable” as well as “thick” and “deep”. This
marriage of methods or triangulation provides the researcher with a number of
opportunities to improve the accuracy of judgements by collecting different kinds of data bearing on the same phenomena.

In its simplest form, triangulation may involve scaling of the qualitative data in order to make it measurable and enable generalisation.\(^6\) A marriage of methods however, is better achieved by integration of quantitative and qualitative methods throughout the research process. It offers several ways for the qualitative researcher to take advantage of the potential of quantitative research, such as the quantification of qualitative techniques; systematising observations; using sampling techniques for qualitative data collection; and developing quantifiable ways of coding data. These methods do not restrict the use of data collection techniques that are commonly associated with qualitative research, (such as participant observation, interviewing, and archival interpretation), though they do exact systematic, documented and reproducible procedures.\(^7\) Conversely, quantitative research can utilise qualitative findings in order to 1) support the findings of quantitative research, for example: the use of field studies to strengthen statistical results; or 2) provide the interpretive framework for quantitative research by identifying and defining units of analysis. For example, using qualitative methods to examine attitudes and perceptions of a particular group and then using quantitative methods to measure the extent of these phenomena.

\(^6\) Jick (1983: 137) uses the term "scaling" to refer to these methods of triangulation. He cites Smith's (1975: 273) conclusion that scaling is not, in effect, a mixture of methods as it does not reflect varieties of data or observations. Thus scaling can only be considered a "primitive triangulatory device".

\(^7\) See Mc Clintock et al (1983: 149-178) for examples of the "case- cluster method" which uses sampling and quantitative measurement techniques to complement qualitative analysis.
The use of complementary approaches is what Denzin (1978:302) labelled "between (or across) methods" triangulation. The basis of this approach is that multiple and separate measures bearing on the same phenomenon, which yield the same outcomes, give a more confident and reliable representation of that phenomenon. Where the results do not converge, the use of multiple methods serves to stimulate investigation by shedding light on unique elements that would otherwise have been overlooked had a single method been used.

For the purpose of this study, triangulation presented the most feasible and logical method of achieving the aims of the study. In the first instance, quantitative methods of gathering and interpreting data were used in order to determine, as accurately as possible, the numbers of Muslim women who had or are currently accessing classes through the AMEP database. In the second instance, qualitative methods of data collection were necessary in order to gain an insight into the area being studied. Thus, quantitative methods were used initially to measure the extent of the phenomena, whilst qualitative methods were used to explore the nature of the phenomena.

3.2. Design of the Study

Since the research question is related to attitudes and behaviour, the research sought, for the most part, to obtain data which is essentially qualitative. However, a multi method approach was used in which data obtained through quantitative means was used to delineate and define categories for inclusion in the study. The study itself incorporated the following methods of data collection:

\(^8\) Jick (1983) rates this form of triangulation as third in the continuum of simple triangulation design to complex triangulation design. At the simple end of the continuum, Jick places scaling techniques. These are followed by the more sophisticated design for testing reliability. The "between methods" design is third and the "Holistic Description" is rated as the most complex of triangulation designs.
1. A statistical review of the typical range of Muslim women in the Perth regional area in terms of country of origin.

2. A statistical analysis to determine the relative percentage of Muslim women who had or were currently accessing migrant language classes in the five year period 1990-1994 (inclusive).

3. A sample survey of migrant Muslim women who have either accessed or chosen not to access English language classes.

4. A series of key informant interviews

3.3. The Target Population

The Muslim community in Perth is represented by a cross-section of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, with the common feature being that of religion. It was therefore necessary to restrict the sample population based on a number of criteria in order to ensure that those women who were eligible for classes were included as respondents. Potential respondents in the sample studied were restricted according to the following criteria:

1. NESB Background. Obviously Muslim migrants who come from English speaking countries or countries where English is an official language could be expected to have a level of English proficiency which would not require them to access language courses. Thus, whilst South African Muslims may constitute a significant part of the Muslim community, women of South African origin were not included in the sample survey, because their English proficiency levels would not warrant a need to learn English as a second language.

2. Potential respondents were also assessed for inclusion in the study depending on their level of English proficiency at the time of arriving in Australia. Women who had a high level of proficiency upon arriving in Australia,
such as some professionals and those who had obtained degrees or training from institutes in other English speaking countries were not included in the sample population. For the purpose of defining and measuring the proficiency level of potential respondents, the ASLPR levels were used as a guideline. Respondents whose English proficiency level was at or approaching ASLPR 2, "Minimum Social Proficiency" ⁹, at the time of arrival were deemed to be ineligible for Adult Migrant English classes and hence were excluded from this study. Potential respondents who entered Australia with minimum proficiency, but who have since acquired the target language, either through language classes or socialisation were assessed according to their responses to a number of questions about their level of English at their time of arrival in Australia.

Taking these restrictions into consideration, I may then offer a definition of the target population as:

NESB migrant Muslim women who migrated to Australia in adulthood, who do not come from other English speaking countries or speak English as their mother tongue and whose level of English proficiency at present or at the time of arrival warrants or warranted a need to access available language courses in order to be able to interact at a social level and obtain information in the target language.

3.4. Statistical Review

A statistical review was undertaken using data obtained from the 1991 Census. The figures gave an overall picture of the make-up of the Muslim population in

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Perth as well as some valuable insights into the status of Muslim women in comparison to their male counterparts. Originally, the study sought to gain more precise figures regarding the number of Muslim women in Perth and immigration figures covering the number of Muslim females over the age of sixteen who had settled in Perth over the period 1990-1994 (inclusive). It was hoped that this would give a cross section of ethnic backgrounds that would be considered in the choice of respondents so that the survey sample could include respondents from different NESB backgrounds as well as serving to elucidate any trends from which a representative figure could be postulated.

However, throughout the course of the study it became evident that immigration figures detailing religion, sex and age were not available through any of the channels accessed (including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, The Department of Immigration and Bureau of Immigration and Population Research). As a consequence, the 1991 Census figures were used as a base of information and this data was used to identify several key variables for both the statistical analysis and the collection of qualitative data. The following tables from the ABS package entitled 1991 Census of Population and Housing Ethnic Communities Package for Selected Religion: Islam were accessed and the data from these tables was analysed to obtain information about the Muslim population in Perth.

1. Table 1 - Population Distribution by Local Government Area. This table showed the number of Muslim men and women residing in Local Government Areas in Western Australia. This table was used to determine the total number of Muslims, the number of Muslim males and the number of Muslim females residing in the Perth Metropolitan area in 1991. This was done by adding the totals of those Local Government areas which come under the Perth
Metropolitan region and disregarding those areas which are country Western Australia (See Table 4.1).

2. Table 2- Birthplace by Sex. This table presented the total number of Muslim males, females and persons residing in Western Australia by country of birth. Table 2 was used to determine the major countries of birth of Muslim females in Western Australia (see Tables 4.2- 4.6). A total of more than eighty countries were listed in this table and it was therefore necessary to select the countries which were most highly represented. The birthplaces of Muslim women, as indicated in this table, varied with Algeria, Bahrain, Brunei, France, Gaza Strip, Hong Kong, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Malta, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Russian Federation, Taiwan, Tanzania and Zambia being cited as the birthplace of only three Muslim females and Australia being cited as the birthplace of the largest representation of Muslim women at 1093. Of those countries which are non-English speaking, Malaysia had the highest number of Muslim women at 326, followed by Indonesia at 307. In order to determine which countries presented the major countries of birth and hence would be viable for inclusion in the study, it was necessary to have a cut off point of eighty or more Muslim women. However, it was decided that Egypt, which had 66 females would also be included in the study mainly due to the fact that respondents from Egypt were easy to access. Apart from being major countries of birth for Muslim women, in order to be included in the study, these countries also needed to be non-English speaking. Thus, although Australia is the major country of birth of Muslim women, women born in Australia could not be included in the study by virtue of the fact that they would not be considered as being of non-English Speaking Background. Consequently the countries of birth to be included in the study are as follows:
Afghanistan, Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, Former Yugoslavia.

Originally, the intention was that these figures would be used to stratify the sample survey in order to ensure that women from all the major countries of birth were represented in the interviews. However, this did not prove feasible in the course of the study, particularly when interviewing women who had or were accessing classes as they tended to come from either Afghanistan or the Former Yugoslavia. There was also an unforeseen complication with using the 1991 census figures as a basis for deciding which countries to include in the study as recent changes in immigration policies and immigration patterns since 1991 have meant that the make-up of the Muslim population in Perth has changed. It was also impossible to ascertain the number of Muslim women currently residing in Perth from the available data as Table 2 covered all of Western Australia and there were no tables available which correlated birthplace by sex by population distribution for Muslims. This became evident in the course of the study when it was discovered, for example, that most of the Muslim population from Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands, resided outside the Perth Metropolitan region.

3. **Table 4- Age by Sex.** This table listed the number of male and female Muslims residing in Western Australia by age and age groups. This table was used to give an overall indication of the number of Muslim women residing in Western Australia who may be eligible to access AMES classes by virtue of the fact that they would meet the criteria for age- that is sixteen years of age or over. Whilst this is not the only indication of the eligibility of these women, it is presented in this study as background information pertaining to the make up of the Muslim population in Western Australia (see section 4.1.1). Unfortunately, it
was impossible to arrive at precise figures regarding the age of the Muslim women who hail from the countries of birth that were cited in Table 2, due to the fact that there were no tables available which correlated age by sex by country of birth for the Muslim population in the 1991 census.

4. Table 5 - Year of Arrival in Australia by Sex. This table outlined the number of male and female Muslims who had arrived in Australia for the following years: prior to 1971; 1971-1985; 1986-1987; 1988-1989; 1990-1991; not stated and born in Australia. Table 5 was used to give an indication of the number of Muslim women who had migrated and settled in Western Australia in the period 1990 to 1991 (see Tables 4.2-4.6). Again, there were no tables correlating year of arrival with any other variable.

5. Table 6 - Proficiency in English by Sex (Persons aged five years and over). This table showed the total number of Muslim males and females who had described how well they could communicate in English according to the following categories: Very well; Well; Not well; Not at all; Not stated; Speaks English only. This was used to postulate a general figure of the number of Muslim women in Western Australia who may be eligible for AMES classes by virtue of their English proficiency levels (see section 4.1.1). It was decided that the categories "Not well" or "Not at all" were an indication of the need to improve proficiency in English and hence the figures represented by these categories, as opposed to the categories "Well" and "Very Well", were used. These figures were also compared with the figures for Muslim men as an indication of the differences in proficiency that exist between the male Muslim population and the female Muslim population. However, it must be kept in mind that these figures are only an indication of the individual's own assessment of his or her proficiency level and do not represent ASLPR levels. It may well be
that some individuals either over or under estimate their proficiency levels and hence the figures cited in this study are only intended to give a general indication of the status of Muslim women regarding English proficiency levels.

6. Table 7- Age Left School by Sex (Persons aged 15 years and over). This table showed a break down of the Muslim population according to the amount of schooling. This table was also used as general background information regarding the characteristics of the female Muslim population. The figures relating to the school leaving age of Muslim females was also compared to that for males in order to give an indication of the difference in status between the sexes and to give an insight into the characteristics of the female Muslim population (see Figure 4.1).

7. Table 8- Level of Qualification by Sex (Persons aged 15 years and over). This table correlated the numbers of Muslim males and females according to the qualifications attained. Table 8 was used in a similar way to table 7 to give an overall picture of the characteristic differences between the male and female Muslim population in Western Australia in terms of their levels of qualification (see section 4.1.1).

8. Table 9- Labour Force status by Sex (Persons aged 15 years and over) The categories listed in this table were as follows: Wage or salary earner; Self employed; Employer; Unpaid helper and Total employed, Unemployed- looking for full-time work; looking for part-time work and Total unemployed, Not in labour force and Not stated. The data was used to give an overall indication of the number of Muslim women either in the workforce, seeking employment or not in the labour force (see Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

9. Table 10- Annual Individual Income by Sex (Persons aged 15 years and over). The incomes shown in this table ranged from Less than $3001 to More
than $70 000. The data was used to gain a general insight into the socio-economic status of Muslim women in Western Australia in comparison to their male counterparts (see Figure 4.4).

The information gained from the review of the figures available through the 1991 census was, for the most part, useful for giving an overview of the status of Muslims in Western Australia and the demographic characteristics of this group. Most of the information is included in the background information on the Muslim population. The review of census data was also a necessary precursor to the statistical analysis of AMES participation rates accessed through the AMEP database. It was particularly necessary to review the countries of birth of the female Muslim population in Western Australia as these data provided a starting point for the statistical analysis of AMEP data by defining categories for inclusion in the study.

3.5. Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis was a purely quantitative study designed to determine the percentages of Muslim women currently accessing formal language classes through the AMEP system. Data have been accessed through the Adult Migrant English Program database which gives a representative figure of migrants who have accessed English language programs run by the Adult Migrant English Service for the years 1990 - 1994 (inclusive). These figures have been correlated on the basis of sex, age, main home language, country of origin and period of residence. An analysis of these figures, when correlated with data on immigration, was able to give a general indication of the participation rate of Muslim women in language programs. The original intention was that these figures would then be used to arrive at a percentile band representing the
possible percentage of Muslim women from a particular country of origin who have accessed classes for each year in the five year period being studied. The use of a percentile band rather than an absolute figure accommodates the fact that data from the AMEP database does not include religion. For example, if the AMEP database figures showed that ten Iranian women accessed classes in the year 1992, it cannot be assumed that all of these women are Muslim. However, if immigration figures show that a total of one hundred Muslim women from Iran migrated in that same year, it would then be possible to assume that between zero to ten percent of these women accessed classes. These figures would then enable the researcher to draw conclusions regarding the relative absence of Muslim women from these programs.

Data was also derived from ABS figures which cited permanent arrivals for the years 1990-1994 (inclusive), their country of birth and their intended state of residence. The following procedure was utilised in the statistical analysis:

1. ABS figures citing permanent arrivals for the years 1990-1994 (inclusive) were accessed and the relevant figures for the countries of birth indicated in the 1991 census as being the most significant birth places for the Muslim female population in Western Australia were extracted.

2. AMEP database tables for participants for the years 1990-1994 (inclusive) were accessed. A number of tables were available with the following correlations:
   a. period of residence by county of birth
   b. period of residence by age by sex
   c. type of learning activity by main home language by sex
   d. period of residence by main home language
   e. sex by main home language
3. Figures for participants from those countries of origin indicated in the 1991 census as being birth places of Muslim women in Western Australia were extracted from the tables which included country of birth as a variable.

4. All participants from the countries of birth indicated in the 1991 census data who had a period of residence of less than six months or six months to one year were extracted.

5. The total number of female participants and the total number of participants (both male and female) hailing from the countries of birth cited in the 1991 census were extracted.

6. New tables were formulated for each year 1990 -1994 (inclusive) and presented in the study with the following variables (see Tables 4.2- 4.6).

   a. country of birth
   b. number of migrant settlers in Western Australia for the given year
   c. number of participants in AMES program for the given year resident for less than 6 months
   d. number of participants in the AMES program for the given year resident for 6 months to one year
   e. total number of participants in the AMES program for the given year
   f. total number of female participants in the AMES program for the given year

These tables were designed to illustrate a comparison between the number of migrants settling in Western Australia in a given year with the number of newly arrived participants (i.e., participants who had settled in Western Australia in the given year) in the AMES program. The tables therefore indicate general trends by settlers from those countries cited in the 1991 census as birth places of Muslim women to access or not access their entitlements to English.
language tuition. The tables also represent the total number of women from these countries accessing classes in comparison to the total number of participants from these countries of birth.

7. Tables breaking down the age of participants and correlating them with the countries of birth and sex of the participants were used to give a general indication of the age breakdown of females accessing classes who hailed from those countries indicated in the 1991 census as birth places of Muslim women. Although these show only general trends and it is impossible to ascertain the exact number of Muslim women accessing classes based only on the data available, the tables are only intended to present an overall picture of the potential number of Muslim women accessing classes, not an accurate or precise measure of this phenomenon.

3.6. Instruments

The study employed the use of a structured interview in order to gather raw data from respondents (see Appendix A). The interview schedule was in four parts and had been trialed prior to carrying out the interviews to allow for modification and/or extension. The first part required the respondents to answer questions relating to their age, family, socio-economic status, education and period of residence in Australia. This general information was necessary to build up a typology of the characteristics of those Muslim women accessing classes and those who were not. The data from this section of the interview schedule is presented in the form of tables with a numerical analysis of the variables used in the interview.

The second section, entitled ‘English Language Needs’ was essentially a domain analysis designed to determine where and when Muslim women are
using English. This was based primarily on D’ Souza’s (1988) Sociolinguistic Profile (see Appendix D) and also drew on Brindley’s (1984) study entitled Needs Analysis and Objective Setting in the Adult Migrant English Program.

The questions in this section related mainly to the domains in which English or the main home language were used and the respondents were required to circle a percentile band indicating the amount of English used in each of the following domains: Home; Social; Work; Neighbourhood; Religious practices; Leisure activities and Business. It was necessary to include this section in the interview schedule in order to be able to make conclusions and recommendations about the immediate and long term needs of Muslim migrant women. By analysing the domains in which English language is used, it is then possible to assess those areas in which Muslim women use most or least English and hence those areas for which there is an expressed need for English.

The third section originally consisted of a number of statements regarding the respondents’ attitudes towards English and language learning which were scaled using a Lickert Scale. However, after the initial piloting of the interview schedule, it was discovered that many of the respondents would have difficulty coping with the linguistic complexity of a Lickert Scale. To remedy this, respondents were simply asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the statements. This section was designed to give an indication of the respondents’ feelings and attitudes towards English and their thoughts and ideas about being a Muslim woman in Australia. The intention here was to discover whether a relationship exists between attitudes towards the mainstream Australian society and learning English. Another intention was to gain some insights into the felt need by Muslim women to learn English, for example by exploring whether or
not these women felt a spontaneous need to learn English upon first arrival, whether or not they rely heavily on an existing support network and whether or not they feel that their need to learn English is as important as that of other family members'. The data collected from this section of the interview schedule is presented in the form of tables with a numerical analysis of the respondents' answers followed by a discussion of the data.

The final section of the interview schedule consisted of eight open ended questions in which the respondents were encouraged to talk freely about their ideas, experiences and perceptions. This section was divided into two subsections, one being directed at women who had or were currently accessing classes and the other being directed at women who had not accessed classes.

The questions mainly concerned language learning experiences and the women were asked to talk freely about language classes and to make any recommendations about how language classes could better accommodate Muslim women.

The original intention of this study was that the survey be stratified in order to achieve equal representation from two subgroups- Muslim women who have accessed ESL classes in the period 1990-1994 and continued to access the classes for a period longer than eight weeks [15 respondents] and Muslim women who have not accessed ESL classes [15 respondents]. However, this proved not to be feasible throughout the course of the study as the number of women who were accessing classes at the time was not a controllable variable. For example, at one institute which is a provider of Adult Migrant English classes, of the eighty five students enrolled under the DEET funded program, only one was a Muslim female. Furthermore, a small minority of respondents had actually accessed classes, but had dropped out after approximately one
month of study. Whilst these women may form another subgroup in the target population, for the purpose of this study, they were included in the larger subgroup of women who have not accessed classes.

Initially, interviews were to be held in focus groups of approximately three or four respondents from the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds. From these, one or two participants were to be identified and interviewed further, thus providing more indepth case studies. Respondents were to be chosen from the focus groups according to the following criteria:

1. Those respondents with whom the interviewer has built up a good rapport.
2. Those respondents who are willing to agree to further interviews.
3. Those respondents who are able to express their reasons for accessing or not accessing clearly and who show an interest in participating in the study.

However, in reality it was difficult to access groups of Muslim women from the same cultural or linguistic backgrounds at the same time. For the most part, those women who are currently accessing classes were interviewed at their place of study and hence were interviewed individually. Occasionally two respondents were interviewed simultaneously, either because they were studying English at the same place or were members of the same family. On rare occasions, such as the interviews held at the Turkish Mosque in Welshpool, a number of women from the same linguistic and cultural background were interviewed simultaneously. Often however, it was the case that women were interviewed individually, thus eliminating the need to re-interview a number of participants for more indepth information.

Whilst most of the interviews were held in English, where the interviewer was unable to communicate with the respondents in either English or Arabic, the aid
of a bilingual volunteer was enlisted. These volunteers were accessed through the researcher's own contacts within the Muslim community.

3.7. Piloting and Trailing of the Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was initially piloted with a small group of Muslim women from Bosnia and Turkey. The average proficiency level of these women was ASLPR 1+/2, hence they were able to communicate quite easily in English. All women used in the piloting of the interview were currently accessing classes at the researcher's place of work. As indicated earlier the main outcome of the pilot was that respondents would find it difficult to cope with the linguistic complexity of the Lickert Scale. This was remedied by removing the Lickert Scale and asking respondents to state whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement in section three of the schedule. Additionally, one member of the pilot group indicated a need to include some more specific statements in section three of the schedule particularly in reference to the reasons why English classes were not accessed upon first arrival. As a result, a statement in the form of "I did not access classes straight away because I lacked confidence in my English speaking skills" was added to this section, but was only directed at women who were not accessing classes or who had indicated that they did not access classes upon first arriving in Australia.

Another outcome of the pilot interview was that some of the domains outlined in section two of the schedule needed more clarification or more specific domains needed to be used. It was suggested that a domain be included that covered the area of medical care. It was decided that this would come under the domain of Neighbourhood/Community. Similarly literacy practices such as reading and activities such as watching television were also questioned by the pilot group
and it was clarified that these would come under the domain of Leisure activities.

Finally, the piloting process also provided an insight into some of the pertinent issues that may arise during the course of the interviews. For example, all the women in the pilot group cited religious holidays as being a problem for them when accessing classes. Thus, when conducting interviews for the research, the issue of religious holidays was raised by the interviewer and the respondents were encouraged to express their concerns and feelings.

Whilst sections one, two and three of the interview schedule were rather straightforward and did not require the respondents to elaborate on their ideas and concerns, the final section required the interviewer to probe the respondents in order to gain more in-depth answers to the questions posed.

Being a member of the Muslim female community proved to be both advantageous and a handicap as an interviewer. Obviously, access to Muslim females was easier to accomplish because of my status as a Muslim woman. However, it was more difficult to encourage Muslim women to talk freely about their cultural and religious status in Australia, not because they feared judgement by a non-Muslim interviewer, but because they assumed that I knew what their status was and could empathise with them. Hence, many of the women did not initially give in-depth answers to the open questions, assuming that I would fill in the gaps. This, once again, called for more probing on the part of the interviewer and a need to clarify to the respondents that, although I identified with them, I needed them to be more precise in their answers.

Furthermore, as is often the case with verbal responses, some women may have been prompted by my status as an English language service provider, to respond with what they thought I wanted to hear. It was discovered that this
could be remedied by asking the women to comment on other Muslim women, such as their friends or acquaintances, rather than to comment on themselves. Thus, by distancing the respondent from the question and framing the question in a way which asked for their perceptions of what Muslim women felt in general, it allowed the questions to be of a non-threatening nature and the respondent could answer more freely without feeling that she is implicating herself as someone who does not want to attend English language classes.

3.8. Key Informant Interviews

A total of three key informants were interviewed. The key informants are: a representative from a Muslim women's community group; a spokesperson for the Muslim community in Perth and Hanifa Deen (see Appendix C), author of the book *Caravanserai* which focuses on Australian Muslims and which was used extensively throughout the study as a reference. The interviews covered areas such as the problems Muslim women in Perth may face, the cultural and religious barriers to participation and the attitudes of the general Muslim population to Australian society. The schedule consisted primarily of open ended and closed ended questions and a different interview schedule was required for each of the key informants. The key informant interviews took the form of an informal discussion and a semi-structured approach was adopted to allow for any pertinent points which may have been raised in the course of the interview to be explored further. All key informant interviews were held in English on a one to one basis and the interview agendas were formulated by considering the issues that had been raised from the respondent interviews. As such the interview schedules for the key informants were not pre-designed, but rather, were finalised after all respondent interviews had been completed.
3.9. Procedure

The procedure utilised in this study is represented diagramatically in the following:

Statistical review of data regarding countries of origin of NESB Muslim women in Perth metro area and their characteristics.

Statistical analysis of data regarding relative percentages of Muslim women currently accessing classes and their features- age, country of origin, period of residence [AMES data base]

Two subgroups. Criteria based on ASLPR level at time of arrival.

3 key informants. Semi-structured interviews

20-30 respondents. Structured interview with open questions at end of schedule.

WHAT ARE THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE DECISION TO ACCESS?

Availability of classes
How is information accessed?

Defining the target population

Are Muslim women accessing classes?

What are the typical features of women who are accessing?

Figure 3. Procedure utilised in the study.
3.10. Data Analysis

3.10.1 Analysis of statistical data

As a precursor to the interviews with Muslim women from the target population and key informants, the following statistical data was obtained:

1. Statistical data in the form of tables from the Australian Bureau of Statistics regarding 1991 census figures for the Muslim population in Western Australia.
2. Statistical data in the form of tables from the AMEP database regarding the age, sex, main home language, type of tuition, country of birth and period of residence of participants in Adult Migrant English classes for the period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive)
3. Statistical data in the form of tables from the Australian Bureau of Statistics detailing the number of migrant settlers in Western Australian from relevant countries of origin.

In order to analyse these statistics in such a way that would provide a general picture of the make up of the Muslim population in Perth in the first instance and then to provide a general indication of the numbers of Muslim women who had or were currently accessing English language classes through the Adult Migrant English Program, it was necessary to extract relevant information from the data obtained. This was achieved by using the 1991 census as an indicator of the birth places of Muslim women residing in Western Australia. The major countries of birth reflected in the census were then used as a guideline for extracting information from other sources. Using this method, the following information was extracted:

1. The number of women from the countries of birth indicated in the 1991 census who had or were currently accessing AMES classes in the period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive).
2. The periods of residence of those women from the major countries of birth indicated in the 1991 census who had or were currently accessing AMES classes in the period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive).

3. The number of immigrants to Western Australia who had arrived in Australia in each year from 1990 to 1994 (inclusive)

4. The number of participants in AMES programs for each year 1990-1994 (inclusive) who had a period of residence of less than one year—i.e., they had arrived in Australia in that particular year.

Once this information had been extracted from the various sources, it was presented in the form of tables detailing the country of birth, period of residence, total number of participants and total number of female participants in the AMEP program for each year and comparing these figures with the number of immigrants from those countries of origins who had arrived in that same year and settled in Western Australia. The intention is therefore to give an indication of the number of participants in AMES classes compared to the number of immigrants to Western Australian for each year in the period 1990 - 1994 (inclusive).

3.10.2 Analysis of data from sections one, two and three of the interview schedule (see Appendix A).

Section One

Data obtained from section one of the interview schedule concerns the general characteristics of the women interviewed from the target population. The questions in this section relate to age, family, socio-economic status, period of residence in Australia, visa category, level of education achieved and country of origin. This data was analysed quantitatively and the outcomes presented in the
form of tables and graphs. Essentially, this section of the interview schedule and the analysis of the data is designed to enable the researcher to draw a typology of the target population of respondents.

Section Two
Data obtained from section two of the interview schedule concerns the English language needs of the respondents and is in the form of a domain analysis in order to ascertain in which areas the respondents use most English. The data obtained from this section was also analysed quantitatively and presented in the form of graphs detailing the domains of language use and the percentages of English used in these domains by the women interviewed.

Section Three
Data obtained from section three of the schedule concerned Language Attitudes and the responses were either a positive or negative response to a number of statements regarding English and Australia. The data from this section was presented in the form of tables indicating the number of women who responded positively or negatively to each statement.

3.10.3 Analysis of open ended questions in the interview schedule and key informant interviews.
All data collected through the open ended questions in the interview schedule and key informant interviews was analysed according to the following procedure.
1. All data collected from section four of the interview schedule - open ended questions- and key informant interviews was transcribed.
2. The data from the transcriptions was categorised using the following categories presented in the theoretical framework
External Factors

- accessibility of classes
- access to information
- special provisions for Muslim women

Internal Factors

- cultural and religious
- desire to participate
- English language needs

Practical Factors

In order to be able to categorise the data based on these variables a number of key words and phrases needed to be isolated. These key words/ phrases were extracted from the actual interviews and were decided on after an examination of the transcriptions. The key-words acted as codes and the data was categorised accordingly. Thus the following method of analysing the data was employed:

1. Categories were delineated from the theoretical framework and after an examination of the transcriptions to elucidate any new categories which had not previously been considered in the formulation of the theoretical framework.

2. Key words and phrases for each category were determined using the theoretical framework and the transcriptions as a guide.

3. Data from the interviews was sorted according to the key words and phrases.

4. Data from the interviews was then organised according to the categories delineated earlier.

5. Data under each category was presented in such a way as to elaborate on each category and present the responses of the target population and the key informants.
That is to say, data which was considered to be relevant to the study was used to provide a deeper, more detailed understanding of the relationship between the variables detailed in the theoretical framework and any other variables that may have ensued from the research procedure.

3.11 Conclusion.
In conclusion, this study will employ a research procedure which combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis. However, the ability of this study to generalise is limited by the size of the selective sample. Furthermore, the analysis of statistical data pertaining to the make up of the Muslim female population in Perth and to the participation of women from Muslim countries in AMES classes, can only serve to present an overall picture of the socio-economic characteristics of Muslim women in Western Australia and the potential number of Muslim women accessing classes. It is not the purpose of this study to generalise or to accurately measure the extent of an observed phenomena, rather this study aims at establishing that this phenomena exists and then to explore the nature of the phenomena through a series of interviews with members of the target group. The limitations of this study are discussed at length in section 1.5.
RESULTS

Introduction.

This chapter shall begin by presenting the relevant data from the 1991 census in order to describe, in numerical terms, some of the typical features of the Muslim population in Perth. As detailed in the Methodology section, the data obtained from the 1991 census was used as a guideline for extracting relevant data from the AMEP database regarding the participation rates of Muslim women and from immigration figures obtained through the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The purpose of this chapter is to present these findings in order to be able to arrive at a measurement of the number of Muslim women who had or are currently accessing Adult Migrant English classes in the period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive). The responses to the interview schedule will also be presented in this chapter. These results shall be dealt with in four parts. The first part shall present and analyse the responses to the first section of the interview schedule in order to determine any patterns of interrelationship in the basic data of the respondents. The second part shall present the responses to the second section of the interview schedule in order to determine the domains of language use and the English language needs of the respondents. The third part shall present the responses to the third section of the interview section pertaining to language attitudes and the final part shall present and analyse the data collected in the open-ended section of the interview schedule.
4.1. Statistical Data

4.1.1 The 1991 Census- Background to the Muslim Population in Western Australia.

According to figures obtained through the 1991 Census, Western Australia has a Muslim population of 8231 persons. The make up of this population is outlined in Table 4.1. Figures 4.1 to 4.4 represent the characteristics of the female Muslim population in Western Australia in comparison to their male counterparts. The female Muslim population in Western Australia ranges in age from under one year of age to 75 years and over. Of these, the largest age range is the 0-4 age range with 465 Muslim females in this group. A total of 2576 Muslim females were aged 16 years and over at the time of the Census, with the most significant age range in this group being the 20-24 year olds (399 females). Muslim females outnumbered Muslim males age 16 and over in both the 16 and 17 year age group and in the 25-29 years age range. The largest difference between males and females occurred in the 50-54 age range with 207 males and 121 females (a difference of 86). In all the age categories between 30-34 and 70-74 (inclusive), Muslim men outnumbered Muslim women. However, it appears that the trend may be changing with more Muslim females than males in the under one year age group and the one year age group.
Table 4.1.
The Muslim population in Western Australia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Muslim persons resident in Western Australia</td>
<td>8231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Muslim females resident in Western Australia</td>
<td>3889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Muslims residing in Local Government Areas of Perth Metropolitan Region</td>
<td>6309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Muslim females residing in Local Government Areas of Perth Metropolitan Region</td>
<td>2982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of birthplaces of Muslims in Western Australia</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of birthplaces in which more than 66 Muslim females in WA were born</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of NESB birthplaces in which more than 66 Muslim females in WA were born</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB birthplaces in which largest number of Muslim females were born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>(326)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>(307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>(279)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Island</td>
<td>(215)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 As explained in the Methodology section, a cut off point of 66 was used to determine which countries of birth to include in the study.

11 This differs from the number of birthplaces as it represents only NESB birth places. In order to be included in this study, the country of birth needed to be NESB.
Figure 4.1. School leaving age of Muslims in Western Australia- Males and Females.

Figure 4.2. Labour Force Status of Muslims in Western Australia over the age of 15- Employed.
Figure 4.3. Labour Force Status of Muslims in Western Australia over the age of 15—Unemployed.

Figure 4.4. Annual Individual Income of Muslim Females in Western Australia.

The trends reflected in the tables and figures presented here are also mirrored in the differences between Muslim males and females in regards to the level of
qualification obtained. Whilst the number of Muslim males over the age of fifteen, resident in Western Australia at the time of the 1991 Census who were either not qualified or had obtained only basic vocational qualifications totalled 1765, the number of females in this group totalled 1920 (a difference of 155). However the most striking difference between the sexes is in the numbers of Muslim males and females who obtained either skilled vocational qualifications or degrees and diplomas at the University level. In this area the number of males who possess such qualifications totalled 644, compared to only 270 females (a difference of 374). Furthermore, the number of Muslim females who had obtained Post graduate qualifications totalled less than half that of Muslim males (110 males compared to 54 females). These figures suggest that the female Muslim population in Perth has a lower level of education than that of their male Muslim counterparts. The lack of higher education levels in the female population may put them at a disadvantage in the labour force compared to Muslim males. This is perhaps further compounded by the differences in English language proficiency between the sexes. In the 1991 Census a total of 665 Muslim females stated that their ability to communicate in English was either "Not well" or "Not at all" compared to 509 Muslim males.

4.1.2 Participation of Women from Muslim Countries in Adult Migrant English Classes.

Following is a representation of data extracted from the AMEP database and immigration figures for the period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive). This time period coincides with a series of immense changes in AMEP and immigration policies which had the potential to skew figures. For this reason, it is necessary to interpret this data against the backdrop of changes in policy in order to understand the impact such changes may have had on the ability or eligibility of
some Muslim women to access Adult Migrant English classes. It must be
stressed that the figures presented here are as accurate as possible given the
availability of data. The numbers here are not a precise measure of the number
of Muslim women who were accessing Adult Migrant English classes in the five
year period 1990 to 1994, they are however, a representation of the potential
number of Muslim women accessing these classes. Whilst there was no
feasible method of distinguishing the religious affiliation of participants in AMEP
programs, it was possible to select the relevant data based on knowledge of the
countries of birth of Muslim females in Western Australia (extracted from the
1991 census).
Table 4.2 presents the number of Muslim females residing in Western Australia,
their countries of birth and the number of female participants in WA AMESP
programs from these countries for the years of 1990 and 1991. Only selected
countries of birth have been shown here, including the countries which were
indicated in the 1991 Census as having the largest number of Muslim women.
The countries of birth which showed the most discrepancies between the
number of females resident in WA and the number of female participants have
been highlighted. These discrepancies and possible explanations will be
discussed in the Discussion section of this study. For the purpose of this study,
absolute numbers rather than percentages were used in all the tables included
in this section. The reason for doing so was that absolute numbers were able to
give a clearer picture of changes in the numbers of women from different
countries of birth accessing classes in the five year period 1990-1994
(inclusive). As trends and changes in participation rates are a focus of this
study, presenting the data in absolute figures proved to be the most lucid way
of showing these trends.
Table 4.2
Female Participants in WA AMES Programs and Muslim Women Residing in WA for Selected Countries of Birth-1990 and 1991.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country of birth</th>
<th>number of Muslim women residing in WA (1991 census)</th>
<th>female participants in AMES programs 1990</th>
<th>female participants in AMES programs 1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocos Islands</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Islands</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is necessary to examine AMEP policy during this period. 1990 and 1991 represent the period prior to the implementation of the National Plan. At that time, there were virtually no restrictions on the number of hours of tuition an individual could access. There were also no time restrictions and no time limits for application and participation in the program. It is therefore possible that some of the participants in the program for 1991, were also participants in 1990 and perhaps even earlier. Thus, it is difficult to measure exactly how many of the participants are new arrivals or decided to access classes for the first time in either 1990 or 1991. There also appears to be a discrepancy in some of the figures which needs to be addressed. For example according to the 1991
Census there were three Muslim females from Brunei resident in WA in 1991, yet the AMEP database recorded six female participants from Brunei in that same year. This is most likely due to the difference in data collection dates for each source and may possibly reflect either:

1. there were three new arrivals from Brunei in 1991 who arrived after the time of the Census and who accessed classes immediately- hence they were added on to the AMEP participant records or

2. there was an influx of Muslim females from Brunei who arrived in WA after the time of the Census and six of the new arrivals accessed classes immediately and hence were added on to the AMEP participant records or

3. six of the participants from Brunei who accessed in 1990 continued to access classes in 1991 but three of them did not complete the 1991 Census for some reason.

There are of course other possibilities to explain this discrepancy. In any case, it is important to be aware of the problems that arise when dealing with data which asks people to state their country of birth.

In 1990, the National Plan was introduced and was to be fully enforced by 1992. The year 1992 therefore represents a period of transition, whereby entry and exit levels of participants were still very much at the discretion of the AMES, but the National Plan was in the process of being fully enforced. The effects of the National Plan have already been discussed along with a review of the literature pertaining to AMEP policy (see Literature Review). The greatest area of change in AMEP policy implemented through the plan was in priority placement for migrants in their first five years of settlement and particularly for those within the first three years. The language needs of longer term residents who had previously had access to the AMEP became the responsibility of
community organisations. The AMEP became, in effect an initial settlement service with 90% of resources allocated to people resident in Australia for less than five years. The strategy was to "enrol at least 75% of new arrivals with limited or no proficiency in English within 12 months of arrival and 85% within 2 years of arrival" (DILGEA 1990: 9). The National Plan identified the following priority groups and aimed at assigning at least 85% of resources to eligible applicants within these groups:

(i) people admitted to Australia with occupational skills in high demand who are seeking work
(ii) People seeking to undertake further study to enhance their employability in Australia
(iii) people who have obtained employment but who need to improve their English to realise their employment potential
(iv) unemployed people needing to improve their English to obtain employment

(DILGEA 1990: 9)

Table 4.3 shows the number of participants in WA AMES programs for the year 1992 for the countries of birth extracted from the 1991 Census. The table also shows the number of immigrants from those countries in that same year as well as the number of participants in the program in 1992 who had been resident for less than six months or for between six months and one year (indicating that they arrived in Australia in 1992 and hence accessed classes upon first arrival).

In light of the changes that had occurred during this period in AMEP policy, these participants would have had to be in one or more of the priority groups outlined above. However, it must also be borne in mind that entry and exit levels were still at the discretion of the AMES, and hence the total number of participants reflected in this table may include some participants who re-
accessed classes or who continued to access classes from previous years. Countries of birth which showed a considerable discrepancy in the number of new immigrants compared to the number of newly arrived participants have been highlighted, as have those countries which showed a significant discrepancy between the number of female participants compared to the total number of participants. Immigration figures stating the sex and religious affiliation of migrants were unobtainable and it was also not possible to ascertain the sex of the participants who had been resident for less than one year from these countries of birth.

Table 4.3.
Participants in WA AMES Programs, Length of Residency and Number of Migrant Settlers in WA for Selected Countries of Birth- 1992.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country of birth</th>
<th>&gt;6mths</th>
<th>6mths &gt;1yr</th>
<th>migrants</th>
<th>total participants</th>
<th>female participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocos Islands</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Islands</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1772</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As with Table 4.2, there also appear to be discrepancies in Table 4.3 between the number of immigrants and the number of participants in the AMES programs. Again, this is most probably due to differences in data collection dates, but may also be due to the fact that immigration figures accessed through the ABS were only available for Western Australia (hence the numbers quoted here refer to immigrant settlers in Western Australia), whilst AMEP figures pertain only to those who accessed classes in the Perth Metropolitan region. Of particular concern is the discrepancy in figures quoted for Iraq where immigration statistics cite a total of 12 migrant settlers in Western Australia whilst AMEP figures cite a total of 21 participants resident for less than one year. This discrepancy may be an outcome of the Gulf war crisis and may indicate an unwillingness by immigrants from Iraq to cite their country of birth. However, considering the fact that immigration figures indicate only the state or territory of intended residence, the discrepancy may also be due to inter-state migration.

In 1993 and 1994, The National Plan had been overtaken by the Federal Government's August Budget Legislation. The AMES could no longer instigate its discretion on the entry or exit levels of participants. This meant that those participants who fell into one or more of the priority groups indicated in The National Plan were given a limit of three months to register for classes upon arrival to Australia and a total of three years to complete their 510 hour entitlement. However, participants could also continue to access classes until they reached a proficiency level of ASLPR 2, which in effect, meant that some participants would have access to more than 510 hours of tuition if they met the conditions for priority grouping. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the number of participants in AMES programs compared to the number of immigrant settlers in
Western Australia for selected countries of birth for the years 1993 and 1994 respectively. Again, countries showing large differences have been highlighted.

Table 4.4.
Participants in WA AMES Programs, Length of Residency and Number of Migrant Settlers in WA for Selected Countries of Birth -1993.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country of birth</th>
<th>&lt;6mths</th>
<th>6mths&gt;</th>
<th>migrants</th>
<th>total participants</th>
<th>female participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocos Islands</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Islands</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>71</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>1228</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>375</td>
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</table>
Table 4.5.
Participants in WA AMES Programs, Length of Residency and Number of Migrant Settlers in WA for Selected Countries of Birth-1994.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>country of birth</th>
<th>&lt; 6 mths</th>
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<th>migrants</th>
<th>total participants</th>
<th>female participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>116</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>29</td>
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<td>94</td>
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<td>Jordan</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocos Islands</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Islands</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>153</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1344</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to be able to examine any trends which may have occurred in participation rates of females from the countries used in this study as birthplaces of Muslim women, Table 4.6 represents the total number of female participants in AMES programs from these countries for the five year period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive). In this table, countries of birth which showed large changes in the number of women accessing classes have been highlighted. That is to say, countries where the number of women participating in classes in 1994 totalled less than 50% of the number in 1990 have been highlighted.
Similarly, countries where the number of women participating in classes in 1994 totalled more than 200% of the number in 1990 was also considered to be a large fluctuation. These fluctuations may, in part, be due to changes in immigration rates and hence may be directly related to changes in immigration policy. However, they may also be due to other factors which affect the decision by migrant Muslim women to access or not access classes. Furthermore, an examination of these trends may provide an insight into how changes in AMEP policy effected participation rates of the target population. Whether these trends reflect immigration rates, the effect of changes in AMEP policy or are a result of other factors exerting influence on the decision by migrant Muslim women to access classes will be explored in the Discussion section.
Total Number of Females Participating in WA AMES Programs in WA for Selected Countries of Birth Between 1990 and 1994 (inclusive)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>Iraq</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cocos Islands</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Islands</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Malaysia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>607</td>
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<td>598</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. The Target Population- Responses to the Interview Schedule

The following section deals with data collected through the use of the interview schedule. A total of twenty three Muslim women residing in the Perth Metropolitan region were interviewed. The data is presented here according to the format of the interview schedule. The first section deals with the basic characteristics of the respondents: age, family, education background, socio-economic status, period of residence and visa category. The purpose of this...
section is to present a typology of the respondents interviewed in order to shed light on any trends or relationships that occur between the variables. The second section concerns the respondents' ESL needs and the domains in which English is used. This section is presented in order to be able to determine the short term and long term language needs of Muslim women and to assess whether there are any patterns or differences in language use between the two sub-groups- women who have accessed classes and women who have not accessed classes. The third section deals with the respondents' language attitudes as demonstrated in their responses to a number of statements set out in the interview schedule. Again, this data is presented with the aim of identifying any trends which may occur between and across the two sub-groups identified. Due to the small nature of the sample, all figures presented in the following sections will be in absolute numbers rather than percentages as absolute numbers give a clearer picture of the results.

4.2.1 Typology of Respondents

Countries of Birth and Languages Spoken.

A total of eleven different countries of birth were represented in the sample population of respondents interviewed. The number of languages/ dialects spoken by the respondents was extensive as some of the women interviewed for the study were proficient in more than one language. The countries of origin and the languages/ dialects spoken by the respondents were:

Indonesia- 5 respondents. Indonesian, Javanese and Balinese
Turkey- 4 respondents. Turkish, Kurdish.
Iraq- one respondent. Farsi. Pashtu.
Somalia- one respondent. Arabic, Somali
Eritrea- one respondent. Eritrean, Arabic
Sudan- two respondents. Arabic, Amharic, Aramaic, Hararian
Syria- one respondent. Arabic
Egypt- one respondent. Arabic
Bosnia- one respondent. Bosnian, Croatian, Russian.
Ethiopia- one respondent. Arabic.

Age Range.

A total of 23 respondents were interviewed. Of these, ten had accessed or were currently accessing English language classes through the Adult Migrant English Services, thirteen of the respondents had not accessed classes and a minority of the women in this group had accessed classes but had terminated after an average of three weeks. The respondents were asked to indicate their age range based on the scale used in the AMEP. Since all the women interviewed were over the age of sixteen, the scale included ages from 16-24 to 65+ years. The outcomes are presented graphically in the following figures.

![Figure 4.5. Age Range of Respondents who had or were accessing classes.](image-url)
Family

Of the respondents interviewed who had accessed or were accessing classes, seven of the ten were married, two were never married and one was separated. In comparison, those respondents who had not accessed classes were either married, separated, divorced or widowed. None of the respondents in this subgroup had never been married. Eight of the respondents in this group were married, two were separated, one was divorced and two were widowed. There does however, appear to be a difference between the two groups in the number and ages of the children. Respondents were asked to indicate the number of children they had, how many children lived with them and the ages of the children. The results are shown in the following table.

Figure 4.6. Age Range of Respondents who had not accessed classes.
Table 4.7

Number of Children and Ages of Children Still Living at Home of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>ACCESSED Ages of children still living at home</th>
<th>NOT ACCESSSED Ages of children still living at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16, 14, 13 years</td>
<td>22, 16, 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>18 months, 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>24 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>24 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7, 10 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23, 29 years</td>
<td>17, 15, 11, 7 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the data presented in this table, three of the women interviewed who had accessed classes did not have children. Three of the women interviewed who had not accessed also had not had any children. In total however, five of the women who had not accessed classes either did not have any children or did not have any children still living at home, compared with four respondents from the group who had accessed classes who had not had children or did not have any children living at home. Of the women who had accessed classes with children still living at home, all but one respondent had school aged children who were, at the time of the interviews, still at school. In comparison, of the women who had not accessed classes, only two had school aged children still living at home who were, at the time of the interviews, still at school. The remainder of this group either had older children who were working or studying, or had younger children who had not yet started school. Four of the women in this group had babies and/or toddlers and one was expecting her fourth child.
Education

Differences were found in the level of education attained between the two subgroups. It appears that, on average, the group of women who had accessed or were currently accessing classes, had achieved a higher level of education than those who had not accessed classes. Overall, however, the average level of education reached by the respondents as a whole was the completion of high school, with only two of the total 23 respondents completing a tertiary degree. Table 4.8 shows the level of education attained by the respondents and compares the two subgroups.

Table 4.8

Level of Education of Respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Accessed</th>
<th>Not Accessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed high school</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed high school and a tertiary degree/ diploma</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started a tertiary degree but did not finish</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited or no schooling (primary level and under)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is apparent from the above table that a higher number of women who had not accessed classes had limited schooling. The results indicate that, of the seven respondents in the sub-group of women who had not accessed classes who had limited or no schooling, six had actually completed high school and one had completed only the first year of primary school. Of the two respondents in the sub-group of women who had accessed classes who had limited or no schooling, one completed the third year of primary school and one had not attended school at all. For the sub-group of women who had accessed classes,
eight out of ten had completed high school and two had had little or no schooling. For the sub-group of women who had not accessed classes, just under half had completed high school, whilst just over half had had little or no schooling. Whilst these figures are not representative of the entire population of Muslim women in Western Australia, it is apparent that the level of education attained was an important factor in the decision by the respondents interviewed as part of this study to access or not access English language classes.

Socio-economic Status

The results indicate relative uniformity in level of income between the two sub-groups. The majority of respondents in both groups were receiving social security benefits, either through the Department of Social Security or through the CES. Two of the respondents who had not accessed classes were receiving Aged Pensions through the Department of Social Security and another two respondents in this group came from single income families where the husband was the sole provider (one husband was employed in a factory, the other as an IMAM at the Mosque). Only one of the respondents from the sub-group of women who had or were accessing classes came from a single income family where the husband was the sole provider (a nursery man). None of the respondents had an individual or combined income which exceeded $35,000 per annum. These results appear to be consistent with the breakdown of income for the female Muslim population in WA as indicated in figure 4.4-Individual Income of Muslim Women Residing in Western Australia.
Period of Residence and Visa Category

Overall, the respondents who had accessed classes appear to be more recent arrivals with the period of residence in Australia ranging from three months to thirteen years. The period of residence in Australia for those women who had not accessed classes ranged from two months to twenty six years. Whilst this may be a reflection of the ages of the respondents in each sub-group, with more women in the 45-54 and 55-64 age ranges for the sub-group who had not accessed classes, it is no doubt also related to recent and current AMEP policies whereby newly arrived migrants have priority placement in English language classes.

Also of interest are the visa categories and residency status of the respondents. The results indicate that more of the women in the second sub-group (not accessed) were either migrants or permanent residents, whilst more of the women who had accessed classes were refugees. These results, along with year of arrival are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9.
Year of Arrival and Visa Category of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women who have accessed</th>
<th>Women who have not accessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of arrival</td>
<td>Visa category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>humanitarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Refugee/ Humanitarian 50% Total Refugee/ Humanitarian 23%
Total Family/ Migrant/ Resident 50% Total Family/ Migrant/ Resident 77%
4.2.2 The English Language Needs of Respondents and the Domains of Language use.

The issues of language needs and patterns of language use are pertinent issues in this study. By examining the domains in which the respondents use English and by measuring the relative percentage of English used in each domain, it is possible to arrive at an understanding of the language needs of this target group. It is also possible to ascertain whether or not differences in language use exist between the two sub-groups and to assess whether or not the patterns of English use impinge on the need or desire to learn English and access English language classes.

An examination of the domains of English language use was undertaken in section two of the interview schedule. The respondents were asked to indicate the amount of English used in each domain by circling a percentage range from 0-10% to over 90%. Respondents were first asked to indicate the language or languages they would use in each domain. Following is a list of the domains used in the study and a breakdown of the type of language activities each domain would entail.

- **Home-** interacting verbally with spouse, children and other family members
- **Social-** interacting with friends at social gatherings
- **Work/ School-** interacting in the workplace or place of study (in this case English language classes)
- **Neighbourhood-** interacting with neighbours and others in the community; activities such as shopping; accessing medical care- visiting the doctor; everyday activities such as reading pamphlets in the letterbox, ordering take-away food etc
• Religious practices- praying, attending religious ceremonies, listening to religious sermons.
• Leisure activities- practising hobbies, reading, watching television, listening to the radio
• Business- dealing with Government departments (DSS and CES); interacting with teachers (written and oral); writing and reading business type letters; dealing with the bank

The results indicate that more of the women who had not accessed classes use English 0-10% of the time in the domains of home (10 out of 13 respondents in the second subgroup compared to 6 out of 10 respondents in the first); social (7 respondents in the second subgroup compared to 4 in the first); neighbourhood (6 respondents in the second group compared to 1 in the first); leisure activities (4 respondents in the second group compared to 1 in the first) and business (6 respondents in the second compared to 2 in the first).

One respondent in the second sub-group indicated that the business domain was not applicable to her as the husband handled all business dealings and all activities within this domain.

There appears to be a difference in the pattern of use of English between the two sub-groups. The first sub-group of women who had accessed classes use English, on average, over 90% of the time in the domains of work/school, neighbourhood, leisure activities and business. This group also indicated less use of English in the domains of home, social and religious practices. In contrast, the second sub-group of women who had not accessed classes tend to use less English overall in all seven domains. This is especially salient when the number of indicators in the 50-70%, 70-90% and the 90%+ ranges are totalled. In total, those women who accessed classes indicated that they use
more than 50% English use indicated 35 times. In contrast, those women who had not accessed classes indicated more than 50% English use a total of 22 times, whilst they indicated less than 50% use of English a total of 55 times. The results also indicate that, for both groups, English is more often used in the domains of neighbourhood and business, whilst the mother tongue is reserved for the domestic (home) and social domains. For the first group, English is used more often in the domains of neighbourhood, leisure activities and business than indicated by the second group. These results are represented graphically in the following figures.

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12 The deficit in the number of indicators is due to the addition of a ‘not applicable’ category in the analysis of the second sub-groups responses. This addition was necessary as none of the women interviewed attended either work or school and hence could not comment on their English use in this domain.
Figure 4.7 Domains of English language use for sub-group of women who have accessed classes.

Figure 4.8 Domains of English language use for sub-group of women who have not accessed classes.

Of particular interest is the uniformity in responses for both groups in relation to the use of English in the domain of religious practices, with all but one
respondent indicating that they used English 0-10% of the time in this domain. This is most probably due to the fact that in Islam, all religious practices are performed in Arabic. Sermons may be delivered in either Arabic, English or the respondents' mother tongue (depending on which Mosque is attended), however, it is not common practice for women to attend religious sermons held every Friday at the various Mosques. Also of significance is the fact that two of the women from the second sub-group indicated they use over 90% English in the domain of home. This is particularly unusual considering the overall indication that the second sub-group uses less English in all seven domains compared to the first. Of the two women who had not accessed classes who indicated over 90% use of English in the home, the first, from Somalia, had been in Australia for three months and was, at the time, living alone or staying with other female friends. This respondent also indicated over 90% English usage in all seven domains and also indicated that she had no support network on which to rely. The second respondent, from Indonesia, is married to an Australian national and lives alone with her spouse. This respondent also indicated over 90% English usage in all other domains except for the social domain where she uses English 30-50% of the time. However, this respondent also indicated that she relies heavily on her husband, particularly in areas requiring a degree of proficiency in literacy as she had had very minimal schooling and could neither read nor write in English or her mother tongue. The significance of these results lies in the possibility that the results not only reflect patterns of use of English, but are also an indicator of the language needs of the respondents. The question here however, is whether the women who had accessed classes use more English in the domains of work, neighbourhood, leisure activities and business because they have accessed
classes and hence are better able to cope with the linguistic demands of these domains, or whether these women accessed classes because of a need to use English in these domains? In other words, are the patterns of domain use indicated here an outcome of accessing classes or a motivational factor in the decision to access classes? This question shall be discussed at length in the following chapter.

4.2.3 The Language Attitudes of the Respondents.

The issue of language attitudes and the attitudes of the respondents to the society in which they live are of particular importance to this study. Language attitudes are particularly relevant if they impinge on or have any bearing on the decision to learn English and hence access classes. In order to gain an overall understanding of some of their language attitudes, the respondents were asked to respond to a number of statements regarding their need for English, their ideas about the significance of learning English and their ideas about living in Australian society. Many of these issues were explored further in the final section of the interview schedule. The respondents were asked to answer with a 'yes' if they agreed with the statement and 'no' if they did not. The results are indicated in the following table.
### Table 4.10

**Responses to Statements Concerning Language Attitudes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Accessed</th>
<th></th>
<th>Not Accessed</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Y</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I always need to use an interpreter or translator when I am dealing with official business.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My husband/children need to know English more than me because he works and they go to school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I rely on my husband/children to write letters and fill in forms for me</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I would like to learn English but I don't have the time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I need to learn English now more than when I first arrived in Australia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I would like to learn English to be able to talk to Australian people</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I want to learn English so that I can find a job</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. As a Muslim woman, I feel I can live like non-Muslim Australians</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I think learning English is very important for me because I live in Australia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I would like to learn English but I do not feel comfortable attending classes with other non-Muslims and men</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results indicate that for those women who had not accessed classes, a higher percentage agreed that they required the use of an interpreter or translator when dealing with official business than for those women who had accessed classes. These results are consistent with the results of the domain analysis where more women from the second sub-group indicated less use of English in the domain of business.

There are several other pertinent issues evident in these results. These are:

- There appears to be relative uniformity in the number of yes and no responses for statements 2, 8, and 9 between the two groups with more women agreeing with statements 2 and 9 and disagreeing with statement 8. This indicates that, on average, the respondents tend to neglect their own need for English in favour of their spouses' children's need, yet they do recognise a need to learn English as part of living in Australian society. The response to statement 8 indicates a tendency by the respondents to want to uphold their Islamic way of life.

- More women in the second group tend to rely on their spouses or other family members to complete transactions that require proficiency in literacy. However, a large proportion of women in the first group, 60%, also indicated that they rely on others to complete such tasks. At the same time, 70% of women in the first group indicated that they use English more than 90% of the time in the domain of business (see results of previous section). This difference indicates that the respondents are better able to cope with the oral demands of the business domain, but rely on others to complete literacy tasks associated with this domain. This is also substantiated by the results of the first statement where only four women from the first group expressed a need for an interpreter when dealing with official business.
• Over half of the women in the second group indicated that time was a major factor in their ability to access classes, compared to only one woman from the first group. These results are indicated in the responses to statement 4.

• Eighty percent of women who had accessed classes agreed with statement 5, whilst only 20% of this group felt a spontaneous need to learn English upon first arrival in Australia. In comparison less than half of the women in the second group agreed with this statement and an equal number disagreed. This difference is particularly pertinent when assessing the motivational factors for accessing classes. It appears that the perceived need to learn English is much higher in the first group than in the second. In light of the responses to statements 1 and 3, the results suggest that those women who have not accessed classes rely more heavily on available support networks and hence may not feel a strong need to learn English. This interpretation is also substantiated by the results of the domain analysis. More particularly, this motivational factor does not appear to be related to the period of residence. The felt need to learn English appears to be related more to the availability and strength of support networks and to how much English is used in the various domains than it is to period of residence.

• In response to statement 6, more women from the second group expressed a desire to learn English to be able to communicate orally with mainstream society. Overall, however, the results indicate that for most women in both groups the desire to talk to Australian people is high. This is also the case for statement 9 where a majority of the respondents from both groups agreed that English was important because they lived in Australia.
• The desire to enter the labour force also appears to be a strong motivational factor as indicated in the responses to statement 7. The results for this statement mirror those for statement 5 and indicate a possible link between the felt need to learn English and the desire to find a job. It is apparent that, for women who had not accessed classes, finding employment outside the home is not a priority consideration. This is consistent with the responses indicated for the second statement where a majority of the respondents indicated that they felt their spouses had a stronger need for English because they work (or in most cases are seeking employment).

• More women in the second group indicated that they felt uncomfortable attending classes with other non-Muslims and men. For these women, this is perhaps, a de-motivating factor, whilst for those women who had accessed classes, the discomfort of having to attend classes with participants from the opposite sex was not as strong as the need or desire to learn English.

The results presented here need also to be clarified by the statements and comments made by the respondents whilst completing this section of the interview schedule. Whilst some women gave a simple 'yes' or 'no' response to the statements, others added conditional clauses to their responses and some spoke at length about the reason they either agreed or disagreed with a particular statement.

In response to statement one, four women indicated that either their spouse or other family members act as interpreters or translators when dealing with official business. The statement was therefore expanded to include spouse/family members in the category of interpreters or translators.
In response to statement 2, most women agreed with the statement without hesitation. One respondent argued that her children needed English more than she did because they were "still young". Another believed that her children needed to know English more "because they grew up here". Those women who responded negatively to this statement argued otherwise, believing that their children needed English less because they were young and could "pick it up quickly". Only one woman believed that both she and her husband had an equal need for English, adding that "For me and husband is important because for kids not a problem-they pick it up quickly. Husband not more important."

In response to statement 3, those women that offered clarification, indicated that, although they attempted to complete tasks by themselves, they often ended up relying on the spouse or children. One woman commented that although both she and her husband filled in forms together, they relied on friends to write letters for them. Other women also commented that form filling was a basic task that they could complete independently, but needed to rely on others for more linguistically demanding tasks.

Responses to statement five varied with some women insisting that English is more important upon first arrival, as a settlement need, and others believing that learning English was not or had not been a top priority for them when they first arrived. One woman commented that she did not need to learn English now more than upon her first arrival because "now I know how to speak but a little. When I first arrived I didn’t know anything". Another added that when she first arrived she needed to learn English more because it was much harder to deal with people. In comparison, one recent arrival felt that it would be better for her to wait two years before accessing classes and another stated that it was more important for her to learn English now because her husband would not allow
her to access classes when she first arrived. One woman stated that she had attempted to access classes upon first arrival but could not attend the classes because of a stressful situation at home. She began to re-access classes when she found that she encountered too many problems through her lack of English proficiency. Another reason given for the need to learn English was put forward by an Indonesian respondent who is married to an Australian national. This respondent believed that English was more important for her now because her husband (a fluent speaker of Indonesian) had refused to speak Indonesian with her and now only spoke to her in English.

A few women clarified their response to statement six and added that they needed to talk to Australians because they live here, some indicating that they needed to talk to Australian people to fulfil everyday tasks. One woman responded positively to the statement but added that she did not want to communicate on a social level, only to be able to spread the word of Islam (known in Turkish as TABLI- or the Islamic duty to be able to answer for one's religious beliefs).

Statement eight appears to have received a lot of attention from the respondents. Two of the women who answered ‘yes’ to this statement clarified their answers with “we can, but we don’t want to”. Other women insisted that it was not possible to live like non-Muslim Australians because “they are different in many ways” and “traditions and values are different”. On the other hand, one woman felt that she could live with anybody whilst another felt that she could live like non-Muslims but would need to keep her religion. One woman offered the following response to the statement: “Yes, because many Muslim women stay at home and do cooking and cleaning, playing with children and Muslim woman’s life is closed. I believe they must go to school and open their life.
Because we live here, must be Muslim at home, not in street in all life.” This respondent commented on her close friend who spent most of her time in the home and did not access classes or show any desire to learn English, “I think she stays home because she is Muslim. She stays home and prays. Why can’t she pray after having a life outside home?”

Many women added to their positive response to statement nine, that they felt English was an important language internationally, not only in Australia. Other women believed that without proficiency in English in Australia, their lives would be more difficult.

Finally, whilst some women responded to the final statement with a simple and direct “no problem”, others felt that lack of confidence was more of a motivational barrier to accessing classes. One woman commented that although she would not feel entirely comfortable attending mixed classes, it was not so much her own feelings that would prove to be a barrier to access but rather the fact that her husband would not approve of her attending mixed sex classes, “I don’t think he likes idea of sitting with other men”.

4.2.4 The Language Learning Experiences of the Respondents

The responses to the final section of the interview schedule, open ended questions, were recorded on audio-cassette and transcribed. There were nine questions in this section which dealt with the respondents’ language learning experiences, their reasons for accessing or not accessing classes, the

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13 Interviews were recorded with the consent of the respondents. Two of the respondents declined to have their interviews recorded on audio cassette and hence their answers were recorded manually. One interview took place over the phone, for convenience, however the respondent’s spouse was on the other line and answered for the respondent. In this case, the answers were noted but were not used in the final analysis. Only the data for the first three sections of the interview schedule, which were gathered in a face to face meeting with the respondent, were used in the analysis.
problems they had faced accessing classes and their suggestions for making English language classes more accessible to Muslim women.

The first five questions dealt with the language learning experiences of the respondents in the Australian context. The questions were:

1. Have you accessed Migrant English Language classes?
2. If yes, how long were you in Australia before you decided to learn English?
3. If no, do you think you will access these classes soon? When? If not, why not?
4. If you have accessed classes, how long did you study English for?
5. Where did you find out about the classes?

In response to the first question, of the twenty-two respondents who completed this section of the interview, eight were currently accessing classes; nine had never accessed classes; one had accessed classes and is currently completing training through SKILLSHARE; one had accessed classes on her first arrival and had completed high-school in Australia (although she had arrived in Australia as an adult); one had enquired about classes but was yet to access classes and had every intention of doing so; two had accessed classes upon first arriving in Australia but had attended classes sporadically and had ceased entirely to participate in classes within two months of accessing.\(^{14}\)

For those women who had accessed classes, including the two respondents who had attended classes for less than two months, the period of waiting before accessing classes varied from one month to four years with most respondents accessing some form of language tuition within three months of arrival. One respondent accessed community classes within six months of

\(^{14}\) As mentioned earlier, it was decided that data obtained from these two respondents would be considered along with the data obtained from the sub-group of women who had not accessed classes as it was not feasible to have a separate group for women who had accessed classes but had ceased to attend classes after only a short period of time.
arrival. She attended community classes for two hours, thrice weekly for a period of one year. However her attendance was sporadic and inconsistent. At the time of interviewing this respondent, she had been attending full-time language classes for twenty six weeks. Similarly, another respondent had accessed community classes within three months of arrival. She attended classes twice weekly for one year before travelling to Pakistan for three months. Upon her re-entry to Australia, the respondent waited four months before re-accessing community classes and at the time of the interview had been attending full time classes for one month. In both cases, the respondents did not attend community classes on a regular basis. Apart from one respondent who accessed classes after four years, it appears that those women who did access classes, did so within a relatively short period of arriving in Australia. For those women that were, at the time of the interviews, currently accessing classes, the length of time they had been regularly attending full time classes varied from three weeks to twenty six weeks. One woman had attended classes for eleven months before starting training through the SKILLSHARE program, another had a total of twenty one months tuition through the high-school she had attended. Two respondents had accessed classes for six weeks and eight weeks, respectively, but had discontinued their attendance.

For those women who had not accessed classes, a majority indicated that they had no intention of doing so. Some women gave an indefinite response such as "I don't know" or "Maybe soon", but were unable to give a definite answer as to how soon they would access classes. Only one respondent in this group indicated a serious intent to undertake language tuition and was in the process of accessing classes, that is she had filled in the necessary documents and was awaiting a reply. One group of five women, interviewed simultaneously at the
Turkish Mosque in Welshpool, stated that, even though they would like to
access full-time classes, they did not have the time. These women were
interviewed during their attendance at a special language service offered by the
Mosque. The Mosque offers two hours of language tuition once a week on the
premises. This appears to be the only service of its kind available to Muslim
women in Perth and only a small number of women (average of about five)
attend the classes on a regular basis. All of the women, whilst grateful for the
service, felt that once a week for two hours was inadequate. The service is
provided by the Turkish Muslim community and is paid for by the women
themselves who contribute towards the cost of a tutor.

4.2.5 Access to Information - How are Muslim women being made aware of
services available to them?

The overall indication is that, for the most part, members of the support network
are acting as sources of information on English language classes and other
related services. These information givers were either children, members of the
extended family, friends or spouses. Responses to the interviewer question
“How did you find out about classes?” varied, as the following excerpts from the
interviews show:

I: How did you find out about the classes? Who told you that you
could learn English?
R: My cousin
I: You didn’t hear about it from CES or DSS or before you came
to Australia? Only from your cousin?
R: Yes

I: But how did you know to come- that you can study English?
Who told you?
R: because my friend help me- job you know
I: You didn’t read about it or CES didn’t tell you?
R: No no because my friend help me because I ask my friend
how can have a job you know. Say oh you must go W. OK you
help me.
I: Is your friend Australian or Indonesian?
R: No Australian, Indonesian.

I: So who helped you to get into...
R: My step-dad.

I: How will you find out about the classes?
R: How? I heard from people. I think it's better to be advertising on TV.
I: Which people did you hear from?
R: My community
I: And which community is that?
R: Egyptian

I: How did you find out about English language classes, who told you?
R: When I arrived in Australia, my sister showed me school.

Only three of the women interviewed stated that they had found out about their entitlements to English language classes through the CES or some other official body, two were sent letters and one had sought consultation through the CES. The results therefore indicate an apparent gap in the provision of information regarding entitlements to English language classes. If, as indicated by the respondents interviewed for this study, Muslim women are relying on support networks for information, there is a possibility that they may not be correctly informed or may miss out on vital information. The evidence suggests that information is often filtered through the support networks to the women themselves. The possibility therefore exists that, if the correct information is not filtered through the support network, Muslim women may be mis-informed. More importantly, if there is no support network on which a Muslim woman may rely, chances are that she will remain un-informed of her entitlements to English language tuition.
4.2.6 What makes Muslim women decide to access classes or not access classes?

Questions six and eight of the final section of the interview schedule asked the respondents to comment on the reasons they decided to access classes or the reasons they had not accessed classes respectively. These questions were designed to bring to light the factors that impact on the decision by migrant Muslim women to access or not access classes and to ascertain whether these factors are concomitant with religious or cultural norms that are unique to Muslim women.

The respondents listed a variety of reasons for choosing to either access or not access classes, ranging from practical factors, such as lack of time, or transport to and from classes, to personal factors which reflect the respondent's attitude to Australian society and to religious and cultural factors. Furthermore, some of the reasons given were dependent on, or related to other reasons, through a complex system of interrelationships. Following is a list of the reasons stated for accessing or not accessing English language classes, however, it must be noted that those women who had accessed classes also commented on why they thought their Muslim counterparts were not accessing classes, and some women who had not accessed classes also commented on the reasons why they thought they would access classes.

Reasons for accessing classes

1. To find a job or to continue studies
2. To be able to interact with ‘Australian people’ on a social level
3. To be able to complete everyday tasks such as shopping, banking etc
4. For religious reasons- to be able to spread the word of Islam
5. Because English is an “important language”
6. Recognition of the need for English proficiency in an English speaking society

7. For self improvement or to achieve independence

8. "To make life easier"

The final four reasons here need to be clarified as there is a fine line distinguishing them and they are interrelated. Reason number five indicates an attitude towards English as a prestige language. It is distinct from the sixth reason in that it represents an acknowledgment by the respondents that English is, internationally, a significant language as opposed to English being significant as the lingua franca of Australia. Reason seven, although related to both reasons three and six represents a more personal and internal motivation for learning English as opposed to one that is imposed on the individual because of the society in which they live. Reason eight is also related to reasons three, six and seven but seems to encompass all these reasons at the same time. However, it is also an indication that some women may have experienced problems in the past because of lack of English and hence believe that by learning English, they may be able to avoid some of these problems.

Reasons for not accessing classes

1. An unwillingness to learn reading and writing and a satisfaction with being able to fulfil tasks orally

2. Lack of time

3. Family responsibilities

4. Unwillingness of spouse to 'allow' the wife to leave the family home in order to attend classes

5. Lack of knowledge about services
6. Reasons related to cultural norms such as cultural notions of the female role in the family structure
7. Reasons related to religious beliefs such as beliefs pertaining to the segregation of the sexes in public places and the wearing of the veil
8. Lack of transport to and from classes
9. Lack of motivation or desire to participate in Australian society

Reason nine is related to both reasons six and seven in that the lack of motivation or desire to participate in Australian society by some of the women interviewed appear to be manifestations of religious or cultural norms. Furthermore, reason four is also a factor in this relationship as it too, is often the outcome of cultural norms which regulate the intermingling of the sexes. In order to understand this fully, it is necessary to elaborate on the cultural and religious reasons that, through the course of this study, have proven to be barriers to access. Firstly, many women stated that they or their Muslim counterparts were often too busy fulfilling their duties as wife and mother to play a larger part in society. These women believed that, by meeting the needs of their home, their spouses and their children they were in fact observing the tenets of Islam and living a Muslim way of life. As such, they had no need or no desire to move outside of the domestic domain and participate in the wider society. This adherence to the needs of the domestic domain ultimately resulted in a lack of awareness of the need to learn English or a lack of desire to learn English as an avenue to participating in Australian society. It appears that this is at once, either a cultural or religious factor or both, and is not necessarily related to the spouse’s religious attitudes at all, but rather is a decision made by the women themselves. One respondent, for example, spoke at length about her friend who did not access classes because “she has big family all women-
sisters, and is the same like her life- sitting at home”. When asked whether she thought this was related to religious beliefs, the respondent replied that she felt it was more likely that her friend was observing a cultural norm and, considering the strong female network available to her, she had simply followed in the footsteps of her mother and sisters. On the other hand, another respondent believed that the lack of desire to learn English was not so much related to cultural norms, but to religious beliefs and the need to uphold an Islamic way of life in a country which is not predominantly Islamic. This respondent also argued that, contrary to what some Muslim women may think, upholding an Islamic way of life and observing the tenets of Islam necessitates the learning of English. She referred to her counterparts who don’t make an attempt to learn English as “lazy”-

Lazy, they think they’re doing their five times praying, closing up and looking after their husbands it’s enough. They are not doing TEBLI (spreading the word of Islam)... When the English person see you, they think you are dumb person. When you learn English they don’t think you person you know... You know in the other world Allah gonna ask ‘What did you done for Islam?’ What you gonna do? ... You gonna say ‘I can’t speak English that’s why’?

Secondly, a number of women expressed concern that their husbands would not approve of mixed sex classes (reason number four). This attitude is also related to religious and/or cultural norms. Whilst some women believed that it was essentially a religious barrier, other women felt that this barrier to accessing classes applied only to women whose husbands came from more strict Muslim countries. At the same time, some women stated that although their husbands may not prove to be a barrier to them attending mixed sex classes, they would feel uncomfortable attending such classes. Again, whilst there appeared to be some confusion over whether this was a religious or a
cultural barrier, it must be noted that in most Muslim countries, males and females are separated throughout primary and secondary school and most women would not have attended a mixed sex class unless they had attended classes at the university level where classes were mixed sex. Considering the level of education reached by a majority of the respondents, it is evident that few of them have ever been in a formal learning situation with members of the opposite sex.

The confusion over the distinction between what is considered a religious obligation (i.e., relating to the tenets of Islam) and what is considered a cultural norm is a reflection of the complex interrelationship between religion and culture in the Islamic world. What some women perceive to be cultural in nature, others believe to be religious in nature and vice versa. Thus, whilst some women felt that apprehension to attend mixed sex classes and devotion to the domestic domain, to the exclusion of all else, was a cultural norm that should be abandoned in order to open up barriers to acculturation and participation in Australian social life, others felt that these were essentially religious in nature. In attempting to live their lives according to Islam in a country which is not predominantly Islamic, these women adhered to what they felt were Islamic practices and disregarded those practices which they felt were un-Islamic.

4.3. Conclusion- Who are the Muslim women most likely to access classes?

In light of the results attained through the analysis of data from the interview schedule, it is possible to offer a list of characteristics most prevalent in those respondents who had accessed classes as opposed to those who had not
accessed classes. These lists are based on the attitudes, beliefs and attributes of the respondents as reflected in their responses to questions set out in the interview schedule.

**Categories of Muslim women most likely to access classes:**

1. Those women who need English to access further study or to gain entry into the labour force and therefore were placed in the high priority group for access to AMEP programs

2. Those women who have an expressed desire to interact in English on a social level and therefore require a sufficient level of social proficiency in English

3. Those women who have a recognised need to learn English through an acknowledgment that English is the lingua franca in Australia

4. Those women who perceive English as a prestige language

5. Those women who have a desire or need to be self dependent and who can not or do not wish to rely on support networks

6. Those women who perceive English proficiency as a means to improving their standard of living and quality of life in Australia

7. Women who have access to information about available language services—either through support networks or through official means

8. Recent arrivals who do not have extensive support networks in Australia, particularly women who arrived in Australia under refugee status

9. Women with school aged children living at home and attending school
Categories of Muslim women least likely to access classes

1. Those women who do not have access to information regarding available services

2. Those women with limited schooling who have low literacy skills in their own language and are apprehensive about acquiring literacy skills in English

3. Women with young children or a high level of family responsibilities

4. Women whose spouses are unsympathetic to their need to learn English

5. Women who face cultural barriers which are manifest in their spouses' discontent at their attending mixed sex classes or participating in external domains

6. Women who, for cultural reasons, feel uncomfortable attending mixed sex classes

7. Women who face religious barriers which are manifest in their spouses' discontent at their attending mixed sex classes or participating in external domains

8. Women who, for religious reasons, believe that an adherence to the tenets of Islam does not include participating in external domains in a country which is predominantly non-Islamic

9. Women who, because of lack of transport, have difficulty accessing classes

10. Women with large support networks who are discouraged from learning English or do not have a perceived need to learn English because they rely on these networks

Whilst the categories are presented here as two separate lists, it must be stressed that they are not entirely mutually exclusive. It is possible, for example, that some women may have a desire or need to learn English in order to enter
gainful employment, but do not have access to information or face barriers due to their own or their spouse's religious or cultural beliefs. For these women, the issue then becomes one of prioritising their need for English. Furthermore, there appear to be characteristics that are not entirely exclusive to one sub-group, but are applicable to the majority of the respondents in the study. These are:

- low socio-economic status
- lack of Education at the tertiary level
- retention of mother tongue in the domestic domain regardless of period of residence
- absence of the use of English for religious practices
- an acknowledgment that their spouses and children have a stronger need for English, regardless of the age of children or employment status of the spouse
- a recognition of the need for learning English
- reliance on a member of a support network at least some of the time

In addition there appear to be variables that do not impact on the decision to learn English and from which no definite conclusions can be drawn. These are:

- age- although most of the respondents who had accessed classes were in the 35-44 age group compared to 25-34 for those women who had not accessed classes, age does not appear to be a factor in the decision to access classes. Considering the size of the sample population, no valid conclusions can be drawn from this data other than to illustrate the characteristics of the respondents.
• marital status- apart from the fact that two of the women who had accessed classes had never married, marital status does not appear to affect the decision to access or not access classes.

• socio-economic status- considering the relative uniformity in the socio-economic status of the respondents, there does not appear to be any connection between level of income and the decision to access classes.

Finally, attention needs to be drawn to those characteristics of the respondents which are congruent to the characteristics of the Muslim female population in Western Australia. These are:

• socio-economic status- a majority of the Muslim females in Western Australia have an individual income of less than $8000 per annum.

• labour force status- 1600 of the 2576 Muslim females in Western Australia were not in the labour force according to the 1991 census.

• school leaving age- a majority of the Muslim population in Western Australia left school at age 19 or lower, indicating a lack of females with education at the tertiary level.
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter addresses the issues that have arisen throughout the course of the study. It offers an examination of the data analysed and presented in the previous section and delves further into the results with the aim of explicating the patterns and relationships between the variables studied. As such, this chapter will discuss the issues impinging on the main research question which were presented in the introduction to this study and will refer extensively to previous findings and literature reviewed in this study. The main research question will not be addressed in this section. Rather, it will be answered in the conclusion to the study. This is because the issues attended to in this section of the study impinge on the main research question and, whilst the factors which influence the decision by Muslim women to access or not access classes will be alluded to throughout the discussion, summarising and presenting these issues as a conclusion provided the most feasible way of answering the main research question.

5.1. Are Muslim Women Accessing the Available Migrant Language Classes through the AMEP?

The results of this study show that, relative to the number of migrant Muslim women from NESB backgrounds resident in Perth who are eligible to access classes, Muslim women do not appear to be accessing classes in any large capacity. This finding validates comments made by service providers and the researcher's own prior observations. Whilst seeking out available networks through which to gain access to Muslim women currently participating in AMEP
classes, the researcher found that at one provider of Migrant language classes, of the eighty-five DEET funded students who had been referred to the college, only one was a Muslim female. At another college, which provided the same service, of approximately fifty DEET funded students attending the college, again only one was a Muslim female. This absence of Muslim women at colleges throughout Perth appeared to be a consistent finding. This observation is, to some extent, supported by statistical evidence. There are however, certain constraints and limitations regarding the statistical evidence which need to be addressed. Firstly, due to the fact that there is no way of determining religious affiliation for the statistics gathered through the AMEP or for immigration figures accessed through the ABS, it is impossible to state precisely how many Muslim women were resident in Western Australia compared to how many women actually accessed classes for the time period 1990-1994 (inclusive). Secondly, immigration figures were only obtainable for the entire state of Western Australia, whereas AMEP statistics refer only to those participants who are resident in the Perth Metropolitan region. Thus, although statistics show that there is an absence of women from the Cocos Islands and from Chris
Islands participating in AMES classes (compared to the number of women from these backgrounds resident in Western Australia), this absence may be explained by the fact that a majority of the population from these backgrounds reside outside the Perth Metropolitan area with a large settlement in Katanning. Despite these limitations, there appear to be discrepancies between the number of women participating in classes and the number of migrant women from particular countries of birth. The most feasible explanation for these discrepancies is that women from these countries, (of which a percentage are likely to be Muslim), are not accessing their entitlements to English language
tuition or, under the terms of the conditions of the National Plan, are not high priority targets for the AMEP and hence are missing out on receiving language tuition.

The countries highlighted in the tables which were presented in the preceding chapter, are those countries in which the discrepancy between the number of migrant Muslim women resident in WA and the number of Muslim women accessing AMES classes was most pronounced. For the years 1990 and 1991, less than one third of the female migrant Muslim population from Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Bangladesh, Cocos Islands, Christmas Islands and Pakistan were participating in AMES classes. On the whole, of the total 665 Muslim females who regarded their English proficiency levels to be “Not Well” or “Not at all” in the 1991 Census, 515 females from the selected countries had accessed classes in 1991. At first glance, this appears to be evidence which contradicts the suggestion that Muslim women are not accessing classes in a prominent capacity. However, the largest number of women accessing classes were born in either Indonesia (97 participants) or Malaysia (210 participants) (see Table 4.2). Considering the fact that the participant figures do not show religious affiliation, merely country of birth, it may well be that the majority of women from these two countries who participated in classes were not Muslim. Considering also, the discrepancies between the number of women resident and the number of women participating in classes from countries in the Middle East region (which, by all accounts, is more predominantly Muslim), the suggestion that Muslim women from these regions are not accessing classes is verified. This is further supported by the fact that, of the women interviewed for this study, the majority of women who had not accessed classes had a Middle Eastern background. Furthermore, if the number of women participating in AMES
classes for 1991 is totalled, with the number of women accessing from Indonesia and Malaysia omitted, the total of 208 represents under one third of the total women who indicated their proficiency levels were "Not Well" or "Not at all" in the 1991 Census. This ratio is a more accurate reflection of the ratios for individual countries (particularly the Middle East region).

Regardless of this, and based only on the statistical evidence given, the possibility also exists that all 515 women who accessed classes in 1991 from the countries of birth listed in the tables were Muslim. This is, however, less than likely as is the possibility that none of the women who accessed classes from these countries were Muslim. It is therefore necessary, based on the statistical information given and from the author's own observations, to deduce the most likely explanations.

For the year 1992, the greatest differences were found to exist between the number of migrants from the given countries of birth compared to the number of participants who had arrived in that same year, as opposed to the number of female participants compared to the total participants in AMES classes. For most of the countries listed, less than one third the number of migrants who settled in WA in 1992 had participated in AMES classes in that same year (see Table 4.3). All other things being equal, the difference in the number of female participants between 1991 and 1992 could be an indication of the number of newly arrived females who accessed classes in 1992. For example, a total of 22 females from Egypt participated in classes in 1991 compared to 23 in 1992, a difference of 1. Of the total 37 participants from Egypt in 1992, 8 had been accessing classes for less than one year and hence may well have come from the total 27 migrants who settled in WA in 1992. With all other things being equal, the indication is that, of the eight 'newly arrived' participants, only one
was female. If the data is analysed in this way, then this indication is consistent for most of the countries of birth listed. Nevertheless, even without such an analysis, the results still indicate that for most of the countries listed, the number of 'newly arrived' participants is much less than the number of newly arrived settlers for the year 1992 and this trend appears to have continued in 1993.

The period 1990 to 1992 was a period of immense change in the operation of the AMEP with the introduction of The National Plan in 1990. In light of the strategies for change put forward by the National Plan, it follows that participation rates for this period would reflect the effects of such changes on migrant Muslim women. The indication is that the number of 'newly arrived' participants in AMES classes for 1992 was disproportionate to the number of migrant settlers in Western Australia for that same year (see Table 4.3). This appears to be a continuing trend through 1993 and 1994 (see Tables 4.4 and 4.5 respectively). There are two possible explanations for this disparity. Firstly, that newly arrived migrants in these years did not meet the requirements for priority placement for language instruction at the AMES according to the strategies put forward by the National Plan. That is to say, they did not have occupational skills in high demand, were not seeking employment or to undertake further study to increase their chances of employment, or were not seeking to improve their English in order to obtain employment. In this case, these migrants, under the National Plan, would have been allocated to community organisations for language tuition. Secondly, the possibility also exists that these migrants faced barriers to access that were not related to their eligibility for classes. In this case, it is also likely that such barriers prevented these migrants from accessing any form of tuition including community based
language classes. If the first possibility mentioned here is the most likely explanation for the significant difference between the number of 'newly arrived' participants compared to the number of newly arrived settlers, then the National Plan's objective of relegating the responsibility of NESB migrants to community service organisations, was achieved. As Pilmer (1990) suggested, the plan therefore would have succeeded in decreasing the backlog of non-English speakers in Australia by catering for all new arrivals. However, the viability of providing community based classes in lieu of classes conducted through the AMES is still at question. That is to say, if indeed newly arrived migrants who did not access classes through the AMES program because of ineligibility were offered places in community based language programs, how successful were these language classes in meeting the language needs of these migrants and, more importantly, what proportion of migrants who did not access classes through AMEP, actually accessed community classes? Whilst the first question here is beyond the scope of this study, the latter is relevant to this study and to the target population of NESB migrant Muslim women. Statistics gathered through the 1991 census and presented here indicate that a high proportion of Muslim women resident in Western Australia have limited education, are not in the labour force or seeking employment and have a low socio-economic status (see figures 4.1-4.4 in the preceding chapter). It also appears that Labaki's (1989) finding that recent immigrants from Lebanon tend to have come from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds is a continuing trend, not only amongst the Lebanese Muslims, but for Muslim immigrants from other backgrounds as well. Under the National Plan therefore, a majority of NESB migrant Muslim women would not possess the criteria necessary for priority placement in AMES
programs. As such, they would be expected to access language tuition through community organisations.

Whilst a minority of the women interviewed for this study who had not accessed formal language tuition had attended community based language classes, a majority had not received any form of language tuition. Furthermore, the minority of women accessing classes at the time of the interviews who had previously accessed community based classes upon first arrival, indicated that they had attended these classes sporadically. This indicates that it is perhaps the second possibility referred to earlier that is the more likely explanation for the difference between the number of 'newly arrived' participants compared to the number of newly arrived settlers in Western Australia for the years 1992, 1993 and 1994. In other words, for the Muslim women interviewed in this study, it is not so much the lack of a service provision that has been a barrier to learning English, as they would have been eligible for community based classes, but rather barriers to access for any kind of language tuition that have prevented them from learning English through the available channels. It is therefore also plausible to suggest that, contrary to the aims of the National Plan, community based organisations are not catering for the language needs of migrant Muslim women, either by not making services more accessible or by not taking into account religious or cultural barriers that NESB migrant Muslim women may face.

5.2. Trends in Participation Rates.

In the preceding chapter, the participation rates of women from selected countries of birth for the five year period 1990 to 1994 (inclusive) were compared (see Table 4.6). Of the countries listed, only Iraq, Jordan and Kuwait
show an increase in the number of female participants within this period, with only Iraq and Kuwait showing an increase of more than 200%. In 1992, there were eleven female participants in AMES programs from Iraq, compared to four and two participants in previous years. However, this represents only a very small proportion of the total 94 participants from Iraq in 1994, indicating that despite the increase in the number of female participants, women from Iraq were still not accessing classes in any great capacity compared to their male counterparts. For Kuwait on the other hand, the increase from one female participant in 1990 to four participants in 1992, 1993 and 1994, appears to be in proportion with the small but steady increase in the number of migrants from Kuwait for these years. In 1992 however, there was, comparatively, an upsurge in the number of migrants from Kuwait, with 25 newly arrived migrants from Kuwait settling in Perth. This number dropped dramatically with only seven new migrants in 1993 and nine in 1994. Taking this into account it appears that, in comparison to the number of migrants to Western Australia from Kuwait within this five year period, the number of women accessing classes from Kuwait is relatively small.

A majority of the countries show a fall in the number of female participants over the five year period, with Iran, Brunei, Indonesia, Lebanon and Malaysia displaying the greatest decreases. There are several factors which may have impacted on the decrease in the number of women accessing classes from the countries listed in the table. Firstly, the decrease may have been a direct result of fluctuations in immigration patterns. In the case of Iran, female participation rates for 1990 and 1991 were relatively high considering the number of Muslim women from Iran residing in Western Australia at the time. However, in 1992 and 1993, the number of newly arrived participants was relatively low in
comparison to the number of newly arrived migrants for those years (12 out of 38 and 7 out of 21 respectively). This trend appears to have changed in 1994, with 25 newly arrived participants out of a total of 29 newly arrived migrants. This upsurge in the number of newly arrived participants from seven in 1993 to 25 in 1994 is not reflected in the difference between the total number of female participants for these years (17 in 1993 and 23 in 1994). The indication is therefore that, although immigration patterns did have some impact on the patterns of participation for the five year period studied, other factors may also have been involved. Of particular interest is the comparatively slight increase in the number of female participants between the years 1993 and 1994, despite a relatively large increase in the number of newly arrived participants accessing classes. Whilst a total of 25 newly arrived participants accessed classes in 1994, compared to only seven newly arrived participants in 1993, the number of female participants from Iran between these years increased by only five. Several explanations may be offered to account for this. The first is that fewer females migrated from Iran to Australia in 1994 than in 1993, hence accounting for the fact that only five more female participants were added on to the AMEP database. This explanation, however, does not account for the relatively low number of newly arrived participants in 1993 compared to the number of newly arrived settlers in Western Australia. The second is that the same factors which effected the low participation rates of newly arrived settlers in 1993, also effected low participation rates for newly arrived female migrants in 1994. Considering the fact that, for both 1993 and 1994, the number of female participants from Iran was relatively high in comparison to the total number of participants from Iran, a third explanation could be that barriers which prevented
newly arrived participants from accessing classes in 1993 were not affecting participation rates in 1994.

The case of Brunei is also one which holds interest. According to the figures, for the years 1992, 1993 and 1994, there were no newly arrived participants from Brunei recorded on the AMEP database, despite the number of newly arrived settlers in Western Australia. The absence of newly arrived participants in these years may well account for the steady decrease in both the number of total participants and the number of female participants. It is impossible to ascertain from the given data whether this absence of newly arrived participants and the consequent decrease in the total number of participants from Brunei was due to a higher level of English proficiency of newly arrived settlers or to actual barriers to access. This also applies to the Indonesian example, where the number of female participants plummeted from 100 in 1990 to only 41 in 1994. The figures for Indonesia also indicate a relatively low participation rate for newly arrived settlers throughout the five year period.

5.3. What are the long term language and literacy needs of Muslim Women?

The respondents interviewed for this study hailed from nine different countries of origin and spoke a total of eighteen different languages between them. This is no doubt testimony to the extraordinary linguistic and cultural diversity which characterises the Muslim population in Perth. Considering also the differences in age and family structure of the respondents, it is to be expected that their linguistic needs would differ. However, there do appear to be patterns of English use that defy these differences.
5.3.1 Respondents who accessed classes

For those women who had accessed classes, it appears that a majority retain the use of their mother tongue in the domestic domain. Accessing classes necessitates the use of English in the domain of work/ school and this would account for the high percentage of English use by women who have accessed classes in this area. However, the results also indicate that women who accessed classes also use a high percentage of English in the other 'external' domains- neighbourhood, leisure activities and particularly business. Labaki's (1989) study of Lebanese immigrants found that most men retain their Lebanese Arabic language at home. This also appears to be the case for Muslim women who have accessed classes. Labaki also found that the social assimilation of Lebanese in Australia is limited to their participation in the workforce. Labaki's finding holds particular relevance to the findings indicated in this study. If the percentage of English language use can be used as an indication of social assimilation, then Labaki's finding may also apply to the Muslim women in this study. The results suggest that accessing classes and the consequent increase in the level of English proficiency for these women, is directly related to their high use of English in the external domains. If social assimilation can be measured in terms of the amount of interaction in English that is used in these domains, then it follows that the social assimilation of the respondents is directly related to their participation in English language classes. Thus, whilst Labaki found that the social assimilation of Lebanese in Australia was limited to their participation in the workforce, it may also be true that, for the Muslim women in this study, accessing English classes proved to be an avenue for social assimilation. However, this would only be true if the respondents' high use of English in the external domains was a direct result of
their increased language proficiency brought about by accessing classes. Another possibility is that women who accessed classes, did so because of a need to use English in the external domains. In other words, English language needs necessitated a higher level of English language proficiency in order to meet the linguistic demands of the external domain and this need precipitated the accessing of English language classes. The question therefore remains as to whether women who accessed classes use a higher level of English in the external domains because of their increased language proficiency or whether they accessed classes because of a need to perform tasks in the external domains in English. One factor which impinges on this is the existence or absence of a support network. Women with a strong support network were less likely to use a high level of English in the external domain. This was because they could rely on their support network to fulfil those tasks which they could not cope with by themselves. In such cases, unless the women felt a strong need to be able to fulfil tasks independently, they were less likely to feel a need to learn English. The extent of the support network was indicated in the results of the study. Firstly, nine of the ten respondents who had accessed classes were more recent arrivals and had migrated to Australia in the five year period encompassing the years 1990-1994 (inclusive). As newly arrived migrants, they would be more likely to have less of a support network than more long-term residents. Furthermore, of the more recently arrived women who had accessed classes, only four had migrated to Australia under the family or resident visa categories. The other women in this group migrated to Australia as refugees or under a humanitarian visa category. As such, they would be less likely to have family already resident in Australia who could form part of a support network. Secondly, the results indicate that most of the women who had accessed
classes were either in the 16-24 age group or in the 35-44 age group. The significance of this is that, those women in the younger age group would be less likely to have school aged children on whom they could rely to perform the more linguistically complex tasks required for the external domains. Those in the older age group, 35-44, did have children aged in their mid teens. However, these women were also more recent arrivals, which indicates that they probably could not rely on their children to perform tasks in English for them because their children would also not possess the language skills needed to complete the tasks in English. It appears that the spouse is often the main support for women who do not have any other support network. Six out of the ten women who had accessed classes indicated that they relied on their spouse or children to write letters and fill in forms for them. The possibility of children forming part of the support network has already been discussed, leaving the spouse as the main member of the support network. It appears therefore, that for those women who had accessed classes, the absence of a strong support network was a main factor in motivating them to access classes as it prompted a need to learn English in order to be able to fulfil the demands of the external domains.

The patterns of English use for those women who had accessed classes were also influenced by their perceived need to learn English, as well as by the practical need to learn English which resulted from the lack of a support network as discussed above. The responses to statements concerning language attitudes, (see table 4.10 of the preceding chapter), indicate the following:

- A majority of the women who had accessed classes felt less of a spontaneous need to learn English upon first arrival. This indicates that they
may have experienced some difficulties because of a lack of English proficiency and these experiences prompted them to seek out and access language tuition. When interviewed, many of the women acknowledged that proficiency in English would make their lives easier. One woman stated that she could probably live in Australia without learning English, but only if she could have unlimited access to an interpreter, since this was not possible, she would have to learn to cope on her own. Another woman stated her reasons for learning English: "... If I want to go for example to the doctor or shopping I would be able to comprehend and to hold a conversation by myself... reading and writing...it's important because if, for example, you get a letter or you need to deal with the CES or Social Security or some other important business, for sure you're going to need to speak and read as well."

- A majority of the respondents who had accessed classes expressed a need to learn English in order to find a job or to access further studies. The recognition of the need to learn English in order to be able to enter the workforce, is a major factor which prompted some women to access classes. Some women felt that the need to find employment or access further study was a priority for them and that learning English was an avenue to fulfilling this desire.

- When interviewed, many women from the group of women who had accessed classes felt that English was an important language and cited this as one of the main factors which influenced their decision to access classes.
The evidence suggests that those respondents who had accessed classes had a strong need for English, particularly in the external domains. The patterns of English use reflected in the results are a manifestation of this need. That is to say, women who had accessed classes used a higher percentage of English in the external domains because of both practical considerations and a felt need to learn English. The practical considerations mainly concern the lack of an extensive support network on which they could rely to fulfil tasks associated with shopping, banking and interacting at a social level. The perceived need to learn English concerns a recognition of the need for English proficiency in order to find a job or continue their studies and a recognition of the importance of English as both a world language and as the lingua franca of Australia. The language needs of the respondents who had accessed classes are therefore:

1. A need to learn English in order to be able to fulfil tasks independently because of the absence of a strong support network
2. A need to learn English in order to find a job or continue studies
3. A need to learn English to make life easier after recognising the importance of possessing English language skills for performing everyday tasks associated with the external domains.

Whilst these needs prompted the women to access classes, the increased level of English proficiency which these women gained as a result of accessing classes is also directly related to their patterns of English use. This relationship is most easily explained diagrammatically.
Domains which necessitate a higher level of English proficiency

Need to learn English in order to cope with the demands of these domains

English language classes accessed

More English use in these domains

Figure 5. The relationship between English language needs and the decision to access classes.

5.3.2 Respondents who had not accessed classes

As with the respondents who had accessed classes, those who had not accessed classes seem to retain their mother tongue in the domestic domain. However, women who had not accessed classes tended to use less English overall in the external domains compared with women who had accessed classes. There are two possibilities which ensue from these results. The first is that women who had not accessed classes have less need to use English in the external domains than women who have accessed classes and hence their patterns of English use show less use of English in these domains. Secondly, that women who had not accessed classes have as strong a need for English in the external domains but do not have the language skills necessary to cope with the demands of these domains and hence use less English in the external domains. The question is therefore one of less need or less ability.

The age range of women who had not accessed classes was skewed towards the under 44 age range, as with women who had accessed classes. However,
the 25-34 age range was the largest group represented with the 16-24 and the 35-44 age ranges being the second largest. There were also more women in the 45-54 age range and the 55-64 age range than there were in the group who had accessed classes. Overall, there was more representation in all age ranges from the group who had not accessed classes compared to the group who had accessed classes (see figure 4.5 in the preceding chapter). This pattern is possibly related to the number and ages of children of the respondents who had not accessed classes. The results show that a majority of the women who had not accessed classes either had young children who were below school age, or had older children who were no longer at school. This indicates that within the subgroup of women who had not accessed classes, there are two further divisions. The first is younger women in the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups who have young children and infants. The second is older women in the 45+ age groups whose children were older and either still lived at home or had left the family home.

For those women with young children, the interviews revealed that time and the responsibilities of tending to a young family were important factors effecting their decision not to access classes. One group of Turkish women interviewed at the Turkish Mosque in Welshpool all indicated that time was a major factor in their inability to access classes. However, one of these women was considerably older (in the 55-64 age group) and had one child, aged 24, still living in the family home. This woman cited transport as the main reason why she had not accessed classes. This respondent also revealed that she had been in Australia a total of 20 years and, though now a pensioner, had worked in a factory for a majority of those years. When asked if she had considered public transport to and from language classes, the respondent replied that she
was unfamiliar with the public transport system in Australia. Another group of younger respondents, mainly from Sudan, were interviewed as a group in one of the respondent’s home. A majority of this group also had young children, ranging in age from 24 days to two years. These women had started to access classes but had discontinued within six weeks. Their reasons for discontinuing classes were related to their pregnancies and the responsibilities associated with looking after a newborn child. When asked if they felt they could not access classes at the time of the interview, the respondents replied that they were too busy, but may consider returning to classes after six months. The one respondent in this group who did not have any children was accessing classes at the time of the interviews. Also in this group was one respondent with older children, (22, 20 and 16 years). This respondent was a widow and had not accessed classes. She had been in Australia a total of three months and had migrated to Australia as a refugee. At the time of the interview the respondent was residing with her 22 year old daughter, another respondent who was accessing classes.

It appears therefore that the two subgroups within the group of women who had not accessed classes have similar patterns of language use, but have different needs. These being:

1. Women in the younger age groups, 16-24 and 25-34 with young children tended to rely more on spouses and members of the extended family to perform language tasks in the external domain.

2. Women in the older age groups, 35-44, and 45+ tended to have older children who performed these tasks for them. This is supported by the fact that more of the women in this age group had migrated to Australia in the years prior to 1989 (inclusive). At the time of arrival, the children of these women
would have been considerably younger and would probably have completed part or all of their schooling in Australia. Thus, unlike the children of more recent arrivals, the children of longer-term resident respondents would be more likely to possess the language and literacy skills needed to fulfil more complex linguistic tasks in English.

Overall, the indication is that women in the group who had not accessed classes were more likely to have stronger support networks than those who had not accessed classes. This is also indicated in the migration status of the respondents who had not accessed classes, with more women migrating under the family, resident or migrant categories. The language needs of these respondents would therefore be limited by the extent of their support networks, and since their support networks are relatively strong, compared to the women who had accessed classes, they had less need to use English in the external domains. There was, however, one exception to this. One respondent in the group who had not accessed classes, had recently migrated to Australia as a refugee. She had no immediate family currently living in Australia and resided alone. This respondent indicated that she used English over 90% of the time in all domains, including the domestic domain. She also indicated that she was fully intent on accessing classes and, at the time of the interview, had started to inquire about her eligibility to access through official channels.

The respondents' reliance on a strong support network to fulfil language specific tasks for them was also indicated in the responses to the statements in section two of the interview schedule (see table 4.10 in the preceding chapter). A majority of the women who had not accessed classes agreed to the following:

- They always needed to use an interpreter or translator when dealing with official business
• That their husbands and children had a stronger need for English
• That they relied on their husbands and children to write letters and fill in forms for them

A majority also agreed that they did not have enough time to learn English. On the issue of whether or not they felt a spontaneous need to learn English upon first arrival, the respondents who had not accessed classes were divided, with six respondents agreeing that they needed to learn English now more than when they first arrived in Australia, and six disagreeing with this statement. This is also related to the existence of the support network. Whilst a majority of the women who had accessed classes had realised a need to learn English (as discussed earlier probably because of problems they had encountered and the lack of a support network), many of the women who had not accessed classes did not express this need.

The existence or lack of a strong support network plays an important role in the patterns of language use and the language needs of the Muslim women interviewed for this study. On the one hand, women without strong support networks are more likely to realise the disadvantages of a low level of English proficiency as they are forced to attempt linguistically complex tasks associated with the external domains on their own. On the other hand, women with strong support networks, whether they be young, recent arrivals with family and friends residing in Australia, or older, more long term residents with older children, tend to use less English in the external domains and hence have less of a perceived need to learn English in order to perform tasks in these domains.

The issue of support networks was raised in an interview with Hanifa Deen, author of Caravanserai and a key informant in this study. According to Deen, it is often the existence of a strong support network that holds Muslim women...
back. Deen acknowledges the need for Muslim women to become more active in the wider Australian community. Quoting a section by Belal Cleland (an AMES Victoria senior administrator) in her book, she identifies two types of Muslim women. The first group is "those [Muslim women in Australia] that are very aware and conscious and active" whom she believes are the women who will activate English classes. The second type are those "groups of women who are deprived of their rights, the non-joiners". Deen acknowledges that these women are the majority.

"...but there are also groups of women who are deprived of their rights, the non-joiners’ and they’re the majority aren’t they, the non-joiners, ‘who sometimes aren’t allowed to join and it’s not always the wicked husbands you know’ and he’s spot on here ‘it’s often grand mothers and mothers in law, aunts and an entire female network who insist vehemently that Muslim women don’t do this...’ we’re talking about women who have not graduated from high school quite often... They don’t have the mind, they don’t have a mind trained for that ...So yes, I would say they’re lazy or they’re not motivated or they’re being told you don’t need it. And it’s not the men, as he says, it’s often the other women who keep the women down."

The issue of the ‘women’s network’ was also raised with another key informant, a representative from a Muslim women’s association operating in Perth. According to this informant:

"...actually, most of the women just can’t be bothered, they just don’t want to study English because they think they only they got all the family around, maybe they have a few friends, they are all friends because stick to like and they don’t have to worry if they don’t speak English. They don’t have that...normally you find that they got somebody that helps....so for them it’s not necessary because especially with the migrants with the children, grown up children, who are married, and I know most of my friends now
they look after the grandchildren while the children working, the young people, they got their housework, enough for them to ...be occupied.”

The ‘women’s network’ and other existing support networks, such as children and spouses, have the potential to limit the participation of Muslim women in the wider Australian community. However, it is not so much the existence of the support network as it is the influence that the support network exerts on the women that is the key factor. Often the support network can exert such a strong influence on the individual that they are convinced there is no need for them to study English. The support network works in two ways to limit the participation of Muslim women in English language classes and in the wider Australian community. Firstly, a strong support network may act as a barrier by fulfilling the language tasks associated with the external domains to such an extent that women never feel the need to learn English in order to be able to perform these tasks. Secondly, a strong network of female friends and relatives may exert pressure on the individual to perform the daily tasks associated with the domestic domain. In this case the network operates to keep the women in the home with the message that they do not need to partake in the wider community.

5.4. Do Muslim women perceive a need to learn English as a means of participating in Australian public life?

To some extent, this question has been answered in the preceding section. As discussed earlier, the existence of a support network exerts a major influence on the perceived need to learn English. However there are other factors involved which need to be addressed. These are: the attitudes Muslim women
have towards English; the attitudes they have towards attending classes; and their perceptions of Australian society and the female’s role in society.

5.4.1 Attitudes towards English.

A large number of the women interviewed indicated that they felt their husbands and children had more need for English than they did. Women agreed to this statement regardless of their age, number and ages of children, level of education and whether or not they had accessed classes. The overall indication is that many of the women in this study feel that their need for English is not as important as their families’ need for English. Despite this, many women in the study mentioned the importance of English when interviewed. Some women alluded to the importance of English as an international language, stating that English was not only important in Australia, but worldwide. Others displayed a recognition of the importance of English as the lingua franca of Australia. These women tended to focus more on the empowerment that having a good level of English afforded them. Whilst they did not use those terms specifically, the women spoke of English as a requirement for being able to live in Australia and how it was essential to enable the fulfilment of everyday tasks. One woman, however, defined this empowerment as much more than just being able to cope with everyday tasks. This respondent viewed English as essential to fulfilling the religious task of TEBLI (spreading the word of Islam). Her reasons for learning English were unique, and whilst this respondent had not accessed classes through the AMEP, she was a regular attendee of English language classes held once a week at the Turkish Mosque in Welshpool. Her reasons for not accessing
formal classes were time and the fact that she would feel uncomfortable attending mixed sex classes.

Many women referred to the need for English in order to be able to interact with people, though not always on a social level. However, it is curious that more of the women in the group who had not accessed classes indicated a desire to learn English for this reason than those who had accessed classes. It is also curious that, despite a recognition for a need to learn English, the Muslim women interviewed for this study still perceived their families need for English to be stronger than their own need. A possible explanation for this is in the women's attitude to literacy. One respondent stated that she had not accessed classes because she did not want to learn how to read and write. This respondent was in the older age range (45-54) and was widowed with two adult children living at home. She stated that she did not believe writing English was relevant or important for her as she had no desire to go on to further study.

Another respondent in the 35-44 age range who also had not accessed classes expressed the same sentiments. This respondent stated that her need for literacy skills in English was limited to reading with her children and that she would rather learn English to talk to people. Other women expressed a need for literacy skills to fulfil everyday tasks such as reading letters, magazines and newspapers. Few women displayed a recognition of the importance of literacy skills for finding employment and one respondent believed that she did not need to know how to read and write English in order to find a job.

The indication is that the respondents in this study have a different perception of oral skills than they do of literacy skills. For a majority of the women, proficiency in English is equated with being able to interact orally with other people and being able to fulfil everyday tasks such as shopping. This is a
manifestation of their perceived roles in society. It also explains why many women felt that their husbands, who worked, and children, who attended school, have more need for English than they do themselves. It is possibly also related to their levels of education. A majority of the women interviewed, and particularly women in the group who had not accessed classes, had had very limited schooling. Their apprehension towards acquiring literacy skills in English could therefore be related to their limited literacy in their own languages. The attitude towards English expressed by a majority of the Muslim women interviewed for this study appears to be skewed towards oral proficiency. For many of the women proficiency in English for themselves is defined only in terms of being able to interact verbally. For their husbands and children on the other hand, proficiency in English also includes literacy skills. This is because, for most of the women interviewed, English was necessary only to be able to fulfil the tasks associated with being a homemaker, tasks such as shopping, interacting with neighbours and people on the street, talking to teachers and other mothers. Literacy skills were limited to filling in simple forms such as bank slips. Considering the education level reached by a majority of the women, it is likely that they survived in their own countries with only very limited literacy skills in their L1. These women therefore see the achievement of oral proficiency in English as sufficient to meeting their language needs. The exceptions are the few women who achieved a higher level of education in their own countries and those who wished to continue on to further study or had employment aspirations. Proficiency in literacy skills is more commonly left to the husband and children. This is once again related to the strength of the support network as those women who relied heavily on their spouses and children to perform language specific tasks for them tended to rely on them more heavily for
literacy tasks than for verbal tasks. This is reflected in the results where more women indicated that they relied on their husbands and children to write letters or fill in forms for them, whilst a smaller number indicated the need for a translator or interpreter for dealing with official business (see table 4.10 in the preceding chapter).

5.4.2 Attitudes towards attending English language classes.

One of the outcomes of this study is that a number of the women interviewed did not feel comfortable attending mixed sex classes. This is not unusual considering that in most predominantly Muslim countries, females and males are separated throughout the school years. Most women from these countries would not have encountered mixed sex classes except at the university level. For most of the women in this study, who had not progressed beyond the final year of high school, attending mixed sex classes was never experienced. However, it is also apparent that, for some of the respondents, their attitudes towards attending English language classes were dictated by their spouses. In other words, some women expressed that their husbands would object to their attending classes and this proved to be a major factor in their decision to access or not access formal English language classes. Most women agreed that women from 'more strict countries' would probably face objections to attending classes from their spouse. However, two of the respondents of Indonesian origin were actually married to Australian nationals and had faced objections by their husbands to attending classes. In both cases, the respondents had separated from their spouses and had sought English language tuition after the separation. One woman explained that, although she did not fully understand why her Australian husband had not allowed her to
attend classes, she suspected that it was probably to ensure that she remained at home and fulfilled her domestic obligations. The other respondent felt that it was probably feelings of jealousy and pride harboured by her spouse which caused him to have this attitude.

The feelings expressed by the respondents regarding husbands as barriers to access were reiterated by two of the key informants (both females) who agreed that, depending on their upbringing, a large proportion of Muslim men would not allow their wives to partake in the wider Australian society. Key informant, Hanifa Deen, stated that the possibility of a husband being a barrier to participation would also depend on the husband's own successful integration.

"A lot would depend on whether a man's employed or unemployed, a lot depends on the man's successful integration. If the man is happy that makes a big difference. If the man is unhappy, he still wants to be king of his own household, he's going to basically keep the woman down. I would say that a woman cannot, that you can't talk about Muslim women integrating as compared to the family integrating, it's the unit, collectively."

This is interesting as it suggests that Muslim women's participation in Australian society is limited by the assimilation of the partner and the family as a whole. A third factor is therefore brought into Labaki's (1989) suggestion that the social assimilation of Lebanese Muslims in Australia is limited to their participation in the workforce. This factor is the inclusion of the family unit. For Muslim women, participation and assimilation in Australia may also be limited by their spouse's participation in the workforce. If, as Deen suggested above, the spouse is gainfully employed and has adapted well to life in Australia, he is more likely to encourage his wife to do the same. He is therefore also more likely to be
sympathetic towards her need to learn English as a means of participation. Overall, it was clearly indicated in the interviews that many of the Muslim women interviewed for this study were either restricted or encouraged to learn English by their spouses. Those who were restricted by their spouses stated that attending mixed sex classes was the biggest problem and suggested the introduction of single sex classes as a solution.

In the previous section, it was suggested that it is not always the men who restrict women from accessing classes and participating in the wider Australian society. The existence of a ‘women’s network’ and the beliefs and attitudes of the women themselves may also exert considerable influence on the participation of women in domains outside the home. For those respondents without spouses, female family member’s attitudes towards attending mixed sex classes exerted the same influence over their decision to access classes as did the spouse’s attitude for the married respondents. One twenty-four year old, single respondent lived with her mother and brother. When asked if she had experienced any problems accessing classes related to being a Muslim she replied, “Yes because woman must stay home. Not meet other mans. Not talking to other mans. When go to school not talking to mans.” The respondent stated that her mother did not always approve of her attending mixed sex classes. This example indicates that the obligations felt by Muslim women towards home and family are actually not only related to their marital status but are deeply rooted in their own sense of self and in the cultural and religious expectations for Muslim females.

For many of the women who had not accessed classes, attending the full time English language classes offered by the AMES was seen as time consuming. For some, it was even considered unnecessary (see discussion in the previous
sections relating to English language needs and attitudes). The issue of time was mentioned several times throughout the interviews with some women stating that they would prefer to attend part time classes but that this option was not available to them. For most of the respondents, not being able to devote themselves to full time study was directly related to family responsibilities and an unwillingness to seek child care arrangements for young children whilst they attended classes. Those women who had accessed classes tended to be more critical and less sympathetic towards Muslim women who did not access classes because of family responsibilities. According to these women, it was nothing short of laziness that prevented Muslim women from attending full time classes. One respondent went so far as to suggest that Muslim women who did not access classes have their social security payments cut as a way of forcing them to learn English. This respondent was from Bosnia and had migrated to Australia under a humanitarian visa after spending some time in a refugee camp in Austria. Both she and her husband had accessed formal English classes and were, at the time of the interviews, attending a skillshare training program. This respondent also acknowledged that Muslim women from European backgrounds had fewer restrictions than those from Middle Eastern backgrounds. On the issue of Muslim women and mixed sex classes, this respondent felt that Muslim women should not be discouraged from attending mixed sex classes. When asked if she thought that single sex classes for Muslim women was a good idea, the respondent replied, “For me, because I'm from European, for me is better is together, better. But if you better for another woman who is stay at home, if you better is separate maybe better for them. For me is better is together. Why, why is separate?”
Although the respondent could not understand why some Muslim women would prefer single sex classes to mixed sex classes, she agreed that if single sex classes meant more Muslim women would access English language tuition, then it was a good idea.

This respondent, along with several others also thought that many Muslim women who claimed they had little time to learn English, were actually fulfilling the societal roles they would have had in their own countries and hence were restricted from accessing classes by their own unwillingness to participate in domains other than the traditional domestic domain. One respondent who had accessed classes after having resided in Australia for four years acknowledges that she did not access classes upon first arrival because she attended to the demands of the domestic domains, "... because I look after my husband and I stay home, then I come to school."

Apart from obligations towards the spouse and family, and pressure to meet the perceived expectations of being a Muslim female, many women also expressed that they themselves would feel or had felt uncomfortable attending English classes. For some women this was related to the wearing of the hejab or veil.

There appear to be two differing attitudes towards attending English classes reflected in the responses. The first is a perception of English language classes as an educational achievement and a means of self fulfilment. Women who perceived English language classes in this way were more likely to access classes in order to be more independent, to find a job or to further their studies. The second is a perception of attending English language classes as a social activity which involves interacting with members of the opposite sex and with other non-Muslims. Women who perceived classes in this way were less likely to access classes unless there was a strong desire to interact with Australian
people or there was some other need. For example, some respondents had only accessed classes after they had become separated from their spouses and others had no support network on which they could rely. Furthermore, women who perceived English classes as social interaction were also more likely to feel uncomfortable about attending mixed sex classes. In an interview with five women from Sudan and Eritrea, all of whom were veiled, the respondents indicated that the necessity of learning English meant that Muslim women would have to put aside their feelings of discomfort. When asked if they had found it difficult to attend classes because they are Muslim women, the following conversation ensued:

'G: There is no difficulty for us, for example, but there are a number of Muslim women who don't want to see men and talk to them, the ones who wear *nikab* [full veil including face, hands and feet]. For them it might be difficult.
S: But they can start in a class that doesn't have men, only women.
G: No. Classes have men and women. How can it be that you have a man in the class with you...it depends.
H: I would have preferred if they had a class for myself.
S: Yes exactly.
H: One is put in a situation where she has no choice.
I: For yourselves. Did you feel uncomfortable in a class where say, for example, you know you are the only Muslim woman or you are the only one wearing a veil?
G: No, I felt very natural.
S: I feel proud and happy that I am veiled.
H: I wasn't covered at the time.
G: She was normal, like them.
I: Did you feel for example that people were looking at you strangely?
S: Yes actually, they always ask me.
G: Even if they look at me or ask me questions, I can’t and won’t change myself just for their sakes. This is my religion and I have to deal with things like this.’

It is G’s comment, "She was normal, like them", that is particularly interesting. Her perception of an unveiled woman as "normal" and "like them" is testimony to the feelings of alienation and antagonism that may in fact prevent many women from attending English classes. Fear of being seen as different, as not "normal", coupled with anxiety over being involved in a social interaction that involves members of the opposite sex (unheard of in their own countries) is at the heart of the discomfort many of the respondents said they would feel attending language classes. It is difficult to say what could be done to allay their fears. In any case, their fears are not unfounded and not without just cause. As discussed in the Literature Review, an unsympathetic media has contributed to the perception of Muslims as different and outside of the mainstream. For women who view English language classes only from an educational point of view, these fears may not even exist and if they do, are probably over-ridden by their needs and aspirations.

5.4.3 Attitudes Towards Australian Society

Perhaps one of the most far-reaching outcomes of this research is that the Muslim women interviewed do in fact perceive themselves as different from the mainstream Australian society. Moreover, this difference has less to do with cultural background and upbringing and more to do with their need and desire to uphold their Islamic way of life in a country which, essentially, holds Western values and principles as ideal. For every Muslim, whether male or female, the
tension which arises between living in a Western society and maintaining an Islamic way of life is inevitable.

An overwhelming majority of the women studied indicated that they felt they could not live like other non-Muslim Australians. Some women clarified their responses by stating that although they felt they could live like non-Muslim Australians, they did not want to. Those women that felt they could live like non-Muslim Australians, sometimes regarded themselves as 'less Muslim', one woman for example classified herself as being 'ten percent Muslim'. It is also interesting to note that a majority of the women who felt they could live like Australians were not veiled. The exceptions to this were a number of women interviewed at the Turkish Mosque who indicated that although they could live like non-Muslim Australians, they preferred not to. Two of the respondents who agreed that they could live like the mainstream were of Indonesian background and had married Australian nationals. There appear to be three distinct reasons why some women felt they could live like non-Muslim Australians, whilst others felt they could not. The first is essentially tied to their own perceptions of themselves as 'less Muslim' or more secular than other Muslims. The second is an acknowledgment that living like non-Muslims would necessitate an abandonment of the Islamic way of life, which would be possible in theory but was impractical because of a desire to maintain their Islamic principles. The third is related to a belief that religious practices should be maintained only in the domestic domains. This view was expressed by the one respondent from a Bosnian background. As mentioned earlier, this respondent perceived herself as different from other Muslim women by virtue of her European upbringing. When asked if she felt that she could live like non-Muslim Australians the respondent answered:
‘Yes, because many Muslim women stay at home and do cooking and cleaning, playing with children and Muslim women’s life is closed. I believe they must go to school and open their life. Because we live here [in Australia], must be Muslim at home, not in street in all life.’

It is evident that this respondent feels that upholding a Muslim way of life outside the arena of home and family serves to limit Muslim women’s lives and restricts them from participating in the wider Australian society. It is safe to say that many of the women interviewed for this study would not have agreed with her. One respondent indicated that she could live like non-Muslims but would need to keep her religion, although she made no mention of how this tension could be resolved. Most respondents however, were adamant that they could not live like non-Muslim Australians, adding that Australians held different values, had a different way of life and that Muslims were different, as one respondent put it, “We have rules”. Indeed, most of the women indicated that forsaking their Islamic way of life would be the only way to achieve complete integration into the mainstream and to live like the non-Muslim majority. Whilst some women did not express this idea candidly, it is evident in the following extracts from interviews:

'I: Do you have a lot of Muslim friends?
R: Yes
I: And do they learn English?
R: Some is learning English and some is working
I: Do they ever have a problem because they are Muslim?
R: No because they have changed their minds. They in Australia a long time
I: So have they changed how they live?
R: Yes
I: What about you? Do you think you could change how you live?
R: No.

'I: Why? Why do you think it's uncomfortable? [attending classes with members of the opposite sex]
R: In our religion you know, have to be you know like that. Any way this Muslim way.'

'I: Do you think it's difficult for Muslims to live with Australians? [agrees] Why?
R: Because Muslim people is Muslim, Australian people is Christian. They don't like Christian people, I think. But I like Muslim and I like Christian, but somebody doesn't like Christian-he say I am Muslim you are Christian I don't like. I don't say that. I: So some Muslims don't like Christians, so they don't want to mix?
R: Yes yes, because Christian people always clothes short.
I: They don't have the same life? Different ways?
R: Different ways, yes because they don't like that...
I: So you think Muslims can't live with Australians because they don't like their ways?
R: Yes yes, because they are drinking,,, because they are kissing. My mother in law she says always don't look TV, they are kissing, everyday kissing, no clothing, they are...All the people don't like this way, Australian ways.'

The third respondent's statements are reminiscent of the attitudes of Muslim women to their Western counterparts discussed in the literature review of this paper. This attitude is perpetuated by a sense of religious superiority and a belief that Western values are inconsistent with Muslim ideals. As mentioned in the literature review, the relevance of these attitudes is the possibility that they may prove to limit Muslim women's participation in the wider community and
ultimately may prove to be a barrier to accessing classes and learning English. Also referred to in the literature review, was Gardner and Lambert's (1972) suggestion that attitudes towards the people and culture represented by a language may either impede or promote the acquisition of that language. Despite the results of this study which show that a majority of the Muslim women interviewed acknowledge the importance of English as an international language and as the lingua franca of Australia, perceptions of English as a prestige language may in some cases be countermanded by feelings of religious superiority a rejection of anything Western. At the heart of this attitude is a deeply felt fear of Australian society and the pressure to adopt an Australian way of life as opposed to maintaining an Islamic way of life. When questioned about the attitudes that some Muslim women have towards their Western counterparts expressed in her book, Caravanserai, Hanifa Deen expressed the following sentiments:

'There are always two sides to that, those that do the rejecting, let's say the mainstream society who see Muslims as being particularly alien and least like us whereas...are more like us. Southern Europeans are less like us, but Chinese, Aborigines, Blacks, Africans and Muslims are least like us. So we've got that social distance and if because of customs and habits and because, quite often because of what people see... What do they know about Australian society? They know what they see on television that came across very very strongly that the parents are terrified for their kids because they honestly believe that it's a jungle out there, and those who may not be totally convinced use it to keep their kids under control.'

We are reminded of the third respondent's recollection of her mother in law's entreaty not to watch television, to turn her head at the un-Muslim images
portrayed on the screen. We are also reminded once again of the 'women's network'. Whereas Deen acknowledges that Muslim parents condemn Australian values based on what they see on television and use this to exert influence on their children, it is also the case that members of the women's network—mothers, mothers in law, aunts and grandmothers, use the same influences on other Muslim women. What this amounts to, is the perpetuation of an Australian stereotype amongst Muslim women and a desire to abolish any kind of influence which may result in them abandoning their Islamic ways and becoming like non-Muslim Australians. It also amounts to an invisible barrier between Muslim women and a Western (Australian) way of life. This barrier is not always in Muslim women's best interests, but it is the outcome of the tension between trying to maintain a Muslim identity in a society which is perceived to be in opposition to the values and ideals of Islam.

Recalling Mudaly's (1992) study of long term resident Turkish women which found that there was no evidence of strong ethnic partiality among the women, it appears that the Muslim women interviewed for this study do exhibit some extent of ethnic partiality. This is no doubt related to the fact that the women in Mudaly's study had been resident in Australia an average of sixteen years, compared to the more newly arrived women in this study. It may also be related to evidence of a strong 'women's network' operating amongst the respondents. Furthermore, the women in Mudaly's study had been in paid employment and therefore had interacted with a variety of non-Muslim Australians on a day to day basis. In comparison, the women interviewed in this study had little interaction with non-Muslim Australians and hence would be more likely to form their opinions of Australian society based on media images.
Ultimately, the rejection of Australian life based on a belief that it is not compatible with Muslim ideals results in alienation and, as Deen acknowledged "perpetuation of the stereotypes on both sides." The fact that this is an impediment to integration and the importance of removing such barriers was also mentioned by another key informant who stressed the need for unity, not only amongst Muslims in Perth but also between Muslims and non-Muslims.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This is the final chapter in this study. As such, it will cover two areas. Firstly this chapter will answer the main research question detailed in the introduction by relating the issues expounded in the discussion chapter to the factors which influence the decision by Muslim women to access classes. Secondly, this chapter will summarise the findings and make recommendations based on these findings.

6.1. The factors which influence the decision by Muslim women to access or not access English language classes.

The results of this study indicate that there are two sets of factors which influence the decision by migrant Muslim women to access or not access classes. The first of these is the external set of factors which are related to the timing and location of the classes, the availability of the classes and the ease of access and to AMEP policy. The second is the internal set of factors which stem from the needs, attitudes and perceptions of the women themselves. The sets are by no means mutually exclusive and the results show that the target population is not entirely influenced by either external or internal factors alone. Rather, it is a combination of several external and internal factors that will ultimately impinge on the decision by migrant Muslim women to access classes. Furthermore, the factors are linked to each other by a set of complex interrelationships whereby, for example, a particular external factor may impinge on another external factor and/or an internal factor or number of
factors. In the preceding section of this study, the issues related to these factors were discussed. The factors themselves and their relationship to each other are discussed below.

6.1.1 External factors.

Accessibility of classes

The location and timing of the classes proved to play a part in the decision by some of the respondents to access or not to access classes. For the most part, these factors were mentioned as factors which contributed to the decision by respondents not to access classes. Some women considered full time language tuition as too demanding and would have preferred part-time classes. Those women who had or were accessing community classes and other forms of language tuition such as the classes held specifically for Muslim women at the Turkish mosque, expressed a dissatisfaction with the limited tuition they were receiving, which was thrice weekly for community classes and once a week for the classes held at the Mosque. The overall indication is that women would prefer to have more than one hour a week of tuition but no more than ten hours a week tuition.

For some women, transport to and from also proved to be a barrier to access. However, the overall indication is that most women would travel longer distances to classes if the classes were held on a part-time basis and if they were held in a place where they would feel comfortable, such as in a Mosque or at the Muslim school in Thornlie. There was also general agreement among both women who had accessed and women who had not accessed that the provision of single sex classes or classes held specifically for Muslim women would greatly increase the number of Muslim women seeking language tuition.
Recent changes to AMEP policy have had a profound effect on the accessibility of classes for migrant Muslim women. Although the women themselves were not aware of how the implementation of the National Plan had effected them, the current emphasis on prioritising ESL provisions for newly arrived migrants who are keen to join the workforce, ultimately results in a barrier to accessing classes for migrant Muslim women. Considering the education background of the women interviewed in this study, and indeed the education status of the target population at large, there is little to suggest that a majority of Muslim women have a need for English in order to further their education. Considering also the number of Muslim women in paid employment or those seeking employment, it is also likely that a majority of Muslim women would not have a need for English in order to seek employment. As a result, Muslim women are missing out on current provisions in the AMES by virtue of the fact that they do not wish to or have no need to learn English in order to gain employment or seek further education. For the most part, Muslim women are eligible to access community based language programs. As discussed in the previous section, most of the women interviewed expressed a dissatisfaction with the frequency of community based tuition. In the discussion chapter of this study, the relevance of community based classes in lieu of formal language tuition was also discussed and it was suggested that those women who had accessed community based classes had attended sporadically or for limited periods of time.

Access to Information

The results of this study indicate a gap in the provision of information regarding eligibility to classes. A majority of the women interviewed indicated that they
had learned about English language classes through friends or relatives. Few women had actually been informed of their eligibility through official channels such as the CES or DSS. It appears therefore that information is being filtered through the support network to the women themselves. The possibilities of the women being misinformed about language classes are therefore increased. Furthermore, it appears that women seeking information about language classes are unaware of the official channels through which this information is available. One woman for example, stated that when she sought information about language tuition she would approach members of her community. Others stated that they had approached friends or relatives for information. Lack of information and misinformation have the potential of being barriers to access particularly if Muslim women have to rely on information from other members of the 'women's network'. In this case, the information they obtain may be coloured by the informant's own ideas about English language tuition or their own perceptions and attitudes towards learning English. Whilst this may have a positive affect on the decision by Muslim women to access classes, it may also prove detrimental if the support network upon which the women rely for information are unsympathetic to the individual's need to learn English.

Special Provisions for Muslim Women

Currently there is only one service which caters specifically for Muslim women. This service is a once weekly, hour long session of English language tuition set up by the Turkish Mosque in Welshpool. On average, five women attend the classes regularly and attendance is extremely sporadic with a high drop out rate. Most of the women interviewed who used this service on a regular basis, indicated that they would prefer to have more language tuition, but as there was
no funding available and they had to pay for the tuition themselves, they felt that this was difficult to achieve. Most of the women in the study welcomed the idea of classes held specifically for Muslim women at a place of worship or other convenient location. However, considering some of the reasons women stated for not attending classes such as the responsibility of caring for a young family, the issue of childcare would also need consideration. For those women with young children, the demands of looking after their family was one of the main factors which influenced their decision not to access classes. These women also stated that they would attend classes which catered specifically for Muslim women assuming that these classes would not be on a full time basis and would not interfere with their responsibilities towards home and family.

6.1.2 Internal Factors

Cultural and Religious
The cultural and religious affiliations of Muslim women may impinge on their decision to access or not access classes in four ways. Firstly, many of the women interviewed indicated that they had felt or would feel uncomfortable attending mixed sex classes. Whist this is also related to factors such as their perceptions of English language classes, their level of education in their own countries and to whether or not learning English was seen as a priority, most of the women regardless of age, background or whether or not they had accessed classes indicated that they had or would feel a degree of discomfort attending mixed sex classes. For some women, the fact that formal English language classes were mixed sex was a key determiner in their decision not to access classes. For others, the need or desire to learn English was a more important factor and outweighed any discomfort they may have felt.
Secondly, a number of women faced opposition from unsympathetic spouses and/or other influential members of the support network. Many women who had not accessed classes indicated that their spouses attitude towards mixed sex classes was also a determiner in their decision not to access classes. Those women who had accessed classes had, for the most part, done so with the support of their spouses. Others, who were either divorced or separated at the time of the interviews, had delayed accessing classes because of objection from their spouses.

Members of the support network, mostly female friends and relatives, also exerted considerable influence on the decision by Muslim women to access or not access classes. This influence was related to the support networks own perceptions of the role of Muslim women in society and in the domestic domain. When a Muslim woman has strong links with a support network which perceives English language as unnecessary, she is less likely to access English language classes. In the absence of such a support network, Muslim women are not only more likely to have a stronger need for English they are also less likely to succumb to the pressure to devote themselves entirely to the domestic domain.

Finally, cultural and religious attitudes also affect the attitudes that many of the women interviewed for this study had towards Australian society and towards English. Whilst most of the women acknowledged a need for English as a member of Australian society, this need was often overshadowed by attitudes towards Australian society. Often these attitudes were formed under pressure from other females in the support network and from stereotyped images in the media. The feelings of religious superiority that some Muslim women have towards their Australian counterparts (see Literature Review and Discussion chapters) has the potential to alienate Muslim women from the mainstream
Australian society and sustains stereotypes on both sides. Even when a Muslim woman may not bear these feelings herself, she is likely to face such attitudes from other Muslim women and may succumb to the influence of these women if they are members of her support network.

The cultural and religious factors which affect the decision by Muslim women to access or not access classes are closely linked to the existence or absence of a strong support network. A strong support network may exert influence on an individual Muslim woman to attend or not attend classes depending on the support network’s own perceptions of the need for English. Members of this support network include spouses and other female relatives and friends. The fact that the support network has the ability to exert such a strong influence on the individual is indicative of the perceived role of Muslim women in society as it suggests that there is less stress on the individual, particularly if the individual is female, and that a stronger emphasis is placed on the collective unit rather than on individual needs. It is also indicative of the tensions which face Muslim women who are striving to maintain an Islamic way of life in a Western society. When the collective unit and influential members of the support network reinforce the message that Muslim women do not need to work, do not need English and do not need to participate in the wider Australian society, the result is a potential religious and/ or cultural barrier to accessing classes and ultimately to successful integration by Muslim women.
Desire to Participate

The desire to participate in the wider Australian community which Muslim women may or may not feel is influenced by their desires to learn English, their employment aspirations and their attitudes towards English language classes. The results of this study indicate that the desire to learn English is perhaps one of the most important factors which influence the decision by Muslim women to access or not access English language tuition. Those women interviewed for this study who had accessed classes had a strong desire to learn English for the following reasons:

- to achieve a sense of independence
- to broaden their knowledge
- because of an interest in languages
- to be able to fulfil their Islamic duty of TEBLI or spreading the word of Islam
- to be able to answer questions regarding their religion in English
- to be able to talk to English speaking people

The desire to participate is also closely linked to the desire to gain employment. Entry into the workforce, for many of the women interviewed, was seen as synonymous with participation in the wider community. In turn, proficiency in English was seen as essential to gaining employment and hence the desire to gain employment was a strong influence in the decision to access by some women.

The desire to participate is also influenced by individual attitudes to English language classes. As discussed in the preceding chapter, there appear to be two mutually exclusive perceptions of English language classes. Where language classes were perceived as a learning experience and viewed only from the perspective of their contribution to the individual's education or as
necessary for gaining employment and entry into further study, Muslim women were more likely to access these classes. On the other hand, if classes are perceived as a social experience, women who had little desire or were apprehensive to participating in the wider community, were less likely to access these classes. This suggests that a lack of desire to participate coupled with a perception of English language classes as a form of social participation can prove to be a barrier to access. It also suggests that a perception of English language classes as a means of realising high priority aspirations such as gainful employment is an important factor in the decision to access and may effect the decision to access regardless of a desire to participate. For example, an individual may feel a strong desire or need to enter the workforce in Australia, in turn she realises that she requires a higher level of English proficiency in order to fulfil this aspiration and hence accesses classes as a means to achieving this goal. On the other hand, another individual may have little desire to participate in the wider community for various reasons, if this individual also perceives language classes as a form of participation, she will be less likely to access these classes for the same reasons that impinge on her lack of desire to participate.

ESL Needs

The need for English is also an important factor in the decision to access or not access classes. The strongest areas of need expressed by those women who had accessed classes were:

- for gaining employment and/ or access to further study
- to be able to complete linguistically demanding tasks associated with the external domain
Most of the women interviewed recognised a need to learn English because they lived in Australia. However, the strength of this need and whether or not this need became a priority for them was closely dependent on other factors. It is difficult to separate the need for learning English from other factors as the composite of these factors operates to prioritise the need to learn English. If the need to learn English is not a high priority, migrant Muslim women are less likely to access classes.

Perhaps the greatest influence on the need to learn English is the existence of a strong support network. In the absence of a strong support network, Muslim women are more likely to encounter a need to learn English in order to cope with the linguistic demands of living in an English speaking society. This is consistent with Mudaly's (1992) finding that long term resident Turkish women were conscious of a lack of independence once their support networks were no longer available to provide help. A majority of those women interviewed for this study who had accessed classes had done so in the absence of a strong support network. Where an individual does have access to a strong support network, the need for English may not be as acute as they would have little opportunity to realise a need to learn English to cope with the demands of the external domain. Thus, access to a strong support network and reliance on members of this network to fulfil the more linguistically demanding tasks of the external domains, culminates in a failure to feel a strong need to learn English.

Of particular importance is the perceived need to learn literacy skills and the attitude toward literacy. For many of the women in this study, learning English was synonymous with learning how to read and write. Limited literacy in their L1 resulted in an apprehension to learn literacy skills in English and a belief that literacy skills were unnecessary. Women who relied on a strong support
network, expressed a need to speak English rather than read or write English. This impacted on their decision to access classes, particularly if the classes were seen to focus on literacy skills.

Practical Factors
Individual contingencies also exerted an influence on the decision to access classes by the Muslim women interviewed for this study. Factors such as age, number of children, marital status, level of education and period of residence contributed to the decision to access or not access classes. Of particular importance is the extent of home duties. This is determined by the age of the participants as well as the number of children still resident in the family home. Women with young children and small babies were less likely to access classes because of their responsibilities towards home and family. On the other hand, older women with adult children were also less likely to access classes because they relied on their children to fulfil language related tasks for them. Recent arrivals and women with school aged children were more likely to access classes either because they could not rely on their children to fulfil tasks for them in English or because they had more time to devote to activities outside the home. Of particular interest is the fact that none of the women interviewed for this study had considered child-care as an option. The one respondent with a young child who had accessed classes relied on her mother to look after the child whilst she attended classes. Other women with children who were not of school age, had not accessed classes or had discontinued classes because they were pregnant. There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, it may be that the Muslim women interviewed were unaware of child-care provisions or how to access child-care services. Secondly, it may be that these women did
not consider child-care as a viable alternative to staying home to look after children. This may be related to the perceived role of women in the domestic domain and ultimately to religious and cultural beliefs.

6.2. The Relationship of the Factors to Each Other.

The factors described above are intricately related to each other in such a way that no one factor can be distinguished as the single deciding factor in the decision by migrant Muslim women to access or not access classes. Perhaps the most important factor however, is the need to learn English which in turn is influenced by the other factors and their relationship. This relationship operates in such a way as to determine the priority placement of English in the lives of Muslim women. Where the need for English is so strongly felt that it overrides all other factors, women are more likely to access classes. On the other hand, where other factors operate as barriers to access, the need for English is not prioritised and women are less likely to access classes. Moreover, if these barriers to access stem from external factors, the need for English may exist but may never be realised. For example a woman may want and need to learn English but may be ineligible to do so under current AMEP guidelines. It is more commonly the case that a number of internal factors and external factors combine to determine the prioritisation of learning English in the lives of Muslim women. Furthermore, the single most important issue affecting the need to learn English is the existence of a support network. In the presence of a strong support network, the need to learn English may never be conceived, whereas the lack of a support network creates a need to learn English in order to cope with the demands of living in an English speaking society. Apart from this, the barriers to accessing classes are dependent on the individual's age, family,
period of residence, educational background, cultural and religious beliefs, access to information and understanding of procedures, desire to learn English and other individual contingencies. The diagram below illustrates the relationship of the factors to each other and how they operate to prioritise or outweigh the need to learn English.

Figure 6. The relationship of the factors to each other and the prioritising of English language needs.
6.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- That the relevant government agencies target Muslim women or their support networks in a program designed to inform them of the available ESL services. In order to do so, it is recommended that members of the support network are targeted at Mosques, through community leaders and representatives and through Muslim women's associations in Perth.

- That special provisions be made in order to provide funding to Mosques or the Muslim Community School for English language classes targeting Muslim women. These classes should be single sex and designed to meet the needs of Muslim women.

- The findings support recommendations made by FECCA and cited in State of The Nation 1994: A Report on People of non-English Speaking Backgrounds (p.103), that the AMEP registration requirements of three months to register and 12 months to access classes be removed so that women with young children or other family responsibilities would be fee to cope with the demands of settling into a foreign country without having the added pressure of having to access classes within their first year of arrival.

- That the AMEP reconsider its priority placement strategy in order to ensure that women who may need English for reasons other than seeking employment or gaining access to further education are not disadvantaged by their choice or culturally inflicted limitations.

- That the need to view Muslim women as a separate group within the group known as immigrant women from NESB backgrounds be recognised by government agencies dealing with them, and an acknowledgment that
Muslim women do in fact form a separate group by virtue of their cultural and religious beliefs.

- That further research into the needs of Muslim women be undertaken, particularly research which focuses on their need to maintain an Islamic way of life whilst living in a Western society.
APPENDIX A

Questionnaire
Muslim Women's Access to Migrant English Language Classes

Basic Data on the Respondent

1. Age
   16-24 yrs____
   25-34 yrs____
   35-44 yrs____

   45-54 yrs____
   55-64 yrs____
   65+ yrs____

2. Marital status
   Never married □
   Married □
   Separated □
   Divorced □
   Widowed □

3. How many children do you have? _____________


   Home/School/ University | Age | Where born? | Total Number
   ------------------------|-----|------------|-------------
   _______________________ | _____|___________|-------------
   _______________________ | _____|___________|-------------
   _______________________ | _____|___________|-------------

5. Are there other family members living with you? If yes, how many? Who are they?

   ____________________________________________________________
   ----

6. What is the highest level of education you have achieved? _____________
7. Where did you receive this education?

8. What is your current employment situation?
   Employed for Wages □
   Full time □
   Part time □
   Self Employed □
   Retired □
   Unpaid work at home □
   Other unpaid work □
   Student □
   Seeking employment □

9. If you are employed, or usually work for wages or a salary, what is your occupation?

10. What is your annual income?
    less than $5,000 □
    5,001-20,000 □
    20,001-35,000 □
    35,001-50,000 □
    More than 50,000 □

11. If you are married and your husband works, what is his job?

12. What is the combined income of your household?
    less than 5,000 □
    5,001-20,000 □
    20,001-35,000 □
    35,001-50,000 □
    More than 50,000 □

13. Where were you born? Country______________
    City/Town______________

14. Where did you spend most of your life before migrating to Australia?

15. When did you first migrate to Australia?

16. Under which visa category did you migrate to Australia?
ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS

17. What languages do you speak, in order of proficiency?

__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

18. Which language or languages would you use in each of these areas?

Home- interacting with children __________________________

Home- interacting with spouse and other family members__________

Social______________________________

Work/ school________________________

Neighbourhood- talking to neighbours, shopping etc________________________

Religious practices____________________

Leisure activities____________________

Business__________________________

19. For those areas in which you use English, how much English would you use? Please circle the percentage.

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</table>
20. Are there any other areas in which you use English? Please specify.


LANGUAGE ATTITUDES.

Please answer 'yes' if you agree with these statements and 'no' if you disagree.

21. I always need to use an interpreter or translator when I am dealing with official business. (CES, DSS etc)

22. My husband/children need to know English more than me because he works and they go to school

23. I rely on my husband/children to write letters and fill in forms for me

24. I would like to learn English but I don't have the time

25. I need to learn English now more than when I first arrived in Australia

26. I would like to learn English to be able to talk to Australian people

27. I want to learn English so that I can find a job

28. As a Muslim woman, I don't feel I can live like non-Muslim Australians

29. I think learning English is very important for me because I live in Australia

30. I would like to learn English but I do not feel comfortable attending classes with other non-Muslims and men
LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

31. Have you accessed Migrant English Language classes? Yes □ No □

32. If yes, how long were you in Australia before you decided to learn English?

33. If no, do you think you will access these classes soon? When? If not, why not?

34. If you have accessed classes, how long did you study English for?

35. Where did you find out about the classes?

36. What made you decide to access these classes?
37. What, if any, problems did you have when you accessed these classes? Were any of these problems associated with the fact that you are Muslim? Can you suggest ways for access to be made easier for other Muslim women?

38. If you haven't accessed the classes, what are the reasons?

39. Can you suggest any ways that would make it easier for you to access the classes?
APPENDIX B.

CONSENT FORM

My name is Anne Rida and I am a Muslim woman studying for my Master of Education degree at Edith Cowan University. As part of my study, I am interviewing other Muslim women about why they decided to take English language classes, or why they decided not to take these classes. The purpose of this is to find out what Muslim women need to be able to attend classes.

I will ask you some general questions, for example how long you have been in Australia and about your family. I will also ask you some questions about where and why you use English and what you think about English and about being a Muslim woman in Australia. If you agree to be interviewed, you only have to answer those questions that you feel comfortable with.

At first, I would like to talk to you with a group of other Muslim women- your friends or women from the same country. If you are interested, I may ask to talk to you again in the future but you do not have to if you do not want to. I would like to tape the interviews on audio cassette using a tape recorder, but I will only do this if you agree.

After the interview, I will transcribe the cassette and will change the names so that nobody will know who you are. Please be assured that no names will be used in the study and anything you say will be used only for the project. No outsiders will have access to this information, and the cassettes will be destroyed when the project is finished.

The interview should take about one hour. After I have finished transcribing the cassettes, I will show you what I have written and you will have the opportunity to change anything or take anything out. If you have any questions or would like to know more, I would be happy to talk to you about my project.

Any questions concerning the project entitled Non English Speaking Background Migrant Muslim Women and Adult Migrant English Classes can be directed to me, Anne Rida on 331 3767.

.................................................................
.............
I (the participant) have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.
I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

________________________
participant or authorised representative date

________________________
investigator date
APPENDIX C

KEY INFORMANT NUMBER 3- HANIFA DEAN.

I: Basically, I've interviewed 30 Muslim women, sort of with a theory in mind that their attitudes towards Australian social life may have some bearing on their decision whether or not to access classes.
R: Most definitely.
I: But of course, I have to explore that. A lot of them are very iffy about that and so the key informant interviews, their purpose is to get insights from people who have studied, researched and done community work...
R: to flesh out the gap.
I: in the responses. A lot of them say no, it's not the social attitude.
R: They're not going to tell you
I: But underlying what they're saying, it's coming out.
R: Well there's always two levels of dialogue, when you talk to Muslim women as you know- there's the official speak and then there's what you have to glean and interpret what they're not saying or if you get someone alone compared to if she's with another sister- there's just so many factors there that can be very frustrating. The Bosnian women are, I mean the cultural, I mean the whole thing is- in my next book I'm sort of tackling the myth of the Muslim woman- it's a convenient tag like NESB, but there are some Muslim women who have more in common with Anglo women than they have with other Muslim women. I've always maintained that a Vietnamese doctor has more in common with an Anglo doctor than with a Vietnamese fisherman or a Vietnamese working in a factory- so there will be class, socio-economic.
I: In your book you talk a lot about some of the superior attitudes some Muslim women have- viewing the Australian woman as a "painted jezebel" are the words you use. What are some of the outcomes that these kinds of attitudes may have to their settlement in Australia, do you think that affects their ability to settle?
R: Well it depends what are the factors that impinge on settlement. What is your definition of that? What kind of settlement are we talking about- are we talking about different levels of integration? I find that self opinionated women, arrogant women alienate other people- no matter what their cultural background. So to me it's a psychological aspect. I find that there are groups of Muslim women who are as I call them self-opinionated, who see themselves as the representative Muslim women and have got a strangle hold on the debate. Those are women who for instance, I tell the story about Pamela Bone, who will damn her and write letters and send a group, a delegation to her office because she dared interview a Bosnian woman who doesn't wear a scarf. So there are those, if you like, self elected gate keepers- men and women, who are sometimes not so skilful in hiding their opinion, which they're entitled to, that Western women are sluts... or immoral women and I have, and sometimes their unwise enough to articulate this at conferences- it's almost like 'well, if they get raped they were asking for it'. What do you expect if you wear minis' So what does all of that self opinionated hogwash lead to? It leads to a lack of, it leads to social distance- which I think is an impediment to integration. So we're talking about social distance and there's quite a lot of interesting stuff on social distance theory. There are always two sides to that- those that do the rejecting, let's say the mainstream society who see Muslims as being particularly alien and least like us whereas...are more like us, Southern Europeans are less like
us, but Chinese, Aborigines, Blacks, Africans and Muslims are least like us. So we’ve got that social distance and if because of customs and habits and because, quite often because of what people see... What do they know about Australian society? They know what they see on television and that came across very very strongly that the parents are terrified for their kids because they honestly believe that it’s a jungle out there, and those who may not be totally convinced use it to keep their kids under control. So you ask me... the outcomes are alienation between two potential groups of allies- alienation and a lack of ability to get into some self criticism, self analysis. So you get a perpetuation of stereotypes on both sides- you get a self fulfilling stereotype.

I: In my interviews I have often been asked ‘why aren’t you veiled?’, and because of the relationship- interviewer and respondent, I always try and make some excuse without sounding too radical.

R: Well you have to be careful. I’m in the position where I can say ‘My interpretation rejects what you are doing and I will back it up and I will read you X Y and Z, Sister why are you veiling, when it’s un-Islamic and it’s a cultural habit?’ Turn it on the head and ask them.. I mean just get.. there’s not enough confrontation. You see, my theory is that when you’ve got a group as a religious minority they’re constantly circling the wagons. Constantly defending Islam, Islam under attack, so they do not get on to what I think are the really important things- looking at how men interpret Islamic tradition and Islamic law- they’re sidetracked continually onto linking hands and defending Islam- which is laudable but which they’ve go to move away, particularly in a country like Australia where they do not have a Muslim intellectual base. It can get very very lonely in Australia. I have more dialogue with Muslim women in the UK than I do with Muslim women in Australia, because it's still very much on a survival - I mean they're building the Mosques and the schools- so that the priority is very very set. So, I guess what I just said then was, you have in my opinion the Feminist movement is.. part of the women who are Feminists are going to be part of what I call the Anti- Racist elements as well. So when you get Muslim women alienating potential allies, that I find disturbing. But I do come down a lot harder on the Anglo feminists because their white woman colonial attitude, because even though I criticise the Muslim women here, we’re not talking about a situation where there’s equal power, we’re talking about the Anglo women have the access and have the power to everything in society by comparison, even though I must admit I’m speaking very broadly as if it was a classless society, but their preoccupation with seeing Muslim women as victims does affect the dialogues.

I: I totally agree with you. I’ve always maintained that feminism is the domain of a white, middle class, educated elite- and I’m neither white, not middle class, not Western, so..what is it going to do for me. I’ve also experienced the looks and it’s almost like ‘Are you really a Muslim?’ I accessed a publication called, Women in Islam and the whole thing was almost an advertisement for hijab.

R: The important thing with those is to look at who publishes them. Was it a Saudi publication?

I: It was the Muslim Community School.

R: Yeah, which in turn does not write original stuff. They’re plagiarising the Saudis. I’ve got loads of this stuff and I also criticise that kind of publication in my book. I don’t think enough Sydney Muslims have read my book or else they’d be far more upset. No-one’s upset which to me indicates that they haven’t read it because those what I call, they’re not publications, I call them the pamphleteer tradition, where there is no critical framework, it’s regurgitation, usually from the Saudi sponsored type of publication and it’s just so much
propaganda. And it's not even intelligent or skills. I complain in the book that I do not come across critical writings in any of the Muslim bookshops, they're mainly written for women, and I try to be fairly diplomatic, who are, have not a lot of education or women who are too busy to read and who just need to be able to fire back a few questions. But who is producing that stuff? The men are, the men are controlling it all.

I: When the Koran was first written down, who were the educated people back then? The men, so the women had to rely on the male interpretation.

R: Well that's where it all began. Fatima Mernissa is very good. You must read some of her publications. I try and turn as many people on to reading her. She's a Moroccan sociologist, she's quite a prolific writer, just look her up in any library and they'll give you 'Women in Islam' or 'Doing Daily Battle'. I've read about four of her books. She's very good on explaining how the Hadiths got forged and you know- She's very, as I am, anti- Muslim male establishment.

I: I'm surprised there isn't a FATWAH on her.

R: Because she's too good. she's a Moroccan sociologist, Morocco is not Algiers. She knows what she's talking about, she's an Arabic speaker. As a matter of fact ...[respondent pauses tape]

...Don't read anything other than why we should all wear PURDAH. In fact there's one little case in the 1950's where this woman- they laud this as being up to date [shows a publication] "Does Purdah Impede National Progress?' this is fifty years later, no,no I tell a lie, forty years later this is being lauded as a great thing for women to read and it's something, a woman who debated a topic, this topic and insisted on debating it with a curtain separating her from the other team and that's the kind of garbage that Muslim women swallow.

I: That's why I found your book so refreshing because it handled the topic with delicacy.

R: I'm not into bashing the community that I have links with. I mean I disagree with them on most things but it's still a minority.

I: You don't want to alienate yourself from them as well

R: To be honest that's less of a consideration for me. It's not wanting to inflict hurt. Not wanting to damage people. Wanting to say what needs to be said, because we have to advance, we can't keep going around treading water, we have to advance. We have to have the capacity to self-criticise, to self-evaluate, to look at things with humour instead of always being lacking confidence, and no-one ever ever tells me what I can or can't say. So if what I've written meant that people were upset, then I would say 'that is regrettable, but...so be it'. I know what my intention is and if it's to get people to... I'm disappointed I haven't had more critical feedback from Muslims, which I expected. A couple of women presidents have said 'we like most of what we've read, some of what we've read we don't agree with' That's fine. I want people to think. I don't want people to stand around applauding and I want younger people to sort of be able to say well you know, 'We can speak out too'.

I: On the topic of younger people, have you visited the Muslim school here?

R: No I haven't. I've visited Muslim schools over in the Eastern States. Indeed my links are much much [slight pause for cassette change] I guess I've tended to be more of an observer than a participant because I'm not.. I describe myself as a Maverick, I'm not a practising Muslim. I would be more of a cult... I'm a secularist, probably be more of a cultural, sort of Muslim of the heart if you like. There is that wonderful term 'minimalist' which I think fits me to a T. So, because my family is here, I've tended, because I don't like it interfering with my own private life, and it can, it can consume you, and because of all the National
conferences and ethnic affairs generally are over in Sydney and Melbourne, that's where I've developed links.

I: Is that why you based your book in Sydney and Melbourne?

R: There's lots and lots of reasons why it's based in Sydney and Melbourne. That's where things happen. In West Australia, things do not shake, rattle and roll as far as ethnic affairs go and as far as Muslim affairs go. Western Australia is very derivative. You've got things like Multicultural commissions and all these sort of things not because people here lobbied for them and wanted them, but because it was part of the Labor platform and they had them in Sydney and Melbourne so they came here as well. Here, so this is not where.. you don't have the heavy numbers of Muslims here, you don't have the concentration of Muslims, you do not have that radical edge to Muslims, because you don't have Muslims here who have been migrant workers like the Turks and the Lebanese. You don't have that sort of more radical, politicised edge if you like. You've had all your factories in Sydney and Melbourne and that's where immigrants by and large have gone and that's where you get sort of more radical things happening. And you've got your large numbers over there. And that's basically.. also you have your large numbers, your Turks are your largest ethnic number, the largest linguistic number are your Arabic speakers- but that's a linguistic majority, it's not an ethnic majority. That's over in Sydney and Melbourne as well, whereas here it's a little bit like.. for instance, the impact of the Gulf crisis, there was no impact in Western Australia- I know I was Deputy Commissioner of Multicultural Affairs at the time, I called on Muslim groups, organised a little meeting, what is happening? nothing. Sydney and Melbourne kids buses stoned, women having their veils ripped off. So all the heavy stuff is in Melbourne and Sydney. I personally know because I tested the waters here- it wasn't happening here. So I guess for all of those reasons, and there is a Western Australia flavour through it because there's me and probably I would like to have done.. I did actually do some more interviews- I did some South African, Malay interviews, and some South African, Indian interviews- but I wrote 140 000 words, so I wrote two books and I had to cut it, I had to go through and get it down to about 92 000. So 50 000 words had to be dropped. Some of the West Australian stuff did get dropped. I wanted to do quite a bit on the Christmas Islanders and Cocos Malays, but it was just too difficult at the time. For a whole range of reasons, I concentrated more on the Eastern Coast. Also I have an eye as to how I want the book to sell, the book is making the rounds over there quite incredibly. People buy four or five copies of it and give it as presents. The media, all the media interest over there, I would not have got that extract in The Australian if it had been heavily focussed in Western Australia. So for all of those reasons and the way the story unfolded, the fact that I was on a journey, here it's not a journey, all of those reasons.

I: Do you think that the population in Perth has specific problems that perhaps the population in Sydney and Melbourne don't have, or advantages or disadvantages?

R: I think that there's probably more tolerance towards Muslims in Western Australia, probably on the grounds that you don't have one single community dominant. As I say to people in the East when I visit them, when you're talking about Muslims, you're talking South East Asian and South Asian. You're not talking Middle East. You're talking Indian, Pakistani, Malaysian, Indonesian, Christmas Islanders- quite a spread. There's less of the ugly Middle East stereotype- you don't find that here and I think that's why there wasn't the outbreak of the initial Gulf crisis.
I: Here I'm often asked where I'm from, whereas I lived in Sydney and people could pick me as a Middle Easterner.
R: Self-opinionated Muslim women are very insulting to other Muslim women. Because I don't have an accent, and you would have the same thing, they ask me am I a convert. Now, they're not supposed to put down converts anyway. [informant pauses tape]
And they will say "Only the best of Islam comes from Lebanon", which is so incredibly arrogant. It's the same thing with the Lakemba uniform, I'm always having a go at the Lakemba uniform. That's what it is, it's the most drabbest looking thing I've ever seen in my life. I say to the Indian Muslim women "Why on Earth, you've got your beautiful national sari, why on Earth do you want to wear that for?" I usually find [tape is paused]
I: Relates her experience in Egypt with the style of hijab and women's fashions.
R: I found that women from Egypt in particular, I talk about the Egyptian women in the fifties you see in the movies. One of the stories I didn't include was from an Egyptian woman whose mother was a teacher and used to wear sleeveless dresses and the next time her mum came out in the seventies, she noticed there was a sleeve, and the next time it's a long sleeve and it's a very pale lipstick. So she's able to gauge the degree of impact of revivalism if you like according to the fashions her mother wears now.
I: They come here and it's probably because they're a minority and you get people saying things like "I was born a Muslim, but I became a Muslim when I came to Australia"
R: See that is very common. I said in my book a lot of women do not wear hijab in their own country, even they were here in Australia for twenty years and it seemed to happen around the time of the Iranian revolution. And also the Gulf crisis, I spoke to a lot of girls who, who... I think it shocked a lot of people and they felt they had to stand up and be counted and it was like, as I say, a T-shirt with a message...the younger women too. It doesn't bother me as long as there is choice. If there's choice that's fine. I also make a distinction between women who choose to wear it in Australia and women who are forced to wear it overseas. I've had Muslim women here say to me, Hanifa, which is good that they're sort of trusting me and asking me, we're reading these terrible things that are happening to Algerian women. This can't be true Hanifa, they're making it up. Believe me when I say, unfortunately it is the truth and it's terrible that Muslim men are doing this. The fundamentalists are going around shooting young girls for not wearing hijab and the youth gangs then go and say we will shoot three women who are wearing hijab. And who are the total victims. There is a tendency to reject a lot of what they're reading, and for good reasons too, the Western media has been a distorted mirror- well it distorts a lot of things, but it is not distorting what is happening in Algeria so you can't just dismiss it willy-nilly.
I: I found that when I came to do my literature review a lot of magazine articles- Jan Goodwin, a lot of her articles seem to be dedicated to introducing people and stressing on the poor Muslim woman.
R: Well you know this is the whole thing. Muslim women have got enough obstacles and enough chance to negotiate without having to, God help them, put up with the missionary tactics of the modern Western Feminists- and if you call them missionaries, they'd be horrified and they are horrified, but they have no idea how change has to be negotiated by the women who want to retain their religion. They ought to just listen and learn a lot more. Things don't happen the way... with the magic legislative wand.
I: I found a lot of people have that attitude. They can't understand that I would like to be able to do things within the framework of the religion.

R: Which bringing us back to your study, it seemed to me that word of mouth advertising amongst Muslim women, that "Hey there's this good female teacher who is Muslim friendly" would go a long way to getting women... so I think having the right teacher, one who is not going to see them as victims, and this comes out very clearly, very clearly in people's minds- you don't have to be brilliant in English to understand that someone is putting you down or someone is being condescending to you, you know that very well. Language is not a barrier to picking those kinds of signs up. So I think that the need for, I don't like the word 'cultural sensitivity' so much, I think a little bit of 'cultural humility' is what we want. People are so busy trying to be sensitive that they usually put their foot in their mouth.

I: The Turkish Mosque provides English tuition. The women I interviewed there said that they have to learn English so that they could spread the word of Islam. Another one said "People look at me and they think I'm stupid because I wear the veil" I asked them why they didn't access the classes that were available to them and that's when all the practical factors came out- time, transport, etc. I found the best way to get their real insights was to ask them to comment on other Muslim women so that they could distance themselves.

R; The husbands are still a problem- the husbands. You're talking about power, control. There's often that aspect.

I: Do you think that the husbands are quite a significant factor? R: I couldn't say. I can only go by talking to women in Lakemba, there's no doubt about it there's been a, and I describe it quite well I think, and there's a women led revival in Lakemba and many husbands don't like that. Some of the Muslim women have said all the good things that are happening in Lakemba are through the women and the men try to hold them back even if it means getting them pregnant. So, a lot would depend on whether a man's employed or unemployed, a lot depends on the man's successful integration. If the man is happy that makes a big difference. If the man is unhappy, he still wants to be king of his own household, he's going to basically keep the woman down. I would say that a woman cannot.. that you can't talk about Muslim women integrating as compared to the family integrating- it's the unit, collectively. I don't think that you.. I think that the woman's integration is dependent on factors including the husband's state of mind and well being of the family etc. There have been too many marriage break- ups where, because the husband comes here, the wife- women can adapt themselves a lot easier. [pause]

A lot depends on, as you know, there's less stress on the individual, the individual's happiness is not emphasised as much as the collective unit etc. I: One of the factors that's come out of this research is that a lot of Muslim women just can't be bothered. They perform their daily prayers, they live their Muslim life and they just can't be bothered.

R: There is a section in my book- Belal Cleland talks about that Muslim women need to be more active. Now he's from Melbourne where there are lots of active women, but he says they need to be more active. It's not always the wicked men who keep the women down. There's a whole women's network there. [reads from book] "It is clear Balal continued, when you do go back to the Koran that women's rights have been taken away from them by men, by which I mean that it has been done without the authority of Islam but in the name of Islam. Women have to learn to fight back. In a society where women are being denied the opportunity for education, you can be sure that their rights are being taken away." I think you have to read those lines fairly deeply " Look at Muslim women
in Australia. First there are those that are very aware and conscious and active* and they’re the ones who will activate English classes in my opinion, the self improvement ones, " but there are also groups of women who are deprived of their rights- the non joiners" and they’re the majority aren’t they- the non joiners “who sometimes aren’t allowed to join and it’s not always the wicked husbands you know” and he’s spot on here “it’s often grand mothers and mothers in law, aunts and an entire female network who insist vehemently that Muslim women don’t do this and that all Muslim women need is to learn how to read the Koran and know a few Hadiths. They determine this to be proper religious behaviour for women and their sole obligation.” So that’s what your saying and that’s from the mouth of a very sympathetic male, practising Muslim who also is an AMES senior administrator and he’s one of the few intellectuals. He’s spot on there, so this ties in with this... we’re talking about women who have not graduated from high school quite often, so they don’t have.. what have they had? A few years of primary school education. They don’t have the mind, they don’t have a mind trained for that quite often. So yes I would say they’re lazy or they’re not motivated or they’re being told you don’t need it. And it’s not the men, as he says, it’s often the other women who keep the women down.
I: It’s the whole women’s network- the ‘when are you going to have a baby’ thing
R: ‘Show me your latest jewellery’ I guess it’s an opiate. I think women’s magazines serve the same purpose for Anglo Australian women- I mean that keeps women in a zombie like trance if you like. So, that’s why in the story for instance ‘the disobedient woman’, even though I detested that man personally, I still had to try and understand him. And very interesting, a part of the story I left out was her own power struggle with women who were wearing the hijab, because she refused to wear the hijab, and she was more educated than those other women. There was this incredible power struggle going on between them. So sometimes maybe, I admire that Turkish initiative, sometimes maybe you have to get to women through ‘it is your religious duty to be able to discuss Islam in English’ to get them to do it.
I: Sometimes you have to appeal to what’s going to be the biggest greatest motivational factor for them.
R: Or whether it’s the children, being able to talk to the teacher- a whole range of things
I: Usually that’s left to the children.
R: It’s usually I think it’s why daughters end up the carers and sons don’t. I was also thinking about some of the very active young women I’ve met here- the Singaporeans and Malaysians and the overseas students, I think it’s rather good sometimes some of the husbands don’t approve of their wives meeting [pause tape]
* rest of interview off record at respondents request.
APPENDIX D

- 2 -

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE: A BEGINNING CHECK-LIST

[a] The Subject's Linguistic Repertoire

What is S's first language?

What are S's other languages, in order of proficiency?

In what language/s does S have receptive competence [listening/reading]?

In what language/s does S have productive competence [speaking/writing]?

Does the subject speak a dialect of English or a type of English like Indian English, Singaporean English, Malaysian English or any other variety from the ESL/EFL domain?

Note any marked features observed.

Can S use any non/alphabetic writing system? [Which?]
Can S use any other symbolic systems for communication e.g. sign language, morse code, semaphore, etc?

[b] The Subject's Functional Range of Varieties

What percentage of S's interaction takes place in each of the following domains?

Home [incl. extended family]
School/Work
Neighbourhood [incl. shopping]
Religious observances
Leisure occupations
Business

What varieties does S use in each of the following domains?

Home
School/Work
Neighbourhood
Religious observances
Leisure occupations
Business
In what other domains would S use varieties other than standard English?

[The Subject's Linguistic Experience]

What experience has S of residence in a non-English-speaking community?

What experience has S of L2 learning?

What experience has S of L2 acquisition?

Has S observed any change in his/her own speech over a period of time?

Has S ever had to serve as an interpreter? [what languages?]

Has S ever had to serve as a translator? [what languages?]
The Subject's Sociolinguistic Profile: A Summary

Name of student preparing this profile: ____________________________
REFERENCES


