The experiences of British Yemeni young people in the context of the conduct of everyday life

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities

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School of Environment, Education, and Development
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<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIS</td>
<td>Participant Information Sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCSE</td>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<td>Theory</td>
<td>Used to describe a systematic set of interrelated statements intended to explain some aspects of social life (Rubin &amp; Babbie, 2016). The term is used to provide explanations in answering the “why” and “how” questions about patterns observed in social life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paradigm</td>
<td>Used when describing a way of viewing the world as a possible framework from which to understand the human experience (Kuhn, 2020). The term is grounded in over-arching, general assumptions about the world, directing the researcher to ask the “why” questions. It is sometimes used interchangeably with theory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Used to refer to the self, and describes the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices (Barker, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Used to refer to the society, and describes the recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limits the choices and opportunities available to individuals and community (Barker, 2003).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Used to describe a group of people who share a common background of experiences (Dahya, 1965)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic heritage</td>
<td>Used to describe practices that are determined by the historical context in which a person may be associated with, based on shared attributes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National culture</td>
<td>Used to describe practices that are determined by the country in which a person resides in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural hybridity</td>
<td>The mixture of cultural influences that allows the mixing of both the colonised country and pre-existing traditional customs (Bhabha, 1994).</td>
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Abstract


Huda K. Ahmed, Manchester Institute of Education, 2022

British Yemenis are one of the oldest communities that have migrated and settled in the UK, yet they have been under-represented in academic literature. The voices of young people from within this community have previously been overlooked. This research provides an opportunity to redress this imbalance through an exploration of the everyday experiences of British Yemeni young people. The data presented was generated via a longitudinal study of six British Yemeni young people, using photo-novella and semi-structured interviews to articulate their experiences. The framework adopts Dreier’s theory of the conduct of everyday life (2011) to explore personality as governed by actions, and Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice (2020) to examine the notion of learning and development, both examining the evolving and developing cultural dynamics of young people. The findings are presented in two ways: (1) A content directed approach to understanding experiences of each participant, (2) A thematic analysis to show relational experiences shared between the young people. The findings provide portraits of the various social constructions of British Yemeni young people’s hybrid and evolving cultures and structures. While such experiences are not unique to British Yemenis, the way in which the young people connect their lived experiences of Yemeni culture and structure with the dominant mainstream British cultures around them, provides a contribution to research that focuses on issues of ethnicity, cultural hybridity, and diaspora.
Declaration of Original Contribution

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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Acknowledgements

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My sincere gratitude to my main supervisor, Professor Carlo Raffo, for his vision, his guidance and patience throughout the six years of my part time PhD, and to my co-supervisor Dr Susie Miles, for her wisdom, guidance and encouragement throughout these years.

It has been a demanding yet fulfilling journey, and during these six years I have learnt what it means to conduct my life in ways which enhance my own living and being.
Chapter 1 - Introduction to the study

1.1 Aims and research question

I explore the dynamic nature of the lived lives of six British Yemeni young people in the context of the conduct of everyday life. Studying experiences has focused on exploring related notions of youth identity and agency (Côte & Levine, 1983; Schwartz, 2005; Bucholtz, 2002; Klimstra et al., 2010). Although valuable, such approaches have failed, at times, to emphasis the lived realities that provide a deep meaning to young people’s experiences, particularly those with ethnic heritage. Based on the arguments made by critical social psychologists and relational sociologist (Holzkamp, 2015; Hodgetts et al., 2010; Schraube & Hojholt, 2016; Dreier, 2011; Hybholt, 2015) my position in this thesis is that people in general, and British Yemeni young people in particular, develop who they are through their social practices in their social contexts and by interacting with others in everyday life. Thus, a person is both a subject, and subjected to, the daily transactions of everyday life, and this is informed by the cultural social arrangement of which a person is part of, and which they reproduce and change (Holzkamp, 2013).

The lived realities of six British Yemeni young people from Birmingham, England, are explored using theoretical positions that focus on their actions and activities with others, rather than on any essentialised and individualised reflexive identity. This generates a deep social understanding of lived relational experiences where meaning is operationalised with and through others. In particular, the orientation of this research is informed by Dreier’s theory of a person (2011) and a focus on the conduct of everyday life. I claim that understanding experiences requires an exploration of a person in their various social contexts, practices, and arrangements, through theories that explore their activities and I engage with a set of paradigms and discussions in and around the doing and living, particularly by forming a connection between Dreier’s theory of a person (2011) and Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice (2020). I focus on the everyday interactional processes in which British Yemeni young people live, and how they continuously learn and develop through such interactions.
To enable the production of a more finely grained sense of the evolving biography and portrait of British Yemeni young people, I also use an analytical lens of intersectionality and post-colonialism.

The research questions used to structure the empirical study focused on:

1. What types of everyday experiences do British Yemeni young people have?

2. What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time?

3. What does the experiences, learning and development suggest about the social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people?

1.2 Research problem

Despite being one of the oldest communities to migrate and settle in Britain (Roochnik, 2001), British Yemenis have been under-represented in academic literature. Although information on their lives may now be more accessible via social media platforms, their experiences have not been academically represented. By documenting British Yemeni young people’s experiences through the activities of their daily lives, this doctoral research provides a platform to share aspects of their living and being, as well as their views and concerns about the world around them.

The reasons behind the under-representation of British Yemenis in previous and current literature is unclear. My personal observation of the Yemeni communities in Birmingham is that, as a social group, the community is largely private, and this may suggest a reason for the limited academic research on this ethnic minority group. From my informal discussions with members of the Yemeni community in Birmingham, other suggestions for their under-representation include the shortage of academic researchers (whether British Yemenis or others) in social sciences in the research of Yemenis in Britain, the scarcity in the public engagement of the British Yemeni community in the media and/or the limited number of
British Yemenis in positions of political power. Another possibility is that there is too small a number of Yemenis living in Britain to necessitate an enquiry. Moreover, there are limited quantitative studies on the precise number of Yemenis living in Britain today - the 2011 census figures estimate approximately 70-80,000 people of Yemeni origin (Office for National Statistics, 2013), although the recent 2021 census may provide a more up-to-date number (UK Government, 2021).

Although reasons for the under-representation of British Yemenis in literature is not the focus of this research, this ethnic minority community has been overlooked in academic research. This suggests that there may be elements of marginalisation and exclusion from research, policy, and practice affecting this overlooked British Yemeni community. Recently, researchers have begun to consider some of the issues of mobilization, immigration and diaspora of ethnic minorities in Britain (Moss, 2021a; Moss, 2021b; Kronenfeld & Guzansky, 2014), but this has been disproportionate. Exclusion can take many forms (Fraser, 1995), and with respect to British Yemenis, it may be rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication, yet there is no clear academic research completed to validate this.

This research addresses the problem of under-representation by documenting the experiences of British Yemenis acknowledging that they have an ethnic as well as national dimension to their living and being. Both ethnicity and nationality are categorical identities, and their studies transpire in several disciplines (Anisette, 2020; Blanchette, 2011; Aboud & Skerry, 1983; Gil-White, 2001; Calhoun, 1993). The evolution of each term, from their initial conceptualisation and definition to their acceptance and mainstream use (Bird, 2020), provides researchers with some flexibility in their use and application. In this research, I use the term ethnicity to describe personal attributes and ancestry heritage, and nationality to depict the society of a person living in a particular country. I do not dissociate nationality entirely from ethnicity, but I also do not explain it merely as a continuation of ethnicity or a simple reflection of common history or language. Rather, I use such terms to explain the culture of participants as a combination of both ethnic and national practices.
This is important when doing research with British Yemenis and I take the position that the psychological and sociological comparison between cultures is complicated and requires an approach that takes into account that, although there are no common set of terms on which different cultures can be meaningfully compared (Hanel et al., 2018; Hofstede, 2001), people of different cultures do have similar cross-cultural applicability (Glaser, 1958; Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). This suggests that while there may be some commonalities and perhaps universal aspects between different ethnic minority communities in Britain, such as Arab communities speaking Arabic, Yemeni culture is also unique in its own history, values, and traditions, and so should be considered as a unique distinctive culture.

Furthermore, the Yemeni community in Britain is diverse. I identify as a British Yemeni and have lived in Birmingham for majority of my life. I have also travelled and interacted with other British Yemenis in other British cities, and have noticed some subtle, yet notable differences between the experience and interactions of British Yemenis in different cities. Weddings are a good example, and I have noticed certain differences in the dress, food and rituals performed at such events. Although this research examines elements of Yemeni ethnicity in general, it does not seek to generalise all Yemenis experience in Britain. Rather, it provides a transparent account on the participants’ specific experiences in question, refraining from cultural-political assumptions and generalisation. Nonetheless, there are also some homogeneities in the way British Yemenis live their lives and these will also be discussed in later chapters.

1.3 The Context of Yemen

As my research focuses on young people of Yemeni heritage, I now provide a brief historical context of their ancestral homeland. Here, I focus on the location of Yemen, as significant to the context of this research. The history of Yemen, including the colonisation of Yemen by Britain and the current political situation in Yemen today, is depicted in Appendix A.

Yemen is located in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, shown in Figure 1, and the geographical position of Yemen is significant to this doctoral research in three ways.
Firstly, the position of Yemen became politically, economically and strategically important during colonial times (Petouris, 2018), with the most relevant to this doctoral research being the colonisation of the south of Yemen by Britain in 1839, and until 1967 (Margariti, 2007; Roochnik, 2001). This long period of colonisation resulted in the diaspora (Halliday, 1992) and first migration of approximately 12,000 young Yemeni men to Britain (Dahya, 1965). Yemenis were recorded to be the first permanent Muslims settlers in Britain (Geaves, 2012). For reasons of employment, Yemenis settled in specific cities in Britain, shown in Figure 2.
Like several other ethnic minorities communities experiencing changes in family structure, employment patterns, public services, racial harassment and cultural identity (Modood et al., 1997), Yemenis also found it challenging to settle in Britain and adjust to the host country (Dahya, 1965). I explore and document some of the literature on these challenges in Chapter Two. Secondly, the significance of the location of Yemen, being located at a far distance from the UK, may also suggest reasons for certain differences in practices between the countries, such as religious or language practices, although the socioeconomic differences may provide more evidence to suggest such variation. Thirdly, travelling to Yemen for holidays, previously and currently, requires time, effort and money and, because of the instability of the country, visits of British Yemenis to Yemen has been hindered. These reasons are further explored and developed in chapters Six and Seven.

1.4 Research paradigm and approach

Understanding the experiences of British Yemeni young people necessitated the engagement of the literature in and around ideas of what people do and reasons behind their doing. Two main strands of thinking about young people and their agency are identity and personality. Having explored some of the main research of youth identity (Côté, 2006; Bucholtz, 2002; Cerulo, 1997; Stryker, 2007; Hammack, 2008) and personality paradigms (Louttit, 1935; Stagner, 1993; Stagner, 1948; Cronbach & Meehl, 1955; Kernberg, 2016; Kedia & Cloninger, 2010), I noticed some issues which pertain to some of the challenges within those identity theories and personality paradigms. Firstly, there is a strong sense of characterisation of what people are through their social identity with their group, a sense of homogeneous understanding of young people’s experiences that tends to suggest an in-group perspective. Secondly, there is a critical nature in the positioning of British Yemeni young people in these identity and personality theories because of the particular historical engagement within that group. Therefore, I felt that there needed to be both a post-colonial (Bhabha, 2012; Lovell, 2003; Childs & Williams, 1997) and intersectional perspective (McCall, 2008; Carbado et al., 2013) to this to directly address the social structures related to British Yemeni young people, and that may be used as an analytical lens to enhance and further understand issues of ethnic identity.
However, after undertaking my initial study (described in Chapter Three) and from my own reflections of my identity and personality (see Appendix B), I found that these approaches - identity theories, personality paradigms, post-colonialism, and intersectionality - have a tendency of essentialising the young person, giving a sense of sameness to particular individuals. This is problematic because these approaches do not fully engage with the living and being of young people in their daily lives, or with how and why they operate in the way they do, with all the diversity that comes from different interactions. It also assumes a feeling-of-knowing experiences on what British Yemeni young people are and do.

To give meaning to these issues of identity and personality, I have adopted the concept of the conduct of everyday life (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016; Teo, 2015; Hybholt, 2015; Dreier, 2011). This is because the conduct of everyday life provides a different, more concrete direction in understanding the identity and personality of British Yemeni young people, one that recognises the centrality of the relationality of living lives in the contexts of the different social fields that make up such lives. This concept focuses on the practice of everyday living, and includes the nuances, the diversities, the specifics, that have a contextual dimension to it, but also on the individual in terms of subjective experiences, and socially constructed ways in which those experiences happen with others. Thus, the conduct of everyday life enables me, as a researcher of British Yemeni young people, to explore their practical everyday living in a robust way that highlights the diversity of their doing that both reflect some similarities, but also their differences.

Using the concept of the conduct of everyday life, I provide a detailed enquiry of experiences, exploring how British Yemeni young people’s action in their living and being narrate such experiences of everyday life (see Chapters Two and Four). This approach invites me to adopt a socially constructionist epistemology and a relational ontology. I take the position that people, individually, construct their own meaning through understanding knowledge, as generated with people and through time, as they interact with the world around them. The activities they do are thus socially and culturally constructed and embedded within the political and social network of their experiences.
This paradigm, by its very nature, also underpinned the methodological considerations. Qualitative research is suited here as it provides a detailed exploration of real-life experiences, meanings, practices, and processes. The approach to the research design is that of a longitudinal case study of six British Yemeni young people, using photo-novella and semi-structured interview methods in combination to document such experiences. Specifically, I capture the activities of the young people in naturally occurring settings and provide narrative portraits, showing the stories of their everyday life experiences.

This research makes empirical, methodological, and theoretical contribution to knowledge. Empirically, it presents data on British Yemeni young people, providing a space in academic literature for their experiences to be documented. This contribution allows researchers to gain insight into the social and historical aspects of such experiences, providing further information on the formation of cultural identity, personality, and personhood. Through the activities that are associated and interconnected with those social and historical characteristics, the way in which the young people act, and reflect about their experiences, is highlighted. Theoretically and methodologically, the research provides a conceptual framework that is informed by theoretical tools drawn from Dreier’s theory of a person (2011) in the conduct of everyday life. Thinking with Dreier contributed to my understanding of personality and directed the analysis of my data. Additionally, I show how I use Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice (2020) to articulate learning and development in relation to the experiences of these young people. I argue that experiences are better understood through the activities and actions of people as they engage, participate, and move through the social context and arrangements within those contexts.

1.5 Rationale and evolving positionality

I have taught secondary Science for a ten-year period in many schools in Birmingham, in both affluent and underprivileged areas, and my professional observation was that students of Yemeni origins were largely underachieving academically. As a teacher, I observed the challenges that Yemeni young people experienced in education and wanted to find out more about the influences in their lives. So, during the first year of my PhD, I spent one day a week
exploring and networking in the Yemeni community in Birmingham. Specifically, I joined social gatherings attended by various Yemeni young people and observed their actions, the way they talked about who they are, their relations, their general routines, concerns, challenges, aspirations and hopes for the future. To try and make sense of these interconnecting experiences, I engaged with the literature of agency and structure, youth identity theories and personality paradigms (as described earlier).

I also reflected on my own experiences growing up as a British Yemeni young person (see Appendix B). I found that that there were forms of disconnections between ideas that appeared to provide an essentialised notion of who I am and am becoming, and an account of lived experiences. There was a static notion of identity, one that did not fully engage with the evolving daily experiences of life. In other words, it became apparent that the articulation of an identity is intangible and abstract, and so I needed to find an approach that was not only inclusive but offered the necessary tools to fully understand and appreciate an evolving self that relates to lived and living experiences. I may not hold the notion of identity in my thoughts, but the way I engage in my daily activities suggest my emerging and evolving being, my personhood. Therefore, it became more apparent that what I do, suggests an identity that is generated by a mixture of experiences that enable different forms of agency to become operative in different social contexts. It is my actions, what I do with others in the networks of my life, that provides a sense of who I am and becoming, my personality or personhood which may, subsequently, reflect my identity. Exploring experience through actions and activities became the focus of my research, directing the research towards examining daily experiences in the actions of young people, rather than exploring an essentialised sense of identity.

1.6 Structure and content

I have elected to present my thesis in Journal Format (See Appendices E and F). As my findings from the research developed, it became clear that it could be presented in a series of linked articles that would be of suitable length and quality for publication. The empirical data that I collected would support distinctive contributions on young people’s experiences which
reflect their identity, personality, and personhood in the context of the conduct of everyday life. It would also contribute to the field of social sciences, personality psychology, and cultural studies.

This doctoral research begins with this chapter, Chapter One, by setting out the aims and research questions, addressing the research problem, and highlighting the gap in research. I then report on the historical and geographical context of Yemen, setting the scene for the study, followed by the research paradigm and approach and then finally an explanation of the rationale and my position as a researcher. Chapter Two then provides an examination of how best to articulate experiences of British Yemeni young people through an exploration of identity and personality theories and paradigms. In particular, I focus on the relationship between identity and personality – and more specifically the different ways in which they might be understood and interlinked. I argue that the most authentic way of exploring these terms, and what they might stand for, is by exploring and understanding the activities individuals perform in their social context interacting with others producing, reproducing, and changing the social arrangements of those activities in those contexts. Against that background, I developed a conceptualisation of understanding the conduct of everyday life of my participants.

In Chapter Three, I describe and justify the methodology that I use to generate and analyse the data, explaining how my position as a professional scientist and an academic researcher informed my methods and analytical approach. I specify the methodology used in my empirical study. Guided by my research questions, I explain the sampling, participant selections and methodological steps for the research. I refer to my initial study that - although was intended to trial and critique data generating methodologies within the field in preparation for the main research - also generated many findings that steered the direction of the research to ways to better understand experiences. I describe photo-novella and semi-structured interviews as being the methods used in combination to generate the data for this research. I show how I have analysed the data, referring to thinking tools drawn primarily from Dreier. I then address matters of trustworthiness, validity, and research integrity. Also, in this chapter, I justify my publication strategy.
In Chapters Four, Five and Six, I present the findings, analysis, and discussion of my fieldwork in the form of three publishable outputs, in which I report and theorise on my fieldwork. Chapter Four is my main contribution to knowledge, contributing to the theoretical discussions about the nature of personality, personhood, and identity. I describe my conceptual framework using different theoretical standpoints. I present a deductive-inductive-abductive approach from theory to data synthesis, principally using Dreier’s representation of personality (Dreier, 2011). I then add Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice, mainly with reference to change, learning and development (Roth, 2016). Both Dreier and Roth’s work on personality and personhood centralises around actions and activity and I show how they give a comprehensive approach to understanding young people’s experiences in the subjective dimensions of person-situation-activity. Further reasons for using Dreier and Roth are also justified in the chapter. Using this framework, I articulate the conduct of everyday life of Nuha, an 18-year-old British Yemeni young woman. I show how this case study is a practical example of studying experiences that can suggest a contextualised, evolving and changing nature of the interconnected personality and identity. As such, the paper provides a set of theoretical tools for thinking about the nature of the lived experiences of British Yemeni young people.

Chapter Five focuses on the learning and development through the continuity of experiences of six British Yemeni young people. As this research is longitudinal, I examine how habits are generated, built, adapted, and changed with time. I show how critical incidents, whether big or small, experienced by my participants, resulted in some changes to habits. In this output, I give examples of how these can be categorised as cumulative-quantitative and/or transformative-qualitative changes.

The experiences of British Yemeni young people related to ethnic and national culture is the focus of Chapter Six. Guided inductively by the data, I show how the young people’s activities, particularly with references to family histories and practices, are linked to five different themes – body image, food, home, language, and religion, examining the possible effect of post-colonialism on such meanings. I explore how intersectionality has also been useful in understanding how the interactivity of social structure in fostering life experiences.
In Chapter Seven, I highlight the main findings and then draw together, discuss the overall findings, and synthesise of my research. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I conclude by narrating the research story and findings and then answer the three research questions. I justify taking an innovative approach to the format of this thesis. I then address my contribution to knowledge, identifying where the theoretical proposal from Dreier is helpful, and where additions from Roth were used to expand and enhance such a theory. I then set out recommendations for practice, policy, and research. I conclude by providing a reflection on my doctoral research. I place this study in the context of the continuing work of critical scholars at the Manchester Institute of Education. The study is therefore a contribution to the body of knowledge that is produced by that community of academic researchers.
Chapter 2 - Understanding young people’s experiences

2.1 Introduction

Human experiences have been extensively studied in the social sciences with various theoretical traditions and fields of research addressing different areas of study. New and evolving ideas, approaches, and perspectives for understanding human experiences are continuously being explored. Of particular interest to this study is the move away from previously articulated cognitivist trait based perspectives - which view human experiences as informed by information processing activity that is situated in a given mind and that is analytically and practically separated from the world (Thrift, 2007; De Sousa, 2011; Freud & Jelliffe, 1915) - to the belief that experiences emerge out of a relational nexus between the subject and the world (Merleau-Ponty, 2013; Wolpe & Plaud, 1997). In other words, experiences must be understood as an emergent property that already presupposes the relational interface between the subject and the world, and cannot be conceptualised as an a priori faculty situated within an already constituted individual (Stryker, 2007; Wrbouschek & Slunecko, 2021). This chapter focuses on developing a conceptual approach to understanding British Yemeni young person’s experiences, which privileges the relational nexus between subject and the world.

The understanding of what young people do and why they do it, has been of continued interest in sociology and psychology, specifically in the study of identity and personality. In this chapter, I consider some of the explanatory approaches that focus on understanding young people’s experiences by exploring what might be viewed as some of the dominant youth identity theories and personality paradigms. Because the particular focus of the study is young people of Yemeni heritage, ideas in and around notions of post-colonialism and intersectionality will also be explored, and these ideas will be linked to some of the traditional identity theories discussed in this chapter. I highlight the limitations of these approaches in relation to providing explanations of subject-independent truths that are tied to practical living and being. By providing an overview and synthesis of some of the main ideas around identity and personality, I explore what these ideas may suggest about the young
person’s living and being. I then move on to describe how the conduct of everyday life, specifically the theory of a person (Dreier, 2011), is a manifestation of some of these ideas but in a particular form that gives primacy to actions. I show how Dreier’s theory of a person generates a robust articulation of young people’s lived experiences as well as the associated identities and personalities that inform those experiences. It is an approach that I argue examines the relational nexus between subject and the world, through the actions that young people undertake in their everyday lives.

**Structure of the Chapter**

The concepts in and around identity and personality have been traditionally seen as a standard way of thinking about young people’s agency (self) and structure (society), and understanding what young people do, and why they do what they do. In relation to youth studies, issues of identity have been explored through different traditions that offer both psychological (subjective and behavioural properties of identity) and sociological approaches (membership and social interactions) (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). I begin this chapter by providing an overview of some of the main approaches for examining youth identity as means of explaining agency. To contextualise these with regards to the focus of my study, I then examine how post-colonial and intersectionality theories provide an additional lens through which to understand British Yemeni young people more fully. I chose these theories in particular because of the historical elements of British colonisation of Yemen, and because of the ideas which intersectionality may bring to the interactivity of social identity structures (race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, and religion) in fostering life experiences. I show how these theories provide additional articulations of the interconnection of agency and structure that might be more theoretically aligned to explaining the experiences of British Yemeni young people. I then demonstrate how the theories of post-colonialism and intersectionality can be used as analytical tools to understand some of the nuances around British Yemeni young people’s experiences, particularly with respect to their family histories and practices. I then move onto exploring complementary ideas that focus on some of the prominent personality psychology, showing how they have historically been built from ideas within biological, social, and clinical domains.
In bringing these traditional ideas of identity, post-colonialism, and intersectionality, and personality together, I show that, despite the explanatory importance of these theories, they seem to struggle in providing a justifiable understanding of some of the heterogeneity, as well as some of the homogeneity, in the everyday life experiences of British Yemeni young people. This gap was noted primarily from my undertaking of the initial study, and secondly, from my personal reflections of my own experiences that questioned an essentialised perspective of identity and personality that appears to be dominant in the field. In other words, such findings showed that, in the experiences of British Yemeni young people, there were elements of difference as well as similarities which did not seem to be accounted for in the main, by post-colonial and intersectionally-inspired identity and personality theories. To avoid the pitfalls of what I argue to be dualistic (the separation of the subject from the world) and yet at the same time essentialist explanation and accounts of who British Yemeni young people are and what they do, I instead focus on the relational conduct of everyday life, with all the possibilities of both diversity and similarity, and change and reproduction in living and lived experiences. This is because the conduct of everyday life enables the connection between young people’s evolving sense of themselves and the social arrangements of their lives to be explored recognising both habitual activity and the possibilities of change.

Building on such a critique, I broaden the understanding of identity and personality to encompass rationales and discourses associated with the conduct of everyday life in the experiences of daily living, in particular using Dreier’s theory of a person (2011). I argue that Dreier’s theory bridges the gap between psychological theorising on an individual level and a transindividual perspective, prioritising the actions of the person with others in his/her social life as a means of understanding experiences. I show how arriving at the conduct of everyday life enables a more comprehensive, extensive and evolving approach to understanding personality, which, in turn, provides a more concrete reflection of identity that yet contains elements of fluidity. I conclude the chapter by outlining an evolved conceptualisation of the conduct of everyday life in terms of the novelty of its application, which forms the basis of the remaining chapters in which I present and analyse the findings of my empirical research.
Figure 3 provides a summary of the approaches that I will discuss in the next section of this chapter.

Although I start by exploring these theories individually, clarifying along the way the research position with respect to each of these concepts, I also show, later in the chapter, that there is interconnection and overlap between these theories as they might help explain the lives of British Yemeni young people. Therefore, these theories and approaches should not be seen necessarily as analytically separate and distinct entities, but connected, through the narratives of British Yemeni young people’s experiences.
2.2 Identity theories and personality paradigms

The study of identity and personality reflect two of the major positions and central constructs in the attempts to understand young people’s agency. The major academic traditions in these fields range from the sociological studies of identity and the psychological studies of personality. The former, in the main, focus on the structures and system of people and their relations, and how they impact one another and the individual that help to generate identity and commensurate forms of agency (Arikan, 2012; Moya et al., 2006; Deaux, 2015), while the latter focuses on self and the individual, and the related cognitive dimensions of living which have both social dimension and aspects of an inherited trait-like perspective (Roberts & Yoon, 2022; Kholbutaevna, 2021) that provides accounts of the individualised self. In this section, I provide an overview of some of the main theories of youth identity, including post-colonialism and intersectionality, and then some of the main traditional paradigms of personality. I then synthesise the research position with respect to each of these ideas, highlighting some of its limitations in understanding British Yemeni young people’s agency and structure.

2.2.1 Youth identity theories

In this section, I explore the meaning of identity - in general and within the context of young people - and some of the prominent theories in youth identity.

2.2.1.1 Identity

Identity has historically been seen as complex and slippery concept. As the boundaries between disciplines dealing with identity are quite arbitrary, an investigation of identity needs to consider multi-disciplinary approaches. Although the term originates from the Latin root ‘idem’, meaning the same or identical, identity can be defined as a description of who a person is and the qualities of a person that make them different from others\(^1\). Hammack

\(^1\) https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/identity
provides a definition that I feel in many respects resonates with my research focus because it includes the person’s subjectivity and behavioural patterns, as well as their membership of societal groups (Côté, 2006; Best, 2011) – identity is “ideology cognized through the individual engagement with discourse, made manifest in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across the life course, and scripted in and through social interaction and social practice” (Hammack, 2008. p22). Developing an identity to associate and/or distinguish oneself from others may be crucial in establishing a stable agency and structure (Stets & Burke, 2000). Whether it implies similarity or differences, uniqueness or individuality, fixed psychological traits, social facts or transitory situations (Buckingham, 2008), identity involves recognising a common cause, storage of experiences and habituated thoughts and memory (in the person), and is represented in behaviours and social activities (in interaction) (Lunsky, 1966).

Although identity can provide a general understanding of some of the features pertinent to the individual, there is also the sense that identity is likely to evolve and develop during transitional stages of life that have both a physiological and emotional dimension. Literature on young people growth and development has shown that identity can also be examined in relation to individuals going through transitional stages of development. These stages include both physiologically and emotionally. Literature on the anthropology of young people (Bucholtz, 2002; Wyness, 2012) describes adolescence as a universal period of time, experienced by young people as they grow and develop (Arnett, 1999; Klimstra et al., 2010). The participants – being in the age range of 16-19 during the time of this study – may have experienced (and are perhaps continuing to experience) shifts and changes during this growth period, which can be seen as a transitional stage of autonomy seeking, emotional instability, and identity exploration (Schwartz, 2005). This may involve, perhaps, becoming more independent from parents and further associating with peer groups (Harter, 1999). Young people may continue to develop and construct their own identity as they move through to adulthood (Wyness, 2012). This delicate, yet gradual, progression continually reflects experiences that may be associated with profound life changes (Bonnie et al., 2019).
2.2.1.2 Identity theories

Many mainstream or traditional approaches that explore youth identity tend to focus on several areas of study. Some traditions stress the internalization of social positions and their personal meanings as part of the self-structure (Stryker & Burke, 2000), while others show the impact of cultural meanings and social situations on identities (Tausch, Schmid, & Hewstone, 2011; Heider, 2013), emphasising how social contexts elicit certain identities that shape meanings and actions. Other traditions centre on collective identity and group-level processes (Cerulo, 1997; Owens, Robinson, & Smith-Lovin, 2010). Of particular importance in delineating ideas of young identity is Côté’s (2006) expansive and comprehensive overview of the varying perspective and approaches to youth identity. He develops his overview with ideas from his previous work with Levin (Côte & Levine, 1983), to produce a universal taxonomy that attends to the multidimensionality represented by the various approaches in understanding youth identity. Adapted from Côté (2006), in Table 1 I summarise some of the main theories and perspectives on youth identity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Identity perspectives/approach</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Description of the perspective/approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity status paradigm</td>
<td>Objective individual focus</td>
<td>Young people experience different stages of commitment and crisis, contributing to identity formation. Four main identity statuses of psychological identity development can be explored here: identity diffusion, identity moratorium, identity foreclosure and identity achievement (see Appendix B) (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966). With the passage of time, the young person may go through some or all of these stages (Kroger, 2013), and not necessarily in an ordered fashion, and these stages of development can relate to education (Porfeli, Lee, Vondracek, &amp; Weigold, 2011), career (Hall &amp; Kelly, 2021), politics and religion (Solomontos-Kountouri &amp; Hurry, 2008), and among other areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical and cultural approach</td>
<td>Objective individual focus</td>
<td>An approach which functions in the reflective assessment and critique of society and culture (Harrison, 1978). Identity is theorised by an adaptation of conceptualising multilateral relationships between individual identity and sociocultural context, recognizing the causal importance of culture in societies and historical context, while at the same time acknowledging individual choice and change (Baumeister &amp; Muraven, 1996). This approach is often used in comparative analysis to study the expectations and difference in culture, for example between individualism and collectivism structures and cultures (Burton, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life history and narrative approaches</td>
<td>Subjective individual focus</td>
<td>Young people are viewed in relation to their narratives or stories, whereby temporal and developmental dimensions of human existence are revealed (McAdams, 2001). Experiences are constructed from cognitive interactions and originate from people’s external perceptual senses, internal bodily sensations, and cognitive memories (Polkinghorne, 1991). Human behaviour is conceptualized as significantly communicative and narrative in nature (Gibbs, 1988). The approach of storytelling of individual chronological experiences can be used to analyse qualitative data (Riessman, 2005).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Symbolic interactionalism

*Structural* - Objective, social focus

*Interpretative* - Subjective, social focus

This approach depends on the symbolic meaning and language that people develop and rely upon in the social interaction process (Stryker, 1987), and how they help to give meaning to experiences (Blumer, 1980). Society is thought to be socially constructed (through conversations, thoughts and ideas), and bonded through environmental stimulus cognitively interpretation (Scheff, 2003). Symbolic interactionalism can either be structural or interpretative. The former emphasises on role designation and positioning, significant to the definition of the self, specifically hierarchy of prominence (how individuals play their role in a given situation), and hierarchy of salience (addressing individual values and their affect over identity formation) (Arikan, 2012; Stryker & Serpe, 1994). The latter emphasises that a person must be understood as a social and thinking being (Carter & Fuller, 2015), and the self becomes the product of society as it tries to incorporate itself into a group by realising and internalising societal expectations, leading to a constructive relationship between the self and society (Stets & Burke, 2000; Stryker, 2008). Society is viewed as having different interrelated parts, designed to meet the social needs of people (Durkheim, 1912).

Modernism

*Post modernism* - Subjective, Individual and sociological focus.

*Late modernism* - Objective, Social focus

Modernism in general follow a set of critical, strategic, and rhetorical practices, used as a critique of structure (Moya et al., 2006). Postmodernists see words as having no objective meaning, and that structures are social constructs and so a merely an interpretation of truth. As a result, identity becomes fluid, it’s meaning more ambiguous and unstable (Posner, 2011). Post-modernist themes strengthen common practices of psychological science, leading to the understanding of concepts such as individual knowledge, the objective world, and the language as a carrier of truth (Gergen, 2001; Bennett, 2006). In the sociological variant, identity is located within the interactional realm and is best understood in terms of its emergent and transitory properties, which vary according to the specific context in which interaction takes place. In late modernism, and as an opposition to postmodernism, there is a duality of structure, and people’s freedom comes from existing structures (Giddens, 1991). As a result, identity becomes a task a person seeks to develop (Giddens, 2020).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Some of the major identity theories</th>
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These perspectives are among the leading approaches for thinking about identity and associated agency and will therefore act as a focus for exploring their relevance to young people’s living experiences. However, in so doing, I will articulate some of the problematic issues that pertain to much of this thinking and yet also recognising that certain key approaches may provide important basis for my research.

2.2.1.3 Research position with respect to identity theories

In this section, I synthesise and explore how studying young people’s agency and structure, through the identity theories, depicted in Table 1, is, in the main, problematic. Although these theories may provide a contribution to understanding certain elements of the social structures and changes that pertain to the formation of a person, studying identity with regards to many of these approaches relies uniformly on methodological approaches that enable a person to generate perception of who they thinks they are based on recalled events (memory) that support such perception, and relatedly on the possible evaluation of the accuracy of feeling-of-knowing experiences (Hart, 1965; Zacks, 2020). This methodological approach is problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, it provides an isolated description of a person, detaching him/her from ongoing social practices. This, in turn, provides an abstracted form of knowledge or an account that is partial. Furthermore, it restricts the examination of the various features of personal functioning and the features of the world in which a person lives. Secondly, studying identity in such a way entails a thinning out of the presence of the world in notions of psychological phenomena and neglects the significance of the world for psychological functioning (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016). Thirdly, the links between the historical structures and influences of the current environment, and how they affect the functioning of a person, are missing. I argue that this is the case for all the youth identity theories discussed in Table 1, albeit with different levels of sophistication.

Let me take the identity status paradigm as an example. Within this approach, there is an assumption that a young person, perhaps during adolescence, will experience a crisis during their development, and at this stage, must make a commitment to reach the identity achievement stage. Identity achievement is, however, relative. It is also measured differently,
depending on the context of the research and there are many factors that affect identity achievement. Furthermore, the identity status paradigm suggests that some young people may fluctuate between different development stages and may not pass each stage or reach a certain level of achievement (Erikson, 1968), and although this may be the argument in some cases, the pattern or sense of development varies for each individual, and should primarily depend on the person’s evolving situation and linked practice. The dualism of agency and structure suggest that the two are separate and each have causal powers on the other. The argument here is that what young people do is both agency and structure at the same time - they do and undergo, one impacting the other continuously. Development is also influenced by different factors that are specific to the individual and the environment in which they live and participate. As such, identity formation is not static and is continuously evolving and developing with increased lived experiences, and so there is no end point. The identity status paradigm also suggests that a well-developed identity signifies a solid sense of personal uniqueness, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, high self-esteem, increased critical thinking, advanced moral reasoning, and low levels of anxiety (Marcia, 1966). Although this may be achieved during adolescence and towards early adulthood, not only does it vary from person to person, but the living and being are constantly changing and evolving, suggesting the possibility of moving from what appears a well-developed and stable identity to one less stable and vice versa. Additionally, the identity status paradigm does not consider the historical, ethnic, and cultural dimensions of the growing and evolving person, and thus, may fall short in understanding young people with ethnic heritage.

A critical and cultural approach in understanding young people’s experiences is more applicable when focusing primarily on the importance of culture in society, but as an effect, the approach produces a partial perspective of agency. Such an approach ignores the fact that a person is both a subject and subjected to the society (or culture) they live in, that therefore results in danger of essentialising what it means to have a culture, or in the context of this research a British Yemeni culture.

I now turn to two other identity approaches: postmodernism and symbolic interactionism. In the sociological variant of postmodernism, identity is located within the interactional realm
and describes some of the unity in articulating identity (Stronach, 1996) that relates to young people’s interactions that are partially dominated by the rise of new media technologies (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; Osgerby, 2021) and consumerism in society (Nicholls, 2017). From my interactions with young people, and from reflecting on my experiences, I argue that these two realities may directly (or indirectly) influence the construction of young people’s identity today (as is shown in some of the findings later), but this is relative to the individual and environment in which they live. Additionally, using postmodernist understanding of society also provides a simplified view of who a young person is and what they do, based on a generalised postmodern view of lived realities of how these realities influence daily activities.

There are also problems reflected in ideas within symbolic interactionism. The theory is rooted in phenomenological thought in which subjectively defined objects have meaning and so there are possibly multiple, conflicting interpretations of any situation (Stryker, 1983). The issue with this, in the context of this research, is that it gives the young person a mistaken sense of agency over structure, and perhaps some creative capabilities or misguided sense of control over society. This is not only relative and subjective but also leaves the person with the false sense that society, of which a person is a member, is designed to meet his/her social needs, and this is not necessarily true. Sometimes a person must change or adapt to suit the society they live in, and not necessarily the other way round. Furthermore, symbolic interactionism focuses on micro-level interactions (Carter & Fuller, 2015) and so overlooks macro-social structures (such as norms and cultures), which makes it difficult to understand the interconnected experiences of an individual using this theory. Symbolic interactionists have been criticized in for their predominately qualitative approach to empirical inquiry and for their failure to deal adequately with social structure and power (McPhail & Rexroat, 1979; Blumer, 1980).

However, the identity theory which relates to producing life histories and narrative approaches has a greater role in this research, primarily as an active methodological stance. This is because it provides an opportunity to focus subjectively on identity, social-life, and culture, and at the same time, enables questions to be asked about some of the structuring
components in a young person’s daily life. Hammack’s (2008) definition earlier - identity “manifest[s] in a personal narrative constructed and reconstructed across the life course” – supports the idea of using life histories and narrative approaches, as a methodology, for studying the subjective phases of social life, as well as the historical and structural aspects of social life (Polkinghorne, 1991). This makes it ideal for exploring the experiences of British Yemeni young people. Documenting participants’ stories using narratives that seek to apprehend, understand, and render people’s stories within their personal, social, economic, political, and historical contexts (Shacklock & Thorp, 2005; Hatch & Newsom, 2010) is not only salient, but also produces a personal account of the here and now, in the narrator’s own words. It also enables an analysis of the collective contextual influences in which those lives are situated (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). In other words, I provide a methodological tool for exploring young people’s conduct of everyday living. This is further discussed in section 2.4 and in Chapter Three.

Perhaps what is also deficient in some of these perspectives on identity highlighted above is the lack of full engagement with issues of ethnic and cultural heritage. To explore this deficiency, I now describe some of the identity theories which relate to British Yemenis being of an ethnic and cultural heritage, and how these theories support in the understanding young people’s agency and structure.

2.2.2 Identity theories exploring ethnic heritage

Having examined, and critiqued, some of the mainstream ideas of identity, there seems to be a possibility of under-emphasis in and around some of the historical, cultural, political power issues of British Yemeni young people. This means that an additional set of thinking tools is required to enable a more developed understanding of identity in an extended way. Specifically, I explore how the post-colonial and intersectionality arguments are pertinent to my study of British Yemeni young people. I show their importance, in relation to some of the standard theories of identity (mentioned in Table 1), in developing ideas which explicitly focus on some of the important structural, cultural, historic reasons why British Yemeni young people see their world as they do. Although there are dangers of essentialising here, it
is more about orientating theories to issues of post colonialism. I start by exploring post-colonialism as a theory and discuss its potential use in examining the ethnic and power difference between colonising powers and those that have been colonised, including the impacts on first, second and third generation British Yemeni young people. I feel that this discussion has been (partially) underplayed, or perhaps forgotten in the identity theories explored in Table 1. In using post-colonialism, the structural imbalance, the discrimination and prejudice, and the domineering is no longer overlooked. I then explore how intersectionality aims to move towards a deeper understanding of the social identity structures which, together, may serve as an influence on the experiences of British Yemeni young people. However, I later discuss how I make more pertinent the analysis of experiences using the conduct of everyday life more sensitised to post-colonial and intersectional arguments.

2.2.2.1 Post colonialism

Post-colonialism considers ways in which identity is constructed through the discourses of colonialism, emphasising the importance of the cultural, economic, political and military dominance of the past (Williams & Chrismans, 1993). In the context of this research, it refers to the way British Yemenis’ identity may be constructed as a direct (or indirect) effect because of the colonisation of Yemen by Britain in 1839. Presented as the extension of civilization to justify the racial and cultural superiority of Western world over others (Childs & Williams, 1997), colonialism has caused changes in people’s cultural identity, social places, and economic roles within the colonised country as well as among those migrating to the Western country (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007). This relationship of control tends to extend to social, pedagogical, economic, political, and broadly cultural exchanges. This section explores some of the prominent works of scholars in the field of post-colonial studies and shows how their work is related to the diaspora and identities of Yemenis settling in Britain.

I begin by exploring the work of three main scholars in post-colonial studies: Said (1979; 2003), Spivak (1988) and Bhabha (1994; 1995; 2012). I chose these scholars in particular because of their major contributions in documenting and providing an insight into the impacts
of colonialism. Most of the literature that I have examined in, and around post-colonialism uses certain definitions, descriptions, and elements from their work, perhaps as a foundation for understanding the influences of post-colonial theory on the lived lives of those affected by it. Furthermore, each of these scholars present different, yet connecting, ideas of how to understand and represent the colonised forces in a way that may lead to further conversations and explorations. Additionally, and in the context of this research, I explore how Said, Spivak and Bhabha’s ideas, separately and collectively, provide some explanation as to the possible changes in identities and, as an effect, the experiences of British Yemeni young people.

I begin by focusing on Said’s work on the representation of knowledge of the colonised. Said uses ‘Orientalism’ to describe a style of thought based upon distinctions made between the Occident (of the West) and Orient (or other) - a style of dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient (Said, 1979; 2003). Said argues that magical realism, referred to the adaptation of Western realist methods of literature, are presented inaccurately and are misleading, and stereotypical of the cultural representation of the east (as exotic, enigmatic, and curious) (Said, 1979). This representation may hinder a representational reality of the orient in representational ways of understanding of Middle Eastern and Asian culture (Ashcroft et al., 2007). He suggests that these methods of representation are used as tools, by colonisers, to dominate the colonised, at an individual and community level (Said, 1979). This view is also shared by other scholars (Cannadine, 2009; Mani & Frankenberg, 1985).

Historical writing on the British empire in Yemen is also dominated by post-colonial traditions and theories (Hinchcliffe, Ducker, & Holt, 2006). Using Said’s idea of Orientalism, it is possible to identify historiographical precedents for applying certain orientalist ideas to diplomatic source material to study British rule over Yemen (Mawby, 2010). Writings on such colonisation offer evidence of intelligence being interpreted in a way which underestimated the strength of local agents and amplified the influence of external manipulation (Rose, 1995). This is what Said refers to as a misinterpretation of truth within a colonised culture (Said, 2003).
Spivak (1988) addresses the problem of misrepresentation by centring attention on giving the ‘Subaltern’ - a colonised group of lower economic and cultural status - a voice. According to Spivak, such voices were prevented by the colonised. She highlights the difficulty for an outside colonised person to represent what is truly happening in the colonised communities. Spivak is an advocate for subaltern voice, and the impact (of offering them a chance to speak) is the reduction of inherently restricted or misleading logocentric assumptions of the colonised people (Kumar, 2013). In this way, Spivak adopts a stance against a specifically intellectual form of oppression and marginalization (Riach, 2017).

Within the context of this research, discussion around the ‘other’ and allowing the ‘subaltern voice’, resonate with the intentions of this research. By default, the British Yemeni community is a minority ethnic group and so can be considered as the ‘other’. By providing a platform for their voices to be heard, through this research, assumptions or misleading statements on their living and being (see Appendix A) may be better understood. Although this research does not consider British Yemeni young people as being ‘subalterns’ as such, the reality is that there has been limited literature on their experiences, which may suggest a lack of attention given to their opinions and voices. Even though the occupation of Yemen by Britain of 128 years ended in 1967, the long period of colonialism has (directly or indirectly) presented some areas of misrepresentation and perhaps oppression, that may have produced a ripple effect on the lives of British Yemenis today. I discuss some of these possible effects later in Chapter Six. This doctoral research provides an opportunity for British Yemeni young people to represent their living and being through their own words, enabling a clear understanding of their lived worlds. It is about privileging the participants as knowers of their knowledge or at least having their problems heard equally as other more dominant groups.

Bhabha (1994) develops post-colonial theory on a different level, and one that I feel most resonates with the British Yemeni context today. He engages with the idea that diversity is brought about by various cultural encounters and that individuals from post-colonial cultures can only be described as having ‘cultural hybridity’ – the mixture of cultural influences that allows the mixing of both the colonised country and pre-existing traditional customs (Bhabha, 1994). Bhabha focuses on ‘mimicry’ as a means by which the colonised adapt the
culture (language, clothing, food, education, etc.) of the coloniser (Bhabha, 1995, Rose & Shevlin, 2004; Huddart, 2005). A study by Hutnik and Street (2010) reveals how British Indians’ self-categorised differently in specific cultural contexts, while another study by Modood et al., (1997) discloses the complex ways in which young British people of Caribbean and Asian origin manage to retain aspects of older cultural practices, yet at the same time modify some to allow modification. Literature from these prominent post-colonial scholars, as well as others (Ashcroft et al., 2007; Childs & Williams, 1997; Gilroy, 2008; Burke, 2012), show how colonisation has led to cultural, linguistic, and religious differences among populations and also the possible emergence of historically constructed groups (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996, Yancey et al., 1976).

Ethnicity is, thus, not simply a historical legacy of migration or conquest, rather it is constantly undergoing redefinition and reconstruction (Yancey et al., 1976). These are examples of how people from colonised countries balance between desires to root themselves in their communities of origin, while at the same time making use of the opportunities available in British culture. As a result, hybrid identity is formed with significant overlaps and mixtures of cultural practices (Sasani, 2015; Kalua, 2009). Although I don’t use the term mimicry as such to explore the mixture of ethnic and national cultures of British Yemenis in my study, I understand the relevance of mimicry in the context of the desire for Yemenis, as an ethnic minority group in Britain, to produce unique cultural hybridity from a mixture of their Yemeni culture as well as their national British culture. The application of the ideas of cultural hybridity, through associations and dissociations with British and Yemeni cultures (perhaps at different levels and by different individuals) is further discussed in Chapter Six.

As a result of the British colonisation of Yemen, many Yemenis migrated to various cities in Britain (Smith, 2015; Stevenson, 1993). Chapter One provided a brief account of this, with Appendix A providing a more detailed account. Dahya (1965) documents the migration of some Yemenis to Sheffield and South Shields in the period of 1945-50, and describes the history of several married men, who despite having left their wives and children behind in Yemen, continued to retain their ties with their families and villages by sending money home regularly (Dahya, 1965). His paper shows how the settlers carried out practices linked to their
homeland. Some of the practices included using their Arabic language in their everyday conversation, dressing traditionally on special occasions, buying mutton from Yemeni butchers, and making it into a stew and serving it in a huge dish according to Yemeni custom. They extend their hospitality to visitors in the same way as they would have done in Yemen (Dahya, 1965), continuing their customs and traditions.

Yemenis also represent the first significant Muslim community to settle in Britain (Lawless, 1995). They projected their religious connections to Islam during the weekends, public holidays, and the annual summer holidays by attending mosques that also served as a centre of social and recreational activities (Sanni, 2014). Most settlers continue to carry out their prescribed duties faithfully, such as prayers and fasts. This has been a continued practice throughout the generations (seen in later chapters).

Other literature on early Yemeni settlers focuses on the working and family status of Yemenis in Britain. When they first settled in Britain, Yemenis often formed a distinct isolated community (Cox, 2011) and so were disconnected from British culture (Halliday, 1993). Reasons alluded to, in these articles, included the fear of a loss of culture and identity, and so like other Muslim ethnic minorities, the early Yemeni settlers may have attempted to perhaps establish an identity of difference (Seddon, 2010). However, such disconnections may have resulted in ethnic isolation and the congregation of Yemeni communities in specific areas in Britain (Abu-Rabi, 2002). The only reported efforts to marginally ameliorate Yemeni isolation was in South Shields, where prominent Yemeni community figures contributed by providing a mosque, religious education for men and women and an Arabic newspaper reporting British-related news, as well as news from Yemen (Cox, 2011).

Other research also shows that the integration between the Yemeni community and the British public was minimal (Halliday, 2013), in part because the British chose to see Yemenis as different, and in part because the Yemenis chose to isolate themselves. Working in semi-skilled positions, Yemenis clustered together, lived in overcrowded houses, and got by with a smattering of English (Wedeen, 2003). To the British, the Yemenis were common labourers and not truly part of British society, and the Yemenis saw themselves as villagers whose
primary focus was their homeland (Halliday, 2013). In effect, the Yemenis claimed to be temporary migrants, putting down only those roots, such as home ownership, that would enable them to accomplish their mission of saving for their return. The relative lack of support networks and institutions, apart from workers’ unions, is indicative of Yemenis’ strong belief in their eventual and inevitable return home (Binder, 1980). Key political institutions in Britain were formulated by the Yemeni immigrants, that instead of being interested in workers’ conditions in Britain, targeted socioeconomic and political developments in Yemen (Stillwell & Hussain, 2010). Furthermore, Yemeni migration, over thirty years before the waves of post-World War II immigrants from other parts of the empire, enabled them, as a small group, to avoid notice (Clark, 2001). This may provide an explanation for the minimal literature on Yemenis in Britain currently.

Living in Britain for generations now, and with the current voluntary (or enforced) migration of Yemenis from their native homeland due to its current political instability (Sharp, 2020), the integration of Yemeni and British culture was and continues to be inevitable. The effect of this integration is the possible formation of a merging of ethnic and national cultures, or as Bhabha (1994) puts it, cultural hybridity. Such cultural changes have continued to lead to a gradual shift from pre-existing roots and traditional customs to national influences of mainstream culture (McKittrick, 2009). Within the generational changes (and with the passing of time and possibly more integration into the country of residence), findings may show the extent as to which a culture is mainstream or subculture. This is further discussed in later chapters. I also argue that cultural identity is better understood as a combination of both ethnic identity (or subculture - rooted in historical origins) and national identity (or mainstream culture – coming from the country of upbringing). The contact between two or more different cultures results in acculturation - a new, composite culture which consists of existing cultural features combined with newly generated features (Parekh, 2006; Sabatier, 2008). Chapter Six discusses the formation of such a unique cultural hybridity for British Yemeni young people in this study.

As I have discussed in this section, post-colonial theory is one of the ways in which the agency of young people, with Yemeni heritage living in the country of the coloniser, can be
explored. It may explain some elements of practices that young people experience and are experiencing, perhaps developed from their family histories and practices. I now move onto another way of exploring the interrelationship of agency and structure in the lives of young people, by considering the cross cutting historical, ethnic, and cultural dimensions, of living that has been termed intersectionality (Gopaldas, 2012).

2.2.2 Intersectionality theory

The concept of intersectionality refers to the interactivity of social identity structures or markers (race, class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, and religion) in fostering life experiences (Gopaldas, 2012). British Yemeni young people are not only young (age), British (nationality) and Yemeni (ethnicity), but they are also of a different skin colour to others in Britain (race), have different socioeconomic and class backgrounds (class), are mostly Muslims (religion) and have many other interconnecting social identity markers. The focus of intersectionality is on the interaction of multiple identities markers and how these may suggest possible experiences of exclusion and subordination (Davis, 2008), privilege and oppression (Gopaldas, 2012), and in possibly addressing the fundamental and pervasive concern of difference and diversity (Collins, 2000). I am not suggesting that British Yemenis are either privileged or oppressed, rather this wide spectrum entails some exploration of their experiences in relation to possible power structures that may have produced certain inequalities in their lives, both as individuals and as communities. British Yemenis are different from other groups in Britain, but also to each other (as explored in Chapter One), and this diversity may manifest in some specific, even subtle, forms of intersecting inequalities. Instead of the idea that inequalities result simply from the accumulation of independent risk factors, intersectionality enables an understanding of the multi-dimensional relationships, modalities of social relations and subject formations (McCall, 2008). It is in the interaction of those inequalities that the distinctive dynamics at their multidimensional interface can be captured (Crenshaw, 1991; Green, Evans, & Subramanian, 2017).

There are different ways in which intersectionality has been used in research. Many studies have used it as a theory to explore social practices, institutional arrangements and cultural
ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davis, 2008). Other studies focus on its use in self-identification, social networks, religious affiliation, language, positive attitudes, endogamy and varied cultural traditions and practices (Green et al., 2017). For example, studies on different ethnic minorities in the United States showed that political attitudes are important in measuring Black identity, language is salient in Mexican-American culture, relational aspects of social identity in British studies (Bilge, 2010) and cultural attitudes play a major role in Asian-American identity (Phinney, 1990).

Intersectionality also addresses the dynamics within both dominant and oppressed groups, showing how each person is uniquely advantaged and disadvantaged within this matrix (Carbado et al., 2013) and that the cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated but also bound by interlocking social locations (Collins, 2000). In this way, intersectionality can be used to explore how categories of different social structures within British Yemeni identity are intertwined and mutually constitutive (Davis, 2008; Green, Evans, & Subramanian, 2017). Although there is no consensus on how an intersectional analysis should be conducted (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Hancock, 2007), there is flexibility and an open-ended methodology within this approach. This can include focus groups discussions, narrative interviews, action research, and observations – all with the central role of giving voice, elicited through such approaches.

2.2.2.3 Research position with respect to post-colonialism and intersectionality

The implications of post-colonial theory, and intersectionality, have been highlighted in sections 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2, respectively. These implications enhance the understanding of how British Yemeni young people’s agency is influenced. In comparison to the other more wide-ranging theories of identity highlighted in Table 1, their application may be more pertinent in exploring experiences of young people with an ethnic culture. However, this importance is in the context of their purpose as analytical tools, rather than a theoretical framework. This is because both post-colonialism and intersectionality, as theories, assume and give, perhaps, an imprecise perception of a fixed, static, essentialist view of who British Yemeni young people are and what they do, based on historical implication or social identity.
structures. In this doctoral research, I move away from the stagnant conceptualization of British Yemeni identity and argue that what needs unravelling goes beyond factors related to post-colonial theory, and social identity structures of age, race, ethnicity, etc - it is more about their lived experiences, their living and becoming as they interact with the world around them. However, what postcolonialism and intersectionality might allow is the better appreciation of the nature of the conduct of everyday life.

Furthermore, post-colonial theory specifically relates to the effect of colonialism on British Yemeni young people because of the historical background and struggles of older generations. Although there has been some documentation of this (Halliday, 1992; Dahya, 1965; Sanni, 2014; Stevenson, 1993; Ibrahim, 2016), it cannot be assumed that all generations of Yemeni ethnic settlers experience cultural differences or injustice, for example. Moreover, the participants in this study are from first, second and third generations and so may not be as influenced by the historical implications of their parents and grandparents, as early settlers. Chapter Six discusses this in more detail. However, I also show in this chapter that some elements within post-colonial theories apply to first, second and third generation young people.

Similarly, consideration of various social identity structures, that are intertwined and mutually constitutive, may be highlighted when discussing British Yemeni young people’s family histories and practices. However, these social identity structures, even as intersection elements, cannot be fully used as a label or representation of what it means to be a British Yemeni young person. Linking to Said’s work (2003) on the true representation of the ‘other’, intersectionality has also been shown to contain postcolonial theoretical perspectives (Mani, 1990). In this research, I use the interactions implied by post-colonialism and intersectionality to further understand some of the reasons and implications of British Yemeni young people’s experiences, moving away from theorising British Yemeni young people’s identity and the feeling-of-knowing experiences. In doing this, I provide a representation of their experiences in their living and being, and as Spivak suggests (1988), through their own words.
Having explored these identity theories which relate to understanding young people’s agency and structure, and those with ethnic heritage, and finding limitations in using these, a shift in thinking towards a different approach was needed – one that does not dwell on the abstracted realities of identity. One such approach is the exploration of personality. I now move to explore some of the traditional personality paradigms, as a different, yet related, approach to the study of young people’s agency, and suggest how these ideas may indicate ways of articulating young people’s experiences of everyday life.

2.2.3 Personality paradigms

In this section, I explore the literature on personality in general, and some of the prominent traditional paradigms of personality that may be applicable to the understanding of young people’s agency and structure.

2.2.3.1 Personality

A prominent way of thinking about personality is to see it as a collection of complex and sophisticated entities one that refers to the dynamic integration of the totality of a person’s subjective experience and behaviour patterns (Kernberg, 2016). From such a perspective personality includes both conscious, concrete and habitual behaviour patterns, experiences of self and of the surrounding word, and unconscious behaviour patterns, experiences and views (including perception, cognition, memory) (Kholbutaevna, 2021; Kernberg, 2016). The outcome is the coordination of multiple dispositions that are built upon habitual desires and fears, behaviour patterns, and intentional states. Therefore, personality derives from the person’s capacity to experience subjective states that reflect the internal condition of the body as well as the perception of the external environment within which the body functions (Kedia & Cloninger, 2010). In other words, personality is a multi-level system that is perceived as an individual’s unique difference in people, expressed as a emerging pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and self-defining life narratives, complexly and differentially located in culture and social context (McAdams & Pals, 2006). In this way, a person continues to shape and adapt to a changing internal and external environment (Kedia & Cloninger, 2010).
Although definitions of personality vary in accordance with the theoretical perspective from which it is viewed, it can be generally defined by *the type of person you are, shown by the way you behave, think, and feel*\(^2\). Much mainstream psychological understandings see the person as surrounded by numerous inputs, which enter and are processed internally via the brain, releasing outputs in the form of behaviour, thoughts and emotions (Augustine & Larsen, 2014) – hence *behave, think, and feel* in the definition. Furthermore, personality is historically based upon several different widely encompassing paradigms, rooted in different sources (Funder, 2001). The interplay of the behaviour settings, behavioural rules or personality traits, and the individual pursuits are essential in understanding person-environment transactions. Furthermore, the distinctive behavioural personality signature of a person may happen at different settings and situations.

### 2.2.3.2 Personality paradigms

I focus on personality psychology as a means of understanding young people’s agency. Personality psychology has been systematically studied since the 1930s (Stagner, 1948; Schachtel, 1939; Duvall & Murphy, 1948; Stagner, 1993), and can be traced back in its ancestry to the ancient Greeks and Roman physicians and philosophers (Revelle, Buss, & Plomin, 1976). Historically, personality appears as a specified term with the aim of achieving a scientific understanding of individuality (Klempe, 2019). Many theories have been verbalised to enable the understanding of the complexity of personality - some suggest that it is biological and conceived to have genetic as well as environmental origins, others include a social dimension, and the impact of social forces on the growing person, while others view it as related to clinical aspects of personality studies, examining people who have suffered adaptive and adjustive failures. These different viewpoints are provided in *Table 2*, focusing on the different encompassing paradigms in this field.

\(^2\) [https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/personality](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/personality)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality paradigms</th>
<th>Key studies on the paradigm</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biochemical theory</td>
<td>Temperaments are regarded as inborn biologically-based, psychological tendencies that underlie individual differences in personality with intrinsic paths of development (McCrae and Costa, 2000). Personality development corresponds to four temperaments associated with variations: blood (sanguine), black bile (melancholic), yellow bile (choleretic), and phlegm (phlegmatic) (Revelle et al., 1976). This theory has survived, and its application is valid, in some form, for more than 2,500 years (Yousefifard et al., 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychoanalytic approach</td>
<td>Focus is on the unconscious mind, and involves empirical research (Baumeister, Dale, &amp; Sommer, 1998) and Freud’s psychoanalytic models of cognition in terms of behaviour and consciousness (Rumeihart &amp; Mcclelland, 1968).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality Trait</td>
<td>Describes personality traits (Sanchez-Roige et al., 2018) - numerically - as orthogonal phenomena (Funder &amp; Colvin, 1991), and as universal individual behaviour within the person-situation debate (Kenrick &amp; Funder, 1988). Personality traits focuses on the effect of the situation against the effect of the person on behaviour (Funder &amp; Harris, 1986). This has led to the arrival of the ‘big five’ personality traits: extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience (or culture) (McCrae &amp; Costa, 1999). There is also a chaotic plethora of personality constructs with different labels that have similar meaning to this and an example of such is the study on factors (including a combination of introversion, extraversion, emotional stability, and self-determinism) which may determine personality traits (Questionnaire &amp; Questionnaire, 1994).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biological approach</strong></td>
<td>Focuses on the nervous system’s association with personality traits. Examples include linking the amygdala to aggression and certain types of emotionality (Buck, 1999), the hormone testosterone in to sociability and positive affectivity as well as aggressiveness and sexuality (Dabbs, Strong, &amp; Milun, 1997) and the neurotransmitter serotonin to regulation (Knutson et al., 1998). In addition, the influence of behavioural genetics on personality in twin studies has been documented (Plomin &amp; Caspi, 1999; Turkheimer, 1998), the influence of family in children personality related outcomes, and understanding the distal rather than proximal causes of behaviour (Jocklin, McGue, &amp; Lykken, 1996).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evolutionary psychology</strong></td>
<td>Focuses on the possibility that behavioural patterns are human nature in itself, considering the evolutionary history environment and adaptation (Berry, 2000). This paradigm faces criticism from sexuality studies (Eagly &amp; Wood, 1999), and behavioural phenomena (Pinker, 1999).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Behaviourist approach</strong></td>
<td>Views behaviour exclusively as a function of environmentally imposed reinforcement contingencies, removing unobserved mediators such as memories, perceptions, and thoughts. This provides many restrictions in the study of social learning (Rotter, 1972), and social cognition (Bandura, 2001), as well as the cognitive-affective personality system (Mischel, 1999).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social-cognitive approach</strong></td>
<td>Derived from behaviourist paradigm, this focuses on cognitive processes (perception and memory). Literature includes work on self-comparison (Higgins, 1999), relational schemas (Baldwin, 1999), cognitive-affective processing system (Mischel, 2009) and a person's fundamental worldview (incremental versus entity), goal orientation (learning versus performance) and behavioural pattern in response to failure (proficiency versus helplessness) (Dweck, 1996).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanistic approach</strong></td>
<td>Holds scientific values, and looks at the human being phenomenologically, through the understanding experience of reality (Maltby, Day, &amp; Macaskill, 2013), and so is useful when examining people of different cultures (McCrae et al., 1998).</td>
</tr>
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*Table 2: Some of the traditional personality paradigms*
These paradigms - in *Table 2* - are some of the important concepts in understanding personality, which provide some suggestions and insights into young people’s agency. I now evaluate some of these personality paradigms within the context of the lived lives of British Yemeni young people.

### 2.2.3.3 Research position with respect to personality paradigms

Understanding British Yemeni young people’s evolving personality is, I would argue, imperative in the exploration of lived daily experiences. This is because it allows researchers to get a sense of how people’s characteristics develop, change, and impact their lived realities. I argue that studying personality in paradigms, such as those discussed in *Table 2*, looks at individualised outcome, rather than the process of understanding experiences in their totality, and so only partially provides direction in the study of young people’s agency and lived experiences. This is because such ideas focus on individualised narrated accounts about the self, which I feel is inadequate for the focus of the research, as such, ideas underemphasise the person in their concrete relational actions in systems of activity. Human personality also matures and evolves through lived experiences (Murray & McAdams, 2010) and so understanding the person as a unique, whole individual requires bringing together different and distinct approaches that focus on a non-essentialisation of that person, and with the passage of time.

For example, personality traits are useful in reflecting the tendency for a person to respond in certain ways under certain point in time, but it does fully consider the social context or arrangements in which these circumstances occur or how they might change, and so cannot truly account for the overall and evolving personality of a person. Other personality paradigms rely on memory of past histories and perception, and although this isn’t necessarily an issue, the past that is written in the present or informed by the present and the near future may be interpreted in a way that may not give a representation intended by the narrator. It also depends on the assumption that people may relate stories that are expected of them or try and ‘fill in the gaps’ in their stories by answering questions that relate to the paradigms discussed. Other paradigms consider a person as an agent with the ability to make
and choose appropriate plans that allow them to live their daily lives with values and virtues (mental, emotional, and behavioural) significant to them and others around them. Although this may be true, it does not consider the societal pressure, the cultural expectations, or the heterogeneity of people in their social environments; one’s values and valued capabilities are not inherently in-built, rather they are learned through relational and cultural activity.

In framing this research, I am therefore opposed to using the personality paradigms mentioned in Table 2 in articulating experiences and so direct my attention in a different path, one which focuses on personality as an evolving phenomenon that can be understood in the context of everyday living and being. This is where the concept of the conduct of everyday life becomes a useful tool.

Having discussed the limitations of articulating experiences through certain identity approaches and traditional personality paradigm - and the notion that they all too easily provide a rather fixed, static, essentialist view of who British Yemeni young people are, and what they do - I now move on to discussing how best to explore the actions and activities of people through the concept of the conduct of everyday life. I discuss why the conduct of everyday life has been chosen as a theoretical framework and why it provides a more concrete way of understanding personality and articulating lived experiences of British Yemeni young people.

### 2.3 The conduct of everyday life

The conduct of everyday life explores the primacy of researching human actions in the contradictory and intersubjective context of everyday life (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016; Friesen et al., 2019). The concept opposes testing subjects against abstract a priori theories that fail to grasp the centrality of life as lived and living. Agency is seen as inseparable from the plurality of life contexts and one’s individual conduct is in constant functional ordination with others (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016). This is one of the main reasons for using the conduct of everyday life in this doctoral research. As explained in the introduction section of this chapter, the focus is on understanding British Yemeni young people’s experiences that privileges the relational nexus between the subject and the world.
Human experience and activity have been studied extensively, but the question of how and why one might conduct one’s life has only recently started to receive attention (Kristensen & Schraube, 2014). Studying the conduct of everyday life is multi-disciplinary and the concept can be used in various areas including child development across different institutional settings in learning and education (Ingold, 2015; Schraube & Marvakis, 2015), therapy (Moloney, 2017; Dreier, 2007), family conduct (Højholt, Juhl, & Kousholt, 2018), in studying crisis, conflict and contradictory situations (Højholt, 2015; Kousholt, 2015; Federici, 2015; Osterkamp, 2015; Caffentzis, 2015), homelessness (Hodgetts, Rua, King, & Whetu, 2015), and different fields in sociology (Jurczyk, Voß, & Weirich, 2015; Haug, 2015), people. These different areas of study show the diversity in using the conduct of everyday life to examine how people live as active subjects within the contexts of their daily lives, recognising the dilemmas and contradictions people face in contemporary society (Holzkamp, 2015).

The conceptual relevance of exploring everyday activities of individuals enables the organization, integration and sense-making of the multiplicity of social relations and contradictory demands in and across engagements in different contexts (Højholt & Schraube, 2015). The concept considers how people collaboratively produce and reproduce their life through daily activities, habits, routines and personal arrangements of things and social relations. It directs attention to the social conditions in and with which people act, participate, and live their everyday life and incorporates the question of how people are subjected to socio-material dispositions of power, knowledge, and discourse.

The focus in the study of everyday life is in activities, situated in and across a multiplicity of spaces and context (Lefebvre & Moore, 2002). These activities are the sum total of relations, which together build up an articulation of the human experience (Ploger & Lefebvre, 1995). Human activity is systematically centred around the lived experiences, agency, and efforts of living and being. In studying the conduct of everyday life, I turn towards exploring how psychological phenomena and problems are given content that relates to the holistic exploration of lived experiences. In this way, I show how the concept of the conduct of everyday life opens avenues to overcome the abstract individualism of psychology which
encloses subjects in isolated psychological special functions. The concept also contributes to “a psychological epistemology, grasping the richness, complexity and connectedness of psychological phenomena as well as the interrelations between human subjects and the world” (Højholt & Schraube, 2015a, p3). An individual cannot be studied in isolation, as there is a constant relationship between the individual and the society, and so is “co-created through the fabric of the societal world” (Højholt & Schraube, 2015a).

The choice to study the conduct of everyday life in this research is supported by the current changes in society in terms of patterns of social living, migration, globalization, financial situations, international conflict and increasing individualism (Højholt & Schraube, 2015b). There is a greater social and cultural heterogeneity and complexity in today’s times and so a variety of problems are continuously emerging. A current example is the struggles and difficulties in the recent covid pandemic of 2019-2021. Recent literature on living in a world with covid (Cohen, 2020; Bohman et al., 2021; Gittings et al., 2021; Barber & Kim, 2021) shows some of the challenges people have encountered in organising and conducting their daily lives and how the period brought changes for society, significantly disrupting everyday life, albeit at different levels in different regions of the world. Such changes invite psychological studies to understand how people confront and experience local changes, in the conduct of their everyday living and being. Furthermore, looking at the conduct of everyday lives enables researchers to explore how people go through different trajectories and shifts, in relations to the social systems (Dreier, 2009), while at the same time taking the historical, cultural, local and global conditions of living and being (Okazaki, David, & Abelmann, 2008). The conduct of everyday life also offers possibilities for collective work on the resolution of social conflicts (Schraube & Højholt, 2016; Hybholt, 2015; Dreier, 2011; Holzkamp, 2015) and enables researchers to develop models or frameworks catered toward the nature and context of specific research.

There are many approaches to studying the practical applications of the conduct of everyday life. One such example is the Day Reconstruction Method (Kahneman et al., 2004). This method assesses how people experience the various activities and settings of their lives, by systematically reconstructing their activities and experiences of the preceding day, studying
the person-behaviour-situation in a time sequence. Kahneman et al.‘s work (2004) focused on the activities and circumstances of working mothers over a full day. The participants were asked to construct a diary consisting of a sequence of episodes, revived from memories of the previous day. This was then grouped by activity or by interaction with others. They were then asked to describe each episode by answering questions about the situation and about the feelings that they experienced. This method allows the capturing of the impact of a situation on a person, and its location in the sequence of situations and activities across the day. Diaries were used to record daily experiences. The Day Reconstruction Method, however, poses some challenges. Firstly, it does not consider the impact that social arrangements may have on how people live their daily lives (Dreier, 2011). Secondly, it does not consider changes with time, development of habits (perhaps through repeated actions), and the effects of other possible incidents. Thirdly, it reduced situations to behaviour, discounting how events and interpersonal relations were affected by the settings and the interplay between personality, situational and behavioural factors (Mischel & Shoda, 2008). As a result, the understanding of the relation between behaviour, situation and person is limited and to some extent misrepresented (Dreier, 2011).

Other methods have also been used to translate the concept of everyday life from theory into practice. Examples include Ingold’s work on the maze and the labyrinth as alternative models of education (Ingold, 2015), Hojholt’s work on the ethnographic methodology on children’s problems in school and their situated behaviour to understand conflictual social interplay between persons in social practice (Højholt & Kousholt, 2014) and Hodgetts and colleagues’ work on the ordinary as well as the extraordinary in the lives and struggles of homeless people (Hodgetts et al., 2015). Such studies provide an extensive description of studying the conduct of everyday life by giving primacy to actions. Although these approaches and methodologies are prodigious and provide a broad approach for the study of the conduct of everyday life, I looked for an approach that works with the participants in my research, I explored the literature on personality and identity, one that uses the concept of the day life, thereby avoiding essentialisation and one that is also manageable within the time frame of the study. Such an approach is Dreier’s (2011) theory of a person. I argue that this theory explores human psychological functioning, as conceptualized in relation to the overall
structural nexus of social practice, and it considers the characterization of individuals in terms of their stable and distinctive qualities, as well as the processes that cause these rationalities.

2.3.1 Dreier’s theory of a person

Dreier’s theory of a person (2011) provides a comprehensive person-situation-activity approach to understanding personality and/or personhood. I use these terms interchangeable to mean the status of being a person that experiences life and is continuously changing and evolving with time. The theory emphasis is on actions and activities of a person across a day, throughout different settings and at different times. In this way, it examines the relationship between lived activity in those different social contexts, and the person’s configuration of those strands of activity, that knot-together and that give a sense of the person. As a person moves and engages with different social contexts in their daily life, they also act in specific ways as they experience day to day events and living. Such understanding enables a critique of both psychologised trait-based notions and constructivist notions of personality. Using the theory of a person, I examine how people express themselves through their activities and actions, emphasising how these diverse processes evolve and become integrated to give each person a distinctive evolving personality or personhood.

Activities are affected by their social arrangements and practices, within different social contexts of which the person is a part. Dreier’s theory of a person examines how a person is studied as existing in movement across time and contexts, and in several situations, as part of the social contexts and practices that take place (Dreier, 2011). Persons associate different concerns, purposes, and histories with such different activities, relations, practices, and contexts. The meaning and course of events and situations are also affected by the context and arrangements in which they occur. In this way, a person goes through life contributing to re-producing their social conditions. They also develop by expanding the degree to which they take part in having these conditions at their commands (Dreier, 2009). Therefore, a person is viewed as a participant involved in personal trajectories in relation to structural arrangements of social practices (Dreier, 2009). He/she is also theorised from the standpoint
of the subject in his/her immediate life situation vis-à-vis an overall social structure (Holzkamp, 1983).

Dreier’s theory of a person focuses on three main areas: (1) order and arrangement; (2) situated participation and movement, (3) and - when coordinated, conducted, and accomplished, considering the complexity of everyday life, offers insight into the conduct of everyday life. Each of these areas are interlinked, further elaborated, and collectively constitute the theory of a person. Figure 4 shows my interpretation of the theory of a person in relation to each of these strands.

![Diagram of Dreier's theory of a person]

*Figure 4: Dreier's theory of a person*

I now elaborate my understanding of each of these strands, relating it to the context of my research of British Yemeni young people’s experiences. Having extensively read and re-read Dreier’s paper on personality and the conduct of everyday life (Dreier, 2011), I extracted some further key elements (shown here in italics) from these three main strands (bolded and italicised). These key elements became the advanced codes for analysis and thus the application of the theory of a person to the narratives of my participants.

1) **Order and arrangement**

A person is viewed as being part of a society with a certain order and arrangement of social practices; these are the diverse social contexts, or places, that make up the spatial dimensions
of their everyday life. These are separate from each other, yet also linked to other social contexts in particular ways which channel how social practices may be pursued across them.

To participate in social practices within those social contexts, there are particular concerns, demands and responsibilities for a person. The activities of persons and the relations between persons are part of these social practices. Social practices may manifest in activities that hold purpose and meaning for the individual and can be derived from family histories and practices, as well as a person’s other practices, such as work or studies. Family histories and practices can also highlight the extent to which theories such as post-colonialism and intersectionality contribute to the social practices of British Yemeni young people. Social practices take place in particular social contexts and are affected by their social arrangements.

The arrangement of social context defines who counts as a legitimate participant, the particular social positions in which a person takes part, and the arrangements for when a person may shift to another position in that context or participate in other parts of its social practices. This arrangement of the day in time (and over time) and in establishing some sort of order as to when a person may or must participate in a particular social context. As a person moves across social contexts, they prioritise their time and order their efforts, activities, and commitments, learning to cope with living a complex everyday life. The order and time in which a person arranges their social practices, in social context, and with different relations establishes a structure in a person’s daily life. This may introduce rhythms or activities and certain shifts, breaks and inner tensions during everyday activities.

2) Situated participation and movement

People carry out a sequence of activities which become habits of activities. The activities and experiences are part of their relations with others which depend on and hang together in social practices. A person’s agency is also deeply entrenched in the social practices they engage in, and so a person is seen as participating in different situations and movements. In these situations, a person associates particular concerns with particular social contexts and has particular things at stake in them. They also pay attention to particular things, gather particular experiences, are in and nurture particular states of mind, and reflect on their lives in
particular ways (Dreier, 2011). As soon as they move into other social contexts, they encounter other arrangements, positions, relations, and co-participants, where they have other concerns and other things at stake, and so their participation takes on other meanings. Activities are also situated in a location from where their perspectives of experience and their activities reach out into the world. They also change as a person encounters other changes in situation and because of reflections.

3) The conduct of everyday life

A person conducts their own life through the structure they have in place – their order and arrangements as well as their situated participation and movement. The conduct of everyday life here is a characteristic individual way of living, an accomplishment of effectively managing and coordinating the diverse activities and commitment in many social contexts and relations. It is a “deeply personal endeavour... a personal arrangement in relation to the social arrangement of everyday life” (Dreier, 2011, p12). Coordination is in routines and habits that introduce a degree of ordinariness. However, changes to routines are also manifested in individual differences in the ways in which persons prefer to conduct their everyday lives. The hope is that one will reach a personally necessary and desired balance of activities and commitments across contexts and days. By establishing a conduct of everyday life, a person’s life becomes marked by their commitments to others (Smith, 1988). A person also develops their personal conduct of everyday life by learning new skills and understanding that helps the person get through transitions in relation to shifts and breaks in their everyday activities, relations, situations, and social contexts. Some of these shifts may be particularly intense and complicated when persons are affected by sudden, disruptive events and these change the perspective of experiences as well as the habits formed.

As shown in Figure 4, the conduct of everyday life expresses a synthesis of the areas within order and arrangement, and participation and movement. It emphasises the sociality of human subjectivity, showing a person being the social subject in their psychological processes. From this perspective, the individual has a first-person perspective of their real-life situation as well
as its mediation through all-embracing social structures that are very much interconnected, intertwined and that permeate in the context of the conduct of the everyday life and living.

In summary, the theory of person addresses phenomena that pose questions regarding what it means to be a person, producing a theoretical proposal which examines how the order of everyday lives affect the functioning of a person (Dreier, 2011). Although the theory was developed based on Dreier’s theoretically motivated studies of psychological interventions in relation to psychotherapy (Dreier, 2007) and learning (Dreier, 2008), it can be applied to other fields of research, and I show, in Chapter Four, how I have used it to explore the experiences of British Yemeni young people in the conduct of everyday life. Arguing in favour of a more ecologically valid approach to theorizing personality, and by enabling the study of the subjective dimensions of person-situation-activity, Dreier’s theory offers a way of linking research on personality with research on the social processes whereby persons conduct their everyday lives. The theory presents how the conduct of everyday life - a mediating category between individual subjects and societal structures (Dreier, 2011) - plays a central role in understanding lived experiences.

2.3.2 Using Dreier’s theory as a methodological approach

Dreier’s theory of a person focuses on studying human behaviour in the context of the conduct of everyday life and in this doctoral research I employ a deductive-inductive approach to data analysis using Dreier’s theory as the basis of my conceptual model. This approach is shown in Figure 5.
Figure 5: A deductive-inductive approach to understanding the experiences of British Yemeni young people.

I show, in later chapters, how in using this approach I conducted a more inclusive exploration of British Yemeni young people’s agency and structure.

It is also important to note that an additional set of thinking tools were also used to explore the learning and development of my participants over time. This uses Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice in understanding and documenting learning and development (Roth, 2020). To avoid repetition of what is to come in Chapter Five, I will only mention that, because this doctoral research examines experiences of British Yemeni young people in a longitudinal manner, an additional set of thinking tools were needed to explore learning and development that was not fully explored by Dreier’s theory of a person. This provided an abductive addition to my conceptual framework, and I explore this in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

2.4 Forming connections – for understanding experiences of young people

Having explored some of the prominent work of identity and personality as a means of understanding young people’s agency, as well as settling on the conduct of everyday life in the theory of a person as a conceptual framework for such understanding, I now connect these overlapping yet distinct constructs, positioning post-colonialism and intersectionality within such synthesis. The link between identity and personality is an extensive and ongoing discussion (Williams, 2011) and covers different fields of research. In my review of the
literature in and around identity and personality, there appear, at first sight, to be little in terms of an overlap between the thinking and major traditions of these concepts. Through a focus on the activities and daily actions of people, in the context of the conduct of everyday life, I show how, in using life histories and narratives, a link can be established. This enables a focused understanding of personality, which in turn reflects identity in a way that provides a comprehensive way of understanding lived experiences of British Yemeni young people.

In other words, to understand British Yemeni young people’s experiences, one must begin with the young person’s narrative, his/her story, but in a way that does not ask about the essentialising ways of and thinking about young people - as either individualised singular products of traits, or part of a pre-determined set of interactions with society. Instead, the focus should be in asking about the activities and actions of the young person, and how this is configured through an evolving set of experiences in the conduct of everyday life. In this way, both aspects of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of being a British Yemeni young person - that relate to the way the person conducts his/her life - is presented.

This change in thinking and questioning was very much inspired and provoked by my initial work (see Chapter Three), from my own reflections of my personal experiences (see Appendix B) and through conversations and discussions with my supervisors and other academics. It became apparent that an overemphasis on particular mainstream view of identity and personality did not seem to reconcile themselves too readily with regards to what people do, and how and why they do what they do. There is also an extra dimension that is potentially underemphasised in examining social identity structures, the heritage of young people that relates to their cultural, historic positioning, the issues of colonialism and the use of power, and defining how they are connected in terms of the identity of nations, but also the young people and their family’s position in the context of dominant culture. Using a life stories and narrative approach (Syed, 2017) allows the connections between these ideas to develop. The proposal here is to let the story speak for the young person, and so present an evolving sense of their personality and identity over time developed with others in particular social fields of experience that relate to elements of the culture and social contexts.
Life histories and narratives approaches were explored in section 2.2.1.2 as a theory for understanding identity, and I appreciate its relevance here. However, I use this as a methodological approach as it serves a more functional practical role in application for an insight into experiences (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). In contrast to the other theories explored in Table 1 and Table 2, narratives, or stories of experiences, emphasises an individual life lived (McAdams, 1995), giving information on identity and personality in terms of the complex and contextual ways in which identity development, symbols, traits and characteristic adaptations (and so forth) manifest. Because identity is a much more specific aspect of the self, and involves conscious awareness, change or situational variability, it is in the narrative of the young people’s experiences in the conduct of everyday life which integrates personality, development, agency and structure (McAdams & McLean, 2013), and in which identity can be truly understood. Stories also allow for a feeling of coherence across time and place, providing a sense of purpose and meaning. Such stories change and evolve as lived experiences occur (Syed, 2017), and this also encourages using a longitudinal approach in this research.

This approach of starting with the narrative or story of activities and actions is what I adopt in this research and is depicted in Figure 6.
As shown in Figure 6, through using life history and narrative approaches to explore actions of British Yemeni young people, the conduct of everyday life (using Dreier’s theory of a person) provides a representation of the young person’s personality, which in turn reflects their identity. This does not mean that I completely disregard the ideas of the identity theories, as explored in section 2.2.2, but only explore them if there is a reference to them in the young persons’ narrative. In other words, in analysing the young people’s narratives of their activities, the implications of traditional identity theories and personality paradigms may be discussed, but only in relation to such activities.

This shift in thinking resulted in devising a set of possible questions that can be countered in the analysis of the narrative. Examples of such questions include: What do the narratives say about personality traits, characteristic adaptation, and other traditional personality paradigms? Does the narrative produce a comparison between cultures? What does the narrative say about the effect of technology and/or consumerism? In the narratives, are there any symbols or language that developed in social interactions with which the young people associate and

Figure 6: Developed approach in the study of young people’s experiences.
interact? These questions can only be applied in the analysis stage of the research once all data was compiled. Furthermore, questions on how the narrative represents the young person in relation to direct (or indirect) influences of post-colonialism or whether they reveal any forms of inequalities due to different social identity structures can be further studied. It is through these narratives that these questions can be explored within the context of identity and personality but only within the narrative of the young people. This is an alternative way of exploring lived experiences of British Yemeni Young people which perhaps connects more present theories within identity, postcolonialism and intersectionality, and personality.

Specific daily narrative experiences are not only contextualized in time and context, but they also reveal life story constructs that the young person uses to make meaning of their past experiences. It also provides a feeling of personal continuity that gives a sense of their life story (Syed, 2017). The focus is on how individuals make an integrative meaning of their lives, and these may provide meaning that exhibit different mentalities in accordance with their contexts. In using case studies as a methodology, I offer a rich, contextualized detail of the cultural representation of young people. I focus on how young people make sense of their lives through emphasis on narratives that integrate past and present experiences, with some attention to the future. Although this is best done in an autobiographical way (as done in Josselson, 2009; Williams, 2009; Fivush et al., 2011), longitudinal case studies of stories of some daily activities can also provide substantial amounts of information on the lived lives of my participants, as well as how young people make sense of small slices of their lives. Through such a narrative, I capture life as lived, showing how people continue to build their personality through the actions and thought processes that happen and are shown through their everyday conduct and experiences as they live it, day by day. In this way personality is studied through situated, daily actions of the person.

2.5 Summary of Chapter Two

The focus of this doctoral research is to document the experiences of British Yemeni young people, and to achieve this aim, I adopt and build on various theoretical frameworks that explore such experiences. In this chapter, I have presented the literature on the various
theories and paradigms in studying identity and personality. I have set out the historical context by drawing on publications and scholarly literature. I explained the complexity in using traditional identity theories and personality paradigms to study lived experiences of British Yemeni young people. Most previous identity research has not focused on interconnection of meaning and doing through time in various contexts but rather on domain-specific and situationally bound identities that fragment any sense of a person. This research avoids this and takes the position that personality is the way a person portrays or lives their identity, through their daily actions as experienced in day-to-day moments in varying contexts over time. Using life stories and narrative approaches, a representation is through what they do with others in varying contexts, their agency is made visible.

In the next Chapter, I explain and justify the research methods that I use to conduct the empirical research to understand the experiences of British Yemeni young people. I also explored using Dreier’s theory, as well as introducing Roth’s ideas of learning and development, to describe the analytical approach for my empirical study that is theory-led and data-driven.
Chapter 3 - Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology for collecting and analysing my research data. I first justify my chosen methodology in the context of my ontological and epistemological position. I then outline my choice of research design and approach, that have been carefully selected as a way to answer my research questions. I justify the methods employed, building directly on experiences generated through my initial study, which, because of its contribution to changes in both theoretical thinking and methodological application, I later refer to it as my initial study. I then produce a detailed account of my methodological steps. I show how I have analysed the data using a content-directed approach to understanding the experiences of each participant, and then use thematic analysis to present the relational experiences that were similar between the young people. I describe how I generated my analytical matrices using Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) and Roth’s ideas of learning and development in personhood in practice (Roth, 2016). I also show how I have used intersectionality and post-colonialism as analytical tools to explain how the interactivity of varying social identity structures enabled further insight into the experiences of British Yemeni young people in the development of their daily practices. I describe the recursive and reflexive process that governed methodological changes during this process. I then describe the ethical procedure and address matters of research integrity and trustworthiness. Finally, I outline the publication strategy that justifies my submission of this thesis in a journal format.

3.2 Research paradigm

The paradigm of this research takes on a social constructionist epistemology and a relational ontology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This is because I take the position that knowledge and meaning is generated, by a person, through the continued interaction between their experiences and reflexes, behaviour-patterns and ideas (Piaget, 2013). This paradigm was influenced by the literature reviewed and the theoretical frameworks employed.
The paradigm also directs the choice of the methodology, with the guiding principle being fitness for purpose (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Qualitative research is used here because of its ability, as a methodology, to link with description, both interpretive and subjective, allowing a detailed and in-depth exploration of experiences, meanings, perceptions, practices and processes (Spencer et al., 2003). The experience is, therefore, understood through a person’s perspective, and I pay attention to the content where it emerges. Concepts that facilitate understanding context, people, and interaction are enabled through qualitative research – all three pertinent to my research questions. Furthermore, qualitative research seeks to connect context with explanation, enabling events, perceptions, and actions to be adequately understood in context (Barbour, 2019a). Analysis of such data draws out patterns from concepts and insights, and the results obtained provide illustrative explanation and individual responses (Berg, 2001). In this way, social meaning and everyday activities of the young people are captured in naturally occurring settings.

3.3 Researcher positionality

I have identified and developed my positionality by examining my disposition with regards to the research subject, the participants of the research and my own beliefs and ideas of human experiences. Prior to this research, my professional background was in the field of science, and so have used more quantitative approaches in research. I gradually changed into thinking more qualitatively when my studies moved to the social science field; during the research process, it became clear to me that the focus of my doctoral research became more on the depth of study, rather than the breadth. These changes were confirmed after exploring the relevant literature on how to best understand experiences, and more so after undertaking the initial study.

The focus of this doctoral research is on an exploration of experiences through the conduct of everyday life, and I have selected the historical ethnic and national background of my participants to be British Yemeni young people, living in Birmingham. I grew up in Birmingham in a British Yemeni home, I am bilingual in Arabic and English, and I have attended supplementary school at the week evenings (and at times the weekends) to strength
my Arabic language and to be more acquainted with other Yemenis and Arabs, perhaps as a way of belonging and forming friendship group of similar ethnicities. I celebrate religious festivals in mosques and local community centres, dress traditionally in some events and weddings, and have visited Yemen on numerous occasions, especially when I was younger and before the war (Hokayem & Roberts, 2016). These different social practices placed me at an advantage, as I was able to relate to my participants in these ways. The way I document my own experiences and construct my own personality and identity may differ to the participants, but the similarities are present. For example, I understand some of the difficulties around building my culture from my living and being in Birmingham, while at the same time making constant efforts to connect with my Yemeni heritage through my family histories and practices.

Having the ability to relate to the participants in this way meant that, during the interview process, I was able to understand the implications of what it meant to be Yemeni and British at the same time. Additionally, topics arising at the interviews regarding family expectations and commitments, feelings towards Yemen as an ancestral homeland, attempts to carry out religious practices in daily activities (for example, finding places to pray in changing rooms when shopping in town), and so forth, were easily understood, without the need for further elaboration from the participants. Additionally, as the findings later show, all participants switched languages, using Arabic terms to express some thoughts or feelings (which may have been lost in translation if said in English). Being bilingual gave me access to understanding this without the need for further explanation or clarification.

Nevertheless, there are also potential challenges and opportunities of being cognizant of my positionality as researcher (Bourke, 2014). Doing academic research is an ongoing process and represents a shared space between both the researchers and participants (England, 1994) and so the roles played by myself (as a researcher) and British Yemeni young people (as the participants), may have the potential to impact the research process (Kezar, 2002). For example, the power dynamics of my previous role as a schoolteacher, and my participant roles as students, may be accompanied by particular set of attributes associated with being a
teacher (with knowledge and experiences) or a student (learning and developing), and may affect the way in which information was given or received during the data collection stages.

There is also the potential that the perceptions of my own lived experiences, being similar or different to the participants, may have influenced the research process in a direction that I may, unconsciously, have intended. For example, when a participant narrates stories of family responsibilities in the house, I instinctively remember the roles I had (such as cleaning dishes or hoovering) and may form biases around such roles. Throughout the research, I try to limit these dispositions by being mindful, taking an outsider perspective as much as possible and reflecting on these perceptions and biases, allowing them to act and serve as possible checkpoints. I also use Pannucci and Wilkins’s guidance (2010) on identifying and avoiding bias and ways to be reflective and reflexive throughout the research process. Through recognition of my own biases and by acknowledging that I am in a different age group, development in thinking, and differences in priorities to my participants, I acquired certain insights into how I may approach the research setting and engage with my participants. My positionality as a British Yemeni woman studying issues of culture in lived experiences remains at the forefront of my mind, however.

Examining the research process reflexively, in the context of my positionality, involved a continuous mode of self-analysis, self-scrutiny and self-conscious awareness of my relationship with the participants (Pillow, 2003). In presenting the findings, I recognise that, just as my participants’ responses could not be value-free or objective, neither could my own. My experiences and interpretations of language are also individually constructed, and the meaning of words is individually and subjectively constructed (von Glasersfeld, 1984). Therefore, I needed to define some of the language used specifically to present what I meant by such terms. Being mindful of this allowed partiality to remain intact so that representation of the participants’ stories would be as close to the truth as possible. This is further addressed in this chapter when discussing trustworthiness and research integrity.

Through exploring my positionality continuously in this research, I was able to identify taken-for-granted assumptions, and so was mindful of my understanding and analysis of the
participants’ discussion. Being a part-time PhD student has given me a longer period of time to consider these matters, exploring them throughout the process of research. I continuously employed in-depth thought and critical analysis throughout the research process using Bourke’s guidance on positionality and reflexivity (Bourke, 2014). While analysing the data of this research, I timetabled reflection time, moving away from the raw data for a day or two to recalibrate and address some of my biases and understandings of the data.

I am also aware of the position I hold with regards to exploring human experiences. I view experiences as being mediated and changed by historical cultural dynamics of an evolving society (Creanza, Kolodny, & Feldman, 2017). In other words, humans are shaped by the historic environmental conditions in which they live but they also bring their evolving individual biographies into such experiences with others (Hards, 2011). Although there may be a commonality and a sharing of experiences through interactions with others, the specific interpretations and understandings of such experiences are individual and potentially different (Yee, 1995). Structures exist, and these constitute the social context in which a person takes part in, and those structures facilitate and indirectly regulate people and their actions. This research was therefore influenced by constructionist ontology and an interpretivist epistemological approach, studying actors’ subjective responses to events. By this means, I generated knowledge and understanding – interpretation rather than explanation – of the social discourses, processes and actions associated with my research process. I, therefore, aim to answer my research questions utilising this particular ontological and epistemological position.
3.4 Research approach and design

The experiences of British Yemeni young people - in the actions they do in their daily lives - are explored through the research approach and design, illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7: A summary of the research approach and design

The research approach I use is a case study. I particularly find Yin’s work influential and one of the key authorities in defining this approach (Yin, 1994; Yin, 2009). According to Yin (2009), the case study approach lends itself to capturing information on more explanatory ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions and, therefore, is where abstract ideas fit together offering insights and in-depth explanations of social behaviour. This produces an effective method for exploring multi-faced complex issues in real-life settings, while at the same time enabling a narrow focus (Yin, 2012; Crowe et al., 2011). In this thesis, case studies are used to explore the conduct of everyday life in real-life settings, focusing particularly on the experiences of six British Yemeni young people, as six different cases.

First, I examine each case on its own and then explore the main themes found in the six cases. By focusing on the conduct of everyday life as a theoretical framework (see Chapter Two), I refrain from essentializing what British Yemeni young people are and do and avoid generalizing their experiences as much as possible. However, in engaging with some of the nuance of their lived experiences, the cultural and social arrangements of experiences, inevitably, reflects a broad picture of British Yemeni subcultures and groups. I show in my findings how this illustrates some of the evolved identities and personality, and how these trajectories are suggestive of British Yemenis young people’s biographies, both in their homogeneity and heterogeneity.
I move on now to describe the research design beginning with my inspirations for choosing photography in research, in combination with semi-structured interviews. I then describe the context of my initial study, giving it presidency in directing the methodology for my main research. I then describe the steps taken to collect the main research data.

3.4.1 The choice of methods

To explore the lived experiences of British Yemeni young people, the criteria for my choice of method originates from my readings of the relevant literature on conducting qualitative research, from my engagement in research methodology seminars at university and from the discussion I engaged in with my peers and supervisors. I now explore the literature of my chosen methods, namely using photography and semi-structured interviews.

3.4.1.1 Using photography

An inspiration for using photography in my doctoral research came from my readings of Freire’s study of young people in Brazil, in which he asked for photographic answers to the definition of ‘exploitation’ (Freire, 2005). The photographs also evoked the young people to narrate other stories of personal experiences of exploitation. His study reveals the powerful and personal role that photographic methods play in the generation of dialogue, and in their ability to capture rich conversations and deep discussions (Freire, 2013). I was also inspired by Collier’s work on mental health in changing communities in Canada (Collier, 1957) and how he uses still images in his research. The still images showed an abstraction and a restatement of reality, presenting life around people in new, objective, and arresting dimensions. Using photographs in this way has the potential of stimulating participants to discuss the world about them as if they were observing it for the first time (Collier, 1957). Collier proposed photo-interviewing as the solution to a practical problem of discomfort and generalisation, noting that the data obtained with photographs was precise and at the same time encyclopaedic, and that the statements were in direct response to graphic probes (Collier, 1957). Such methods also elicited longer and more comprehensive interviews but at the same time helped participants overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional
interviews, and allowed a more dialogic relationship between the researcher and the participant (Harper, 2010).

I also participated in several classes at university, where I observed master’s students, in various disciplines of humanities, using photography to explore their understanding of issues related to inclusion, identity and social justice. This instigated my attention in using photography as a method. Furthermore, using photographs in research was supported by the reality that the young people live in a visually intensive society and globalized world (Kasberg et al., 2021). They are subjected to millions of visual stimulations from all manner of media every day (Elsman, van Rens, & van Nispen, 2019). Taking photographs also seems to be a fashionable and enjoyable activity (Nardini, Lutz, & LeBoeuf, 2019), and not only does it assists in the reflection of complex ideas or issues, it also makes the process of data collection more enjoyable, enabling the abstract to become more concrete (Cook & Hess, 2007).

The power of using photography in qualitative studies is well documented in the literature (Sutton-Brown, 2014; Wang & Burris, 1994; Hurworth, 2003b; Miles & Howes, 2014), and there are different approaches and term used to describe the way photography is used in research. These include photo-based interviewing, photo-elicitation, photovoice and photo novella. The naming a researcher will choose primarily depends on the literature they have reviewed and approach and design of their particular research. In this doctoral research, in the initial study, I explored the use of photo-elicitation (Harper, 1991) and photo-novella (Wang & Burris, 1994), and focused on photo-novella in my main research (justified in 3.4.3).

Photo-elicitation and photo-novella are two of the many ways of using photography in research, particularly in interviews. Both methods empower participants, turning them from passive objects of study into emancipated co-creators of research and empowered co-creators of data (Hopkins & Wort, 2020). Acting as an intermediary in research, by enabling the researcher to focus the attention on the photograph rather than the participant (Shaw, 2021), both methods are useful for understanding participants’ perspectives and insights into their everyday worlds (Barbour, 2019b). Although both photo-elicitation and photo-novella are
means of narrating stories via photography, they differ in their depth of conceptual involvement and expected creative outcomes (Hopkins & Wort, 2020).

The foundation of photo-elicitation is the idea of inserting photographs into a research interview (Harper, 2002; Bignante, 2010) to generate collaborative discussion with alternative imaginations, meanings, interpretations, and/or potentialities (Harper, 2010; Harper, 2002). The photographs can be generated by either the participants or the researcher, depending on the context of the study. Researchers have a facilitative role in photo-elicitation methods, as they draw out what is needed in the interview, helping the participant frame and formulate their responses (Jenkings, Woodward, & Winter, 2008). I show later, in section 3.4.3, how my initial study uses photographs that I selected for the photo-elicitation method, while my main study, in section 3.4.4, only uses photo-novella.

Photo-novella differs from photo-elicitation in that participants have an active role in the generation and interpretation of photographs. I understand photo-novella to be within the family of photo-voice, with the underlying component being that the photographs are brought by the participants. These photographs allow participants to document and discuss their life conditions as they see them (Wang & Burris, 1994). In this way, the photographs’ provide an interpretation, purpose, and/or message from the participants own unique perspective and experience (Wang & Burris, 1994), which often reveal deeper understandings of values and beliefs (Beazley, 2002). I use the term photo-novella, instead of photo-voice, because it depicts the use of ‘picture stories’ (Hurworth, 2003) and this is precisely what the method in this research is: participants narrate their story of their daily lives using pictures.

I was inspired by the way in which Wang and Burris (1997) use the photo-novella method to study village women in rural China. Wang and Burris’s approach describes photo-novella as underpinnings by empowerment education (Freire, 1996), feminist theory (Smith, 1988; Lather, 1989) and community-based application. They show how this method enabled the women to think critically about their living, being and their community. The photographs in Wang and Burris’s study serve as a kind of code that reflects the community back upon itself, mirroring the everyday social and political realities. Photo-novella has also been informed by
the work and teachings of many education and community involved photographers besides Wang and Burris. Schratz and Steiner-Loeffler (2005) give practical examples of the use of photo-novella techniques to study children’s mental and wellbeing and in school self-evaluation and Riley & Manias (2004) show the use of photo stories in clinical nursing practices and research. Using photography in this way allows researchers to look at the world through the lens of the photographer.

Photo-novella can also be done in a diary-like manner (Alaszewski, 2011; Swallow et al., 2015; Miles, 2017) providing spoken reports (which can then be transcribed into written reports) on events and experiences of daily lives that capture the particulars of experience in a way that is not perhaps possible using photo-elicitation. Although the researcher may set the general question in the photo-novella method, the agenda for the research can be flexible, allowing the conversations of the interview to be steered more closely to the main areas the participant wishes to disclose, with discussion being guided by the participants’ photographs. Participants take photographs of their daily activities, and elements of life is captured as they are lived (Bolger et al., 2003). These daily activities are embedded in the socio-cultural contexts in which participants live, and this elicits information on the day-to-day events, experiences and feelings (Collier, 1957). By forming a special lens which can be focused and directed to topics of greater importance to the participants, photo-novella has the capacity to enable an understanding of experiences of the participant in question.

3.4.1.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviewing is a method, which I use in both my initial study and main research, in combination with photography. These interviews use a series of closed and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up ‘why’ or ‘how’ questions. Semi-structured interviews have been extensively used as a data collection tool in qualitative research (Harvey-Jordan & Long, 2001) and the questions often lead to answers that offer opportunities for various themes or subtopics to develop. I used Adam’s (2015) recommendations of how to conduct semi-structured interviews and Kennedy’s advice (2012) on using interview guides to help direct the conversation toward the topics of the research.
This is because both Adam and Kennedy provide clear direction and steps on how to carry out semi-structured interviews that seemed fitting for this research. These steps are included in the interview guide (see Appendix C) and discussed later (see 3.4.4). The photographs, taken by the participants, were used as the initial guide to the interviews, as well as a memory aid - both for the participant to remember the sequence of events, and for me, as the interviewer, to ensure the contents of the topic were covered. The interview guide consists of a list of questions and topics within the context of the research, focusing on the participant’s social context, practices, and arrangements - such as “So, what happened next?”, “When was this?”, “How is this morning routine the same/different as…?”, “Who did you go with?”. These focused on questions primarily related to activities and actions and so enabled participants to discuss situations and narrate stories of their lived experiences. This also foregrounds each person’s particular way of making sense of those experiences in their own words and in their own way (Kennedy, 2012).

3.4.2 The site of the field work

The interviews took place in a local café in Birmingham. I selected this particular café as it had a very relaxed environment, was in an accessible location, and I knew the owner. I was also inspired by a wall art display on one of the walls of the café which linked Yemen with the discovery of coffee (Bernard, 2020), shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: A wall display in a café in Birmingham.
The café also benefits from having a quiet side area, with a large table which I could use for participants to display their photographs. I booked this area prior to the interview dates, and during the quietest periods at the café - 10am, 2pm and/or 7pm.

3.4.3 Initial study

I conducted an initial study to primarily examine the feasibility of my research design and approach (Leon, Davis, & Kraemer, 2011; Johanson & Brooks, 2010), particularly in the use of photography in my main research. I had originally named this a pilot study but, with the guidance of my supervisors, moved away from this. This is because the study, although small-scale, explored more than one area and generated more information than expected. It explored the feasibility of using different methods in combination, yielding a considerable number of crucial components to the implications and practicality of the main study. This includes reforming the research questions, informing the criteria for the selection of participants, choosing the effective photographic method, and demonstrating the benefits of using longitudinal studies. Additionally, two British Yemeni young people - Nuha and Fatima - who participated in the initial study, also participated in the main research, and I used some of the initial study findings to explore their conduct of everyday life and to strengthen an understanding of their learning and development. This would mean that approximately three consecutive years of data (from March 2018 – October 2022) was collected for these participants. Hence this initial study developed to be more than a pilot - it became the evolution of my research study design. In this section, I show how the initial study contributed to a change in direction of both theoretically thinking and methodological application.
Context of the study

Five participants, *Khalid, Sally, Fatima, Nuha,* and *Sam* (pseudonyms, used for anonymity) - introduced in *Table 3* - took part in the initial study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fatima</th>
<th>Nuha</th>
<th>Khalid</th>
<th>Sally</th>
<th>Sam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generation</strong></td>
<td>First</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age at the interview</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Introducing the participants in the initial study.*

These participants were recruited through gate keepers (sports coaches and teachers in supplementary schools) and from my own engagement in the Yemeni community in Birmingham. This was a good opportunity to evaluate the feasibility of recruitment for my main research. At this stage, the selection criteria were purposive (based on who I, and the gatekeepers, could find to participate in the study - young people who identified themselves as being British Yemeni). The criteria were further developed during the main research and is described later (see section 3.4.4.2).

Methods and approaches trialled in the initial study

The two photographic methods trialled in the initial study were photo-elicitation (Harper, 1991) and photo-novella (Wang & Burris, 1994), and I have explored the literature on these earlier. *Table 4* shows which method, and approach, each participant engaged in, and describes the tasks for each of the methods. Both photo-elicitation and photo-novella were trialled in the initial study to decide which technique would best suit the exploration of experiences of my participants. To critique the data collection method, two participants, *Sally* and *Fatima* carried out both photo-elicitation and photo novella and gave feedback on both methods.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Additional notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Photo-elicitation</td>
<td>1. Khalid</td>
<td>1. Out of the twelve photographs, select nine that most relate to you as a British Yemen student.</td>
<td>Khalid picked the photos himself and was interviewed alone. Sally and Fatima picked the photos together and were interviewed together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Sally and Fatima</td>
<td>2. Arrange the photos using the diamond ranking method.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Talk about the photos in an open discussion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo novella</td>
<td>1. Sally</td>
<td>1. Take nine pictures using a disposable camera of one day (as an example of a typical week).</td>
<td>Sally and Fatima took pictures on their day separately and were interviewed separately, while Nuha and Sam took pictures together but were interviewed separately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Fatima</td>
<td>2. Arrange the photos using the diamond ranking method.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Sam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Methods used in the initial study.

All interviews took place in March 2018 at the café mentioned in 3.4.2. I considered the seating arrangements for the interviews, being aware of the voice and eye contact elements, conversation turn taking, proximal body positions of the interviewee and interviewer, as well as the vocabulary used for questioning.

As shown in Table 4, some participants carried out photo-elicitation, some photo-novella and some both. For the photo-elicitation method, I selected twelve photographs from the internet, shown in Figure 9. I chose these photographs from my own observation around Birmingham, from my teaching practice and from my experiences as a student in university.
For the photo-novella method, the participants were given one disposable camera each and were asked to take 10-16 photographs. Although the photographs taken by the participants were not always clear, these devices were ideal, and preferred over digital cameras as it ensured that there were no second-thoughts or ‘trying to impress’ scenarios (Loizou, 2011). This limited the participants from trying to take a picture-perfect image, as editions and filtering of the photograph taken was not possible with disposable cameras (Lee & Lee, 2021). In using disposable cameras, a genuine representation of the young people’s experience was maintained. I discussed the technique of taking photos with participants, and demonstrated how it was performed – with a straightforward ‘point and shoot’ method.
(Kleemans et al., 2018) – by taking the first photograph myself. The cost was more reasonable than providing digital cameras or relying on students’ own cameras (Given, Opryshko, Julien, & Smith, 2011).

In addition to photo-elicitation and photo-novella methods, I also used the diamond ranking method (Clark, 2012) in this initial study. This is an additional visual tool that can be used, in combination with photography and semi-structured interviews to encourage collaboration, thinking and discussions of certain themes or issues concerned with the participant (Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015). There is often a main discussion topic, and the method offers the participant the opportunity to participate in the process of data collection (Niemi, Kumpulainen, & Lipponen, 2015; Clark, 2012). By allowing the participants to arrange their nine photographs into a diamond hierarchy, with the top being the most relevant to them and the last the least relevant (as to complete the diamond shape), the participant is engaged and actively participating, and reflecting on importance and significance (Clark, 2012).

I saw at first-hand the benefits of using diamond ranking when I participated in a university seminar in which master’s students were asked to define their understanding of inclusion using this method. The students completed this exercise in small groups. Discussions on where to place certain photos took place in groups, and these discussions provided a considerable amount of information about the participants’ experiences of inclusion through their interpretations and ranking of their photos. The master’s students discussed and changed the ranking, and this continued until the final diamond shape was produced.

Some participants worked alone, and some in pairs (refer to Table 3) so that the research can assess the benefits of gathering individual and collective experiences. Both approaches yielded rich data, albeit for different purposes. Gathering information from pairs or groups collectively produces knowledge that extends beyond a particular moment, and so when participants work in pairs or groups to carry out a task, they help the researcher in deciding the key themes for exploration, themes of concerns or matters that need further addressing (Hunleth, 2011). With group or paired discussions, the participant is accountable to their
peers and engage in dynamic conversations that shape the discussion in ways not possible during one-to-one interviews.

Despite the rich conversation that I witnessed during the interviews, I also noticed that some of the quieter less-vocal members were less likely to be heard. Therefore, the exclusion of some individual voices was a drawback of generating collective data. An example of this was when Sally spoke about the photograph of the bus being unimportant to her, while Fatima, perceived the photograph as showing a ‘busy world’ in a fast city, and of significance to her experience of being late for college, adding stress to her day. Perhaps Fatima would have ranked the photograph higher in the ranking order, but because Sally, as the dominant participant, did not see its importance, Fatima let her opinion pass, and compromised by placing it in the middle of the ranking, as shown in Figure 10. Young people vary in confidence level and articulation of their thoughts so when working in a group, some voices may be ‘copied’ from one another and may provide accounts which reflect social norms rather than direct experience.

The continuous discussion as to whether individual voice or collective voice serves the purpose intended for the research ultimately depends on the research itself and the aims that the researcher wishes to fulfil. Sally and Fatima worked together within the photo-elicitation method and were happy to do so, however, when it came to bringing in their own photographs, they wanted to rank their photographs and be interviewed separately. Both participants pursued a sense of personal space and privacy and were more comfortable in narrating their own personal experiences when interviewed alone, without the pressure of pleasing others. The nature of experiences is personal and private, and so working in pairs or groups does not offer enough information on individual experience. Nuha and Sam worked together to take the photos (as their social context and arrangements were linked, as they are cousins, friends and go to the same college) and although the nine photos were the same, the discussion of the reasons behind each photo, as well as the diamond ranking (also done separately as desired by the participant), yielded different responses (examples are shown in figures 10 and 11). Working individually seemed to lead to greater detail in responses.
Using photographs, an open-ended question was asked to set the agenda for discussion: “Tell me about your experiences as a student”. This was followed by other questions such as “Which photos do you want to talk about next?”, “Why did you pick this photo and place it here?” and “Why did you exclude some photos?”. These questions focused on the photographs the participants picked or took, the order in which they arranged them in diamond ranking and the responses they gave for the follow-up questions thereafter. The opening question, used to initiate the conversation, focused on the young people’s experiences as students, as this was the emphasis at the beginning of this research - the educational context of the young person, rather than general experiences. This was later adjusted to encompass all social practices, providing a more holistic approach to data collection and analysis, rather than fragmenting experiences to only examine the educational section. This initial study revealed that I needed to reform my questions and my aims so that I was able to represent the young person as a whole unit, carrying out social practices in social contexts and through different social arrangements as they experience life, and not just experiences which related to education. Furthermore, there are limited studies on British Yemeni young people in academic literature and research, and so I could start research from an angle that perhaps sets the scene, or builds a base, for future studies on British Yemenis.

**Data collected from the initial study**

A total of six diamond ranking images, and six twenty-minute interviews were compiled from the initial study. *Figure 10* shows an example of Sally and Fatima’s diamond ranking of photo-elicitation *Figure 11 an example of Sally’s photo-novella.*
The intention of the study was primarily to critique the methodology, rather than form an analysis or synthesis the data. However, both Fatima and Nuha continued in the main research and so their interviews were transcribed and were (at times) referred to in the main research.
Exploring participatory research

In the initial study, I also considered participatory research (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Cook, 2020) and participatory action research (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2009; McTaggart, 1991) as an approach of exploring experiences. This is because at least one of the methods trialled, photo-novella, is described as participant-generated (Caroline, 1999; Wang, 1999) in the sense that the participants take their own photos and discuss them with the interviewer. However, participatory research is much more than that, and when coupled with action, it is a dynamic, interactional, and transformative process of dialogue between people, groups and institutions (Kindon et al., 2009) that enables people, both individually and collectively to realise their full potential and to be engaged in their own welfare (Singhal & Devi, 2003). The methods employed in participatory action research seek to understand and improve the world by changing it using collective, self-reflective inquiry (Kindon et al., 2009). The reflective process is directly linked to action, influenced by understanding of history, culture, and local context and embedded in social relationships (Baum et al., 2006).

For the research to be participatory, I follow McTaggart (1991) principles and guidance on the levels of research design and the implementation process. These levels are listed in the first column of Table 5. To explore these levels during the initial study, I asked my participants for their opinions on their active engagement and contributions in each of these levels. The words in italics are some of their quotes regarding the different questions on each level of participation.
Levels of participation
General Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Photo-elicitation</th>
<th></th>
<th>Comments from participant on</th>
<th>Photo-novella</th>
<th></th>
<th>How will this be implemented in the main research?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Participants set the agenda of the inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td>Khalid: Myself, my life, my relationships. But with the photos that you chose, all I understood is that we need to say our opinions on these photos, so responses were general.</td>
<td>Naha: I agreed to participate in the research because it is nice that people actually care about what we say, what is important to us and you are actually listening to us which is nice.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Research questions refined to ask about activities in their daily life, rather than experiences as students of an ethnic and national identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: What do you think you would like me to ask you about?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Participants set the methodology of the inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td>Khalid: Using photos is great. I think here, photos speak louder than anything. So I like that we are using photos. Makes it easier to talk about what the photos means to me.</td>
<td>Fatima: Maybe photos but with sequence rather than just take photos randomly and try and fill the blanks.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continue using photography but instead of using the diamond nine method, ask participants to produce a time-line of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: I use photos to find more about you. Is this a good method or are there other ways?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Participants participate in data collection</td>
<td></td>
<td>Khalid: What was good is that the photos you gave us linked to us as young people. Fatima: The diamond ranking made sense as I was able to rank important themes but sometimes I felt I was just ranking them to fit the diamond.</td>
<td>Sally: This was easier because we had time to think about the photos and it was personal. With the other photos, we fill the gap and their were spaces around each photo. Things didn’t really link. Sam: I preferred doing it. I can only relate my experiences as I see them</td>
<td></td>
<td>The photo-novella is a sufficient method in answering the research questions. There is no need to use still images, or diamond ranking, as this seemed a little impersonal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: How did you feel about what you did, in terms of collecting the photos or ranking them – the methods?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Participants involvement in data analysis.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fatima: Maybe look at the main themes we talk about? and maybe why these are important to us? Khalid: I don’t think it is for us to analyse the interview, we have too much on our plate. Sam: I am still 17, how would I know what to do with the interview?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Analytical approaches to be chosen by myself to focus on daily lived experiences as individuals, and themes as collectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: Would you like to contribute in analysing your data?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Participants control the use of outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sally: Tell our parents to give us a break and let us explore the world as we see it. Khalid: Make sure schools listen to us. Tell them how we feel because I don’t think they listen to us. If school wants us to learn properly, they should teach properly and link it to our lives. Naha: Making others see what is important to me. Sam: This gap between us and them is getting bigger… The community, the political state, the expectations of others. We just want them to understand where we are coming from.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Publish articles and present findings to community leaders and general society. Include recommendations for policy, practice and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q: What would you like me to do with the findings of this research?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Participant views on the two methods trialled in the initial study.
The last column of Table 5 gives detail on the changes I have made to the main research, as an outcome of these discussions. Although the agenda of the inquiry was set, the participants had the freedom to direct the research to issues which they wanted to voice, giving them a sense of ownership (Kindon et al., 2009). However, it is at the second and third design level (methodology and data collection) where I felt that this research was partially participatory. Even so, this study demonstrated that my research does not engage in all levels of participation, and the action element was certainly underdeveloped. Literature on British Yemen young people’s experiences is limited, and given the logistics and nature of the research with its time restraints and added complexity in training the participants on levels of participation (Lundy & McEvoy, 2012), and that it was ultimately conducted by myself (as one researcher), I conclude in saying that my research may contribute to certain elements of participation, but is not a participatory research.

**Conclusions from the initial study**

This initial study influenced the main research in many ways. These influences include:

1) Refining the research questions - from asking about the young person’s experiences in an educational context, to more of a comprehensive question about the young person’s daily lived experiences. This produced a holistic approach to the research as I examine more than the educational experiences of British Yemeni young people but also their general lived experiences.

2) Focusing on photo-novella as an exclusive method to show realities of British Yemeni young people’s living and being.

3) Adopting a diary-like method (Miles, 2017; Alaszewski, 2011), instead of using the diamond nine method by asking the participants to take photographs to produce a timeline of events. This provides an assessment of contiguous episodes over full days.

4) Employing longitudinal studies to collect data over time - to record possible learning processes and development shifts from the continuity of the young people’s experiences.

These points emerged as a direct result of the findings of the initial study and informed the actions for the main research.
3.4.4 Main research

I use Crowe’s clear and comprehensive guidance to design and conduct my case studies (Crowe et al., 2011). This guidance directs the methodological steps, and I summarize these in Figure 12.

I will now elaborate on each of the steps, providing some of the most prominent literature used.

3.4.4.1 Step 1 - Defining the case

Having carefully formulated my research questions, explored the relevant literature, and appreciated the theoretical issues and settings, I define the case study for this research as: the study of the activities of six British Yemeni young people in the conduct of their daily lives. I have also set pre-defined boundaries which clarify the nature and time covered by the case study (longitudinal – discussed later) as well as matters related to the proposed research approach (qualitative) and ideas for the research design.

3.4.4.2 Step 2 - Selecting the case

I employ an intrinsic case study (Stake, 1995). This is because this is a unique case study and is of genuine interest to me, as a researcher of British Yemeni heritage. I was also able to
access the participants, through gatekeepers and my own engagement in the Yemeni community in Birmingham. I selected participants who were willing to work and cooperate with the research. I also devised an inclusion criterion (see Table 6), inviting a total of six participants to take part in the study (see Table 7).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation criteria</th>
<th>Reasons for criteria chosen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 16-19 age range</td>
<td>Young people over 16 did not need parental consent (not high risk) and age group is mature enough to reflect on experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Both male and female</td>
<td>50:50 male and female (for gender balance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 First, second and third-generation British Yemenis</td>
<td>Representation from all three generations, showing variety and extent of what it is to be British Yemeni.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Attended formal education in England</td>
<td>This ensured their homogeneity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Currently live in Birmingham</td>
<td>To enable face to face research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Available to be contacted over two years.</td>
<td>To complete data collection over the period of the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Less than 10 participants</td>
<td>To produce an in-depth account of each participant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Criteria for selecting participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Fatima</th>
<th>Younus</th>
<th>Nuha</th>
<th>Rashad</th>
<th>Adam</th>
<th>Sausan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at the beginning of the research</td>
<td>16 (At initial study)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16 (At initial study)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational/work pathway</td>
<td>College to university</td>
<td>College to college</td>
<td>College, gap year (work), university (and work)</td>
<td>College to university</td>
<td>College to university</td>
<td>College, gap year (work), university (and work)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Introducing the participants in the main research.

The pseudonyms, used for anonymity, were mostly chosen by the participants. Fatima selected a family member’s name, Younus was studying the story of Prophet Younus (Jonah) during the time of the first interview and so selected that name, Nuha liked the way the name
sounded, and I chose the name Rashad, as he didn’t want to choose a pseudonym for himself. Adam and Sausan (Susan) chose names that they said were suitable in both British and Yemeni settings and cultures. The participants all identified themselves as being Muslims.

3.4.4.3 Step 3 - Collecting data

For data collection, photo-novella was used (Wang & Burris, 1994). As described earlier, photography in everyday life involves taking photographs of events and activities, and can be used to gain knowledge on routine, opportunistic, spontaneous, self-focused, or arbitrary matters (Harper, 2010; Glaw et al., 2017; Hodgetts, Chamberlain, & Radley, 2007). I arranged to meet each participant separately at the café (see 3.5.5). I then asked the participants to take photographs, using disposable cameras, to narrate the stories of their experiences. Giving the control of the camera to the participants not only empowers them, but also offers them the chance to amplify their place in and experiences of the world (Wang & Burris, 1994).

Having explained the basic principles of using disposable cameras, (as I had done previously in the initial study – see 3.4.3) as well as what to consider when composing a photograph, I gave out one disposable camera to each participant. Each camera had a maximum of 16 photos. I asked the participants to take photos of their routine days (perhaps a weekday) and non-routine day (such as a holiday or weekend) for any two days during a three-week period. This provided an assessment of contiguous episodes over each full day. I discouraged casual picture-taking and advised the participants to think of the camera as an information-event capturing device. The audience for everyday photography varies widely from oneself, to family and friends, and to anonymous others through social media (Bendell & Sylvestre, 2017), and so inviting these young people to take photos (which represent aspects of their lives that are routine and those that are out of the ordinary) gave me an insight into the participants personal and social worlds. During the three weeks, the participants captured photographs for each of the four days in their different social contexts, documented (in the form of photographs) an entire day activity, from the point they woke up, until the late evening. Thus, a sequence of event for the participant was established. After the three-week
period, I collected the cameras from my participants and developed them at a local Jessops store (see 3.5 for ethical consideration).

After developing the photographs, I then arranged to meet with the participants at the same café. The participants were given 5-10 minutes at the beginning of the interview to arrange their photos across a timeline, starting from the first activity. This not only offered them time to become more comfortable with the setting, but the photographs also acted as a memory trigger facilitating the recall of past experiences (Given et al., 2011). It also allows some reflection time, which may have revealed different layers of meaning that could evoke deep emotions, memories and ideas (Glaw et al., 2017).

I then started the interview process. Although the photographs remained the main reference for the questioning, enabling the participants to communicate easily their knowledge and perspectives (Wang & Burris, 1994), I also used an interview guide which I designed prior to the interview (see Appendix C). This helped direct the semi-structured interviews. To minimize fatigue, each interview took approximately one hour. All interviews were carried out face to face and were audio-recorded. This all constitutes the first part of the main research.

The second part involves collecting data again, and so repeating the same process, 12-19 months later. This was important as it facilitated the answering of the second research question - What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time? Learning and development of British Yemeni young people experiences can be articulated over time, and so I needed to collect data in a longitudinal manner. I adopted a longitudinal prospective cohort approach, studying the same set of individuals in real time (Caruana et al., 2015; Balmer & Richards, 2022). Doing research longitudinally also allowed my participants to reflect on some of the complex and personal stories of their lived experience over time and allowed me as the researcher to capture the dynamic and idiosyncratic nature of their lived experiences over time.

Taking into account some of the challenges of longitudinal studies (Bednall, 2013; Laird, 1988; Van Weel, 2005), I used guidance from Caruana et al., (2015) to determine the nature
and technique of the longitudinal study and Balmer et al., (2022; 2021) to establish the elements required in longitudinal qualitative studies. This is shown in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To consider in longitudinal research</th>
<th>Suggested guidelines</th>
<th>Implementation at main research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods of data collection (Caruana et al., 2015)</td>
<td>Standardised and consistent over time, recording facilitated.</td>
<td>Used photo-novellas and semi-structured interviews and audio-record interviews - same for both years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorization of data (Caruana et al., 2015)</td>
<td>According to each case study - information pertaining to specific individuals.</td>
<td>Participants is given a pseudonym as the code for categorising individual data, and grouped accordingly, per case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables (Balmer &amp; Richards, 2022)</td>
<td>Adequately controlled - stability in geographical mobility and distribution, ability to continue follow-up.</td>
<td>Same individuals were studied, all continued to live in Birmingham, covid conditions meant that data could have been gathered remotely, but this was not needed at the times of the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship (Balmer &amp; Richards, 2022)</td>
<td>Maintain deep relationships with participants</td>
<td>Through ensuring they were comfortable during interviews, no judgemental comments, reassured confidentiality and anonymity, and opportunities to change or withdraw.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time (Balmer &amp; Richards, 2022)</td>
<td>Conceptualisation of time - designate a timeframe for data collection</td>
<td>Research structured and sequenced within fixed time, considering time-as-fluid (when participants reflected on the past and reconstructed it in the light of recent experiences), noticing temporal patterns (rhythms of time). Data was also generated recursively, participants were encouraged, to respond to their past selves and imagined futures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention (Balmer &amp; Richards, 2022)</td>
<td>Effort should be made to ensure maximal retention of participants</td>
<td>Avoided long periods between first and last interview. Time was set (12-19 months) to reduce risk of interrupted follow-up of individuals. Photographs acted as memory triggers for retention of events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Elements in longitudinal study implemented in the main research.
The meeting time and dates in which the interviews were taken are shown in Table 9 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of participant</th>
<th>Initial study</th>
<th>Day 1 routine day</th>
<th>Day 2 non-routine day</th>
<th>Day 3 routine day</th>
<th>Day 4 non-routine day</th>
<th>Number of months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Younus</td>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>March 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashad</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausan</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>March 2020</td>
<td>March 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9: Interview dates*

In doing longitudinal studies, certain aspects discussed in the first interview were clarified and explored in greater depth in a subsequent conversation, for example, the reasons behind why different activities took precedence over others during that time and period of the day. As shown in Table 7, there were two data collection points, with the number of months (between Day 1 and Day 4) varying from 12-19 months, depending on the availability of the participants as well as the difficulty caused by the pandemic lockdown. *Fatima*, *Younus* and *Sausan’s* interviews all took place before the first lockdown and so there were no COVID-19-related discussions from their interviews to note. However, *Nuha*, *Rashad*, and *Adam’s* second year interviews took place just before the second national lockdown (Davies et al., 2021). Their narratives showed the effect of the first lockdown, in March 2020, on the conduct of their daily lives (see Chapters Four and Five). Despite this, all interviews were carried out face to face, at the same café, including those which took place during the pandemic, being aware all the while of the measures advised by the UK government at that time including social distancing, masks, sterilisation of hands, etc. Every participant was interviewed separately, and no information was shared between participants.

Once the interviews were completed, I transcribed the semi-structured interviews verbatim, with the identifiers removed (Jefferson, 1984; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Meanings and relevance were established from participant discussion of the photographs and from the
analysis of the data collected. I also noted in the transcript the relevant photo under discussion in a different colour, as part of my coding process (see Figure 13).

The research generated the following data:

1) Photographs taken by six participants in routine and non-routine day from 2019 and 2020. The photographs taken were used only as a stimulus for dialogue and were not analysed themselves.

2) 24 semi-structured interview transcripts which included two routine and two non-routine days in years 2019-2020 for all six participants.

Figures 13 is an example of a section from Adam’s photo-novella and interview transcript, noting, in purple, where in the interview the photograph relates to. Figure 14 shows Rashad’s photo-novella in one full day.

201 So, tell me about your day?
202 So, I wake up, have breakfast, fool (beans) with magla (stone/clay plate), Yemeni style my mum usually makes it, like a full Yemeni breakfast, around 11ish. I wake up late cus it’s like Saturday and I’m up till late on Friday. Then I go to the gym.
205 So how often do you go to the gym?
206 Like 4 or 5 times. I need to keep myself healthy. I used to go like on and off but now I started to do it more regularly.
208 Why is that?
209 I have a routine, one day I do triceps, another day biceps, another day legs, another day back. I plan it like myself, and I have a partner, a friend that comes with me, so we train each other.

Figure 13: A section from Adam’s photo-novella and interview transcript
Figure 10: Rashad’s photo-novella to show his activities from a routine day.
3.4.4.4 Step 4 – Interpreting the data

The interview transcripts were analysed in two ways: vertically examining each case in its own right to provide a holistic review of the participant, and horizontally, looking at some common behaviours and activities that were similar across the six participants. The focus of the analysis was on the content of the story as related to the activities the participants chose to engage in. This meant that two approaches to analysis were needed, which I now describe, drawing on the relevant literature that facilitated data analysis.

1) Content-directed approach – examining each case

I used a content-directed approach to analyse each transcript. This is because the categorisation of my data relies heavily on the role of theory, which in turn facilitates the focus on the research questions. I use a direct approach to content analysis to conceptually validate and extend my theoretical framework (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). With intersectionality and post-colonial theories in mind, a coding system was deductively generated using Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011). I specifically use Dreier’s work here because he clearly maps out key concepts to articulate the conduct of everyday life in the exploration of lived experiences (see Chapter Two and Chapter Four). This theory identifies the key concepts or variables as initial coding categories. These codes were obtained directly from Dreier’s theoretical proposal on personality and the conduct of everyday life (Dreier, 2011). Dreier presents the theory with reference to three main strands:

1) Order and arrangement – these include the social context (or places in which an activity takes place), the social practices - which relate to the various activities (in which issues of concern, responsibility, purpose and meaning and family histories and practices surface) and relations in and within these activities – and social arrangements (which discuss the order and time in which these social practices, and context manifest).
2) Situated participation and movement – this includes the sequence of events which build habits in activities, and the perspective of experiences which deal with matters of change and reflection.

3) The conduct of everyday life – this is the synthesis of how the order and arrangements, in all their manifestations, and the situated participation and movement, amalgamate to bring about the theory of a person in the context of the conduct of lived experiences.

These strands formed the main elements of the analysis matrices. I further explored these strands and produced further sub-codes, and this is shown in Figure 15. The subcodes are based on my interpretations of Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011).

![Figure 15: Content-directed approach - coding using Dreier's theory of a person.](attachment:figure15.png)

After generating these codes, I used guidance from Hsieh and Shannon (2005) in forming an audit trail and audit process. By conversing with my supervisors and other colleagues at the University, who acted as possible audit reviewers, I was able to create operational definitions of these codes, whilst at the same time examining the accuracy of the predetermined categories.
It is noteworthy that these categorisations were not the initial codes used at the beginning of the analysis in this research. I initially focused on one subdivision of Dreier’s theory – situated participation and movement. This is because I felt it described a person being situated in a location from the perspective of their experience - sequence of events and perspective of experiences (Dreier, 2011). As such, I generated codes based on this part of Dreier’s theory of a person, specifically relating to four sections: (1) participants pay attention to particular things; (2) participants gather particular practices; (3) participants are in and nurture particular states of mind; and (4) participants reflect on their lives in particular ways. I began my analysis with these four codes and analysed Fatima, Younus, Rashad, and Adam’s transcripts from the first two days in this way. The codes were displayed as headings in a table format. Table 10 shows an example of a section of Younus’s transcript analysis in the first interview, carried out in this way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Person pays attention to</th>
<th>Person gathers experiences</th>
<th>Person nurtures particular state of mind</th>
<th>Person reflects on action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Must</td>
<td>Family practices and history</td>
<td>Time and place</td>
<td>Purpose and meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Wake up</td>
<td>Taking reference to power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>On sleep</td>
<td>Reading Quran</td>
<td>Teaching language</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Spiritual understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Encourage Islam</td>
<td>Mum</td>
<td>Downloads on my phone</td>
<td>Technology app to help with religious activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Have an accomplished day&quot;</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Activities organized around spirituality, mental and physical health</td>
<td>Is a day to remember</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Need for fulfilment&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Fulfilled&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;需求 to improve in day&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Fulfilled because of satisfaction of day&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;How has your day been?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Full day&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Full day&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Fulfilled the need for a good day&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>&quot;Proud of your day in family&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Mum&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Start by reading Quran&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I do it because I want to&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>&quot;Did you have a good day?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;On a regular basis&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;On a regular basis&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;On a regular basis&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;Not to lose the ability to read Arabic – obligation to read Quran and concern over losing Arabic if not practiced&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Ability to read the Quran&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Read Arabic&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;If I don’t practice, I will lose the language&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;How did you learn Arabic?&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Learning Arabic at a young age - Mum taught me&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Reading&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Learning a language at a young age - mother taught me at home, and went to a mosque supplementary school to learn&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Example of data analysis using initial codes for Younus' transcript.

Each line of the transcript was analysed and organised in this way. However, upon my own reflective and reflexive deeper reading of the literature around this theory and the conduct of everyday life (Dreier, 2011; Højholt & Schraube, 2015; Holzkamp, 2015), and further discussions with my supervisors (as possible reviewers), I detected that my previous understanding of Dreier’s theory of a person was under-developed and only presented a
segment of what I had intended to do - articulating experiences of British Yemeni young people, holistically. This way of categorising did not give an agentic approach to personality and the conduct of everyday life. As a result of this exploring and thinking process, I carefully re-studied Dreier's theory again. As a result, I utilised its comprehensive description of the conduct of everyday life to form more inclusive analytical codes for analysis, within the approach of person-situation-activity. These codes include areas of order and arrangement and participation and movement and provide detailed information on the conduct of everyday life. The new codes generated are shown in the headings of an extract from Sausan’s transcript, displayed in Table 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>'Order &amp; arrangement'</th>
<th>'Situated participation and movement'</th>
<th>'Conduct of everyday life'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social setting</td>
<td>Social practice</td>
<td>Social arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Place and position</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Demands and resources/abilities</td>
<td>Purpose and meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social context</td>
<td>Relations</td>
<td>Order (Frequency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social practice</td>
<td></td>
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**Table 11: Example of data analysis using updated codes for Sausan’s transcript.**
The remaining transcripts were analysed line by line according to these categories. Such categorisation does not imply that these areas function independently of each other, on the contrary they are viewed as interlinked and intertwined (as shown in Tables 9 and 10). Some categories were repeated while some were merged with others. Furthermore, if the statements from the interviews did not ‘fit’ into a specific code, new or more elaborative codes were generated. Using such an arrangement meant that a structured and forensic technique for data analysis was feasible, allowing for the detailed organisation and categorisation of the data. Additionally, and as shown in both Tables 9 and 10, I also colour coded some areas within the transcripts. This was to inform areas where intersectionality (green) and post-colonialism (red) inspired discussions could be considered as part of the research findings. This colour coding was continued for the full transcript analysis, and for all six participants.

To inform learning and development, I then added another layer of analysis, incorporating Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice (Roth, 2016). In Roth’s ideas I found a rich understanding of change which suggested possible learning and development, which I used to consolidate and improve on Dreier’s ideas of the conduct of everyday life. As a result, the analysis became a deductive-inductive-abductive approach (see Chapter Four). The contributions made by Roth in the conceptual framework is discussed further in Chapter Five. Although I continue to use some of Dreier’s writings on person in structure of social practice (Dreier, 2009) in learning and development, I primarily focused on how Roth’s understanding of cumulative and transformative changes (Roth, 2016) produce an all-inclusive approach to understanding habits and changes at the level of a person’s situated participation and movement, which I felt was not offered in Dreier’s work.

As a result of this reflexivity, I analysed the remaining transcript using the codes shown in the heading of Table 10. The data is accumulated from four non-consecutive days of interview, between March 2019 and October 2020. The conduct of everyday life is shown through the synthesis of the narratives and portrays a motion picture of the individual’s evolving personality. This comes together to provide a portrait of the young person as part of their evolving biography.
To analyse similar activities across the six participants, I use thematic analysis. This is because of its ability to capture patterns within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Braun et al., 2019). These themes involve careful reading and re-reading of the data (Rice, 1999) and help to describe the subjective meaning and cultural-contextual message of the data (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). As shown in the content directed approach, my research is theory heavy and this may lead to some ambiguities in using thematic analysis as it is sometimes described as a theoretically flexible approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, understanding thematic analysis as an umbrella with different orientations and practices enables the integration of both theory-led and data-driven analysis.

The process of analysis chosen here was a hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development using guidance from Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006). The hybrid approach incorporated both deductive a priori template of codes approach outlined by Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) and the data-driven inductive approach of (Boyatzis, 1998). The deductive approach defines the codes (before commencing an in-depth analysis of the data), and this was developed a priori and based on the research question and the theoretical framework. The inductive approach is where I used an NVivo data management programme to examine the 24 interview transcripts together, and formed themes related to the codes derived.

NVivo is a comprehensive, specialized computer programme of data coding (Richards & Richards, 2003). It identifies themes in a systematic, step-by-step process (AlYahmady & Al Abri, 2013), helping with the management of the coding (Cervantes et al., 2016). I used the relationships between the Dreier-inspired conceptual categories and the themes generated through coded data to form the discussion of the analysis. This hybrid approach enabled the answering of the research questions by allowing the tenets of the conduct of everyday life to be integral to the process of deductive thematic analysis while allowing for themes to emerge directly from the data using inductive coding.
In Chapter Six, I show how I use thematic analysis to discuss significant similarities and experiences between the participants’ narratives, communicating some of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of British Yemeni young people’s lived experiences. Although presented as a linear, step-by-step procedure, the analysis was an iterative and reflexive process and was applied throughout the process of this qualitative inquiry.

3.4.4.5 Step 5 – Reporting findings

I have chosen narrative approaches to report my findings. I showed, in Chapter Two, that a link between personality and identity could be established using narratives, particularly of daily activities in the conduct of everyday life. Narratives are discursive actions of performance and interactions (Ferrell, 2003) and in narratives, participants are able to relate their stories and describe their actions as lived (Polkinghorne, 1995; Bamberg, 2012).

Furthermore, using narratives, I am able to embed social meaning whereby my participants tell stories that are not only personal, but which form part of larger situational, organisational, cultural and historical narratives (Riessman, 2008; Gottschall & Wilson, 2005). By locating stories of experiences with descriptions of the context in which they occur, I build a sense of how young people’s lives are socially constructed, showing greater complexity that exists across individuals as well as societies. The coherence of stories and the experiences the young people convey are reflexively connected to the multiple activities and the increasingly diverse conditions of storytelling (Gubrium & Holstein, 1998).

Narratives are not only useful in the theoretical and methodological realm, but they can also act as a representation device to present, holistically, the originality of a person’s living and being. To present the findings, I produced narrative portraits for each of the six case studies. Figure 16 shows an example of a portrait of Younus’s narrative. By selecting and rearranging extracts from the photographs and interview transcripts, and applying tools from Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs (2020) and Lawrence-Lightfoot (2016), I created portraits that offer a glimpse into the subjects’ lives.
A portrait of Younus

Order & arrangement

Social context

Place & Position: Home, college, library, work, outdoors in parks and garden, mosque

Social Practices

Activities

Concerns: Wasting time; lack of motivation; losing ability to read Arabic and understand the Quran; costs of healthy food; uncertain future; being led astray; weakened eyesight; views on teaching in schools; forgetting; suitable facilities for sports; costs of gyms; being greedy; being dependent on others; jealousy or rivalry from others; relying on his phone; limited space at home; being distracted; limited opportunities for making friends

Social arrangements

Order & Time

Has day schedules with morning, afternoon, evening and bed-time routines; he finds ways of maximises his time by learning new and useful things; reference to time, year, month, past, present and future.

Sequence of events

Building Habits

Relations

Mum (in close contact with); Siblings (different to him); Dad (ideas dissimilar to him, less interactions); family often do their own things Friends (limited opportunities)

Perspective of experience

Regular actions: being healthy is a lifestyle with eating and exercise habits; praying is part of routine; activities done to ensure he covers spiritual, mental and physical well-being

Change & reflection

Younus is involved in personal trajectories, across social contexts, institutionally arranged in various ways. She moves and plays her own role in accomplishment of her own learning.

Conduct of everyday life

Cumulative experiences. Stimulate mind, body and soul through repeated actions that give meaning to his day; tries different activities and assesses its meaning to his lived life, eliminating what is not useful, more he practices a language or sport the better he gets at it

Transformative-qualitative continuously reflection on activities and still ongoing transformative shifts

Personhood in practice

Purpose and meaning:
Culture empowers not restrict; keeps journal to remember important things; actions are backed by religion – Islam is a lifestyle because it makes sense; practicing a language will mean not losing it; being outdoor links him with nature; exercise has a purpose; studies business as it gives him opportunities; does things that are beneficial for body; education is more than a degree; learning new languages opens more avenues in future; reading for benefit; only share things with people if they benefit from them; exercise, drawing in 3D and taking cold baths motivates mind and boys and receives stress.

Demands and responsibilities:
Spiritual activities; improve Arabic and read Quran; represent Islam correctly (takes responsibility for it); being healthy - taking time out for walking and sports (such as parkour), and healthy eating; appreciate food; getting on with others; caring for animals; choosing friends carefully; reading books to stimulate mind; family responsibility during dinner time; to please and respect parents; finding ways to relieve stress; learning languages; learning to cook; living "organically"; looking after hair

Family Histories and practices:
Prayer and other Islamic practices (reading Quran) are encouraged; learnt Arabic by practicing at home and attending supplementary school at young age; switches languages; visited Yemen and experienced freedom and good food; Yemeni food during dinner and eating on floor from one dish; family time is dinner time but not all the time; men don’t cook much; family makes their own culture to suit them; mother’s role in the home and to care for her children physically and intellectually; all educated; respecting parents unconditionally; difference in gender (ballet and long hair only for girls)

Figure 16: A narrative portrait of Younus’s conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice

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Both Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs’ (2020) work on disability and identity, and Lawrence-Lightfoot’s (2016) work in portrait methodology in education inspired the application of this tool in illustrating everyday life experience, presenting a product in which the participant is visible and cognisable. It also allows the depiction of social phenomena through stories of everyday life experiences, while at the same time granting the ability and flexibility to form an in-depth understanding of the story. In summary, using narrative portraits offers a way of displaying and presenting the research findings, while honouring the story of the participants (Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs, 2020).

Through these five steps of defining and selecting the cases, collecting and interpreting the data and then reporting the findings as a narrative portrait, an exploration of the experiences of six British Yemeni young people in a person-situation-activity context was documented.

3.5 Ethical considerations

The research was conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice of the University of Manchester and using the guidelines of the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011). I applied for ethical approval from the Institute of Education at the University of Manchester. In this section, I address the two ethical considerations related to this study. The first issue relates to the participants – in their recruitment, anonymity, and member checking - and the second to the use and storage of the photographs.

**Participants:**

1) Recruitment - I was able to recruit participant through my engagement with the Yemeni community and through speaking to community leaders as gatekeepers (see 3.4.4.2). Using my university email address, I contacted the participants and sent them the participant information sheet (PIS) and consent forms (see Appendix D). I provided sufficient information to enable informed consent and did not pursue non-responders beyond two reminders. The PIS and the consent form were also revisited at the second stage of interviewing (the following year), and via emails, I asked whether the participants wished to continue (making them aware that they had a right to withdraw) -
all six participants agreed to continue the following year. The participants were given a reasonable amount of time (two weeks) to consider continuing, before giving consent. I then recontacted to them and arranged our first meeting.

2) Anonymity - Based on the ethical guidelines, I explained my responsibilities related to confidentiality, anonymity, disruption, as well as gaining informed consent. To ensure the privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity rights of participants, I used pseudonyms. I also chose Birmingham as the city in which the study was conducted. Although there is limited quantitative data of this, Birmingham has a significant number of Yemeni residents, adding to the anonymity of my participants.

3) Comfort in sharing information during interviews - The interview questions were carefully selected to ensure that the participants were comfortable in sharing information about their lived experiences. Questions that evoke pressure or worry were avoided as much as possible during the interviews. Although this only happened once (one of the participants mentioned having a brother that the family no longer speak to), I assured the participant that confidentiality and anonymity would be followed through and moved the conversation along avoiding further discomfort or embarrassment - in this situation, I detected some uncomfortableness around taking about the brother, and so moved forward without pressing any further questions on the subject. The site of the interviews was also in a public place, and although I selected relatively quiet times to conduct the interviews, and a quiet space away from other customers, it did remain a public space and other customers were present and, at times, in close proximity to the participants. This did not seem to be of much concern to my participants, and they all continued to narrate their experiences with limited awareness of the people around them.

4) Fair representation - At the end of the interviews, I gave the participants access to the photographs they took, and the choice to disregard any photos that they did not want to include. I also asked them if they would like to disregard any comments they made during the interviews. After the interviews were conducted, I also gave the participants the opportunity to contact me, through email, should they wish to read their interview transcripts, to check their accuracy and representation.
Use and storage of photography

1) Using disposable cameras - The participants used disposable cameras to take photographs, and this was managed by myself, developed, and secured in a manner that follows ethical guidance. The film was removed, the plastic recycled, and the photos printed in a secure location. Only one complete hard copy was made of the photos.

2) Anonymity - I instructed the participants to take photos that would avoid any noticeable features - faces, names, or area signs - to ensure privacy and anonymity. Some photos did, however, have identifiable faces, but I concealed the identity in such images by covering these faces with paper and tape.

3) Storage of photographs - The film (negatives) was shredded and recycled at my office at the university, in line with the university’s recycling procedure. The hard copies were stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office at the University of Manchester, and an electronic copy was scanned and stored using the university’s protected software, and with password protection to which I had access.

These were the two main ethical considerations of my research. When conducting such research, the ethics and integrity of the process are crucial (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) and provide the moral principles that govern behaviour and action, and are crucial to developing ethical literacy in research practitioners. The integrity is also based on individual and collective adherence to core values of objectivity, honesty, openness, fairness, accountability, and stewardship. This doctoral research was done in a rigorous manner following guidance from Roth (2015a) and Elgin (2008). Using Elgin’s checklist which focuses on trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis (Elgin, 2008), I explore the research context at the preparation, organization and reporting phases. This checklist is shown in Figure 17.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation phase</th>
<th>Data collection method</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do I collect the most suitable data for my content analysis?</td>
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<td>Is this method the best available to answer the target research question?</td>
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<td>Should I use either descriptive or semi-structured questions?</td>
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<td>Self-awareness: what are my skills as a researcher?</td>
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<td>How do I pre-test my data collection method?</td>
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<td>Sampling strategy</td>
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<td>What is the best sampling method for my study?</td>
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<td>Who are the best informants for my study?</td>
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<td>What criteria should be used to select the participants?</td>
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<td>Is my sample appropriate?</td>
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<td>Selecting the unit of analysis</td>
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<td>Is the unit of analysis too narrow or too broad?</td>
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<td>Organization phase</td>
<td>Categorization and abstraction</td>
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<td>How should the concepts or categories be created?</td>
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<td>Is there still too many concepts?</td>
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<td>Is there any overlap between categories?</td>
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<td>Interpretation</td>
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<td>What is the degree of interpretation in the analysis?</td>
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<td>How do I ensure that the data accurately represent the information that the participants provided?</td>
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<td>Representativeness</td>
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<td>How do I check the trustworthiness of the analysis process?</td>
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<td>How do I check the representativeness of the data as a whole?</td>
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<th>Reporting phase</th>
<th>Reporting results</th>
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<td>Are the results reported systematically and logically?</td>
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<td>How are connections between the data and results reported?</td>
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<td>Is the content and structure of concepts presented in a clear and understandable way?</td>
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<td>Can the reader evaluate the transferability of the results (are the data, sampling method, and participants described in a detailed manner)?</td>
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<td>Are quotations used systematically?</td>
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<td>How well do the categories cover the data?</td>
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<td>Are there similarities within and differences between categories?</td>
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<td>Is scientific language used to convey the results?</td>
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<td>Reporting analysis process</td>
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<td>Is there a full description of the analysis process?</td>
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<td>Is the trustworthiness of the content analysis discussed based on some criteria?</td>
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**Figure 17: Checklist to improve the trustworthiness of a content analysis study (Elgin, 2008)**

Following the checklist shown in *Figure 17*, I reflect on each of the questions at each of these stages. The preparation stage began with the literature review on topics around identity, personality, and the conduct of everyday life. Aims and appropriate research questions were set. The literature review provided academic findings of previous studies on elements of identity and personality, ethnicity, and diaspora. I then selected the best method to answer the target research questions, deciding on using photography and semi-structured interviews. I was aware of my positionality and my skills in this research and used them to my advantage during questioning and connecting to my participants. The sampling strategy was appropriate and well saturated, and the initial study enabled decisions to be made that were fundamental to both the collection methods and the sampling strategy. The emphasis in this stage was primarily on the rigorously designed method that needed to be detailed and appropriate to the research questions throughout the process. Logical justifications were given in each stage, practical as well as ethical issues. The steps in the main research were designed and
conducted to meet the aims, as well as the use of photography to validate the memory lapses of young people.

Following on with the checklist in *Figure 17*, in the organization phase of the research, I produced a forensic and detailed system in which data was categorized and analyzed, adding the trustworthiness of rich, appropriate, and well-saturated data (Elo et al., 2014). A content directed analysis was employed using a deductive-inductive-abductive approach, which was theory-led and data-driven. This is discussed in Chapter Four. The choice of analysis was influenced by the research aims and questions and this adds credibility to the research study (Bogdan & Bikien, 1998), (Sandelowski, 1993). The data was interpreted to produce a true representation of the participants. For example, I used direct quotes from the participants’ interviews to emphasize a particular point when exploring different activities or themes in the research. I also included the photographs produced by the participants in support of the point I wished to convey. Towards the final stages of the research, I produced narrative portraits of the participants as a way of reporting the research findings, being mindful and steering away from misrepresentation or generalization of the data. What I recorded and what occurred in the real context was consistently being reviewed at each stage of this research.

3.6 Publication strategy

In this section, I explain why I chose to write articles for each of the outputs based on discussions and guidance with my supervisors. I have indicated the contribution of each output in addressing my research questions, to which I return in more detail in the discussion chapter. Exploring the social and cultural dynamics of British Yemeni young people through the conduct of everyday lives is important for many reasons. Firstly, the Yemeni young people in Britain are an under-represented and under-researched group (possible reasons for this gap have been suggested in Chapter One). Secondly, this study makes contributions to the body of sociological research, focusing on issues of ethnicity and diaspora in the lived experiences of culture and structure. Thirdly, the publication outputs cover different, yet associated themes, from which I plan to publish in different journals (see *Table 11*).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article</th>
<th>Summary of the article</th>
<th>Possible Journals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuha: a study of the conduct of everyday life of a British Yemeni young person.</td>
<td>An evolving conceptual framework using Dreier’s theory of a person and Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice, in the conduct of everyday life to present and analyse findings, relating to the types of everyday experiences of British Yemeni young people. Using a narrative case study example of a Nuha’s experiences of her everyday life, I demonstrate the application of a deductive (using Dreier’s theory of a person) - inductive (data analysis) - abductive (examining Roth’s ideas of learning and development) approach to analysis. Intersectionality and post-colonialism are used as analytical tools throughout the data analysis, to provide an additional way of thinking more fully about the culture of the young woman. This article focuses on my first and second research question.</td>
<td>Journal of Research in Personality Or Culture &amp; Psychology</td>
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<td>The continuity of experience: examining personhood in practice in the study of the lived lives of six British Yemeni young people.</td>
<td>Examining the contribution that theory and theorising can make to understand how habits are formed, changed, and developed. The paper discusses how critical incidents, may have a direct, or indirect effect on people’s habits in their daily lives by presenting and analysing findings, relating to the different forms of learning and development of British Yemeni young people over time, and what this learning and development suggest about the evolving social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people. This article focuses on my second and third research questions.</td>
<td>Learning, Culture and Social interaction Or Journal of Adolescence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Yemeni young people’s experiences related to body image, home, food, language, and religion.</td>
<td>A presentation of findings relating to a thematic analysis of the experiences of British Yemeni young people by examining their actions, perceptions, and experiences. It contributes insights into themes of body image, home, food, religion, and language as related to British Yemenis. Cultural hybridity is examined through exploring the participants’ family histories and practices in the order and arrangements of their social practices. This article focuses on my first and third research question.</td>
<td>Journal of Youth Studies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Publication strategy

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3.7 Summary of Chapter Three

In this chapter, I have clarified my ontological and epistemological positions, and justified my methodological approach. I have set out and rationalized my research methods. As a way of enhancing interview data, this chapter shows how using photography in interviewing assists in understanding the experiences of British Yemeni young people. I described how I have also used a longitudinal qualitative approach to explore lived experiences as they unfold. I have described how I have analysed the data generated by those methods but have avoided repeating analytical information that appears in the chapters that follow. I then explored elements of research integrity and trustworthiness. Finally, I have explained my strategy for publishing my findings in the form of three journal articles. In Chapters Four, Five and Six, I present those three articles in publishable format.
Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Findings, analysis, and discussion

In the next three chapters (pages 111-189), I present, analyse, discuss, and theorise on the findings from this doctoral research. The three outputs are as follows:

Chapter Four (pages 112–137)

Nuha: a study of the conduct of everyday life of a British Yemeni young person

Chapter Five (pages 138-168)

The continuity of experience: examining personhood in practice in the study to the lived lives of British Yemeni young people.

Chapter Six (pages 169-191)

British Yemeni young people’s experiences related to body image, home, food, language, and religion.
Chapter 4 - Nuha: a study of the conduct of everyday life of a British Yemeni young person.

Abstract

There is a lack of research that focuses on the lived experiences of British Yemeni young people in the UK as they pertain to their learning and development. This paper aims to bridge the gap by exploring the case of Nuha, an 18-year-old British Yemeni young woman, as she navigates the conduct of her everyday life. The paper presents a developed conceptual model and associated methodological approach for exploring Nuha. It does so by first reviewing what might be viewed as dominant approaches to the study of ethnic young people’s experiences that advocate a social identity theory infused with concerns for intersectionality and post-colonialism. A critique of such thinking is developed that takes issue with much of this writing that has the potential for an essentialised abstracted approach. The paper instead advocates the use of a subjectively focused, practice orientated and yet culturally sensitive approach to exploring human behaviour in the context of the conduct of everyday life. Based on an analytical matrix that is developed from such thinking, I examine Nuha’s life experiences using Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011). In doing so, I recognise the additional importance of personhood in practice (Roth, 2020) that provide a reference point for exploring more deeply the learning and development of Nuha. The research is generated through a case study narrative that is analysed dialectically through theory, recognising how theory is simultaneously driven by the data. The paper concludes with arguments made about the centrality of an extended and developed sense of the conduct of everyday life to get at the nuanced evolving sense of being and doing for Yemeni young people.

Key words: Conduct of everyday lives, British Yemeni young person, Personhood in practice, Intersectionality, Post-colonialism.
Introduction

This article presents a case study of a young British Yemeni woman, Nuha, examining her daily experiences through the conduct of everyday life. The data, presented in the study, is drawn from a larger doctoral study of six British Yemeni young people, conducted over nineteen months, documenting the experiences of members of this overlooked and under-represented community. The study was guided by two research questions:

1) What types of everyday experiences do British Yemeni young people have?
2) What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time?

In answering these questions, it is important to explore the conduct of everyday life as it connects to the field of ethnicity, learning and development of young people. This study was provoked by own reflections as a Yemeni woman and as a schoolteacher about the lived lives of young British Yemini young people as they learn and develop in the UK. One of things that was immediately apparent is that this is very under research area which is at odds with the fact that Yemeni communities are some of the oldest and most established ethnic communities in the UK. The focus of this paper is both theoretical and empirical with particular attempts at developing a novel approach for undertaking this study.

A deductive-inductive-abductive methodological approach (Okoli, 2021; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Assarroudi et al., 2018) emerged and is applied to the analysis of the young people’s narrative. This is summarised in figure 1.
In this article, I narrate how the sequence of this approach emerged and evolved, describing the process of data synthesis of the narratives of the participants. I build my deductive theory through a critical exploration of various ideas of identity and personality that result in utilising Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) and the conduct of everyday life. I then explore Nuha inductively in relation to the conduct of everyday life. I go on to show how using Dreier’s theory of a person does not completely explore or explain Nuha’s learning and development and thus I focus on Roth’s idea of personhood in practice as a way of moving things forward abductively.

**Methodological approach**

In undertaking the research, there was an initial attempt at scoping some key explanatory approaches to thinking about lived lives of British Yemeni young people. At the early stages of the research, issues of youth identity and agency were explored through examining some major work by Côté and Levin, that presented ideas in and around the social construction of identity, reflexivity, and associated action (Côté, 2006; Côte & Levine, 1983). These were the initial concepts that enabled my thinking about some of the factors in young people’s lives. At the same time, I argue that the historic lived lives of British Yemeni young people require notions of intersectionality (Gopaldas, 2012; McCall, 2008) and postcolonial theorisations.
(Halliday, 2013; Bhabha, 2012; Kour, 2005) in order to make sense of their identity and agency. This is because intersectionality provides a possible platform to explore different identity structure markers that are found in British Yemeni young people, and post-colonial, provides ways of understanding how the past may have influenced the present living and being of Yemenis in Britain.

Much of the research on the lives and living of young people have to a lesser or greater extent focused on notions of identity and agency. In particular, social identity theory attempts to explain how and why individuals identify as members of a group, and to quantify the impact of that identification on their behaviour (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Stets & Burke, 2000). Some of its main concepts include inter-group comparisons, self-categorization, and optimal distinctiveness (Billig, Abrams, & Hogg, 1991; Cerulo, 1997). Although useful, there is a tendency in some of the main thinking to bleach out elements of individual subjectivity with a stronger focus on social identity. This overlooks the importance of history and culture, simplifies the significance of self-esteem, and makes claims about in-group bias that may not be supported by the data. Such an approach, in many respects, abstracts individuals from the actual conduct of everyday living and the factors that pertain to such living (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016).

In addition, there are also weaknesses with the focus on reflexivity and the social construction of identity influencing agency. This is because social construction of identity does not explore activity and the social arrangements within those activities, but rather focuses on the self as it is formed through interactions with others and in relation to social, cultural and political contexts. In other words, social identity theories seemed to focus too strongly on ‘in group’ articulations of subjectivity that do not fully pertain to notions of variety and diversity in the living of life. This became even more pronounced when I reflected on my own experiences of my lived life, and from my experiences with working within the Yemeni community and engaging with young people. What became troubling for me, in exploring some of the traditional theories, is that they focused too strongly on the homogenous ideas of social groups in understanding agency and structure. My own reflection suggests that although there are some homogeneities, there is also some heterogeneity and
traditional theories only partially expose this. These issues also tend to essentialise what it means to be a British Yemeni young person, and I argue that one needs to go beyond this and explore more strongly the living and being of these young people, one that goes beyond an individual and psychological perspective of the social and identity that bleaches out a deep social, historical and cultural relational ecological perspective.

One such approach is through the conduct of everyday life, characterised by the works of several scholars (Højholt & Schraube, 2015b; Schraube & Osterkamp, 2013a; Kristensen & Schraube, 2014; Holzkamp, 1995). Such scholars have provided significant contributions to understanding people as active subjects within the contexts of their everyday living and being. Through encapsulating the actions and associated socially-located self-understanding by which individuals actively organize their daily life, the social and material contexts of those lives can be reflected (Hybholt et al., 2020). This includes the way people collectively participate in everyday practice and their efforts to handle their activities, concerns, relations, and conditions in different action contexts (Bandura, 1999). Guided by this literature and other prominent critical psychologists (Hodgetts et al., 2010; Schraube, 2013; Schraube & Osterkamp, 2013b; Spitzer, Franklin, & Kohout, 1975), Dreier (2011) develops ideas that are associated with the cross-contextuality of the conduct of life. Specifically, his ideas of personal trajectories of participation became the basis for his theory in understanding personality and the conduct of everyday life (Dreier, 2011). Such an approach comprehensively opens a focused direction in studying people’s activities, movements, and participations in and through the social structures of their everyday practice.

Dreier centralises his theory around a relational person-situation-activity context, focusing on how studying action and activity provide a deep understanding to the conduct of everyday life of an individual. Such understanding avoids many of the abstractions associated with an overly cognitive and individualised reflexive understanding of young people’s agency. This has directed me to take the position that understanding personality and identity is most accurately achieved through looking at the consequences of relational actions and phenomena experienced and narrated by the young person, and, theorised in terms of the way a person is dialectically both a subject of and subjected to their surroundings. This gives a sense of
meaning and motives of those different activities in which a person takes part emerge from aspects of society and its social arrangements.

Dreier’s theory is rooted in the way a person conducts their daily life and denotes both a holistic and agentic approach to personality. It also concentrates on the concrete practice of activity which highlights both agency and the social arrangements that pertain to that agency (Dreier, 2011). Through focusing on activity that provides a much more grounded, practical experiential way of thinking about agency, the theory moves away from an overly cognitive, reflective, potentially abstracted narrated approach. In Dreier’s theory of a person, people are considered as existing in movement across time and context, allowing researchers to “grasp how the order of everyday lives affects the functioning of persons” (Dreier, 2011, p1, line 9). This theory bypasses the limitations in research on personality by “strengthening the ecological validity of theorizing and of empirical findings by approaching personality from the perspective of the everyday lives of persons.” (Dreier, 2011, p9, lines13-15). On account of its power and ability to provide a stronger and contextual way of understanding the nature of lived lives, Dreier’s theory has been chosen as the central theoretical framework for data analysis in this study and provides a consistent platform to do so. Dreier’s theory of a person is about understand the person as active participants involved in their own personal trajectories in relation to structural arrangements of social practice.

Taken directly from Dreier’s theoretical proposal in his paper: “Personality and the conduct of everyday life” (Dreier, 2011), I developed an analysis matrix. This was used to answer the first research question: What types of everyday experiences do British Yemeni young people have? The theory is presented with reference to Dreier’s ideas of (1) order and arrangement, (2) situated participation and movement, and (3) the conduct of everyday life. These three elements of the theory, which formed the main analysis, allow researchers to grasp how the order of everyday life, in its arrangements, movement and participation, affects the functioning of the person. Further exploration of these three components generated further sections, again derived directly from Dreier’s paper (2011), which became the sub-codes for the analysis. The codes and subcodes are based on my interpretations of Dreier’s theory of a person and are shown in Figure 2.
Having a coding frame such as this allows theoretical constructs to be validated and hypotheses and assumptions to be tested (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). Dreier provides the principle for understanding the phenomena by offering this much needed set of thinking tools. This is because it articulates the subjective experience, thoughts, and actions involved in people’s creation and organisation of their activities, tasks, projects, and participations in and across different social contexts in the fabric of everyday life. The coding frame are used as a data extraction tool and provided a systematic way of interpreting young people’s narrative and, in this particular case, that of Nuha.
Methods and material

The study employed two methods: photo novella (Wang & Burris, 1994) and semi-structured interviews (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). These methods allow the exploration of the conduct of everyday life through asking participants to take photographs of activities during one routine and one non-routine day. This provides knowledge on how a person lives their lives through routines as well as during time-outs (Hybholt 2015; Heintzelman & King, 2019; Dreier, 2011). Participants took photographs to narrate the story of their lived lives, and then, in the form of semi-structured interviews, talked about the significance and meaning of their photographs (Hurworth, 2003b). Such methods engaged participants, enabling them to investigate aspects of their own social practice. The study was conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice of the University of Manchester and using the guidelines of the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011) and received ethical approval from the Manchester Institute of Education.

The study examined the experiences of six British Yemeni young people living in Birmingham in the context of the conduct of everyday life using a person-situation-activity approach. One of the participants was Nuha. After receiving her signed consent form, I gave Nuha a disposable camera and asked her to take photographs of activities during one routine and one non-routine day. The photographs were used as tools for the interview process (Wang & Burris, 1997), which took place shortly after they were developed. This process was then repeated, nineteen months later to explore areas of learning and development for Nuha. Nuha took part in five in-depth interviews, one in March 2018 (which introduced Nuha to the research and provide certain information on her life as a student), two in March 2019 and two in October 2021. The narratives of Nuha’s daily activities were co-constructed, with the photographs providing a platform for the discussions. I encouraged Nuha to talk about day-to-day routines and events.

Although the research was deductively framed by Dreier’s theory, the interviewing and subsequent narrative production of Nuha’s story had a more generally inductively and open-ended approach (questions focused on helping her expand on what she did in her everyday
lives). The analysis of the narrative was then driven by a coding and data extraction model generated using Dreier’s concepts. A table was designed with headings that complemented the theory. An example of this analysis from an extra of Nuha’s interview transcript is shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Social context</th>
<th>Social practice</th>
<th>Social arrangement</th>
<th>Situated participation and movement</th>
<th>Conduct of everyday life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>567</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>“Mom wants more kids” – more kids mean more responsibilities</td>
<td>Order (activity)</td>
<td>Sequence of activities (building habit)</td>
<td>Perspective of experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Mom wants more kids” – family tradition for Nuha</td>
<td>Order (year)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>568</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Large family size “Mom likes kids, because of her status, have more”</td>
<td>Place of origin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I then put Bakhoor”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570</td>
<td>How do you think that is?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday ritual – after dinner</td>
<td>Put Bakhoor – explain fire process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>571</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Family eats together on Friday and then after cleaning, enjoy the smell of “Bakhoor”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>572</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>“I then put Bakhoor”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>573</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>“I then put Bakhoor”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>576</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Bakhoor makes house smell nice</td>
<td>Especially Fridays</td>
<td>Eat then help clean then put bakhoor sequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>578</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Bakhoor makes house smell nice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>580</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Guest – “cha wale”</td>
<td>Go upstairs, relax, get cha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>582</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Bakhoor – traditional food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>583</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Guest – “cha wale”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>584</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Guest – “cha wale”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: An analysis of an extract from Nuha’s interview transcript

Nuha’s interview transcripts were analysed line by line. There were many overlaps between the different elements in the heading of Table 1 - some elements merged, and others placed in more than one section. This led to further evaluation evolving from the data. The analysis was done in this way because the lived lives of a person cannot be fragmented into compartments, and clear overlaps between social context, practices and relations are evident. For example, when Nuha talks about what she does on a Friday, as part of her routine day, the analysis is both placed under social context (place – home), family history and practices (eating together on Friday), order and time (Friday rituals happen after dinner), sequence of activity (habit built of perfuming the house on Fridays) and part of her evolving biography (in which Nuha perfumes the house with an incense (Bakhoor) and this is also done traditionally in Yemen). These overlap gives the participant a sense of being one person as they act across different social fields (Holzkamp, 2015). Nevertheless, analysis being completed in this way
provided a structured and forensic system for the detailed organisation and categorisation of the data. References in the transcripts to intersectionality-related markers or post-colonial concerns were highlighted within and throughout the table (shown in Table 1 in green and red, respectively). It is noteworthy that I make the concept of the conduct of everyday life more pertinent in the analysis of experiences by using it in a way that is more sensitised to post-colonial and intersectional arguments. Together, this constructed the research text. The interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

Using guidance from Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs (2020) and Lawrence-Lightfoot (2016), I then produced a narrative portrait of Nuha, offering a portrait into Nuha’s life that is not static, but rather linked to the evolving story of her life - a portrait exploring the past, and linking to the future, connecting with others and their social arrangements, and showing possible learning and development. This evolving portrait, reflects, interprets, and communicates Nuha’s narrated experiences, while at the same time respecting her voice by working only with the structure of the text (Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs, 2020). Although the depictions are from the participant’s narrative of their personal life, my position and subjectivity as the researcher also played a part in the narrative construction and so the portrait becomes my story of Nuha. In this way, and the filters through which questions were asked, data was gathered and analysed, and findings reported are shown (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This is a much more active, engaging position through which I help to shape the story’s coherence and aesthetic (Welty, 2011; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2012). Nuha is not simply telling her story, she enacts it (Pentland, 1999) and my editorial work captures her essence and qualities of her character and history (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005) in ways that display her active living and being. It also reflects a negotiation between how Nuha sees herself and how she tells her story (McAdams & McLean, 2013; Anderson, 2012). With these negotiations in mind, I crafted Nuha’s portrait by selecting and rearranging extracts from the interviews, specifically those that are repeated, and action based. In this way, I analysed the narrative portrait using the conduct of everyday life, one which enabled me to avoid abstraction representation of Nuha.
Introducing Nuha

*Nuha* is a young woman, born in Birmingham, whose parents migrated to Britain as young adults. She is the second child of a family of seven and was living with her parents at the time of the study. *Nuha’s* conduct of everyday life is articulated through her activities, and her biography is a combination of perhaps predetermined roles she plays as a family member, student, employee, and, at times, a friend. As she moves within and across different contexts and experiences, her mode of participation varies according to the diverse contexts she participates in. These contexts embody specific positions, social relationships, scopes of possibilities and personal concerns for her, which when enabled, become evolving roles for her. Her narrative shows her activities as she starts to think about, and articulate elements of what adulthood may hold for her. Her activities are also clearly located in elements of her culture, family practices and histories, which illustrate the interactivities of her social identity structures in cultivating her lived experiences.
Building Nuha’s portrait

Figure 3: A developed timeline narrative of Nuha’s activities
Figure 3 shows a timeline of Nuha’s activities on four non-consecutive days. The timeline is an analytic tool used to help in the process of creating narrative portraits. I have adapted Rodriguez-Dorans timeline (2020) by choosing quotes from Nuha’s transcript to depict the activities Nuha performed, with my own narrative filling the gaps between the two years. Across this timeline, there are many conversations in which there are connections between Nuha’s activities and her social identity structures, her order and arrangements and situated participation and movement that come together to formulate her story.

I now begin Nuha’s story.

Nuha carried out activities that show the parameters of her lived experiences. She begins her day, at home, by either performing daily religious rituals, such as prayer and reading the Holy Quran, or by carrying out domestic responsibilities, such as helping her mother with breakfast. She ends her day by cleaning up after dinner and taking time out for herself for skin care, watching television or browsing her phone. These activities have become part of her morning and evening routines and a habit that she builds cumulatively. Time and order are also part of her daily routine; some actions are regular, such as waking up early, some are (not only regular but) focused on time, such as praying, while others are based on the demands and responsibilities required of her, mainly by her parents, such as cleaning and babysitting.

Nuha’s domestic responsibilities in the house occupy a large amount of her time and establish her prescribed role in the family. This is highlighted in the photos she took of her daily actions and through the discussions throughout her narrative. Photo 1 shows Nuha’s one-year old baby sister. Although this photograph does not present a clear picture of Nuha’s domestic duties, it led to a rich discussion on her responsibilities in the home.
“I babysit her... I do like being active and having something to do. I sometimes can’t be bothered, or tired and no one really appreciates it... I shouldn’t really complain because I know my mum does, like way more, and like this is my duty, and if I don’t do it, my mum has to do it all by herself and it’s not really fair on her, when there are so many of us. I don’t want to feel guilty... I do feel like it’s like a bit of a burden. Like when I go outside or something, my mum is just like, well you can’t, cos it’s just like I need help”.

Establishing a routine of everyday life means that Nuha does not have to scrutinize and doubt every aspect of what she is doing as she goes along with her day, creating practical and cyclical routines and regular arrangements, and providing a possible framework to resolving everyday practical tasks and demands. Nuha helps her mother in the smooth running of her family - she cooks, cleans, does the laundry, and looks after her younger siblings. It seems that although Nuha feels her importance in her family, especially in helping her mother, she finds having many siblings a “burden” because it limits her ability to go out, socialise, work, read or watch TV drama. In fact, Nuha blames her mum for having many children: “What can I do? My mum wants more kids.” Her extended family in Yemen also have large families and Nuha’s mother continues this family tradition, perhaps due to the expectations of the family’s wider society.

Despite feelings of being overwhelmed and unappreciated, Nuha accepts and endures her domestic responsibilities - her sense of duty and responsibility take precedence over her own wants and desires. She does, however, learn to negotiate and form a balance between activities and commitments across social context and days. She plans the days in the week so that she can have time for herself. She wakes up earlier than the rest of her siblings so that she has time to have breakfast quietly and alone, while browsing her phone and going on social media. When she finishes her family duties, she goes to her room, or moves elsewhere.
to drink her tea, on her own for a “bit of peace”. Photos 2 and 3 show some of the activities she does to ensure she has some time to herself.

"I get a milkshake. I go on my phone at the coffee shop cos I really don’t want to talk to anyone (left) I have my breakfast, on my own, by myself, on my phone (right)"

Nuha values down time, especially in the evenings, and she “enjoys [her] own company”. She finds being on her phone is her ‘alone time’, while at the same time it allows her to “connect ... to others”, the outside world - in a way that suits her schedule. Although she shares a room with her younger sister, she finds space by putting on her headphones to “zone out of” her surroundings. In visiting a coffee shop, she is alone again, doesn’t go out with friends, and doesn’t talk to anyone, perhaps emphasising the value she places in having quiet time.

Nuha’s friends are also limited and the interactions she has with others are linked to her social contexts, primarily her home, college/university, or work. Although separate from each other, these are linked with other social contexts in particular ways which channel how social practices may be pursued across them. When in college, she studies with her friends, but only interacts with them in college. When at home, she interacts with family or spends time on her own watching a drama series, which she then talks about with her friends when she is back in college the next day. Her family life and college life seem separate yet linked. When circumstances change, such as working from home, or studying virtually due to Covid-19 lockdown, she finds a system to make her work, study, and family life work, albeit from home. She learns to differentiate between times of work, family responsibility and leisure.
Although she finds this “a challenge”, it has become manageable as she learns to “merge days”, which enables her to facilitate this effectively. The merging of social context, activities and relations also affects the formation of friendship groups. Since taking a gap year, Nuha feels she no longer has friends.

“I meet up occasionally but yeah, I don’t know, is it because I get exhausted around people, or is it because I just don’t have friends, I don’t know...It’s just like that, because when you stay at home for so long, it’s like your social battery is sort of drained... you just become less social... I feel like every time I do get a chance to talk to anyone, I just like to drown them in my words, cos you know, I am not used to it”.

The cumulatively social arrangements around Nuha, having to work from home and study online, have suppressed her chances of finding opportunities to socialise with people other than family and such an experience - of being without others - has led to her feeling “exhausted around people” and her “social battery” becoming “drained”.

With reference to her choices of friends, Nuha also highlights her understanding of the differences between British and Yemeni cultures. Prior to her gap year, Nuha states that she associated with those that have similar religious values to her. She gives an example of this: “I don’t want to hear who she has slept with, or who he is dating. It doesn’t relate to me. All the English and non-Muslim girls I know all they talk about is their boyfriends and what they do. I’m just not interested in that”. Although “British values might say that it is ok”, Nuha’s religious expectations and ethnic historical practices oppose this and so her culture is reflected through her religious beliefs and associations. She explains: “We Muslims, and Yemenis, believe that is wrong, but in this country... might say that is fine, because of what things are like for them”. In this statement, Nuha shows where she belongs by using “we” and “them” and over the timeframe of the study, Nuha views the difference as related to religious practices, which is also embedded in her culture. The way in which Nuha classifies others and positions herself in her society is interesting, implying either transition from one social status to another, or affirmation of her own belief and social practices. This enables her to reclaim control over her definition of self and agency.
Nuha’s main interactions are with her immediate family - her mother, siblings and occasionally her father. Outside this circle, she does not socialise much with others. During the period between the first two interviews, I also came to unravel the relationship Nuha has with her father. Although she rarely mentions him in her narrative, when discussing her activities during her gap year, particularly with reference to exploring her career options, she does talk about the family restrictions imposed by her father with regards to moving away from home.

“In London, I wanted to study History and Arabic, which is kind of different because ... here in Birmingham the only courses I could do were like History and English Language, not very multi-cultural...and that was like very European Christian history, history that I can’t relate to as an ethnic girl, as a Yemeni British girl. So, I wanted to learn more about my own history... Things didn’t work out... my dad’s changing moods. His mood, it like changes a lot and we just like have to deal with it... It’s because I am a Yemeni girl... I don’t think it’s just their own personal views, it’s just when you are like around people who think like that. I’m like frustrated. This topic kind of annoys me... My mum didn’t actually have a problem with me going, as long as I had like a friend. My dad was just like no, altogether, yeah, so that was out of the question. So, I was like just like oopsy, I just had like a gap year cos I like had other plans... my dad just said no.”

This extract reveals several layers in the order and arrangements of Nuha’s social practices. She is concerned because she is not allowed to go to university outside Birmingham and is frustrated because she is unable to make her own choices in this regard. She sees this as a cultural injustice because of the social structures that she feels bounds by, “being a Yemeni girl”. Later in her narrative, she explains that it is “traditional in Yemeni cultures for girls to stay at home”. However, Nuha acknowledges that this is a generalisation and later, contradicts herself by saying that “not all Yemeni families are like that”. Therefore, her situation is specific to her family and her “upbringing”. This paints a portrait of Nuha’s family practice and history, being different to other families. Social identity structures of gender and ethnicity may, together, have influenced her past experiences and she feels may also affect her current and future plans. Nuha also highlights some of the problems regarding the educational courses provided at local universities. Despite living in Birmingham - a city that is “supposed to be called multicultural but in reality, it isn’t, cos there is so much
*segregation within Birmingham*” – she displays her concerns in the lack of ethnically inclusive courses, ones that should “relate” to her as an “ethnic girl”.

**Analysis and discussion**

In this section, I discuss how I made sense of Nuha’s narrative using Dreier’s theory of a person in the conduct of everyday life, bringing in some key ideas of her story. In documenting areas of her learning and development in the context of her social practices, I also highlight some of the limitations of Dreier’s theory with respect to Nuha’s case particularly. I explore other ways in which learning, and development, can be recognized, specifically using Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice (Roth, 2020).

*Nuha’s* conduct of everyday life is formed as an amalgamation between the order and arrangements of her daily experiences and the extent to which she participates and moves in different situations. Her social context is limited to her home, college, and work and, only occasionally, a coffee shop and the gym. This is also linked to her social relations and the time she spends with different people - the reasons behind this are linked to her having family responsibilities as well as demands from college and work. Her social activities also tend to have purpose - she prays because “it is part of [her] faith”, she “works for money”, she cooks or cleans to “help out”, she studies “to set some foundations”. In this way, Nuha attaches meaning to her daily practices. The sequence of events and perspective of her lived experiences enable her to build habits, which can change or develop depending on various circumstances. Putting this together, a portrait of Nuha’s conduct of everyday life can be depicted. This is shown in Figure 4.
In this way, *Nuha’s* story is articulated in relation to the conduct of her daily life through the order, arrangement, participation and movement of her living and being. This is clearly displayed in *Figures 3* and *4*. Her conduct of everyday life is also demonstrated through her endeavours to get important things done, and through the way she prioritises her activities in accordance with what is important to her living and being. Her sequence of events and perspective of experiences evolves as she continues to perform activities in different ways, to enable her to secure demands and personal preferences, coordinate and negotiate her daily living practices. However, in exploring her story, there are elements concerning learning and
development that are not completely covered by Dreier’s theory of a person. The data inductively seems to create some tensions with the theory. For example, when Nuha gets a “passive-aggressive response” from her mum for not doing the dishes, she learns to “take it”. Although this may be part of her way of changing or adapting, upon reflection, Dreier’s theory only has limited scope for documenting whether this is part of the learning process for Nuha in terms of how she sees her actions, or a developmental shift in her thinking and being and so personhood.

Nuha’s narrative shows that a person’s biography is constantly evolving and shifting with continuity of experiences. Although Dreier expresses some features of the process of learning in personal trajectories of participation in structures of social practice (Dreier, 2009; 2008; 2003), his ideas are more focused on institutional arrangements. Dreier considers knowledge as a means to, and learning as a modification of, practical ability (Dreier, 2003). His work is predominantly in relation to modes of participation (Dreier, 2008) and is also centred on how this is applicable and exemplified in psychotherapy (Dreier, 2007). This does not apply so readily to the case of Nuha. There are also elements in her narrative that do not seem to be fully reflected by Dreier’s work, and this led me to seek a supplementary, yet interlinked, concept or idea.

In the attempt to locate theoretical tools that will add to, complement, and develop Dreier’s work, while at the same time allowing a full grasp of Nuha’s narrative, I searched for ideas that privilege actions, but, at the same time, encompass ways to account for learning and development. This enabled the thinking to be driven a little further into principles which examine learning and development as active, process-based approaches that are personal and participant centred (Elkjær, 1995), socially constructed through the interaction of prior experiences and new events (Fosnot & Perry, 1996), and which also take the approach of this research. The quest was to locate concepts which centred on learning as not only comprising cognitive, emotional and social/societal dimensions (Illeris, 2003) but also focused on learning by doing. In other words, the personal construction of learning is through experiences and experiencing in living and being, in all realms of the individual’s practices.
As a concept, the conduct of everyday life has been developed in the context of learning and development by many scholars, and the literature on learning is vast and strongly balkanized by different subject matters. Some scholars have focused on how, where, and why people learn within education settings (Schraube & Marvakis, 2015; Højholt, 2008; Kimonen & Nevalainen, 2005), while others have centred their work on associated learning principles that help researchers take a more holistic understanding of learning and development, for example life-long, life-wide and life-deep learning principles (Banks et al., 2007). Bell et al.’s work on cultural learning pathways focuses on specific intertwined learning outcomes which develop through cultural experiences, helping to explain aspects of process, progress, and complication in the context of social practices (Bell, Tzou, Bricker, & Baines, 2013). The link between this study and the approach suggested by Bell et al. (2012) is that the theoretical framework is considered from a situated learning stance, understanding that the social and material pragmatics of sense-making and action are paramount in learning. These studies have been very helpful in developing an appreciation of agency and structure in the experiences of people in the context of the conduct of everyday life. They also show examples of where Dreier’s theory may have influenced, or perhaps been influenced, such studies.

However, in terms of additional forms of writing that provide a more particular focus which relates more to the case study of Nuha, other critical psychologists, although utilising similar ideas, have gone in a different direction that focus more strongly on ways of analysing and documenting learning and developing in the lived lives of young people. One such critical psychologist is Roth (2020). Through engaging with the research literature and from discussion with my colleagues, there are some ideas from Roth on personhood in practice (Roth, 2016), which seems to enable a full elaboration of Nuha’s experience of learning and development. Furthermore, this study does not ask questions regarding how, where, or why people learn, rather its focus is on documenting the forms of learning and development that British Yemeni young people experience over time (the second research question). I argue that, within the context of this research, Roth develops a different level of thinking. His ideas on actions and activity have parallel elements to Dreier’s theory of a person. However, Roth’s ideas go beyond Dreier’s theory by allowing the exploration of ideas of learning processes.
and developmental shifts that seem to chime with Nuha’s story in various ways, as I show in the remaining part of this paper. This provides an additional set of thinking tools that facilitate the articulation of learning and development in the continuity of Nuha’s experiences. This abductive process of engaging with Roth’s ideas was developed while working with Nuha’s story and derived from the inductive questioning of my initial deductive approach. Subsequently, Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice became operational in the further analysis of Nuha’s data.

To articulate learning and development in a longitudinal way, I have integrated Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice (Roth, 2016), with particular reference to change and reflection. Dreier suggests that learning and development influence each other and are perhaps mutually exclusive (Dreier, 2008), while Roth enhances this idea by taking the approach that, although development requires the manifestation of different forms of learning, it is a more advanced process. Although Dreier indicates that learning and development are formed through situated movement and participation of a person in their perspective of experience, Roth explicates that it is certain marker events, critical incidents and moments of reflection that evolve and shift in the continuity of a person’s experience. Roth’s ideas also depend on new context and what is learnt with regards to these contexts.

Roth proposes that a person experiences many forms of change. To understand change, incremental learning, and development shifts, the observation of cumulative-quantitative and transformative-qualitative changes is required. Sometimes, the cumulative-quantitative changes lead to a transformative-qualitative change, which leads, in turn, to different types of cumulative-quantitative changes. Along these lines, the movement of a person is explored, and this is where Roth’s ideas become more explicit. Nuha shows many forms of learning processes and some developmental shifts, particularly during the period between college and the point preceding her ultimate uptake of studying law. The cumulative-quantitative negative experiences – of not having much to do during her gap year, failing to convince her parents to allow her to move away, working in low-pay job as an Arabic teacher, carrying out many time-consuming family responsibilities – have directed her to finding a purposeful career, both in her job at a call centre, offering advice on Covid-19, and in the pursuit of a career in
law. These cumulative-quantitative changes may have helped to trigger the decision to become a part-time employee at the call centre and a full-time student.

_Nuha_ has gradually learnt (and continues to learn) to juggle between her different social practices, especially due to changes to her university schedule because of the pandemic. While working at the call centre, _Nuha_ can study online, and she finds that she can both study and work in her own time. Occupying her time with work and study meant that, although she continues her family responsibilities, she does “less of the housework” because she is “now too busy to do” it. Taking a gap year and exploring options with respect to work, study, and family responsibilities, which have taken much of her time, _Nuha_ “appreciate[s] education more now”. She states: “I feel like it’s more a blessing, rather than a burden”. She has had time during the gap year to reflect and think about what she wanted to study, and this contributed to her being “more passionate about this field [law]”. She has had time during the gap year to reflect and think about what she wanted to study, and this contributed to her being “more passionate about this field [law]”. She has learned to cope with university being online, even though it seems to have prevented her from developing a social circle - she hopes to find solutions to this in volunteering and future work experiences. The quantitative changes (through the time of the study) have led to other forms of qualitative changes that transformed the structure of life-motives, and the kinds of decisions _Nuha_ subsequently makes.

_Nuha_ also reports that taking a gap year has allowed her to develop her “self-awareness and patience”. She “had other plans” that did not go her way, and she “comfort[s]” herself and learns to “deal with things that don’t go” her way, moving on and “not dwelling [too much] on it”. _Nuha_ has learnt to accept what she cannot change and finds ways of making herself “feel better about not having [certain] choices”. The complexity of her life and the diverse demands made on her due to her participation in varied social contexts entails a corresponding need to develop diverse personal skills, competencies, and understandings. Preference for certain activities, rhythms and relations is part of how _Nuha_ reflects on her actions. This development consists of emerging and evolving contextualized attributes that she develops and learns as she gathers experiences over time.
Putting this together - the conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice with respect to learning and development - I developed Figure 4, utilised the deductive-inductive-abductive approach of Figure 1 to build Nuha's portrait and her evolving biography. Figure 5 shows this improved portrait of Nuha.

Figure 5: Nuha's portrait - conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice
Concluding remarks

In this article, I have produced a conceptual framework combining Dreier’s theory of a person and Roth’s ideas on learning and development to address a phenomenon that poses questions regarding what it means and takes to be a person. I have included an analytical lens of intersectionality and post-colonial theory throughout the analysis to show how the interactivity of social identity structure fostered life experiences for a British Yemeni young person. I have shown how Dreier’s theory of a person unfolds the examination of the subjective dimensions of person-situation-activity, offering a way of linking research on personality with research on social processes. People conduct their everyday lives, they continue to experience, learn, and develop as they move, participate, and engage across different social contexts. Although I have used this framework to articulate the conduct of everyday life in a specific case study, I argue that it can also be applied to others as it favours a more ecologically valid approach to theorising personality and the conduct of everyday life.

Using Nuha as a case study example, I have produced a portrait indicating how different moments, in the experiencing and as experienced, may suggest who she is and who she is becoming but not in any causal, one directional way. Whether more or less involved, any part of her life contributes to mediating other parts. Some practices are more dominant than others, whether by choice or as subjected to conditions, at any given moment, and these form a network of other activities, each with relative importance and relations. The self-understanding which Nuha develops includes the commitments she makes, how she coordinates and negotiates her various practices, the opportunities she seizes, and how she responds to situations, challenges, and setbacks. There are certain changes that Nuha would like to see in her conduct of everyday life, with the most prominent being increasing her circle of friends so that she can socialise and carry out other collective activities. She acknowledges that events and experiences are yet to happen which may change this depending on her other social order, arrangement, participation and movement. Nuha’s engagement and priorities will continuously evolve as she reflects on such experiences and this will develop, and perhaps change the conduct of her everyday life.
By building a portrait of Nuha in a layered and interpretive manner, I have produced an authentic representation of the texture and nuance of such human experiences, capturing the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of experience and organisational life. Although I started by exploring how Nuha’s identity, as a young woman with cultural hybridity, I also detected that social identity structures were not sufficient in understanding how she conducts her everyday life experiences. Using Dreier’s theory of a person as a deductive approach facilitated this understanding and has provided a valuable insight in the application of this theory inductively to Nuha’s narrative. However, the theory did not fully account for learning and development and, so, a final abductive approach, using Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice, granted an all-inclusive approach to analysing Nuha’s narrative, with the interconnecting focus being activities and actions. This paper has shown that a collection of approaches may be necessary and imperative in capturing the biographic totality of a person’s lived experiences, and in producing a portrait of the evolving person.

In this way, I have produced a narrative portrait with a series of theory-driven features, described in Figure 1, that helps identify aspects that were specific to the research topic. In Nuha’s case, it is the activities she carries out that articulates her daily experiences, and how she learns and develops as she experiences subtle changes. Through her narrative portrait, I have depicted social phenomena through her story of daily life experiences helping to capture contextual nuances that are otherwise overlooked. Furthermore, I have shown how theoretical thinking helps explain and understand social life that is continuously challenged by dynamic and evolving problems, and, thus, the development of conceptual frameworks and theories is required to get a firm understanding of both classical and contemporary theories in the context of the research. Moreover, using such an approach helps researchers to embed social meaning as individuals tell stories that are not only personal, but which form part of larger situational, organisational, cultural, and historical narratives.
Chapter 5 - The continuity of experience: examining personhood in practice of British Yemeni young people.

Abstract

The living and lived lives of British Yemeni young people in the UK is underrepresented in current youth research even though the Yemeni community is one of oldest ethnic communities in the country. The focus of this paper is to contribute an understanding for some of the ways in which British Yemeni young people learn and develop. In doing so, the paper focuses on exploring lived experience through ideas of personhood in practice as articulated through the conduct of everyday life. Using Dreier’s theory of a person and Roth’s ideas of learning and development, the continuity of experiences in six case studies of British Yemeni young people are examined. In particular, the paper examines ideas of habit and critical incidents for exploring more experiential notions of agency that moves beyond certain statis notions of cultural identity as a way of understanding lived experiences. The paper focuses on how actions build habits, and how, with the passing of time, such habits may be reinforced or changed, resulting in new forms of learning and development. The study utilises photo-novella and semi-structured interviews as methods. The findings suggest that, although experience as adaptive habits are embedded in the actions of the participant, the reflexive perception of such experiences, as well as the circumstances and the occurrence of marker events or critical incidents, point to the possibilities of change and development. These changes can be in the form of cumulative-quantitative shifts, in how a young person sees their doing, and through transformative-qualitative changes in personhood. Although the paper focuses on examples of learning and development as evident in the experiences of the six British Yemeni young people, it also provides evidence for how theory can be useful in articulating the conduct of everyday lives more generally.

Key words: Conduct of everyday life, Personhood in practice, Learning processes, Development shifts, Dreier, Roth, Habits, Critical incidents.
Introduction

The study of ethnicity of young people in Britain, has, in many ways, privileged ideas about how the diaspora and other forms of culture identity connect with elements of the culture and values of mainstream society (Basit, 2009; Wood, Landry, & Bloomfield, 2006). It also relates to ideas in the broad field of youth studies that focus on how young people’s agency is enacted (Fish, 2013; Nico & Caetano, 2021). However, relatively few studies have explored the explicit importance of habits in the learning and development of forms of agency, and even less as to how this specifically plays out in the lives of British Yemeni young people, a particularly under-researched minority ethnic group in Britain.

Habits – understood as a process whereby contexts prompt (often automatic) actions, learned through prior performances (Gardner & Rebar, 2019) - are privileged here for many reasons. Firstly, they give a sense of a sequence of routines that is pertinent in understanding lived experiences. Secondly, habit development, and change, can offer information on how learning and development manifests in everyday living. As learning is generally considered to be a personal experience (Elkjær, 1995), any adjustments in habits provide essential information on the learning and development in the person’s dynamic and evolving life. Thirdly, many of the actions people engage in, daily, are habitual (often elicited with minimal cognitive effort or intention (Gardner & Rebar, 2019)) and can be individually and/or collectively constructed (Robbins & Costa, 2017). This communicates ideas of not only the social dimensions within the living and being of the young person in question, but also the historical and cultural implications of their wider community. Therefore, studying habits within the context of learning and development in people’s evolving actions and activities is paramount to understanding the experiences of the young people in this research.

This paper explores the centrality of personhood in practice (Roth, 2020) as it relates to building and changes in habits, focusing on how such thinking may be explored through the lives of British Yemeni young people. In particular, the paper shows how personhood in practice can be used to describe the totality of everyday practical life in which individuals participate fully in daily activities (Roth, 2016) and through which habits are both developed
and reconfigured. The building and configuring of habits, relates to both incremental learning processes (habit development and adaptation) and development shifts (habit reconfiguration), as the individual actively engages across and within different social and cultural contexts. Learning processes and development shifts (adaptive habits or habits reflexively configured) are understood in this context as meaning - operationalised through actions associated with challenges of everyday living.

However, in undertaking the study in this way, I also recognise that there are different approaches to the theoretical positions differentiating and/or integrating ideas of learning and development and habit formation in the lives of young people. One, perhaps crude but, useful heuristic is to suggest a distinction between (a) those that view learning and development as independent entities so that learning is considered a purely external process and not actively involved in development, and who view development as a precondition of learning but never the result of it (Piaget, 1964), and (b) those that assert that learning and development are internal cognitive process that are interconnected (Vygotsky, 2019; Vygotsky, 1978), and at times similar (Koffka, 2011; Kandiri, 2017; Derenne, 2019) and socially mediated.

This paper combines elements of this thinking by suggesting that learning and development are interconnected multifaceted processes, but with learning processes at the forefront of developmental shifts and - yet also - beholden to them as new forms and stages of learning ensue. Thus, the suggestion is that one learns first and then develops, and through that development one might then learn new things in new and different ways. For example, when one sleeps having eaten a heavy meal, depending on the situation, one may wake up feeling sluggish, and so may learn that heavy meals in the evening is not a good option. So, as part of one’s learning process, one may opt to eat earlier or have a lighter snack instead, and hence develop habits in the time of meals, and the type of meals, which becomes an adaptive habit in one’s evening routine. Because of this development, the person may perhaps learn new ways of cooking light meals, or what kinds of food work, not only during evening meals but perhaps throughout the day. In this way, learning and development is seen as an interconnected web of several practices that enables a person to conduct their daily living in a way that complements their being.
Learning and development may also reflect a dynamic temporal and activity-focused process, recognizing how personality and identity may evolve and emanate in the learning and development of doing in the context of lived lives. In many respects, they may also reflect a relational, pragmatic, cultural, historical approach to learning and development (Roth & Lee, 2007). Such an approach rejects the need for an analytic separation of personality and identity from the perspective of learning and development. The position I take in this paper is informed by such rejection. I understand concepts such as heterogeneity, diversity, hybridity, and diaspora, as elements of both identity and personality, that are pertinent to understanding the living and being of British Yemeni young people. The result of the multiple and simultaneous experiences of young people both configuring and being configured in and through life (with others in different social fields), suggests a sense of the continuity, for individual young people, of being one person even though they may act differently across different fields and across time.

This paper, therefore, explores how the continuity of experiencing brings about learning and development. Drawing upon a combination of Dreier’s ideas on personality and the conduct of everyday life (Dreier, 2011) and Roth’s understanding of learning and development on personhood in practice (Roth, 2016; Roth, 2020; Roth & Lee, 2007), this paper provides an account of the different forms of learning and development experienced by British Yemeni young people through the social and cultural conduct of their everyday lives with reference to two research questions:

1) What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time?
2) What does this experience, learning and development suggest about the evolving social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people?

By using a theoretical lens that focuses strongly on the conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice, and on activity and doing, and how learning and development are accomplished through this paradigm, I explore the experiences of four British young people.
Learning and development through the conduct of everyday life

In line with a number of writers, I argue that learning is manifested in the continuity of experiences, showing that it is a relational and interconnected activity of individuals in their environments - one that is suggestive of the evolving fullness of their living (Roth, 2020). Actions - which create relational living in daily events - are where meaning is operationalised (Roth & Lee, 2007). A person is primarily a practical action being and is part of the material world in which he/she is active, learns and develops (Csordas, 2015). Resting on person-situation-activity approach, and depicted in Figure 1, I use Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) to explore how learning and development (circled) are manifested in the conduct of everyday life of British Yemeni young people.

Figure 1: An articulation of Dreier’s theory of a person in the context of learning and development.

A person acts, develops, and learns through interacting within the order and arrangement of their lived lives – their social context, social practices, and social arrangements. Within these arrangements, there is an order where activities develop rhythm or habits derived from sequences of adaptive doing. There are also shifts or tensions to the order of reflexive
moments, resulting in potential change of habits as a person experiences such changes or development in various activities. It is the doing and thinking, as one integrated activity, that allows people to be constantly engaged, with opportunities to develop and grow, within and across their various life settings (Dreier, 2008a). This engagement is not an abstracted purely cognitive constructivist individualistic meaning-making activity. Rather it is a pragmatist notion of privileging continuous problem-solving (Dewey, 2006) in one’s environment often with and through others. Therefore, learning and development takes place not just in the brain, but rather is a combination of head, body, and relation environment interconnecting entities. Such combination emphasises the young people’s chronologically evolving intertwining moments that, in their non-additive diversity, bring about the personality of a person as articulated through the conduct of everyday life (Roth, 2020).

In this way, a person, and their personhood or personality, is understood as being situated in participation and movement. Such processes operate when the person is in more than interaction (in functional co-ordinations), but also, when intrinsically embedded and connected, in the transaction (Dewey, 2006), with his/her social relations. These social relations make up the social context, and which are constantly evolving (Vygotsky, 2019). There are also social practices that are continuously reproducing and changing, which then create the contexts that impact them. Therefore, the processes of doing and undergoing are constantly in permanent flux. During this process, the person builds sequences and perspectives (Dreier, 2011), which may bring about different forms of change and reflection. The ability to strive to get things done, secure demands and personal preferences, seize opportunities, coordinate agendas, negotiate, respond, cope with critical incidents and learn skills (which all reflect agency) (Dreier, 2011) are embodied in the learning process of the unique individual but done so through their evolving relationships with others. Therefore, individuals do not fully ‘own’ their learning, rather learning is continually dependent on individuals, environments, relations, practices, concerns and other elements of the living and being.
Learning and development through personhood in practice

In everyday lives, people do not only participate in only one form of societal activity, rather there are multiple, simultaneous societal activities at different times and in different situations. These activities may lead to possible learning processes and developmental shifts. To understand human actions, in the context of how such actions bring about such learning processes and shifts, a study of the totality of everyday practical life is imperative in considering life activities. Both Dreier and Roth contribute ideas of learning and development as understood within the framework of actions and doing, and Figure 2 introduces some of their most prominent ideas.

Dreier focuses on learning as being an individual mental process, whereby people move around structures of social practices and during this movement they develop skills and understanding (Dreier, 2008b). Knowledge is continuously built upon the foundation of previous learning (Dagar & Yadav, 2016), and this influences what new or modified knowledge an individual will construct, from reformed or new learning experiences (Bada, 2015). However, learning is not only comprehension, knowledge, understanding or skills gained through practice or experience (Lourenço, 2012), it is also changes in observable behaviour (Olson & Ramirez, 2020) – this is what Roth refers to as development. Dreier

Figure 2: Prominent ideas of learning and development from Dreier and Roth
suggests that learning and development influence each other and are perhaps mutually exclusive, while Roth adds to that by taking the approach that, although development requires the manifestation of different forms of learning, it is a more advanced process. This is where Roth’s ideas are valuable. Development shifts are given a distinct platform to that of learning, and this platform rests on the encounter with new forms of experiences. The emergence of an evolved personality with new forms of motives and consciousness may occur during this shift (Roth, 2020). This is a relatively lasting change in behavioural potentiality that transpires as a consequence of reinforced practice (Hilgard, Marquis, & Kimble, 1961).

Learning is a characteristic of the individual as well as the environment (Roth, 2016) and there is an integrated and constant contact, movement and development between them. Understanding habits, as open to revision in the context of an engagement between the person and their environment, allows space for correction and alteration in the way actions are performed daily. As habits are constantly re-adapting and reforming, new habits are created, and/or old ones adjusted. When circumstances change, so do habits (Holzkamp, 2015). As a person experiences things over time, changes are inevitable. Roth suggests that there are two main fundamental reasons for change:

1) Marker events or critical incidents (such as weddings, graduations, and accidents) - when a person experiences an incident, he/she is compelled to make a change, either by editing, reinforcing, or justifying a habit, leading to qualitative changes. Such changes can transform the structure of life-motives, and the kinds of decisions a person subsequently makes.

2) Moments of reflection (often generated by marker events) - when repeated activities encounter pre-reflective improvisation, or deep intellectual or emotional reflection on meaning, methods or purpose, a deliberative change to the course of action occurs. Reflecting on the performance of activities also takes part in the person’s life as they negotiate the conduct of their everyday lives (Dreier, 2011). This allows them to reach a desired balance of activities and commitments across contexts and days.
Living in a dynamic environment, over time, our habitual tendencies are under constant threat from accidents and contingencies that undermine the mastery of them (Carr & Dewey, 2006, Bourdieu, 1986). Changes in life conditions may initiate substantial identity work in coming to understand oneself, other people, and collective subjectivity in the light of new life conditions (Holzkamp, 2015). This consequently influences the person’s conduct of everyday life. Every experience that a person has is an important physical and psychological entity, and the experience itself has an intellectual and practical overtone that reflects the practical, inherently societal, activity (Roth & Jornet, 2017). These moments cannot be understood in terms of independent parts, rather as a whole, implying direct societal relations with others. These moments are a moving force that take into account the fullness of life as something alive, the living motives and interests which drive a person to their lived activities (McLeod, 2018).

Roth's understanding of development involves the idea that experience is not only cumulative-quantitative changes in habits but can also be transformative qualitative changes in behaviour (Roth, 2020). There is a dependent relationship between the perception of change and the subjective flow of time (Klincewicz, 2014) and so in using longitudinal research (Bednall, 2013; Caruana et al., 2015), the study of learning and development is made viable. Roth describes development as a morphogenesis, whereby new forms of experiences are formed (Roth, 2016). Quantitative changes give rise to qualitative changes, and qualitative changes can also bring about different quantitative changes. Therefore, at times, the cumulative-quantitative changes lead to a transformative-qualitative change, which entails different types of cumulative-quantitative changes that follow.

**Introducing the research context**

This paper examines the interconnections between the continuity of experience, learning and the development of six British Yemeni young people in the context of their everyday lives. This approach guided here is that of a case study, allowing in-depth, multi-faceted exploration of the narratives in a real-life environment (Crowe et al., 2011a; Yin, 2009). Using photographs taken by the participants to narrate the activities of their daily lives
(photo-novella) (Wang & Burris, 1994), and semi-structured interviews to elaborate on the photographs taken (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), the voices and visions of key elements in the young people’s everyday lives are revealed. Using such methods creates a visual expression of the social and cultural constructs of the society of the young people (Booth & Booth, 2003), and invites researchers to look at the world through the same lens as the photographer and to share the story the photographs evoke. Young people now live in a visually intensive society (Strack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004) and, so in using such methods, young people are positioned as creators of their own sequence of activities, perceptive of experiences, learning and development. This research also employed longitudinal study and this enables the identification of related events to particular exposures, with regards to presence, timing and chronicity (Caruana et al., 2015). Through documenting each case in this study, I populate the theoretical positions that I have evolved here, exploring the participants’ conducts of everyday life by commenting on their habits, learning and development.

Methods and material

Participants

Six British Yemeni young people, aged 16-19, took part in a longitudinal study over 12-19 months. The participants were 3 young women, Fatima, Nuha and Sausan, and 3 young men, Younus, Rashad and Adam (all names are pseudonyms). This paper focuses on four of these participants – Sausan, Fatima, Rashad and Adam. All participants indicated during the interviews that they were ethnically Yemeni, and nationally British. Fatima and Nuha are first-generation settlers, and Younus and Rashad second generation, and Sausan and Adam third generation. All participants identified themselves as being Muslim.

Procedure

The study was conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice of the University of Manchester and in accordance with the guidelines of the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011). After receiving ethical approval, all participants signed a consent form. I gave each participant one disposable camera and asked them to take photographs of
their activities during one routine and one non-routine day. The participants were given ethical guidance on taking photographs and these were used as tools for the interview process, which took place shortly after the photographs were developed. This process was then repeated 12-19 months later. Changes in activities, which may suggest areas of learning and development, were reported by the participants. Between March 2019 and October 2021, a total of 24 semi-structured interviews were conducted, each participant taking part in four in-depth interviews. The narratives of their daily lives were co-constructed, with the photographs providing a platform for the discussions.

**Data collection and analysis**

The semi-structured interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, with the identifiers removed (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). They were then analysed using a content directed approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, Assarroudi et al., 2018), generating codes using Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) and Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice (Roth, 2020). Each transcript line was coded manually and placed into a table for analysis. For the purpose of this paper, the data analysed concentrates on the different forms of learning and development experienced over time specifically for four of these participants: Sausan, Fatima, Rashad, and Adam. I chose these four cases particularly because their activities displayed the most evidence of change, learning and development during the time of the study. This does not mean that Nuha and Younus did not learn or develop, but I do not include this here because their learning was not as noticeable, perhaps needing more time to be observed.

In these four cases, I apply Dreier and Roth’s theoretical approach to understand the lived lives of Sausan, Fatima, Rashad and Adam. By selecting and rearranging extracts from the photographs and interview transcripts, and using narrative portraits tools developed by from Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs (2020) and Lawrence-Lightfoot (2016), I compiled their stories of their living and being.
Findings

Sausan

I first met Sausan when she was 17-years old, studying at college. Sausan structures her days around her roles as a student, an employee, a family member, and a friend. Sausan’s timeline of events, related to studying and working, are displayed in Figure 3. Through the continuity of her experiences, she encounters various changes in her roles, as a student and at work. She is unsure what to do next, at each stage of her career, and spends time exploring her options. The trajectories that lead Sausan in and out of career choices have contributed to directing her currently envisioned career.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Drops out of college and starts apprenticeship in Child Care and Nursery Services</th>
<th>Leave her apprenticeship course and starts full-time work at a local café. Explores the idea of becoming a makeup artist</th>
<th>Works full-time in multiple jobs - her main job in waitressing</th>
<th>Full-time student returning to college to study midwifery</th>
<th>Completing qualifications necessary for becoming a midwife and works part-time at a supplementary school</th>
<th>Continues in college and is working part-time, with hopes of going to university soon after</th>
</tr>
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Figure 3: Sausan’s timeline of events envisioning her career future.

Looking over Sausan’s narrated experiences, I observed cumulative-quantitative and transformative-qualitative changes, particularly with regards to her career choices. As shown in Figure 3, college and work are two alternatives with about equal probability of participation. At certain points, Sausan is only at college. There is also a period, in June 2020, where she is only working. In September 2020, she stops working and is a full-time student. However, because college is not “as full-time” as she had previously anticipated, she now participates simultaneously in work and study. This pattern may continue depending on different situations she will encounter in the various stages of her evolving trajectory. Her activities in working and studying are built on whichever social context she is spending most
of her time in, at that particular time in her life. In these social contexts, she builds or develops habits of activities, such as waking up at certain times or constructing a to-do list of activities, enabling her to carry out what she sees as her ‘duties’ as a student and as an employee.

Sausan reflects on the months between September 2019 and March 2020 particular moments of potential reconfiguration. The qualitative shift arises from her participation within specific forms of activity, such as when she completed her qualification in the Health and Social Care programme with a high-level award and yet simultaneously failing her Maths and English. The cumulative negative experiences of failed tests in Maths and English – “which [she] need[s] to re-do at some point” - may have triggered her to drop out of college between September 2019 and December 2020. It also appears to have resulted in her working full-time, even in low-salary jobs. While working, Sausan expressed her dissatisfaction at the particular state of affairs suggesting that this period was a “temporary solution” to her situation. The cumulative quantitative incremental levels of continuing and evolving dissatisfaction with her work triggered the decision to become a full-time student in college, so that she could acquire a “proper job”.

“I have to work cos I like having my own money, and it is easy, but it was the fact that I had problems during work ... don’t get along with others... and cos all I do is serve coffee for longer hours and not much pay, which I don’t want to do all the time so yeah it has to be the right job... I did Health and Social care in school, and I got really good grades, my teachers said I should think about this... but I have to finish it off. I’m going to a different place in college. I have already applied and got a place so I know what I will be doing, for two years, and then I will go to the university and get a proper job. That’s my plan”.

College is a way back for how Sausan, in her most current articulations, envisions her future and, since having experienced everyday work in low-paying jobs, such as that in a café, as monotonous and unenjoyable - a quantitative change - she has decided to go back to college full-time, to peruse what is considered, to her, a more satisfying work future. It appears that Sausan’s engagement with midwifery pathway is the result of her both doing and undergoing in various contexts that, at least, in her current guise, appears to have made her more certain of her career decision. This can be considered as a qualitative shift that appears to have
changed her envisioned life trajectory and pathway, providing the opportunity for different forms of experiences.

Sausan’s participation across social structures and practices gives rise to her emotional and intellectual reflections that relate to her new career pathway, which appears to have been enabled by the experiences of her gap year. In a more general way, as Sausan moves across different social contexts, she carries out different activities that allow her to continue her day, having accomplished some set purpose. Activities are also prioritised, and this is shown in the habit of making a to-do list so she can “tick it off”, enabling Sausan to secure demands and personal preferences as part of her accomplishment in the conduct of her everyday life. Through the continuity of experiences, certain habits are more reinforced than others and when repeated, can become automatic. For example, Sausan is in the habit of “moisturizing [her] skin before bed” and so does not need to schedule that in or include in her list as it has become and automatic habit.

Sausan also encounters new forms of experiences that may be contradictory to previous beliefs. For example, Sausan’s perceptions of earning money as being “easy”, may have changed perhaps because of her experiences in low paid jobs. This may also be linked to Sausan being more empathetic towards her working mother. Although her mother has a professional role, Sausan acknowledges the effort of managing work and duties at home, especially with her father being away for work for the majority of the time.

“I feel like I am helping my mum as well and I don’t want her to come home to a messy house and no dinner. Since I have worked, more so, I realise how hard it is. I delay my other social activities. Family comes first, I guess”.

Sausan will voluntarily cook and clean during the days her mother is at work. Her perception of working has changed, and this (as well as other factors) may have given her a sense of obligation to help more in the house. She does so with apparent grace and engages with cleaning in ways that allow her to “sing and dance solo”. Previous habits, including going out with her friends, have taken lower precedence than helping at home, and only when she has finished her family contribution does she then make arrangements with her friends. “Family comes first” and this means that, for Sausan, certain habits change because of
developmental contradictions or incremental changes of habit that, then, reach a point which becomes a possible developmental shift. This may also have contributed to new form of motives and an evolved consciousness.

Another observed set of interconnections between cumulative-quantitative and transformative-qualitative changes in Sausan’s narrative with regards to reflection on her body image. Sausan struggles with acne and hyperpigmentation of the skin, and this occupies her mind and time.

(In 2019) “It was really bad when I was in school, but it has calmed down a bit. It’s just like hormonal. I tried tablets but then I didn’t like relying on tablets. The makeup covers not all my acne but mainly my scars. Mainly on the face. I have hyperpigmentation. It’s like scars that come and go. Sometimes I feel people will probably look at me differently, perhaps. The acne has been like up and down. I don’t think I would wear makeup as much if I didn’t have it. I have got used to it now, before I used to like to get annoyed but now it’s just, yeah, there. It’s pressure from society I guess, they would comment on it.”

(In 2020) “I don’t wear makeup as much now as I used to...I think I am more confident in myself now... It’s improved since then. I think it is hormonally based, but as well when I changed my skin care routine it got better, and I started using less products and just products that I know is good for my skin, rather than just cos it looks good in the moment.”

Sausan applies makeup as part of her morning routine and takes it off when she gets home. She spends some of her time learning about makeup application from “Instagram bloggers and YouTubers. Mainly hijabi ones”. Hijabi bloggers are young Muslim women that are part of “an emergent cross-faith transnational youth subculture of modest fashion” (Othman, 2017; Kavakci & Kraepelin, 2017). They often have a social media platform with focuses on
fashion, particularly makeup and dress (Robinson, 2015; Balasescu, 2017). Such bloggers show the evolving relationship between religion, gender and society and its influence on the Muslim fashion systems (Hall-Araujo, 2017). Sausan finds Hijabi bloggers “speak to her” as a Muslim young woman as she can “relate to them more”. This evolving concern and practice around makeup suggested, in March 2020, for the possibilities of becoming “a makeup artist”. Applying makeup regularly and “getting good at it”, suggested a possible professional career for Sausan. However, this does not materialise beyond a recurring thought as she “decides that it was more of a hobby”. Although she mentions that she has built resilience against the comments made by others regarding her skin, applying makeup was also “pressure from society”. Upon reflection and with the passing of time, she seems to have changed her perspective about her experience of applying makeup and this is linked to reflection on the reasons why she was wearing makeup in the first place. One might say, based on some of the thinking developed in this chapter, that Sausan has, through incremental learning, become more effective in the daily application of make-up, linking it to purpose and meaning in the order and arrangements of her social practice. I argue, therefore, that for Susan, there has been a quantitative learning process that is connected to qualitative development, in terms of feeling good and being “confident in her own skin”.

Fatima

I first met Fatima during in 2018 when she was studying in the first year of A-levels in college. Her narratives during this time, she expresses concerns around her career and this was a continuous focus in her narratives in 2019 and 2020. Fatima sets agendas and navigates her days to strive to get important things done. For Fatima, such an approach allows her to coordinate her daily activities to work within and around her role as a Muslim, as a sister, but, most importantly, as a dedicated student - “Education has been a big priority” and throughout her narrative, she displays activities which reinforces such priority. She also makes connections between her studies and her religious duties and role in the family, which I explore later.
Fatima values activities related to her religion. The photos she took initiated the conversation regarding reasons behind performing her religious obligations, such as praying and fasting. These photos are repeated throughout her interviews. Reading and praying are part of her morning routine, and she ends her day with similar activities. One might say that Fatima has developed such activities as routines and are now a habit, part of her living and being.

**Photo 2: Fatima’s religious activities**

“I pray and then read The Quran after this, or I read and then pray depending on the day... I don’t think I could carry-on the day without having prayed... I am very accustomed to it. Like it’s just a routine thing that I do, it’s not like anything different, and if I didn’t do it, I would feel like a gap somewhere in my day and that would be unsettling... It’s like a habit I have developed. It just works. I pray every day, 5 times a day, but I only took pictures at the beginning and end... it’s a quick activity... plus prayer gets me to focus and this helps with studying.”

Although she performs these activities as habitual activities, the activities which she comes back to centre around actions related to her education. She links her prayers to her studies saying that “pray[ing] gets me to focus and this helps with studying”. Wasting time seems to be of great concern, and prayer is a “quick activity” enabling her to continue studying while at the same time, feeling “settled” having prayed and/or read the Quran.

To keep track of time, Fatima also writes a to-do list, as she states that she can “get very easily distracted”. She refrains from using her phone in the morning, she feels that it is “not really a productive way to start” her day. She also engages in family related activities, such as preparing for her sibling’s birthday party, or playing card games with her family, or colouring and reading, but these activities are usually time limited, and upon completion, she often returns to her studies.
The cumulative activities of studying for Fatima are noticed throughout her narrative, and because she spends a great amount of time and effort on this, she finds that she now, for example, developed her study skills in the “art” of revision, which differs to her previous revision method. In 2019, Fatima claims that she did not “know how to revise and wasted time just reading”. She felt that such revision methods did not benefit her much and, although her results were better than she expected, she “developed skills that [she] could repeat so that [her] studying would be more effective”. As a result of the (quantitative) incremental repetition of her new skills, her method of revision has changed and has been consolidated. For example, she is “answering exam papers for practice, instead of just learning [her] notes”. Through exploring her developed learning through consolidated forms of revision, Fatima can also reflect on what does not work, thereby helping her develop new and adapted forms of revision. Such evolved habits and skills support the arrangements Fatima has put into place to achieve her purposes for revision. These repeated and evolved/adapted actions become day-to-day responsive habits, which become part of her living. When anything more critical occurs in her learning environments, such as when a particular understanding or orientation to a subject is less successful - such as revision strategies - then her habits are either reconfigured or changed to enable her to ‘adapt’ to the new circumstances.

In many respects, critical incidents are centrally important in thinking more generally about habits, and particular development shifts or changes in those habits. At the age of 18, Fatima experienced a major critical incident in her life, the tragic death of her parents. Photos taken by Fatima, as part of the research activity, that related to praying and reading of the Quran instigated the conversation regarding the loss of her parents - Fatima describes how such a loss influenced her to become more studious.

“Education has been a big priority in my household and in my family, at the beginning I never used to think about it, but now I value the whole concept, and I understand that education is important, to get a job, to earn, a really big aspiration for me... my parents were educated... they taught me and my siblings that education is really important, for our futures, especially in our generations, education is big... I want them to be proud of me, even if they are not here with me now...”
Fatima has always seen herself as studious, but the loss of her parents has perhaps enabled her to be more reflexive, where she now “values” education more fully. This may have inspired her, in her own words, to work harder, better, and more effectively, so that her “parents [are] proud” of her academic achievements. Such moments require adaptations to new forms of living can provide a stimulus for change in terms of motives, consciousness, and actions that are formative in an evolving personality. When there is a change of circumstances, adaptive change in action becomes more apparent.

Although Fatima recognises the centrality of being studies and has evolved her study habits to become more ‘successful’ in her learning, she also recognises that she often needs external validation for what she is doing. Fatima is self-conscious and continuously assesses herself throughout her narrative.

“I honestly did so much better in A-Levels than I expected because I just worked up the mentality that I wasn’t good at studying... I just thought in my head that I was just not clever enough... I am very downcast because I just feel like I am not clever enough... I am not a really good speaker... Like when I had to take part in a discussion, I was all nervous and didn’t like it... I am all wrapped up in my studying... I prefer to stay at home and study... most of my regular day I just revise, all the time, literally, so either at university doing lectures and seminars or revising at home... studying at home building up my routine. I just study all day.... It’s like I don’t fit anywhere, I just don’t know, I feel like I need validation from people to tell me that I am doing well. That’s why I study so much. And I spend most of my day doing that. I am getting better grades because of it, and this is making me feel better about myself. I feel after I finish my studies, I will be proud of my hard work”.

Fatima spends most of her time studying because she feels she needs to, because she is “not clever enough”, and has to, so that she can get “validation” from others. She comments later that she does not want to be like her eldest brother, who doesn’t care much about what others think of him. These emotions govern her daily activities and are perhaps reasons why she structures her day around her studies or why, for example, she starts on any coursework requirements “so early”. As a result of her continuous studies, Fatima feels that she is building more confidence in herself. One might argue that her evolving adaptive behaviour around her study, as well as self-efficacy appears to become more profound, perhaps becoming more strongly articulated in the continuity of her experiences. She feels better
because, as she puts it, is getting better grades and so, continues to study because this is important to her feeling of significant belonging to both her memories and to her future which again is evidence of a cumulative quantitative learning process.

Changes in circumstance have meant that Fatima has also had to experience an enforced context change due to the loss of her parents. Fatima in this instance undergoes fundamental change, that requires significant changes to how she operates, perhaps slowly enabling the building of new adaptive habits to allow her to navigate her way in differently constituted social relations. For example, since the accident, Fatima has had to move permanently, with her siblings, into an extended family home. She has found a coping strategy to deal with this crisis and narrates how keeping a journal “almost every day” has helped her to come to terms with these changes.

Photo 3: Fatima’s journals

“This picture is like the journal that I write, I have a diary... I never used to write in journals much... I wanted to write something big so that I can remember it when I grow older, now, after my parents passed away, you know it’s quite difficult to talk to people about it... like all these feelings, but because I don’t really want to burden people with my problems... I usually write my difficulties down instead of talking about them... I find it easier to write, than speak, because a lot of the times when you speak, it is hard to say [something] especially if it’s like something as heavy [as] losing someone. It’s really personal to me”. 

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Although this activity is relatively new, it now becomes central to her living and being. As we can see through Fatima’s loss, crisis-like catastrophes reconfigure the experiences of a person.

The possibilities of an evolved personhood for Fatima, with a new hierarchy of motives, is being continuously generated. For example, she now takes an active parental role in her younger siblings’ lives, such as waking her younger brother up for school or helping him with his homework, something she has only done since the loss of her parents. She also experiences new forms of consciousness.

“When my parents were here like last year, I had much more freedom, like I would go out with my friends … I have restricted myself… I feel I am a little nervous, especially since my parents passed away, I don't like going out that much I like just staying at home, I just feel uncomfortable asking them for things, you know they will feel obliged… I don't really want to burden them, and they might like to give me money or things like that, just let it be. I think me, and my siblings are already a burden on them. Parents, are different you know… I don’t feel comfortable asking them for things... and you know they have different rules than my parents did, and I don’t really want to break without realising... it’s just not worth the problem of me worrying about it”.

Fatima experiences new forms of social context and activities and this continues towards the end of her narratives. Managing her daily activity has changed because of her current circumstances and she narrates how this is a gradual learning process. Fatima talks about different coping strategies that have enabled her to cope with the changes she has experiences. For example, she spends her time either in college/university or at home and avoids going out so that she does not “break” any possible “rules” that her family may have. She states that staying at home is “easier”, and she avoids asking her extended family for money, because she does not want to “burden” them any further. Fatima gets on with her life by “just let[ting] it be”. Although she expresses negative emotions towards her situation - “nervous[ness]”, “uncomfortable[ness]” and “worry” -, she finds ways of dealing with her situation as best as she can, through journal writing or just avoiding difficult situations. It is perhaps Fatima’s way of coping and managing her current situation.
Rashad

Rashad was 17-years old when we first met. He was studying at college with hopes of becoming a Biomedical Scientist. His photo-novella depicts stories of his daily activities, with the prime focus and discussion around maintaining his body weight.

Photo 4: Rashad’s activities related to keeping healthy. “I bike” (left); “I have fruit” (middle); “I go to the gym” (right)

Rashad spends “at least 5 days a week... for around one and half hours” at the gym. Although college is about “an hour away”, he cycles or walks there. He prepares his own meals, and snacks on fruits, protein bars or “boost drinks”, while at the same time checking his calorie intake on an application he has on his phone. Rashad “used to be fat big”. His weight affected his mood and mental health and now, Rashad explains how the transformation to being healthy emerged.

“I needed to lose weight; I was like obese. I was overeating, too much food, a lot of takeaways. I used to have a big appetite. I didn’t like the way I looked. Sometimes people used to make fun of me. I used to be 92 kilos and then [over] 3 months, I just said I have the summer holidays, I had nothing to do, I put my head down, three months and khalas [enough]... just did it... I watch my calories. I know how much calories are in my food, I have it my head now as I’ve been doing it for so long. I exercise. I do more now, than I used to”.

Rashad’s decision to lose weight did not necessarily come from one critical incident, rather, his narrative shows, that it was various quantitative and cumulative factors that contributed to the change, of both intra- and inter- actions that connected emotion, cognitive self, and the
environment into one set of evolving concerns. He switches languages using the Arabic term “khalas” to signify that he has had ‘enough’ of his previous eating habits.

For Rashad, losing weight is an accomplishment through a particular conduct of his everyday living activities. He compares his experiences before, when he was big, to now when he is healthy. When asked what motivated him to keep going, he replied: “The end result, I’m kind of happy, I regained my body strength and control, and I am healthy and feel good”. There is a clear change in dominant form of activities - from the previously dominant experience of “overeating, being lazy and not liking” himself, to the newly dominant form of experience of “feeling good and happy”.

On his days off, a time-out which lifts him out of his everyday life, Rashad eats out. He calls it a “cheat day” and despite being conscious about it being unhealthy, he feels that “it does not disturb [his] normal routine, because it only happens once or twice a month”. However, the result of unhealthy eating makes him feel physically sick. Eating healthy all the time has meant that his body has adapted to healthy food and when disturbed, by unhealthy eating, the result is “feeling sick”. Rashad explains: “When you have been eating healthy all week and then you go out, your body feels it, so I was feeling a little nausea”. Where experience changes cumulatively, new forms of experience emerge that are qualitative in nature. Although he states that he has some “cheat day[s]”, later in his narratives he clarifies that these days have been greatly reduced - “I hardly do that now”. Rashad continues to learn how to be “in control of his eating habits” and this leads to a transformational development in the way he feels about himself.

Being “in control” of eating habits is also shown in Rashad’s activities during the pandemic lockdown in England in 2020. Although he narrates that the lockdown period was “boring” and he spends a lot of his time “binging on Netflix”, Rashad remains conscious of his eating habits and exercise routines. During lockdown, he learns how to cook new healthy dishes and his exercise routine changes from going to the gym to engaging in more outdoor activities such as a “sprint at the local park”, “playing football” or “biking with friends”. The hard work of previous years - in keeping fit - seemed to have continued during the pandemic.
Towards the end of the interview, Rashad narrates how he was able to continue his career journey - at university studying Medical Biosciences, albeit “virtually because of the pandemic”, while at the same time ensuring he “exercises in between university online sessions”. Reformed habits helped to enact, or mobilise, other habits (Dewey, 1983) and for Rashad, keeping fit and healthy has become a habit that is continuously evolving with changes in circumstances and situations.

Adam

I first met Adam when he was 17-year-old. He spent most of his routine day at college, in the gym and with family and friends. At the weekends or on non-routine days, he focuses his time on his gym performance, and on boxing as a sport. He spends time with a circle of his close friends and, for entertainment goes out for meals, plays football related video games, and generally “just chill[s]”. From his narrative, this routine seems to be different to what he had experienced in the past.

I interviewed Adam in 2019, shortly after he had changed social circles and moved on from his involvement in a violent local gang. The conversation in and around gang involvement was initiated by a photo Adam took of his earphones as he was walking to college to catch the bus on the morning of a routine day. The narration begins when Adam tells me what he does on the bus. Other than listening to music, Adam has silent moments, and this is an opportunity for Adam to reminisce about the past. He values these moments as they give him a “vision” of what his life used to be like, and his feelings towards the past. He also finds solitude in these silent moments.

“I listen to mostly rap. It is more like... vocal rap, a remedy, which is better than the heavy rap I used to listen to. I’m not really a heavy music listener, I try and cut it off, reminds me of bad times. Some days I have silent moments, where I have my headphone on but won’t have any music... I look back and I think, what was I playing at? I was not taking life seriously. I see it as I am in charge of my own actions, if I like died today, we are going to God, and I can’t say ana disht samihnee [I am reckless, forgive me]. Maybe before I used to see it like that, before I wasn’t like scared, I was like living the day. I look back and say didn’t I have shame, I never used to fear God...I have bad experiences...living like a thug, acting like this was being manly...Gangs and there were a lot of stabbings,
and a lot of time it wasn’t because I would put myself in these situations, a lot of times its cos I’m at the wrong place and wrong time. That’s how I used to see it. Now I see it, right place, right time – it was a sign. Enough. I’m not like a violent person...I used to think like that, like cool to be bad. I try to avoid it as much as I can, not because like of fear but because I know it is wrong. I used to see it, look how many chances Allah gave me, so many chances, opened my eyes to who I am, just like a mercy.”

Adam’s experience is determined by real historical conditions related to his activities when he was a teenager. Actions performed by Adam, as a gang member then, symbolise his prior understanding of respect, power, identity and manhood, in addition to having a way for acceptance and survival. When I asked how his involvement in a gang came about, Adam notes that he “doesn’t really know how it happened” except that, then, he believed that it was “cool being bad”. Understanding the relationship between the construction of the male identity and social violence in the form of gangs is a historical and current phenomena (Baird, 2012) and not unusual for boys in Adam’s age group. For Adam, being in a gang was perhaps a way of practicing masculinity -“being manly” - influenced by many factors. From Adam’s narrative, it seems that such factors may be related to peer pressure, to building personal reputation or perhaps finding a place to belong. Although these may be reasons for why Adam joined a gang, his narrative focuses more on how he moved away from “living like a thug”, through making cumulative adjustments which led to further continuous transformative changes.

As Adam moved from school to college, he found an opportunity to shift away from his old ways because “everyone is new and adapting”. Whenever he describes an activity from his day, he quickly mentions what it is not. For example, he listens to vocal rap, instead of heavy rap, he studies during some of his free time “when before [he] didn’t study at all”, when watching movies, he chooses different kind of movies to those he watched before which were “like horror and violence”, and when he plays video games, he tends to play football games, previously he “used to play... violent games”. He also avoids “places that have groups of boys up to no good”, and things which often glamorise the gang lifestyle, or any possible forms of violence. He also avoids going out with friends “that drink” because he is (perhaps no longer) “into that”. There is the emergence of a new form of experience, an objective
change in the environmental conditions that leads to a contradiction within the person—perhaps in the self-questioning of “Why am I doing this? Does my face attract all this attention and trouble?”. In this way, Adam finds out how new possibilities emerge, and has different perspectives on experiences, and this appears to be necessitated by the contradictions arising in his other related activities.

Adam talks about his past experiences as he “looks back” and realises the issues that used to be part of his life. He narrates how his thinking and actions have changed as he learns more about what he wants from himself, his connection to God, and later in his narrative, how to achieve happiness. Adam’s relationship with God was viewed by him as previously weak. Although he rarely mentions God or religious duties and participation in religious activities in his narrative, he asserts that he no longer has the attitude that he can do what he likes, as if it does not matter, and now speaks about fear of God: “before I wasn’t, like, scared, I was like living the day. I look back and say didn’t I have shame, I never used to fear God”. This allows him, in his own words, to reflect further on his thinking and actions, for example in how finding Islam, for him, was not just about the outward practices, such as prayer and fasting, but also an inner belief.

“Like Islam, I feel like Islam doesn’t tell you just to pray five times a day and just [give] orders, Islam is like a way of life ... it even tells you how to wipe your ass and with what hand, you know to the detail. It tells you through the Prophet’s teachings, it’s like complete. It’s inner as well, in your heart so your life is happier. It’s complete.”

Again, he uses the words “happy” and “complete” to reinforce his current belief in how religion has transformed some of his behaviour. He also states that he is “lucky to have got out” and his gratitude is reflected in the different changes in his activities. This belief, for Adam, does not have to be reflected in the instructions of practising Islam, but emerge in the way daily routine (non-religious related) activities are carried out. Adam reveals that, in the evenings when he is not out with his friends, he reads The Alchemy of Happiness - by Al-Ghazali (2015), an Islamic philosopher and theologian. He indicates how such reading has influenced his thinking about how Islamic traditions have explained happiness through understanding God. Adam also mentions that this book was given to him by a person he calls
“a true friend that wants the best” for him, and indirectly compares such friends with others that he used to associate with in previous years.

The cumulative activities associated with actions that are not stereotypical of gang members, appears to have helped Adam to reflect and move away from his past life, and more towards what he would describe as a transformed Adam. He states he is no longer in a gang and he “won’t go back there”. “There” seems to be more of a state of mind than just a social context and he states this repeatedly throughout his narrative: “I’m not in a gang anymore, I didn’t know myself then, I won’t go back there”. Understanding himself has for Adam been centrally important in keeping him away from his old gang life. He now feels that he has taken charge of his actions in a proactive way and thinking about this (during moments of silence, and during the interviews when he stops to reflect on what he narrates), has allowed him to look to the future in what he would describe as a more positive manner.

As I follow Adam’s narrative, I notice that activities such as exercising in the gym, studying in college, and hanging out with friends in safe environments have become more dominant experiences overturning previous experiences – “I only do things that won’t get me into trouble”. Adam carries out these activities but at the same time looks for other options to better himself, such as work and connecting with his mother. When I asked about going out with friends, Adam states: “from time to time I just go and see [my friend]. But I see it as mum first, she does more for me, I also feel it. I’m just closer to her more now”. For Adam, there is a different experiential trajectory (focusing on education, health, and religion) following the transition to the evolving form of experience. In his interview from 2020, he continued to occupy his time with what he calls ‘good company’, and activities that for him help to build him up. This included studying at university, acquiring a part-time job in a restaurant, and when free, meeting up friends and going to safe spaces to “eat out or have shisha”. He is also part of a power league football team where he plays highly intense football and, also, “release negative energy” through exercises such as boxing. In this way, Adam learnt to experience life for more than that which gang society offers him.
Discussion

This article has presented the formation and changes in habits, through repeated or changes in activities, of four British Yemeni young people. What I suggest is that these evolved habits provide a sense of learning and development in the context of the conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice. It is in the continuity of the experiences, of Fatima, Rashad, Adam and Susan, that enable them to actively and continuously adapt their existing daily habits. In each case study, everyday life and its implicitness, unconsciousness and regularities is explored, and the individual is constantly situated and moving around in structures of social practices with different levels of participation and engagement in practices.

This adaption to habits represents areas within learning and development, that reflect elements of generality and specificity. For example, in each of the cases there is a sense in which learning takes time (Goodhart, 2020). For example, it is in the continuity of experiences that Sausan learns the type of makeup that suits her, Fatima learns effective ways of studying, and Rashad learns which diet programme best works for his body. Furthermore, for each learning takes place by interacting with others and so is not an isolated process or outcome. Nuha learns how to respond to her mother’s “passive-aggressive” response when she fails to engage in some of her family responsibilities; Sausan learns about fashion through following bloggers on social media; and Adam learns how to connect with God through reading – all of which are forms of direct and indirect interactions. Learning is also, for each individual, an active and personal process, sometimes imposed on an individual because of a critical incident, while at other times because of the meaning and purpose such learning fashions for the individual. Fatima learns how to adapt her revision skills because she actively recognises the benefits of such revision, and Sausan learns that midwifery is her career pathway through actively engaging in other professions that did not give her the career satisfaction she was looking for.

When exploring how development manifests as a cumulative shift in processes of learning, I argue that development is an activity or stage that takes longer. Additionally, it may require multiple interactions and manifestations of different forms of learning. For example, being in
low-paid jobs and working longer hours, with colleagues that she doesn’t always get on with, has enabled a development in Sausan’s motives for studying for a “proper job” and for being, perhaps, more empathetic towards her mother (who works full-time and looks after the home independently, particularly in the absence of the father). As a result of such empathy, Sausan helps more with household responsibilities, prioritising cooking and cleaning before arranging time to meet up with friends. This is an example of a transformative qualitative shift that can be viewed as a development shift in Sausan’s living and being.

Learning also constitutes an important dimension in understanding personality and its development in the characteristics of a person as well as the environment. Its implications are most evident when experience changes cumulatively. For example, Sausan and Fatima both write to-do lists, on a regular basis, and this eventually becomes a habitual activity embedded as part of the activities of their day. Both young women learn the value of making these lists and so continue to do so in other days. Other activities, such as Fatima writing a journal, becomes more valuable after the death of her parents, a critical incident in her life. In this example, Fatima learns to express her feelings, thoughts, and memories in journal writing, and this helps her cope with her situation.

Development is also shown where a change in experience is qualitative in nature. This may lead to the emergence of new types of personality and perhaps new forms of relations in the person acting in the environment they are in. For example, to adapt and change a particular learning environment, Adam’s mode of participation within and then outside the gang enables him to take agency and evolve his personal consequential progress. He alters his position with regards to the social structure of schooling and repurposes his agency in relation to such social structures to register and acquire greater levels of control than when in disenfranchised social positions. These are perhaps ways in which Adam makes efforts to represent sophisticated and deliberate attempts to challenge expectations, escape negative perceptions and pursues what he now terms his ‘true’ interests without the influence of the gang around him. His choice of friends, the places where he “chills”, all change; even the games he plays have shifted from violent games to football. In this way Adam has a new hierarchy of motives.
and new forms of consciousness and this leads to a qualitative transformative change in his evolving personality, which in turn may lead to further and new forms of experiences.

**Sausan, Fatima, Rashad and Adam** participate in multiple activities and such participation happens across society but lived through different subject positions. To make the participants’ decisions intelligible, I considered the (lived concrete) relations that the young people have been, and are, part of, and how such activities are connected to make up the totality of the thinking of the person’s life (Roth & Germanos, 2016). In other words, considering their whole lived experience brings together the always-situated practical movement and its reflection on the intellectual and affective planes (Roth, 2020).

**Conclusion**

This paper integrates both Dreier’s theory of a person in personal trajectories (Dreier, 1999) and Roth’s practice of personhood (Roth, 2020), through the motives of different activities to which people are subjects and are subjected to society. I have used the term personality/personhood in this study to mean a construct of evolving experiences rather than some trait-like static view. The stories of **Sausan, Fatima, Rashad and Adam** showed how the conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice can accommodate and enable differing experiences to enable essentialist generalisation about the significance of focusing on the conduct of everyday life. What such thinking enables is an understanding of how British Yemeni young people engage with the societal mainstream, social values, and experiences in the context of Britain) and, at the same time, diversity (hybridity relating to how the conduct of everyday life manifests in the lives of Yemeni young people, as opposed to young people generally). Learning and development in relation to living lives is articulated through the interconnection between this – and each case study demonstrates the practical application of this.

As such lived and living lives are about an adaptive, cumulative, evolving, transformative, differentiating, moving sense of life that relates to conduct of everyday living and an evolving personhood. This avoids the notion of being simplistic in understanding people through a particular cultural veneer, such as diaspora or cultural identity, as if these have
imputable impacts. My thinking, and evidence from this paper, suggests and support ways of making sense of lived and living experiences.
Chapter 6 British Yemeni young people’s experience of body image, home, food, language, and religion.

Abstract

This paper provides an in-depth knowledge on the social practices of an under-researched ethnic group in the UK, the British Yemenis. Through an exploration of their lived activities in the context of the conduct of everyday life, this study uses photo-novella and semi-structured interviews in combination, to present five main themes which emerged from the study. These are body image, food, home, language, and religion. The paper shows how British Yemeni young people connect and disconnect, at different levels, times, and context, with mainstream British cultures and Yemeni subcultures, displaying elements of cultural hybridity that are unique to these individuals, yet at the same time provides some information on the Yemeni community. The study follows the daily activities of six British Yemeni young people in a longitudinal manner, exploring an understanding of how social structures and cultures have, and are continuously, impacting the young people’s conduct of everyday life. The study also contributes to the use of intersectionality and post-colonialism as analytic tools in the study of young people’s lived experiences.

Key words: British Yemeni, Conduct of everyday life, Intersectionality, Cultural hybridity, Post-colonialism.

Introduction

Yemenis are an under-represented ethnic group in Britain despite being the earliest Muslim settlers in Britain since the 19th century (Sanni, 2014). There have been numerous studies on the diaspora of other ethnic minority groups in Britain such as the Pakistanis (Zriba, 2018), Indians (Ghai & Desai, 1964) and Africans (Killingray, 1993). The Yemeni diaspora developed as a result of different historical waves of migration (Sanni, 2014; Guns, 2010). The current war in Yemen (Kaptan, 2021; Hokayem & Roberts, 2016) has increased Yemeni diaspora and mobilization and this has facilitated their visibility and voice as immigrants.
globally (Moss, 2021). Some Yemenis migrated to the UK during British colonisation (Jones, 2005; Roochnik, 2001), while others migrated to better their economic or educational status (Civantos, 2015). However, due to the ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity within the Arab world (of which Yemen is part) and those settling in Britain, information on the numerical strength and spatial concentrations of Arab communities is hampered by the lack of accurate quantitative data (El-Solh, 1992). The 2011 census figures estimate that there are approximately 70-80,000 people of Yemeni origin were living in Britain (Office for National Statistics, 2013). One of the reasons behind the lack of a precise number is due to the ethnic grouping in these censuses. The recent 2021 census has an option for ethnic categorisation in which a person can note their ethnicity using their own words (UK Government, 2021), and so there is hope that this census will provide a clearer picture when its results are released.

Literature on the Yemeni community in Britain is also limited. There is some work on the religious and social solidarity of the Yemeni community in Britain (Dahya, 1965) as well as the attempts of early Yemeni settlers to integrate into British society (El-Solh, 1992; Sabagh, 1994; Sanni, 2014; Stevenson, 1993). This paper provides knowledge on the experiences of current British Yemenis in Britain. Through examining their actions and activities in an in-depth way, the study explores the connections in the structures, cultures and relations of the young people, suggesting a notional link to their personality (Dreier, 2011) and personhood (Roth, 2016) in the context of the conduct of everyday life. The study gives examples of how young people (of first, second and third generations) live their daily lives within the social and cultural framework of British society, while at the same time (albeit at different levels) preserving their Yemeni histories and practices. This paper argues that it is in the study of their conduct of everyday life that researchers can understand such participations and interactions of structures and cultures.

The conduct of everyday life articulates the subjective experiences involved in people’s creation and organization of their activities and tasks, as well as the way in which they participate in and across different social contexts (Holzkamp, 2015) in the fabric of everyday life (Dreier, 2007). The concept roots its inquiry in the meanings and reasons for action, contributing to the dialogues among people on how to live in a contemporary society.
Here, I focus on the daily activities which six British Yemeni young people engage in and which I take to represent their personality (Dreier, 2011). Instead of focusing on a simple explanation of the causal impact society and the social arrangements it has on young people’s activity, I explore the interweaving of relational activity, that both contributes to and emerges out of the culture and structures of certain institutions. This leads to an evolving sense of continuity and change for the young person. I take the position that a person is both a subject and subjected to the society in which he/she lives in, and that agency and activity are demonstrated through the person’s living and being. This suggests a hybridity in a young person’s evolving personhood, that is conterminously the same and different to others associated with the Yemeni ethnic group.

Hybridity is an umbrella term for different forms of blending, mixing, and combining (Mäntynen & Shore, 2014; Pieterse, 2001) and the focus in this study is as it relates to the blending of different social practices that perhaps contain elements of ethnic and national cultures which the person participates in and engages with. This is of great importance when studying people that are possibly affected by post-colonisation, and the movement out of their ancestral homeland to a host country, as is the case with British Yemenis. This study makes connections to post-colonial theory in order to understand some of the factors which have perhaps contributed to the formation of the cultural hybridity of the young people.

Furthermore, the world is more connected than ever before and so the hybridity in a person’s evolving personhood may be influenced by the increase in ethnic intergroup contact and migration processes (KagitçibaşLi, 1997) of the young people and the increase in new technology in contemporary globalization that may enable new phases of intercultural contact (Hrynshyn, 2002). As a result of this, several interdisciplinary fields have extensively researched explanatory concepts, analytical tools, and heuristic devices that help explain the interconnection of social structures and cultures in the formation of cultural hybridity (Schwartz, 2005; Sabatier, 2008; Desmet, Ortuño-Ortíñ, & Wacziarg, 2017; Bhugra & Becker, 2005).
Intersectionality, for example, is one way that could be used to explain such interconnections. Often used to theorise identity (Gopaldas, 2012), intersectionality studies the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations (McCall, 2008), including social practices, institutional arrangements and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power (Davis, 2008). It can be used, therefore, to study the interactivity of social identity structures (of race, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, and nationality) in fostering life experiences. The blend of these identity structures also constitutes the hybridity of the young person. In the context of this study, I use intersectionality as an analytical tool. This is because I take the position that people are active subjects, that do, and in their doing, forms of their agency reflect their evolving social structures and cultures. These cultures encompass their tradition, religion, manners, behaviours, and customs (Shah, 2016; Zimmermann, 2012). All these, and more, are embedded in the daily activities of the young person.

To appreciate the fullness of our intersecting lives (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996), the structures and cultures of everyday living that expose both the social arrangements of Yemeni life in the UK, as part of shifting cultural tropes of British society, must be taken in connection to each other. This study, therefore, contributes to debates around intersectionality by steering them in a direction that centres on the exploration of the daily experiences of British Yemeni young people through focusing on the act of doing. In this way, the relational and interconnected experiences of these young people will be presented.

By exploring the daily experiences of six British Yemeni young people in Birmingham, UK, through their interconnected activities, I move away from traditional identity theories or personality paradigms as they appear to provide an essentialised and perhaps a static notion of who the young people are, and are becoming, that may not fully engage with the evolving nature of their daily living. Instead, I explore a more complex relational, pragmatic, interconnected, historical, cultural set of social arrangements and practices. In this way, I provide a portrait of the social construction of British Yemeni young people’s hybrid and evolving cultures and structures. I do not speculate that all British Yemeni young people are alike, but by understanding some of the nuance around such community, their history-culture-
of activity which they are part and reproduce as Yemeni society, can be identified. While such experience is not unique to British Yemenis, the way in which they interconnect their living experiences of culture and structure, provides a contribution to the body of sociological research that focuses on issues of ethnicity and diaspora.

Methods and material

Participants

Six young people, aged 16-19, took part in a longitudinal study. The participants included 3 young women, Fatima, Nuha and Sausan, and 3 young men, Younus, Rashad and Adam (all names are pseudonyms). All participants indicated during the interviews that they are ethnically Yemeni and nationally British. Fatima and Nuha are first-generation settlers, with their parents moving to Britain in their early 20s and settling for work purposes. Younus and Rashad are second-generation, their parents born in the UK. Sausan and Adam are third generation settlers, with their grandparents arriving due to colonisation. All participants identified themselves as being Muslim.

Methods

Photo-novella (Wang & Burris, 1994) and semi-structured interviews (Newton, 2010) were used in combination to capture the young people’s experiences. I gave each participant one disposable camera and asked them to take photos of their daily activities on four non-consecutive days. Two of the days were routine days, to show the familiar and intimate sedimentations of their preferred way of conducting of life (Dreier, 2011) and two days were non-routine, perhaps a weekend, to provide a more particular variation on the regular conduct of everyday life (Hybholt, 2015). The photos taken were used as a stimulus to allow the young people to narrate their daily experiences (Hurworth, 2003c). This provided a detailed account of experiences, building on the privileged knowledge and perspective of the participant documented in their photos (Hurworth, 2003b). This process was then repeated 12-19 months later, depending on the availability of the participants and the possibility of
meeting considering Covid-19 restrictions. Between March 2019 and October 2020, a total of 24 semi-structured interviews were conducted, each participant taking part in four in-depth interviews. The study was conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice of the University of Manchester and in accordance with the guidelines of the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011). All participants signed a consent form.

**Analysis**

The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically, capturing patterns within the data (Braun et al., 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). Specifically, a hybrid approach of qualitative methods of thematic analysis was used following guidance from Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) incorporating a deductive, priori template of codes approach outlined by Crabtree & Miller (1999) and the data-driven inductive approach of Boyatzis Richard (1998).

The first part of this hybrid approach is a deductive content directed approach in which I used Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) to guide and form the codes for analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Assarroudi et al., 2018; Crabtree & Miller, 1999b). This theory is presented through a study of person-situation-activity approach, with reference to:

1) the **order and arrangement** – these include the social context (place), social practices (activities – concerns, demands and obligations, purpose and meaning, family history and practices – and relation), and social arrangements (order and time noticing rhythms and shifts) of the participant.

2) the **situated participation and movement** - these include the sequence of events (which builds the idea of the habits a person has and develops) and perspective of experiences (which narrate possible changes and reflections in the person’s activities).

3) the **conduct of everyday life** - which both (1) and (2) contribute to, providing a portrait of the young person’s evolving biography.

These codes were generated directly from Dreier’s paper: “Personality and the conduct of everyday life” (Dreier, 2011).
The second hybrid approach is a data-driven inductive approach, where emerging themes become the categories for further analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). Considering the codes offered by the deductive approach (using Dreier’s theory), I then re-read and examined each of the narratives. As this paper focuses on the social practices that were similar for all six participants, I particularly concentrated on practices that were predominantly influenced by the participants’ family’s histories and practices. I then identified patterns that emerged from the six narratives. This offered a way of understanding the interconnections between the structures and cultures shared by my six participants. To reduce the complexity of data, and facilitate coding for all 24 transcripts, I used NVivo software technology (AlYahmady & Al Abri, 2013). This is as an analytical tool, designed for qualitative data analysis to manage the coding procedure for the subjectivity, richness and comprehensive text-based information of the data (Cervantes et al., 2016).

The relationships between categories and themes of data led to the main points of discussion for the analysis. To document the similar experiences of the participants, themes emerge directly from the narratives. Connecting Dreier’s codes for the deductive approach with the thematic codes for the inductive approach provided vital information on the similarities and differences between the six participants. This provides a justifiable understanding of some of the heterogeneity, as well as some of the homogeneity, of everyday life experiences of British Yemeni young people. For the purpose of this paper, the data analysed concentrates on the connections across British Yemeni young people’s lives, and not the individual stories of the young people, and so thematic analysis was effective in answering questions on such experiences. Bringing together components of the participants’ experiences provides a flexible and more interpretative and conceptual orientation to the data (Nowell et al., 2017), connecting social context, social practices and social arrangements to the cultures, structures and relations of the participant individually and the group of young people, as a whole.

Findings

Five main themes - body image, food, home, language, and religion - emerged from the data. Although these are general categorising themes, there are subtle differences within each
theme showing the uniqueness and individuality of the experiences of each participant. I now explore each of these themes, using participants’ references as the heading for each theme.

**Body image: “I care about how I look”**

The focus on body image is not a new phenomenon. With the increase in the use of social media, and particularly with reference to pictures of movie stars and fashion models (El Ansari et al., 2010; Goodyear, 2020), it is not surprising that the young people in this study also carry out practices related to their body image. Perceptions of beauty for the young people are evaluated by the contemporary society in which they live, which influences their opinions of what is deemed to be fashionable, attractive, and ideal. All six participants reported that a large part of their daily activities consist of taking care of their appearance. Although there are differences in priorities, effort, and influence between the participants, they all showed that they cared about how they looked.

The influence of social media on the perception of body image is portrayed clearly in Sausan and Nuha’s narratives.

*Sausan: I follow Instagram bloggers and YouTubers. Mainly hijabi ones cos I can relate to them more. They speak to me in a certain way. If I go out in evenings with family, I don’t wear much makeup but if it’s with friends, I do... we all wear makeup. I don’t have friends that don’t wear makeup. It’s the norm. And I also don’t like my skin. I have acne So, yeah, the makeup covers not all my acne but mainly my scars... Sometimes I feel people will probably look at me differently, perhaps. I don’t think I would wear makeup as much if I didn’t have it. It’s pressure from society to look a certain way, I guess.*

*Nuha: I end my day by ... washing my face, doing a bit of skin care. Face wash, moisturize. It’s like make myself look less ugly... I have like a disproportionate face but at least I don’t have spots... Dry skin everywhere... which isn’t nice... and I see others on my phone with clear moist skin... So, I moisturize so I don’t look as bad.*

*Sausan* has acne and so her daily activities involve putting makeup on to cover her facial flaws. She also states that “it is the norm” - all her friends apply makeup and so this is a social practice. Beauty perception is not only influenced by social media, but also by her
social relations, and states that there is “pressure from society” to look a certain way. Sausan follows bloggers and YouTubers that wear the headscarf, because she “relates to” them, and this shows how she integrates elements of her religious obligation to wear the headscarf with her mainstream culture of looking “a certain way”. Nuha, on the other hand, seems dissatisfied with the way she looks and so to make herself “look less ugly”, applying beauty products to avoid having dry skin, or spots, with the hope of having “clear moist skin” like others she sees on her phone.

There is also some mention in Fatima’s narrative of looking “better overall”.

*Fatima:* I get out of bed around 7, and then I like to get ready, put my makeup on, cos like most girls wear it now and it looks better, ..., after I get ready, it usually doesn’t take long as I am getting better at my makeup, then I go down

In previous years, prior to attending university, Fatima did not wear makeup except during family parties and stated that she was “not so good at putting it on”. Being at university seems to have encouraged her to wear it more frequently and she is “getting better at” applying it. Fatima shares similar feelings to Sausan, saying “most girls wear it”, and so it is a cultural norm. She also states that “it looks better overall”. A complex range of factors influence body image perception, and this includes socio-demographic factors (gender, age, country), and psycho-social factors (stress, social support and quality of life) (Burnette, Kwitowski, & Mazzeo, 2017). Satisfaction with and concerns about body image are also affected by social norms and cultural standards (Izydorczyk et al., 2020) and this seems to be the case with Sausan, Nuha and Fatima.

Although dissatisfaction with body shape, image or looks may be associated more with women than men (Demarest & Allen, 2000; El Ansari et al., 2010), it is not unique to them. Rashad, Younus, and Adam are also conscious of their physical appearance, and elements of their daily life reflect this.

*Rashad:* I used to be, like, big before...like fat big. Like, last summer holidays I went on a diet. I needed to lose weight, I was, like, obese. I was overeating... I used to have a big appetite. I didn’t like the way I looked. Sometimes people used to make fun of me.
Younus: It is organic coconut oil... don’t like chemicals in my hair. You see, it’s easy for my hair to get frizzy and messy, and so I do this to my hair every day to keep the curls looking good, I put it on, and then wash it out. It’s not to the level that I feel insecure, but I like to keep my hair tidy.

Adam: I put my headphones on... It’s just there as an image... I spend a lot of my clothes, cus my taste is different from others, and I like expensive clothes, that fit my image...

Rashad focuses his energy and activities on losing weight, Younus ensures his hair is looked after daily and Adam has a particular way in which he wants to display himself, “an image” by having headphones on even though they are switched off. At another time in his narrative, Adam also mentions that he spends a large amount of his money on buying specific “clothes that fit” his image. At times, taking care of body image originates from social norms, at other times because of the opinion of others, and at other times because of the young person’s own understanding and perceptions of themselves. Younus’ self-awareness of what looks good as a hair style, and what does not, is reinforced in his daily activities of applying specific products to his hair. Rashad doesn’t “like the way” he previously looked when he was overweight and perhaps there is a perception that being fat is frowned upon by the society he is in, and this is reinforced by his statement that at times “people used to make fun” of him. These activities and associated feelings are by no way unique to these individuals and may be an expression of their young age and their subjected to the mainstream society in which they live and participate.

Food: “Traditional food is now a bit of everything”

All participants took photographs of food and discussed it as part of their social practices, with Yemeni cuisine being a main part of their eating habits. Traditional and local foods are a symbol of subjective belongings, customs and traditions, and the relationships that exist in communities (Roudsari et al., 2019; Wahlqvist & Lee, 2007; Jordana, 2000). Younus talked about the cultural practices around food in his family.

Younus: My mum makes traditional food...The Yemeni way. I usually set the table at home for us to eat together... we eat traditional food usually, like fish and chips and sometimes Yemeni rice and chicken.
HA: Fish and chips is traditional food?

Younus: Yeah, it's British food and we like to eat it. Traditional is now a bit of everything. We sometimes sit on the floor to eat together as we sometimes eat from one plate, using our hands, and sometimes we eat on the table. It all depends on the day. It depends on the food my mum makes. I like sitting on the floor because it goes back to the feeling of a more natural way, and it is the Sunnah [tradition] of the Prophet.

Younus uses the term “traditional” to show the hybridity of his food culture, where Yemeni food meets English food. Younus speaks about sitting on the floor to eat, “the Yemeni way”, and points out that some “cultural Yemeni” cuisines cannot be found on the Internet because “it’s like from the village” and that he must ask his mother for the recipes as they are “passed through [the] generations”. Younus also points out some of the ethnic and religious practices around food and the customs around eating. Such practices include eating with the hands, eating from a shared plate, and eating together, all of which are traditional ethnic practices and part of the customary method in Yemen. As Younus notes, such practices are associated with Islam, and emulate the actions of the Prophet Muhammad (Swarup, 2003).

All six participants narrate positive feelings towards Yemeni food, which was usually served at dinner time when family members often got together to socialise after completing their personal daily routines. The food was often ready when the young person returned home and the type of food cooked varied depending on whether the day was routine or not, whether there is an occasion such as birthday or Eid and depending on family members’ food preferences. When opting to eat out or have a takeaway, traditional Yemeni food is chosen, and Adam and Sausan narrate going to local Yemeni restaurants, with their families and friends, during their non-routine days.

Home: “Back home is just a phrase”

During the interviews, British Yemeni young people spoke of home as being a place to relax and at times connect with others through conversing with family. Mealtimes were a key time to do this. Sausan looks forward to coming home after a long day at work “to relax”, and during dinner “everyone is home together, eat[ing] together”. Rashad returns home from
college to “rest” or take a “power nap”, rejuvenate so that he can go out again in the evening. At the end of one of his more active non-routine days, having climbed Snowdon for charity, Rashad “couldn’t wait to get home and just get warm and go to sleep”. Similarly, Adam refers to home as being a place to “chill out” but also describes his mother’s cooking, whether Yemeni (or other types of) food as “home food”, connecting home with food and family.

Other references to home, in the context of ancestral homeland (Yemen), were also made during the narratives, particularly when discussions turned to travel, language and interactions with extended family. The participants had all visited Yemen for holidays.

Younus: The best thing… was the freedom… even like running around in the neighbourhood, kids were free. Here, it’s like adults need to be on watch all the time in case there is kidnapping or fast cars around. What is nice about Yemen is the nature, and I am an outdoor person, it makes me feel relaxed. It seems fresh and healthy to be in.

Rashad: It’s really nice, but it’s a holiday, I guess. I like the weather, the people, the place, the food, the customs. I like going. But when I am there, I do feel different from the Yemenis, the way they act is a little different from me, the things they do… it’s been long since we went, like with the war and all.

Fatima: It’s nice and people are friendly and all, but it is just a holiday and then we come back home, and we are back to our normal routines… I don’t feel I am similar to my cousins in Yemen for example. We don’t really know what to talk about when we visit them.

Sausan: I love going there during the summer holiday… but it was always just a holiday, and we are outsiders, coming to visit, so I guess it wouldn’t be the same if we lived there long.

Nuha: I do feel like that this is my home, I was raised here. ‘Back home’ is just a phrase. Birmingham is my home. It’s what I know.

Discussion around visiting their ancestral homeland is filled with positivity, but it seems that Yemen is not considered home. When taking a walk-in nature during a routine day, Younus refers to Yemen as being a place that is synchronised with nature. He relates his feelings of being “free” in Yemen, a sentiment that may be related to how young he was when he visited Yemen, perhaps more than the safety of the country. Unfortunately, due to tribal disputes,
continuous civil wars, and poor quality of life (Al-Dawsari, 2012; Kaptan, 2021), Yemenis in Britain are no longer able to visit their ancestral homeland without war-associated risk.

Rashad is the only participant to mention the war in Yemen (Hill, 2010), but states that he does not “know much about it”. He also mentioned that his “nan watches it on the news, cos she’s from there”, but that he is “not into all that politics”. Although he acknowledges that the war means that his family can no longer visits, he is not interested in the political state of the country. Rashad’s dissociation with matters that are happening in Yemen gives an indication that recent generations have become less affiliated with their ancestral homeland, and so are disconnected from the political state of the country.

Nuha rationalises this dissociation from Yemen by stating that Britain is “what [she] knows”. Sausan adds to this by describing herself as an “outsider” when she visits Yemen, Rashad states he is “different” from Yemenis in Yemen, and Fatima states that after all, the visits were merely “a holiday”, and after it, they “come back home” to the UK. These conversations suggest that the participants perceive themselves as being more “from here” and that Birmingham is their home. Although they may connect to Yemen in some way or another and enjoy “holiday[s]” in their ancestral homeland, they “come back” to what they know and are familiar with. Furthermore, when Adam talks about his future aspirations and wanting to work abroad (to earn tax-free money), he then states that he will then “come back home”. When I asked what he meant by home, he replied: “Birmingham. It’s what you know, what you’re linked to and where you’ve been in”.

Language: “Arabic is part of my history and culture, and I like it”

Language is a shared cultural tool reflecting the sociocultural context and connects the individual to society (Hoge, 2012). Within the context of this research, the Arabic language also connects the young people to their ancestral homeland as well as other Arab communities that share the same language.

Sausan: I went to an Arabic school in the weekends when I was young, but I learnt it mainly when I went to Yemen on holidays from time to time. At home we
spoke it and read it as well, although most of the time we speak English with each other, even with my Arab friends.

Younus: I can read… in Arabic… practice for my second language, so I don’t lose it. My mum, she speaks English, but she would rather speak in Arabic to us, so we, and she, don’t lose the language… when we go Yemen, we can speak to my parents’ grandparents and other family in Arabic.

All six participants in this study are bilingual and have at some point in their childhood (up until early teens), attended Arabic supplementary schools. This was out of school hours and an educational opportunity for the young people to advance and practise Arabic, hence preserving the language through the generations. Fatima, Nuha, Younus and Sausan narrate how attending supplementary schools was also a way of making friends and to link with those of similar ethnic backgrounds to themselves. Rashad states that “most of [his] friends are Yemeni, and come to football, around college, from Arabic school. It’s a nice community thing”. Sausan continues to practise Arabic at home and is now working part-time as a tutor of Arabic to younger children. She is proud of being bilingual as it is part of her “history and culture”. However, she finds it easier to speak in English, even with her Arab friends. Younus speaks to his mother in Arabic at home and, although he appreciates her efforts and understands the importance of language preservation, he refers to Arabic as a “second language”, suggesting that he is perhaps more proficient in English, having lived in Birmingham all his life. He is interested in learning other languages but tries to keep Arabic a priority so that he does “not lose it”. He is also keen on ensuring that he exercises his brain, and suggests that one such way is through practising Arabic. Younus, Sausan and Fatima also share that, because they know how to speak Arabic, they can converse with their extended family in Yemen, on the phone or through social platforms. Sausan also states that she was able to practise speaking Arabic when she visited Yemen. This allowed the participants to connect to their extended family through a shared language.

There are also cultural and religious structures connected to Arabic and the interaction between language and religion as a sociolinguistic field of study is ongoing (Alsaawi, 2020). Arabic is the language of the Quran, and so learning it becomes part of the religion (Ediyani, 2020). Fatima, Nuha, Sausan and Younus reported that their daily activities involved reading
the Quran, a habit they has developed over the years, and that they were able to do so because they could read Arabic. The young people also used Arabic terms that were affiliated with Islamic traditions during their narrative. Examples include “Inshallah” when talking about actions intended in the future, “SubhanAllah” when amazed by something, “Wallah” when swearing in the name of God and “Alhamdulilah” when pleased about something or feeling blessed. These Arabic terms also reflect the Islamic concept that actions are done by the will of Allah (Uddin, Mazumder, & Mazumder, 2014).

During conversations, the participants also switched between English and Arabic, some more evidently than others. I understood these terms and sentences, being bilingual myself, and was able to translate the Arabic references to English. There are challenges to translating qualitative data from Arabic to English (Almahasees, 2017) and in the absence of a standard way for translating cross-linguistic qualitative research, I used direction from Kashgary (2011) and Mosca & de Bo (2017) when translating, paying close attention to certain points in the text as well as enhancing cross-cultural awareness. The terms used by the participants were also in a Yemeni dialect, rather than traditional Arabic, and so to check I had understood the intended meaning, I asked other Yemeni adults, at a local community centre, to translate the terms.

*Rashad, Younus, and Adam* used more explicit Arabic words to describe concepts and feelings more readily. Such words, found in bold below, are not only terms and texts in Arabic, but also carry an expression of emotions.

*Rashad:* I put my head down, three months and said like khalas, and just did it.

*Younus:* Like, they don’t want me to do things against their culture. Cos it would be like Ayb. We don’t do many things that are rude, and so we don’t usually use the word Ayb, but it is often like to things that go against their culture. Like, food etiquette and the way you sit down, should be a respectable manner, like spreading legs in front of my mum or dad. Simple things, that don’t usually bother me so why not keep to them to please my parents.

*Adam:* I am in charge of my own actions, if I like died today, we are going to God, and I can’t say ana disht samihnee. Enough. I’m not like a violent person, but I used to see myself as I’m a nice guy, but ana mush abbal.
Rashad spends most of his days planning his meals or exercising to keep fit. He declares that the decision to lose weight emerged from the negative feelings he had of himself, of how he looked being overweight. The word “khalas” has different meanings but must be understood through the context and situation. In this situation, Rashad uses the word to mean “that’s enough” to suggest that he is tired of his overwhelming situation of being overweight, and the term here is more accessible, to Rashad, in Arabic than in English. Similarly, Younus uses the term “Ayb” to describe some activities that are (to Yemenis) culturally insensitive and although roughly denotes shame, disgrace and dishonour (Al Jallad, 2010), the term here implies activities that go against Younus’ family culture. Younus associates these activities to his parents’ culture, rather than his own practices and culture.

Adam narrates his experience of being a part of a gang. He uses a combination of Arabic words “but ana mush ahbal” (which roughly translates as “I am not stupid”) to describe how he alerted himself to his situation, describing it with strong emotions. He speaks about religious and moral reasons as to why he is no longer in a gang, “ana disht samihnee” (roughly translates as “I am reckless/imprudent, forgive me”), and expresses his feelings about this situation in Arabic more readily. This combination of words can only be understood in the context of the conversation and is far more understandable and meaningful, to Adam, in Arabic. As Arabic and English are of different and distant origins, the meanings that Adam wants to convey may be lost in translation if said in English. Therefore, the Arabic texts used may connect to various social and cultural elements of his lived life that provide a contrast, a distinction from his former aggressive self being a member of a gang.

Religion: “Islam makes sense, and it is a lifestyle”

All participants in this study identified themselves as Muslims and carried out activities, such as prayer or reading the Holy Quran. Fatima, for example, reads the Quran because she is “accustomed to it. Like it’s just a routine thing that [she does]” and expresses a form of discomfort if she does not do so: “I would feel like a gap somewhere in my day and that would be unsettling”. She also states that she has prayed in “changing rooms when shopping”. Other participants do not relate routine religious practices as such, but they do
mention some form of connection to God, either through using terms such as Inshallah (God willing), or as in Adam’s case, using Arabic to rebuke himself having shame in the face of God, for his previous gang-member associated activities, as discussed earlier.

The narratives also connect religion with other themes. For example, the significance of Friday to the Muslims community, is reported in Nuha, Rashad, and Adam’s narratives. On Friday, if members of the community are not in school or working, they observe a communal Friday prayer, known as Jumma. They may also gather for dinner with their family, enjoy Yemeni cuisines and socialise with one another. Friday is also part of the weekend in Yemen, and so social cultural practices around this day may have originated from family history in the ancestral homeland yet are also connected to the religious significance of Friday.

Nuha: The bread smells lovely… every Friday usually we all sit together. Like a tradition… that day we had kabsa and aseed… we eat every Friday together as a family. We also do bakhoor, especially on Friday.

Fatima: we see my mum’s side once a week when we have a family gathering on Fridays which is nice and very chilled out. We eat together on that day and chat and play cards, like that… we usually do a pray too.

Rashad: This is a Friday and we had it off during the college holidays. It’s a Jumma day. So, I wake up… I take a shower and get ready for Jumma… And Jumma is like a communal prayer so go and see others. So, I went to Jumma… its only like half an hour, so I might meet some of the regular friends that I play with football.

Nuha focuses on the cultural significance of Fridays in getting together as a family to eat traditional food, such as “kabsa and aseed” and perfume the house with “bakhoor”, and this, she states, is “like a tradition”. Fatima echoes the feeling of a social family get together that she experiences when she visits her mother’s side of the family. Friday also coincides with the English start of the weekend which makes it easier for such meetings. Rashad’s experiences of Friday are also linked to socialising and meeting friends, even if it is in the Islamic context of taking part in the Friday prayer. The community youth club which he attends also runs on Friday evening.
There is also a sense of purpose linked to performing religious activities, and the participants were keen on displaying Islam positively, differentiating between it and some misconceptions and misrepresentations which they felt were presented in the media.

*Adam:* I feel like Islam doesn’t tell you just to pray five times a day and just orders, Islam is like a way of life, it even tells you how to wipe your ass and with what hand, you know the detail. It tells you through the Prophet’s teachings Hadith and Prophet teachings, its internal as well so your life is happier. It’s complete.

*Younus:* Islam is not like just a religion, it makes sense, and it is a lifestyle... there is misrepresentation of Islam..., it’s all ignorance. Those that are not Muslim, don’t know what to believe, and those that are, some, just represent it wrongly. And only if you want to understand the religion, you need to read it for yourself and be your own judge... the laws of Islam, and it makes sense, otherwise I wouldn’t do it.

*Nuha:* Why do you need to sleep around first to check who is the right guy? I don’t mind the Islamic part, because it makes sense in the long run, and the boundaries are set that make sense... I do believe I am a religious person, more than culturally. I try not to let my culture hold me back, and embrace its positivity and uniqueness, but my religion is my direction I feel.

*Younus*’s activities are driven by his religion and as he feels they “make sense”. *Nuha* agrees with the “Islamic part” of the rules in Islam and justifies her actions and being in relation to her faith. *Younus* feels that there is a need to differentiate religion from aspects of his Yemeni heritage and culture or social expectations within the community, and religion seems to be basis of his beliefs and activities. Anything which is not part of religion is diminished. For example, when he talks about growing his hair long, his father disapproves, and *Younus* states that this is “a cultural thing” as the father “thinks it’s more for girls”. *Younus* feels that, so long as it is not against his religion, he will continue having long hair. This shows some independence of thought and demonstrates how he prioritises his religious beliefs over his family’s culture and ideologies. *Younus* does not agree with, or follow some of his parents’ opinions, and states: “They have their way and I have mine”. This shows some level of disconnection that *Younus* feels towards some elements of his own family history and practices.
Discussion

The thematic analysis of the sample of British Yemeni young people highlighted certain common aspects of Yemeni subculture that appear embedded in their conduct of everyday life. And yet for each person, such themes have a different nuance, in particular how they are either different to and/or become assimilated into their understanding of mainstream British culture. In the discussion section, I focus on this cultural hybridity of living as a key element of understanding the identity, practice, and personhood/personality of British Yemeni young people - one that enables a theoretical examination of such a combination.

Through the lens of lived experiences, the cultures and subcultures of British Yemeni young people were observed. I understand mainstream culture to convey the culture in which the young people live within and practice, that is the British culture that they were born into and associate many of their social practices with. Such mainstream culture reflects a shared meaning-making that is understood and interconnects their lived lives with societal norms and values. Additionally, the young people also have a Yemeni subculture that they, at times, are associated with and to, notable through the five themes discussed here. This subculture also connects to localised community and shared values, norms, and orientations in those communities. It is often represented through family histories and practices. Culture links people with community, both British and Yemeni, and the community with the nation (Shah, 2016) and so in understanding the conduct of everyday life of British Yemeni young people, it was possible to articulate their relational cultural psychological experiences.

The conduct of everyday lives highlights the hybridity and perhaps aspects of translations or adaptation from and to both mainstream British culture and Yemeni subculture. This paper has shown how the young people’s social practices have historical dimensions that are fluid and can create an insight into the different personalities and identities of Yemeni young people in Britain through engaging with both British mainstream cultures, and Yemeni subcultures. The similarity or dissimilarity between the culture of settlement and the culture of ancestral homeland influences the personality structure of the young person as well the construction of cultural identity (Bhui et al., 2005). For example, Rashad attends communal
Friday prayers when he is not at college and this links to his religious social identity structure as well as his need to establish an ethnic cultural identity through communicating with people of, perhaps, similar ethnicity and religious identity. Rashad states that during the Friday congregation he “meets some of the regular friends that [he] plays football with. They are all Yemenis”. This to Rashad, is perhaps a way of constructing elements of his cultural identity.

Where Yemeni practices meets British practices is evident, and parts of the narratives show a combination of both cultures. For example, Younus enjoys many different cuisines, “including traditional fish and chips” as well as Yemeni cooked food. Adam is particularly fond of Yemeni meals at the weekend, which he enjoys with his friends at a local Yemeni restaurant. Traditional Yemeni cuisines are accessible in Birmingham, and this is perhaps a way in which the Yemen community preserves traditional culture and heritage while in Britain. Adam and Sausan dine at Yemeni restaurants, and the presence of such restaurants represents a form of regional identity, suggesting the presence and active environment of the current Yemenis in this region of the UK. It may also be a mode of adaptation for Yemenis in Britain.

There is other evidence in the young people’s narratives that their practices reflect the construction of a cultural hybridity, providing a space for personal and collective experiences of cultural values and national interests (Burke, 2012). The shared food choices, the attempt to preserve the Arabic language, the focus on physical image and acceptance in society, and the practices associated with religious connections, together show an integrated evolving culture of the participants being influenced by both British mainstream culture and Yemeni subcultures. Cultural hybridity thus communicates an amalgam of themes, influenced by both heritage and practices related to their ancestral homeland, as well the society in which they live. Both cultures are held in important and are more apparent in various everyday transactions in particular societal settings.

Furthermore, the similarities across the six participants suggest that the Yemeni communities in Britain share common historical experiences, cultural beliefs, and family practices, and they have a broad collective consciousness of belonging together. For the young people, these
collective beliefs and practices are also affected and influenced by living in and within the British society. Within the five themes explored in this paper, there are also differences in the specifics of experiences, but these are interconnected and meaningful at the individual and community level. In terms of preserving certain practices and traditions of the ancestral homeland culture, the six case studies showed efforts to preserve Yemeni subculture, such as cooking Yemeni food, sitting on the floor during dinner, going to Arabic supplementary schools from a young age, visiting Yemen (particularly before the war), practicing the Islamic faith, and switching languages in conversation. The participants’ parents often took them to Yemen for holiday and these trips, or ‘ethnic pilgrimage’ (Kelly, 2000), may have contributed to the construction of their culture and ethnicity (Nagel, 1994).

Home, however, is considered to be Britain, the country they associate most with. Terms such as “back home” are unambiguous in their interpretations. They all connect home to the place they live and when talking about visiting Yemen, acknowledge that it is “just a holiday” and “home is Birmingham”. This shows complete disassociation with Yemen being home, and this is the case with all participants, whether first, second or third generation. Although the young people have a romanticized experience of Yemen - “the weather, the people, the place, the food, the customs” all being “nice” and “fun” - the reality is that Britain is what they know as home.

There is also an overarching sense that bridges these themes, showing hybridity as integrated and interconnected than merely either/or. The activities and meaning associated with the activities of the participants show that they connect and disconnect to both mainstream British culture and the Yemeni subculture. They connect to certain rituals around the main themes explored here, but at the same time disconnect from other aspects of subcultural identities. Sausan, for example, connects to certain rituals related around body image and what is perceived as beauty through the application of makeup to suit young mainstream British society and structure in which she is part of, but disconnects with such culture by mainly following social media that links to her religious affiliation of being a Muslim hijab-wearing woman. Younus connects to family time, elements around food that relate to his ethnicity and religion, such as eating with his hands, or on the floor, “the Yemeni way”, but
disconnects with such culture at different times by eating fish and chips or sitting at the table to eat, for example. When he visits Yemen as a child, Rashad connects to some of the enjoyable experiences of being in Yemen but disconnects from the actual realities of Yemeni life as it is now. Within the narratives there is a romantic reflection of the cultural heritage of Yemen located in the participants’ culture, connections, and networks and so it becomes embedded as part of the individual.

At the community level, the Yemenis in Birmingham connect with mainstream British culture by carrying out various day-to-day activities within social contexts (university, colleges, work) and social arrangements to suit the culture in which they live. However, they disconnect with this by associating with the subculture of Yemen by, for example, attending Yemeni restaurants and community centres where Friday congregation prayer are performed, as a manner of adaptation in Britain, and as an expression of minority, religious and ethnic identity (Rijal, 2009). The participants’ parents also connect with Yemeni subculture by, previously, taking their children to visit Yemen to ensure that they experience, at a personal level, their ancestral homeland, appreciate its history, language, and culture through a subjective constructive lens and experience life with people in Yemen. However, the young people disconnect with Yemen by not (noticeably) exposing the current war situation happening in Yemen. Only Rashad mentions the war in the interview, and only as a side remark, dissociating himself from the matter by stating that he isn’t “really into politics”. The participants also connect with mainstream British culture by speaking English as their main language, even with Arab-speaking friends, as evident in Sausan’s narrative and in Younus’s description of Arabic as a “second language”. They find themselves at the core of a complex web of power relations which potentiates their production of multilingual practices (Moraru, 2019). The parents also connect with Yemeni subculture by ensuring their children learn Arabic – they take them to supplementary schools, and visiting Yemen before the war, and by speaking to them in Arabic at home. This connection and disconnection occur in different contexts for different reasons and provide an emerging sense of British Yemeni youth culture, evolving and developing as cultural identities associated with first, second, third generations of Yemeni young people in Britain.
The examples discussed in this paper show that it is in the young people’s evolving conduct of everyday life, the living and being is embedded in social practices around families and communities that have histories, and that they are also part of. This produces the cultural lives and living of not only the young people, but also the communities they are within. It is in the experiencing and doing and living in such contexts that researchers can see certain themes emerging of what is important in that everyday life, both in terms of evolving everyday habits and regular interval-led habits such as holidays and time-outs. The everyday doing of culture is evolved and transformed by the young person and so the cultural hybridity of British Yemeni young people is not fixed but rather an evolving personhood. Using the conduct of everyday life does not hold up a set of cultural values and norms over young people as separate which then inculcates/socialises them in some sort of way. Rather, it is the connecting networks of experiencing and doing that provides the essence of who these young people are. This may explain, for example, why the war in Yemen is of little importance, unless it directly impacts the conduct of everyday life in particular ways, it will remain irrelevant to the young people.

**Conclusion**

This paper examines the experiences that are similar across the six British Yemeni young people and notes the five main themes that emerge from the data. Through the study of their activities in the context of the conduct of everyday life, these themes - body image, food, home, language, and religion - provide a sense of how the young people have interacted, participated, moved, and engaged in the order and arrangements of their living and being. Of particular interest in this paper is the extent to which these young people’s family histories and practices influence their conduct of everyday life, and what is happening in the lived lives of these individuals and how using the conduct of their everyday living enables the themes to emerge. The way British Yemeni young people connect and disconnect various times and places, to mainstream British culture and Yemeni subculture gives an indication of the emergence of their unique hybrid culture.
Chapter 7 - Discussion

7.1 Introduction

British Yemenis are one of the oldest ethnic communities to have settled in the UK (Seddon, 2010), yet they have been under-represented in academic literature. This doctoral research bridges this gap in research by documenting and exploring the experiences of British Yemeni young people through linking and interconnecting concepts of personality and the conduct of everyday life. In this discussion chapter, I explain and interpret the findings of my research, discussing its meaning, significance, and implications, which I present in my three outputs.

7.2 The key findings of the research

Using the experiences of six British Yemeni young people as examples, this doctoral research explores the concept of the conduct of everyday life in understanding young people’s structured and yet evolving agency. Having examined the literature of some of the prominent critical psychologists in this field, (Holzkamp, 2015; Kristensen & Schraube, 2014; Schraube & Højholt, 2016; Hybholt et al., 2020), this research explores the reasons for using the conduct of everyday life to articulate and examine young people’s experiences. This specifically refers to ways in which the concept focuses on understanding experiences that privileges the relational nexus between subject and the world. In essence, the conduct of everyday life constitutes an endeavour to conceptualise the unity between the active efforts of British Yemeni young people to arrange their everyday life, and the societal, historical, and fundamental social conditions underpinning them. By moving from the theoretical understanding of identity, agency, and reflexivity into the practical exploration of personality, activity, change and reflection, understanding human subjectivity becomes, I would argue, more concrete and tangible, especially when the focus is on actions and activities. The young people may say who they are - through speech, feelings, and beliefs - but it is what they do that, I have come to appreciate, enunciates areas of their evolving personality, living and being, that together reflect their identity.
Taking the position that understanding identity is made more visible through understanding a lived and living personality/personhood, and that personhood develops through activity, the research uses theories from Dreier (2011) and Roth (2020) to analyse the narratives of six participants, Fatima, Nuha, Younus, Rashad, Adam and Sausan. Although this research focuses on examples of living, being, learning and development as evident in the experiences of my participants, I argue that the presented conceptual and methodological model can also be applied in the analysis of other cases of young people, enabling researchers to understand lived experiences through the conduct of everyday life in conjunction with personhood in practice. By the conduct of everyday life, I mean the ways in which young people conduct their daily living through their order and arrangements, as well as their participation and movements, so that they can secure certain demands in life as well as personal preferences, coordinate and negotiate their daily lives and, through such transactions, learn and develop. By personhood in practice, I mean the ways in which the young people’s multiple and simultaneous experiences of configuring, with time, while being immersed in and across various activities.

The conceptual and methodological approach integrates Dreier’s theory of a person in the context of the conduct of everyday life, with ideas of intersectionality and post-colonialism, building an analysis matrix, and then adds Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice to explore learning and development. I would argue that this approach is effective for many reasons. Firstly, it bypasses the limitations discussed in this research with regards to some mainstream identity theories and personality paradigms in understanding young people’s agency and structure. I have explained the limitations as they appeared to pertain from the findings from the initial study, and from personal reflections on my experiences (particularly with respect to avoiding the production of a narrative that is fixed, static, and an essentialist view of who British Yemeni young people are and do). Secondly, the conceptual model begins with a deductive approach using Dreier’s theory of a person to explore the conduct of everyday life of the participants. Although the literature around the concept is largely Eurocentric, the theory of a person consists of areas which position family histories and practices as one of the key components of social practices. Therefore, it is relevant and applicable to the experiences of young people of ethnic minority background. This gives an emphasis in and around some
of the historical and cultural dimensions of British Yemeni young people. To solidify such understanding, I have also used intersectionality, and post-colonialism as analytical tools to help understand possible influences of various power structures within the lived realities of the young people, particularly in discussions around family histories and practices. Thirdly, the conceptual approach avoids an essentialised view of who British Yemeni young people are and what they do, perhaps reflected in certain types of social identity structures, and thus connects more strongly (than other identity and personality theories) to issues that pertain to my research focus.

My deductive approach focused on Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011). This theory enables the study of human behaviour in the context of the conduct of everyday life – an approach that emphasised everyday living. I find Dreier’s theory to be particularly useful in empowering explorations of the subjective dimensions of person-situation-activity, offering ways of linking research on personality with research on the social processes that shape people’s conduct of their everyday lives. In each case study within my research, the narratives were analysed inductively, and dialectically through theory, recognising all the while that theory is simultaneously driven by the data. Because of tensions between theory and data - with regards to certain insufficiencies in describing the continuity of experiences of the young people, it became apparent that the conduct of everyday life, as I interpreted it, required further adaptations. In particular, I abductively reflected on the data in a way to suggest a need to explore ideas that focused more explicitly on the specifics of learning and development. This led me to Roth’s ideas of personhood in practice (Roth, 2015) as a supplementary theory for data analysis. Additions from Roth’s work on cumulative and transformative changes, as I have argued, enabled me to enhance the data analysis.

To exemplify the use of this developed comprehensive deductive-inductive-abductive approach, I analysed the case study of Nuha, in Chapter Four, demonstrating how data analysis uses theory and yet the theory is simultaneously driven by the data. The article shows how to articulate human experiences in the context of a combination of the conduct of everyday life and personhood in practice. I then focused my next output, Chapter Five, consolidating and adding to the first article by directing the discussion on issues of
dissonance, critical incident, and reflection, as they pertain to personhood in practice - in the
course of the conduct of everyday life. I include examples for learning and development for
Sausan, Fatima, Rashad, and Adam. I then examine the six case studies horizontally, in my
third output, Chapter Six, presenting five similar themes, as emerged from the narratives.
This final paper shows how the young people connect and disconnect, with mainstream
British cultures and Yemeni subcultures, within the themes of body image, food, home,
language, and religion, displaying element of cultural hybridity that, although unique to these
individuals also, represent the wider Yemeni community. I argue that it is through the study
of the conduct of everyday life, that such experience on ethnic young people research,
individually or collectively, can be fully appreciated.

7.3 Synthesising the research

In this section, I synthesise the evidence and explanations of my research. As shown in this
research, the conduct of everyday life incorporates the theoretical ideas into practical
application by studying the psychological processes of experiences, focusing on activities and
action, within the social and material contexts of their everyday living (Kristensen &
Schraube, 2014). Going beyond psychological theory and research, the young people’s
collective participation in everyday practice and their efforts to handle the conditions,
relations, concerns, and struggles in life are explored in a manner that articulates their
subjective experience and participations in and across different social contexts in the fabric of
everyday life. This makes it ideal in studying the types of everyday experiences British
Yemeni young people have, my first research question.

Furthermore, the conduct of everyday life also considers how people make and live their
everyday life in the patterns of daily activities, routines, and personal arrangements of things
and social relations. This makes it useful in exploring the different forms of learning and
development British Yemeni young people experience over time, my second research
question. With additional ideas from Roth in personhood in practice, changes to everyday
living explores learning in ways that inform cumulative-quantitative shifts in how a young
person sees their doing, as well as through transformative-qualitative changes in personhood.
Considering the ethnic, historical, and cultural dimensions of my participants, the conduct of everyday life, with supporting ideas from intersectionality and post-colonialism, also directs attention to the social conditions in which people participate and live their everyday life and includes the question of how people are subjected to socio-material dispositions of power, knowledge, and discourse. This enables an understanding of the evolving social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people, my third research question.

In summary, the conduct of everyday life is a key concept for understanding British Yemeni young people’s active efforts in conducting and organizing their day-to-day activities, that is also suggestive of their overall evolving biography. Research on the conduct of life provides details on how British Yemeni young people, both as individuals and as a collective community, are involved and subjected to the powers, forces, and complexities of their daily experiences. Based on such analysis and thinking, my cumulative understanding of my research findings suggests that British Yemeni young people are young people first, and yet their lives are infused by cultural hybridity as second. The evidence and theorisation of the cases here suggest that it is in that (interconnected) order that one can understand and articulate the young people’s experiences.

**Young people first**

There are multiple concurrent activities that characterise each participant’s biographical account. These different parts mediate each other so that the form of subjectivity in any one of these activities does not characterise the participant as a person. What is characterised and apparent in the young people’s narratives is that their activities, in many aspects, represent a Birmingham inflexed British social structuring of their age – that is that they are young people first. The activities that show similarities to one another are characteristic and distinctive to what it means to be a young person living in Birmingham. For example, the young people were all students at the time of the study and their experiences of exam stress (at different times and levels) and ambivalence towards their chosen career pathways were evident in all their narratives. These concerns are not new, and many young people, in general, may share these concerns and uncertainties. With the added uncertainty of studying
remotely during COVID times (Limniou et al., 2021), the young people interviewed (specifically Nuha, Rashad, and Adam) expressed further uncertainties, albeit at different levels. Furthermore, the young people’s sense of searching for belonging and significance also represents them as young people generally and students specifically, developing and evolving. Both Nuha and Sausan took gap years to “explore, refresh” and “figure out” their career directions and plans. Nuha stated that in her gap year she took “a break” and “zoom(ed) out” to “see what’s going on”, while Sausan’s gap year allowed her to try “different things and have time to do other stuff”. Taking time out to recuperate from competitive school experiences and resolve uncertainties about which type of higher education to pursue is not a new phenomenon - it is not unique to Sausan and Nuha. Studies of young people taking gap years is extensive and ongoing (O’Shea, 2011; Vogt, 2018; Snee, 2014) and often reported to be an opportunity to engage in individualised, reflexive and identity work, yet, as shown in the cases of Nuha and Sausan, it is in the doing that identity was most apparent not in individualised forms of reflexivity. Having the time to do so also reflects the notion that they are young people first.

Being Young people first also shows that because they are young, they recognise they have time to grow, develop, learn, and change, as they interact and participate in different situations and social practices. This is evident in the narratives of the young people - Adam expresses interest in working abroad when he is older, Sausan shows excitement in exploring her career choices and Younus is keen on learning new languages, stating “at my young age, I feel I need to get as much knowledge about everything”. The continuity of their experiences enabled them to consider, shift, mature and recalibrate the goals and ambitions in life. These changes are at times minor, such as with Sausan’s skin care routine, or major, such as with Adam moving social contexts so that he is away from gang violence. This, in effect, alters the way social practices are then performed in the future. Moreover, the young people were keen on displaying their individualised narratives about themselves with many “I am” statements, such as “I am an outdoor person”, “I am mature” or “I am downcast”, “I am open-minded” and this reflect, in many respects, an individualised idea of choice biographies. Having employed a longitudinal approach, the young people are shown to be in movement through time - that each person in the present moment is also about the experienced past and an
envisaged future (Spiller, 2021). Young people’s statements of “I am” are, therefore, not static, indicating that living and being is continuously being adjusted. Such changes may be clear and discernibly different, or subtle, both resulting in changed, edited, reinforced, or justified patterns and habitual behaviour in different contexts. For example, when Fatima criticises herself - “I’m not very, like, naturally clever, just not clever enough” - but later on, when she gets affirmations from academic results, she no longer makes such bold statements and decides that she can do something about it - “I am getting better grades because of it, and this is making me feel better about myself... proud of my hard work”.

Being young also hold other kinds of characterisation in both participation and practice. Young people may participate in activities, such as colouring and shopping for Fatima, and hanging out with friends for Adam, but are only fully engaged in practice when there is a larger economy of activity, or when doing so, might orientated young people in particular ways (Blevins, 2005). This engagement is seen in the way the young people at any particular time prioritise their activities, focusing on one or two main activities and scheduling, and coordinating everything else around such activities. For example, Fatima focuses primarily on her studies, is actively engaged in them, and employs most of her time “for important things like studying”. She schedules socialising with her family, eating, cleaning, colouring, and all other activities around her studies. Rashad’s current engaged practices are related to healthy eating and exercises. Although he goes to study at college and university, his present attention is on what he does between those times. Walking or cycling to college, going to the gym during breaks, reducing how much takeaway food he was consuming, cooking his own meals at home, counting calories, are examples of the activities which Rashad prioritises in order to stay healthy and at his desired weight.

Consequently, social practices were negotiated to facilitate such prioritisation. This enabled the young people to reach what may be seen as a current and personally necessary desired balance of activities and commitments across contexts and days, whilst at the same time securing demands from others as well as their own personal preferences. This is exemplified by keeping a schedule or a to-do list of activities in the narratives of Fatima, Nuha, Younus and Sausan. Therefore, to the young people, doing everyday life is an accomplishment.
around a particular set of current and reflexive practices. It is a personal arrangement in the here and now, that is, however, in relation to the order, arrangements, situated participation and movement, and various engagements of everyday living and being. I am not suggesting that all young people have a current focus, but as shown by the data, having a focus, whether it is studying, entertainment, personal development, socialising, or otherwise, enables the young person at any one particular time to arrange, coordinate and negotiate matters that are of importance to them so that they can reach a personally necessary desired balance to enable that focus. The young people see themselves as primarily responsible for themselves, rather than others, and so they may seize such opportunities during this development stages of their lives. And yet at the same time, there is reason to believe that these do change over time, as the data suggests, implying that young people do but also undergo in and through time.

*Young people first* also explores how the participants connect to others in their society, of a similar age range or educational/work level. This means that factors that affect their living and being a young person have a level of commonality - experiencing critical incidents or concerns about image or being independent of their thought and endeavour to make their own decisions, or making friends, for example. And yet, although there may be a commonality of general experiences, the specificity of such experiences demonstrates diversity and heterogeneity of perception and action. This is particularly evident in and around the generality of smartphone and social media use (Rather & Rather, 2019). Although smartphones and social media were a central experience, there were some differences between the participants’ use of them. *Sausan*, for example, is fully engaged with her phone, checking it at the beginning and end of her days, and in between also, and by going on “*Snapchat. looking at people’s stories*” and “*follow*[ing] Instagram bloggers and youtubers*”. *Fatima*, on the other hand, finds social media “*boring*”, and only uses her phone for “*watching YouTube*” videos or “*playing games*” - if she wants to speak to her friends she would rather “*call them by phone*”. *Nuha* uses her smartphone as a social friend and comfort, to “*connect to others*” but at the same time to be alone “*on my own, by myself, on my phone*”, and so avoiding conversing with others. *Younus* states that: “*with technology these days, you are interacting more with the phone than people*”. Morning and evening routines involve checking phones, and although this is not specific for young people, it has become a tradition,
a pattern, particularly because of the social context, practices, and arrangements the young people take part in.

In summary, *young people first* suggests that researchers of young people’s experiences should consider that young people are young first, and so carry out universal social practices that are primarily characteristic of being young, and which also reflect the society they live in. Once that is recognised, with all its various implications and manifestations, the next part is to understand that young people also have a cultural dimension to their living and being.

*Cultural hybridity second*

Although the cases highlighted common notions of young people first, the individual habits of living were also associated with societal expectations that are imbued with a particular combination of mainstream and historical culture. Such culture is an amalgamation, and perhaps the blending (and hence hybridity) of both ethnic and national cultures. Ethnic culture is shown in the young people’s narratives as one that is passed down by their Yemeni heritage and ancestral homeland, envisioned through their family histories and practices. Their national culture, however, is brought about by living in and participating in practices of British society. Depending on which of the cultures the participants interact with more, will indicate which is a mainstream culture and which is a subculture. All participants have only lived in Britain and so it is the only living they know and so represents their mainstream culture. Their way of living enables them to be part of and contribute to British society in different ways. Doing other activities that are not characteristic of the British culture, such as praying or speaking Arabic, or wearing the headscarf, has come from their subcultures, which is primarily them being of Yemeni heritage. However, through the participants’ narrative the extent to which the young people connect and disconnect from the British and Yemeni cultures varies at different times, instances, and moments throughout their everyday experiences. For example, the practice of eating with hands, sitting on the floor, from one plate, together as a family, especially on Fridays - is a way of connecting with Yemeni culture. However, during other times of day, such as breakfast for example, the young people may have cereal or toast showing how they also have adopted the mainstream British
cultures. Nevertheless, the combination of these cultures and structures has contributed to the structure of their social practices, forming an existing culture which they are from, interact, participate, and engage with.

So, although all participants narrate that they are ‘Yemeni’ - often represented in the traditions they follow - their social practices also showed the extent of their ‘Britishness’. Sausan rationalises this by stating that it depends on whether the Yemeni families “are integrated into the British society”. Nuha challenges this idea of multiculturalism in Birmingham by stating that “although some would call Birmingham multicultural, the reality it isn’t, cus there is so much segregation within Birmingham”. Such issues of segregation may be indirectly related to post-colonial concerns regarding British history of migration and diaspora (Mawby, 2010). A substantial amount of literature explores issues of residential segregation, self-segregation (Phillips, 2006), desegregation (Catney, 2016), internal migration, ethnic mixing (Peach, 1996), (Gale, 2013), and community cohesion (Kalra & Kapoor, 2009) in Britain. Integration of cultures in this context is, therefore, understood as British Yemeni young people expressing their own national culture without the loss of its identity and in the reflection of the characteristics of their heritage, in the national traditions inherent and corresponding to them – perhaps understood as a form of hybridity.

Cultural hybridity as second also defines how areas of identity-making are in the participation and movement of the young people’s practices related to Yemeni culture. In the findings from this research, it appears that the young people are ‘holding’ onto being Yemeni through many different practices. An example is traditional food cooked traditionally, in “the Yemeni way”. From a personal perspective, my mother cooks great Yemeni food, yet I do not (mainly because I haven’t learnt to), and so I cannot expect my children, or generations after us, to continue such tradition. They may learn themselves but as Younus explains “there are certain cultural Yemeni things you can’t find it on the internet, cus it’s like from the village”. If passed on through generations, such traditions will continue.

Another such practice is religious observance. When an activity is repeated daily, such as praying and reading the Quran, it becomes embedded and habitual in the social practices of
that individual. *Fatima* for example states that: “*I don’t think I could carry-on the day without having prayed*” and *Nuha* stays: “*I need it in my life... Quran as part of my life*”. The other four participants do not talk about religious obligations, and so this part of their Islamic culture may not be significant or may be lost or diffused in other social practices. Both *Fatima* and *Nuha* are first generation settlers, while the others are second and third generation, and this may suggest a diffusion of religious duties down the generations, although this cannot be generalised with such a small sample of participants. Moreover, the other participants show that they practise their religion in different ways. For example, *Adam* (who is third generation) avoids meeting up with his friends because “*all they do is drink*” and states that he is “*not into that*”. *Rashad* (who is second generation) attends Friday prayer, a weekly congregational prayer, and this is part of his cultural practice. The Friday prayer is perhaps a way in which *Rashad*, and other Muslims, identify with Islam in a largely non-Muslim society, perhaps symbolising meanings that Muslims attach to their living faith in the country (Hashem, 2010). The prayer is a “*a communal prayer*”, bringing people, with shared religious practices, together. Friday is also a day for having family gatherings, *Fatima* meets up, weekly, with her mother’s family on Fridays, or to meet friends, *Rashad* goes to youth club on Fridays. Friday prayers and then meet-ups are practices that are still exercised in Yemen today and so may be an additional example of holding onto Yemeni traditions. The gatherings on Fridays is also supported by the development of the weekend in the British structure, whereby Friday marks the end of the week, and can be considered as a time to go out, and becoming a distinguishing feature of the balance between work and leisure (Walton, 2014). Traditions bind communities together, and such traditions may be a combination of both religious and ethnic practices.

*Cultural hybridity* second is also explored in the attempt of Yemeni families to keep hold of their traditions and cultures. For example, *Younus*, *Sausan* and *Adam’s* mothers speak Arabic at home in the hope that they don’t “*lose it*” and encouraged the reading of the Quran, which is also in Arabic. Parents also urged their children to learn Arabic by sending them to supplementary schools from a young age and all participants narrate that they have attended Arabic schools during the weekend or in the evenings. Parents also travelled to Yemen with
their children and, as Sausan states she “learnt it mainly when I went to Yemen on holidays from time to time”. Despite these attempts, English is the language of their society, they conversed with their Arab and Yemeni friends in English, implying a possible shift towards English-dominant bilingualism (Portes & Schauffler, 1994). Younus refers to Arabic as a “second language”, suggesting that he is more comfortable and perhaps more proficient with speaking English, having lived in Birmingham all his life. There was no clear difference between the generations with respect to competence in Arabic.

Supplementary schools, as well as community centres, also provide a space for other Yemenis to come together, and form childhood friendships. From my own personal experience, my three childhood friends, that I am still in contact with until today (over 35 years later), are Yemenis that I met while attending Arabic school at a young age. The participants have a mixture of different friends, with Yemeni friends also featuring in this list. Rashad’s friends in Birmingham are “mainly Yemeni” as they “are similar” to him. However, when Rashad visits Yemen (which was a family practice often performed for ethnic identity construction and reconstruction) he feels “different from the Yemenis” because “the way they act is a little different, the things they do”. Such realisation of differences may indicate why he feels that he is “not fully” Yemeni. Fatima also shares this feeling: “I feel I am more British in my thinking and the way I am. I mean we still have like Arabic food and sometimes wear ibayahs for Eid or when we pray in the mosque and we speak Arabic so that is all similar, but I don’t feel I am similar to my cousins in Yemen for example”. Fatima also compares herself to other members of her family that “were raised in Yemen” to be different to her as they “have a different mentality” to her and when speaking about her aunt she states that “she is from here, like she is Yemeni originally, but from here, so she is a lot like us”. A dichotomy, and perhaps suggestion of the cultural opposition, between ‘us and them’ is also found within Yemeni young people through such comparisons between Yemenis that are from Britain and those that were “raised in Yemen” (and perhaps have only recently settled in the UK).

Cultural hybridity is also found in the names of the participants. All participants had Arabic names and these can be associated with religion and culture, perhaps also reflecting ancestral
elements of heritage as well as their social context (Seeman, 1980; Dion, 1983; Jennings, 2006). Identity is sometimes encoded in a name that stamps the parents’ traditions and hopes for the child (Seeman, 1980). From speaking to Yemenis in community events, I reflected on some of the personal names of Yemenis in Britain, the names of the participants, as well as the pseudonyms the participants chose for themselves, and noticed that their names and pseudonyms had religious, linguistic, historical, and political dimensions to it, and this is supported by other literature (Al-Zumor, 2009; Aribowo, Hadi, & Ma’ruf, 2019). These observations include the naming of girls (both in Yemen and in Britain) after the Yemeni Queen of Sheba (Abbott, 1941), or boys after Prophets in the Quran and, at times, after political leaders. Naming is, therefore, not only suggestive of a sense of personal and social identity, but also community acceptance. The pseudonyms that were chosen by the participants were Arabic or Islamic names, with some choosing names that were fitting in both British and Muslim (and Yemeni) cultures, such as Adam and Sausan.

In summary, the young people may think of themselves as being somewhat “Yemeni”, but Britain is the life they know. Nuha states: “Back home is just a phrase. Birmingham is my home. It’s what I know”. This does not mean that she does not carry out activities that are highly embedded in her Yemeni subculture, such as family contributions and expectations, but her main activities relate and connect mainly to her being part of British mainstream culture. The fear of parents, and perhaps the Yemeni community in Birmingham, is that the future generations will dissociate with their ancestral homeland cultures and become ‘just British’. I argue that the fear of loss of culture may have previously prevented Yemenis from integrating into British culture and perhaps one of the reasons why they have been an under researched ethnic group.

There are also efforts by the Yemeni community in Birmingham to ‘keep alive’ Yemeni traditions, for example in setting up community centres which accommodate young people of Yemeni heritage. Rashad narrates that he attends such community clubs and, there, he goes to play “snooker, table tennis, foosball, board games with lots of young people go, mainly Yemenis”. Such clubs are set up in different cities in Britain for that purpose – to keep traditions alive and build ethnic cohesion. These clubs may be viewed through the lens of
development whereby the young people are somewhat equipped with certain aspects of Yemeni subculture by associating with others of their similar ethnic backgrounds, and at the same time, they can be seen as contemporary due to their associations to the British mainstream cultures of the social practices done in such clubs. Religious festivals, wedding and funeral practices and dressing traditionally in these events are all efforts of the community to remain intact with their Yemeni heritage, while integrating with the British Society.

7.4 Summary of Chapter Seven

This chapter has provided a discussion of the main findings of the research with reference to the three outputs of this research. I interpreted the findings with a main understanding of the experiences of British Yemeni young people given that that they are young people first and have an interconnected cultural hybridity second. I showed how the findings of my research focused on using the conduct of everyday life to answer the research questions, and linking it to areas of experience, learning and development using ideas from personhood in practice, as well and post-colonial and intersectional aspects to help re-orientate the conduct of everyday life.
Chapter 8 - Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This doctoral research presents a conceptual model which integrates multiple theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to provide an enhanced way to articulate human experiences, specifically in the context of British Yemeni young people. In this final chapter, I draw together the research findings by answering the three research questions:

1) What types of everyday experiences do British Yemeni young people have?
2) What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time?
3) What does this experience, learning and development suggest about the evolving social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people?

I then set out the contributions to knowledge, and make recommendations for policy, practice, and research. I go on to comment on the research’s limitations. Finally, I reflect on my own learning from this doctoral research.

8.2 Answers to the research questions

I now answer my three research questions, in the context of my three outputs found in chapters four, five and six.

1) What types of everyday experiences do British Yemeni young people have?

Young people experience many different types of practices that are both suggestive of their individuality as well as their social groupings. Uniqueness as well as commonalities imply that experiences are both embedded in the young person through an interaction between their agency and their surrounding structures and cultures. Sausan, for example, wants to look good for herself and for the people around her, and so applies beauty products for that purpose. Her makeup ideas have emanated from the suggestions of Muslim YouTubers and
bloggers, that she can relate to as a Muslim woman herself, while at the same time representing current fashions in society more broadly. Once she realises that the products are damaging to her skin, Sausan changed her skin routine to one that makes her look better, outwardly, and at the same time makes her feel good, internally. The interactions between the internal and external suggests a negotiation between what works for her, and what is also pleasing with regards to her hybrid social arrangements. Although this particular set of feelings and experiences may relate more to Sausan, looking after one’s skin, body image and shape was also shared by other participants.

Establishing a conduct of everyday life means that young people do not have to scrutinize and doubt every aspect of what they are doing as they go along. Waking up early, eating, going to college, university, or work, are all activities done in a manner that creates practical and cyclical routines and regular arrangements that are reflected in the reproduction of societal life that provide a framework to resolve everyday practical tasks and demands. Demands and responsibilities - such as cleaning the house for Sausan, babysitting for Nuha, or cooking healthy meals for Rashad – have become practical routines that do not necessarily need extra thought or attention – they have become habits learned through their daily routines in particular contexts with particular others. Some of the participants’ activities - such as praying or going to college - happen because they are habitual actions that have been learnt over time, and because they “just work”, while other activities - such as revising or dieting – are performed because they hold some form of meaning and purpose to the individual at specific moments and in specific contexts. The young people also experience various general concerns - such as gaining independence, making money, exploring the world through travel, building a social network of friends and acquaintance - that keep them actively engaged in their living and being.

The participants also show how some social practices compete for attention with others, and at times combine with other practices in amalgams of activities, and that social practices also come with certain relational responsibilities. For example, Sausan cleans and cooks when her mother is at work. Whilst cleaning the house, she listens to music, sings, and dances solo. In many respects, currently, this takes precedence over going out with her friends and she
consciously prioritises her family responsibility at home, and only when she has finished cleaning and cooking does she arrange to go out with her friends. When Fatima’s siblings have a birthday party, Fatima must leave her studies and help in the party preparations. Although feels that she “has wasted enough time”, and is anxious about this, she seizes the opportunity to have quiet time (before the guests arrive) to study and “catch-up”. Both young women are involved and engaged in negotiating their personal conducts of living and being, finding a possible balance of activities and commitments across contexts and days.

The young people also narrated experiences that were directly influenced by their society. For example, the female participants focus on perceptions of beauty influenced by culture, media, and peer pressure and this was emphasised in the ways in which they narrated notions of beauty and ugliness. Nuha makes herself looks “less ugly” by moisturizing her skin to avoid getting spots, Sausan covers her acne, using makeup and skin care products, and Fatima states that she “looks better overall” when she wears makeup. Although both female and male participants discuss the centrality of beauty regimes and routine that they enact to preserve their body image, the female members focus on beautifying their facial looks in comparison to their male counterparts, who focused more on weight in Rashad’s case, hair in Younus’s case and dress in Adam’s case. This cannot be a generalised argument for the comparison between genders, but it was reflected in these particular cases.

The narratives of the young people also show elements of cultural hybridity in social practices around food, ancestral homeland, language, and religion. Some of these show a greater mixture of British and Yemen culture - such as the types of food eaten during dinner - while others show segregation between the two cultures - such as elements associated with religion. Although practiced in different ways, the participants’ localized, day-to-day realities illustrate how certain aspects of their lives are currently defined by their link to Islam. This is also noted by their social interactions with others of different religion (or practices of religion). For example, Nuha dissociates from her non-Muslim friends when it comes to having a boyfriend. Although “British values might say that it is ok”, her religion states otherwise, and so she has limited non-Muslim friends because of certain practices and because, as Nuha states, all such acquaintances talk about their boyfriends, which she does
Adam avoids meeting up in the evening with his non-practicing friends because “all they do is drink” and declares that he is “not into that”. This also brings about a sense of an identity of difference (Seddon, 2010) through asserted religious distinctiveness. Muslims’ activities in Britain have been documented (Mckinney, 2012; Qureshi, 2015; Fuad, 2012; Joppke, 2009) to show how they remain intact with their religious obligations, while continuing to integrate in the British society in other realms. Evidence from this doctoral research also validates this.

2) What different forms of learning and development do British Yemeni young people experience over time?

British Yemeni young people in my study were continuously evolving and developing, both in the social and cultural aspects of their living and being. The substantive issue that is common to all participants is how one lives, undergoes, and learns through the continuity of experiences. For Sausan, there are cumulative-quantitative and transformative-qualitative changes with regards to her body image and skin care. There are also trajectories that lead Sausan in and out of career choices and have directed her planned career; taking a gap year to explore these options has strengthened certain learning processes. Fatima’s loss of her parents has directed her to study more, better, and harder so that she can make her parents “proud”. She “exerts (her) whole effort on revision”, because she “needs to be accepted” through her achievement in education and this has further encouraged her pursuit of academic success. Success, to Fatima, may eventually result in transformative changes to her sense of security and in building her confidence. Rashad and Adam’s learning and development has been influenced by minor incidents as well as moments of reflection. Rashad’s activities are focused on building healthy habits, so he does not go back to being “big” again. The unkind words from his peers, as well as his own negative feelings towards his body weight, may have initiated such changes. For Adam to change, bigger shifts were required and this including changes in social context, social relations (particularly friends), as well as reflection on the purpose and meaning of his living and the varying social practices he participates with and engages in.
This continuity of experience also suggests many general outcomes. Firstly, it shows that experiencing is the result of the interconnected activity of individuals in their environments. For example, Adam learns how to navigate his new ways of living by moving away from gang society, carrying out different forms of activities. This includes sports such as boxing and football to release energy, playing less violent games, and hanging out with friends that “want the best” for him. His continued experience in this ‘new’ life is relational through interconnected activity with his environment and others. Secondly, young people learn and develop through prioritising the practical problem-solving of their living in and around various domains of daily activities. Fatima prioritises her studies, as she learns that, for her, this is the means by which she will gain acceptance and self-fulfilment. Rashad discovers practical long-lasting solutions for maintaining his body weight - including food habits as well as exercises that provide him an opportunity to socialise with friends (such as football and hiking). Nuha learns how to deal with not being allowed to study away from home by finding local institutions that enable her to pursue a career without offending her parents. These are some of the examples of the learning and developments experienced by the young people.

3) What does the experiences, learning and development suggest about the social and cultural personhood of British Yemeni young people?

This question can be answered in three ways. Firstly, British Yemeni young people in my study are on a journey; a journey that intertwines their experiences, learning and development with their living, and which is influenced by their history, society, and culture and in interactions with others and various practices. The interweaving of relational activity both contribute to and emerge out of the culture and structure of social context, and in interactions with their social relations. This creates an evolving sense of both continuity and change for the young people. For example, Nuha is on a journey to becoming a lawyer. She learns how to secure demands, such as her family responsibilities, as well as personal preferences, such as taking time out for herself. She is involved in her own personal trajectories, across her social context, and connects with matters associated with her different roles as a student, employee, daughter, sister and, occasionally, friend. The growing individualization of the
organization of her social life and of core institutions (such as family, education, and work) place new demands on Nuha’s conduct of everyday life. She generates knowledge and meaning from interactions between her experiences and her ideas, which are continuously changing and evolving.

Fatima’s experiences have meant that she has had to adapt to and coordinate to her change in situation. She makes efforts to be a dedicated student, taking time to do so, so that she can gain validations from herself and others. She continues her life trying to achieve that goal. If it is achieved, there are other opportunities that wait for her. Younus has many aspirations and is keen on learning about everything, occupying his time with useful activities that target his body, mind, and soul. At this point of his life, he does not have a direction and will continue to explore his options as he learns more, through continuity of experiences. Religion seems to be his guide, and this may continue or change depending on the experiences he encounters. Rashad’s previous target of being healthy has been somewhat achieved through the activities he engages in keeping fit. Although this may change over time, he focuses on the next stages of his life, at university and beyond. Finally, Adam compares the similarities and differences between his experiences in and out of a gang, responding to situations, challenges, and setbacks along the way.

Secondly, the experiences, learning and development suggest that the historical and cultural aspects of British Yemeni young people are heavily influenced by the social aspects of their daily living. This is in the form of their own lived practices, as an effect of the society in which they are fully embedded in, as well as their family histories and practices, which they connect to at times, and disconnect with, at other times. Cultural identity of British Yemenis is continuously reshaped and made in relation to their place of upbringing. Cultural identity is, therefore, a combination of both ethnic identity (rooted in historical origins) and national identity (the place of upbringing) that is continuously evolving with time. This results in a culture consisting of existing features combined with newly generated features (Sabatier, 2008).
There also seemed to be a gradual shift from ethnic, pre-existing roots and traditional customs to national influences, but this depends on which generation the young person is from, as well as the extent of the influences of family histories and practices. For example, there are active efforts to maintain Arabic skills in individuals of Yemeni heritage, born in the UK. Such efforts include speaking Arabic at home, going to Yemen to consolidate the language, encouraging conversations on the phone with extended family, or attending supplementary schools at a young age. Such efforts help to reduce the speed of conversation to English monolingualism (Ferguson, 2012), especially in second and third generation young people (Portes & Schauffler, 1994; Carol, 2009; Fillmore, 1991). However, Sausan speaks English with her Arab-speaking friends, Younus refers to Arabic as a “second language” and Fatima only really uses Arabic when speaking to extended family members in Yemen. Therefore, such efforts are not as effective and relate to post-colonial struggles of the Yemenis in Britain.

Thirdly, the personality (or personhood) of the young people studied is constantly evolving and shifting depending on the circumstances and conditions of their order and arrangements, and movement and participation. British Yemeni young people have varying, yet interconnected, experiences. While avoiding essentialisation, I argue that these case studies could signify some of the experiences of other British Yemeni young people. The role of actions in articulating both the development of, and adaptation to, social, cultural, and historical elements of the participants’ life shows that these young people are individuals only to the degree that history and society enable them to be individuals because their consciousness is sublated in the history, culture, and society they live in.

Fourthly, personhood/personality is not a given, but an evolution – a continuing amalgam of all the experiential moments in their different contexts, that may or may not convey who the young people are. As a result, personality is not an internal product and separated out from the external. Rather, it is the composite of a person’s environment, and the people in it, which creates a portrait or biography. Such biography is constantly evolving and shifting depending on new contexts and what a person may learn, and they might develop, with regards to those contexts. An example of this is in the various experiences Sausan has in her lived life - being
a young woman concerned about her image, a student exploring different career pathways, a daughter that, now more than previously, appreciates her mother’s efforts in and out of the house, an Arabic teacher, an employee – in different social context and structures, building her evolving biography as she continues living and experiencing.

By examining the young people through lens of activity, I have purposely avoided a predisposed notion of what it might mean to be a young Yemeni, having an identity and a set of way of doing. Instead through their actions, I have suggested how their living, being, learning and development have both elements of commonality and distinctiveness, but also some commonality in their social fields of experiences that suggest some homogeneity as well as heterogeneity, with a shared heritage, yet also a sense of individuality.

8.3 Contributions to knowledge

My main contribution to knowledge is in developing a conceptual and methodological approach for understanding British Yemeni young people’s agency and associated and interconnected sets of structure and cultures. This framework is distinctive for three main reasons. Firstly, the framework consists of a multi-dimensional focus, whereby it considers various paradigms of personal and social identity, agency, reflexivity, personality, personhood, and the conduct of everyday life. Previous literature has focused on articulating experiences through developing an understanding of identity formation (Klimstra et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2005; Erikson, 1968), including Côté’s ideas of youth identity (Côté, 2006; Côté & Levine, 1983), Crenshaw and Mccall’s positioning on intersectionality and the interactivity of social structures (Crenshaw, 1991; Mccall, 2005), and Bhabha’s exploration on influences of post-colonial theory in the location of culture (Bhabha, 1994). Although these are valuable, I have developed a conceptual framework which integrates these theories, focusing primarily on personality, personhood, and the conduct of everyday life. Particularly, I use Dreier’s theory of a person (Dreier, 2011) - in what British Yemeni young people do what they do and why they do it- and Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice (Roth, 2020) - in the learning and development within the context of continuity of experience - to assemble a framework that enables the interlinking between agency and structure, which is suggestive of
a person’s evolving personality, and reflects their practiced identity. This is important because it avoids essentialising people based on their social identity structures, and instead declares that it is the conduct of their everyday life that enunciates what it means to be a British Yemeni young person.

Secondly, the approach developed focuses on activity and action, consolidating other studies of the conduct of everyday life (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016), but with a focus on an ethnic minority group in Britain. This opens up the study of the conduct of life to additional critical analyses of embodiment. Such work compliments and extends studies, in this epistemic field by examining the dynamics and interactions between self and society where human subjectivities are a reflection of, but not determined by, the social and cultural arrangements. In fact, the subjectivities of young people in this study recognise how individuals relate to and potentially change the social arrangements of society through a hybridity of evolving actions, habits, reconfigurations and forms of reflexivity.

Thirdly, this research convenes the ideas and theories from Dreier and Roth, focusing on the similarities between the two in the context and notion of action and doing in exploring experiences, but also in how each theory builds on the other. Both of these scholars of psychology are heavily critical of mainstream psychological approaches particularly the notion of the individualised sense of a person’s being which seems to do a disservice to the relational cultural element of the self. Dreier views the characteristic of person and environment as slightly distinct (yet indirectly connected), while Roth perceives them as completely interconnected and integrated – in other words, you can’t see the person unless you see the environment in which they live in. This latter view elucidates the idea that agentic activities a person is a consequence of the environmental relational activities they engage with. I show how, in applying combinations of these theories and ideas to British Yemeni young people, a deeper sense of understanding their cultural, historical, and social embedded experiences is possible. This gives us a sense of who they are, taking together their views and perspectives of a person and their environment in the context of their lived lives.
I also make a secondary contribution to knowledge by studying an ethnic minority group that has been under-represented in academic literature. Therefore, the contribution is to the field of social sciences, particularly in cultural studies and in the study of British Yemen young people. The presence of Yemenis in Britain received an almost incidental mention in published research on ethnic minorities (El-Solh, 1992) and findings of other ethnic minorities cannot be used to generalise those of other ethnicities - whose cultural-political assumptions, and origins function differently. Furthermore, the majority of academic literature that relates to British Yemenis has previously focused on early settlers (Halliday, 2013), the Muslim community achieving cohesion and stability (Geaves, 2012) and the Arab diaspora (Civantos, 2015). This doctoral research, specifically, creates a space in research by providing a platform for Yemenis in Britain, particularly young people, to voice their concerns and viewpoints through the narratives of their daily experiences.

8.4 Recommendations for policy, practice, and research

Reflections on the conduct of everyday life, and the conceptual network that surrounds this concept, provide suggestions and solutions to basic core problems that address the relationship between society and the individual, focusing on human subjectivity as it is lived, grounded but not determined by the context. Traditionally, recommendations for policy and practice relate to educational settings and although this is useful, I focus my recommendations on ways of understanding the lived realities of British Yemeni young people by adding conceptions of reflexivity, appreciation, and correspondence. Through embodying the conduct of everyday life, my recommendations are primarily for research, more than for policy and practice.

The conduct of everyday life and the concepts that surround it require certain reflections. This is because the concept not only describes the forms of experiences young people have, but also prescribes what people experiences in their daily lives. The first recommendation for ongoing social scientific research, and one that has been argued by others (Koch & Harrington, 1998; Dodgson, 2019; Teo, 2015), is that there should be a process of extensive reflexivity by the researcher throughout the research process. Reflexivity is about
acknowledging the researcher’s active role in the research process, being continuously aware of how prior experiences, assumptions and beliefs may influence the research process. It doesn’t stop there, however and is also about being reflexive on the frameworks, approaches and concepts used in developing and generating conceptual frameworks in any social science, and in my case critical psychology. Within the context of this research, reflexivity relates to the development of the conduct of everyday in natural-historical reconstructions.

The conduct of everyday life is also significant for the theory of subjectivity (Holzkamp, 2013). Social epistemologies argue that social characteristics influence research in - not only questions but also methods, interpretations and applications (Teo, 2015). This is important because they not only apply to everyday but also to academic life. Social characteristics influence how researchers do research, – the choice of research approach and design, as well as the research position and paradigms – employed and what terms are preferred in research. There are a vast number of new terms emerging that are ambiguous in meaning, and these require clear-cut clarifications to avoid ambiguous meaning, referring such terms to the context of each research.

The demands for and supplies of knowledge within and across the conduct of everyday life varies. My research identified various barriers to strengthening knowledge flows, including a lack of familiarity with practices in other fields, lack of academic interest in exploring lives of British Yemenis, power relations and the undervaluation of tacit knowledge. A more visible and concrete demand for and supply of knowledge, more opportunities for the interdisciplinary creation of knowledge, the development of a joint knowledge agenda (Teo, 2015), and the improvement of systems for learning and sharing knowledge may reduce certain barriers, and enable further explorations.

There is also a need for more dialogue and discussions to set the conditions for possibilities to transcend social structures and conduct of everyday life. Dialogue ought to be between the participants and the researchers, and between the researchers in different fields. When I asked participants what they would like me to do with the findings of this research, one replied: “give us a break and let us explore the world as we see it”, another “make sure schools listen
to us. Tell them how we feel because I don’t think they listen to us. If school wants us to learn properly, they should teach properly and link it to our lives”, and another stated, “making others see what is important to me”. Another participant said: “There is gap between us and them is getting bigger... The community, the political state, the expectations of others. We just want them to understand where we are coming from”. Such dialogue, particularly in research, may reduce this gap and give significance and power to the young peoples’ voices and opinions.

The world is changing, and with such changes, polices, practices and research must also develop to cater for the changing world. The growing individualization of the organization of social life, and of core institutions, places new demands on people’s conduct of everyday life. With changes in the past few years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, individual life has been more of a social project and a possible social problem subject to comprehensive societal interests as well as institutional and governmental interventions. Therefore, the conduct of life is becoming increasingly a matter of not only personal but also social and political interests and concerns. My research here is, therefore, essential in exploring the reality of lived lives in such turbulent times, and what this living and being means for young people’s personal and professional development. When building, editing, or reforming curriculums in schools, colleges and universities, programmes should consider contributions to or reflexivity about the civic. Such contributions and reflexivity need to be embedded in the relational conduct of everyday life with its social arrangements, issues of culture, and so forth, that it is pertaining to it. It needs to relate to young people so that it becomes more of a practical application rather than theoretical information.

My recommendation for policy and practice is to engage with young people in practical problem-solving approaches that are meaningful to them, one which does not impose a particular model of understanding, abstracted from the living world of young people. This can be integrated into school curriculum and during teacher training sessions. Issues affecting young people firstly need to be understood by continuous dialogue with the young people in different social contexts. Being aware, mindful, and attentive to the lived lives of people of the young people allows researchers to have a better correspondence and hence
understanding, without being limited in opinions or perceptions based on ideas of uniformity of culture while at the same time not dismissing its importance. This thinking extends beyond British Yemenis. In this way, researchers can get a better understanding of young people, their needs, and interests, acknowledge their importance in the development of wider society.

8.5 Limitations of this doctoral research

This doctoral research studied the conduct of everyday life of six British Yemeni young people, through privileging their actions and activities. There are, however, some limitations of the research which I will now discuss.

Firstly, this research began with limited literature on British Yemenis today, and so I was already at a disadvantage because statements on British Yemeni young people were absent, and any new knowledge could not be backed up by the academic literature. This meant that any findings from this research would set the basis for understanding the experiences of this ethnic minority group. However, this foundation is formed by only six case studies, which is what was possible as a sole researcher. The hope is that more researchers will continue to study this ethnic minority group, generating more findings through more case studies. This would provide further detail on experiences as individuals on the micro-level, but also as a community on the macro-levels. British Yemenis of different age groups, living in different cities, with different focuses, could also be investigated, providing further contributions to knowledge. While taking care not to over generalise, more bold findings on this ethnic minority groups could be stated and used to test some of the essentialist generalisations I make about youth first and interconnectedly cultural hybridity second.

Secondly, the research explores the continuity of experiences at two points in the young people’s lives. Although this provides certain information on the learning processes and development of the young person, more data could be obtained if the research was conducted over a longer time frame. In this way, the longitudinal research would have been conducted through time, and not only over time (Neale, 2016). Conducting research through time is a collaborative venture that builds trusting relationships between participants and the researcher (Balmer & Richards, 2022). Although solid relationships were established in the timeframe of
this research, stronger or deeper connection would perhaps be formed, enabling the participants to be more trusting, and possibly more willing, to share their experiences again and again. This would further add to the pool of existing information on their lived experiences. Furthermore, this study does not ask questions regarding how, where, or why people learn, and only focuses on documenting the forms of learning and development that British Yemeni young people experience over time. Perhaps more, longer studies of this kind can be employed to tackle and explore these questions, providing recommendations for policy and practice.

Thirdly, in collaboration with other researchers, this study could have employed participatory research, providing more power and involvement to the subjects of study. As a result, the question of personal and professional identity, educational attainment and progress, discourses around power and integration, could have been examined and that could also merit further investigations. This study did not explicitly explore this, and the conceptual frameworks developed did not overtly deal with issues of power and discourse. Information on this could further benefit the community by providing tools to analyse conditions and make informed decisions on collective actions. Furthermore, relying on the photographs to stimulate discussion may have limited other conversations and discussions to emerge and so perhaps using more than one method, that is complementary to photo-novella and keeping with the participatory element within research, may have given more detailed information on the lived lives of my participants. Furthermore, using participatory research, coupled with an action element to it, can also be an empowering process that is particularly relevant for engaging young people in reflection and dialogue for social change (Chen, Poland, & Skinner, 2007). I urge new researchers to explore the experiences of British Yemenis, supporting such studies through scholarships and community discussions as a way of moving forward for the bettering of the understanding of British Yemeni young people.

8.6 Reflections on doctoral journey

I conclude this thesis with a reflection on the changes that I have experienced in the course of my doctoral study. I ask: How did I come to think, write, and practice in the way I do now?
With the continuity of my own experiences, I have engaged with learning processes and developmental shifts myself. I came from an intensive scientific background, where numbers were perceived as power, and quantitative research was the most advisable means of producing valid, reliable results. Through attending lectures, seminars and discussions with peers and seniors, I came to appreciate that this is not necessarily accurate, particularly when exploring human experiences and understanding society. As part of this process, I have also undergone some discoveries and explorations of what it takes to be me, particularly in terms of my own identity and personality. Coming from a Yemeni ethnic background myself, I find that certain elements discussed in the narratives of my participants also resonated with me (my personal reflection is in Appendix B).

As I have shown across the chapters in this thesis, articulating identity and personality is not a straightforward process. Having explored the prominent literature around identity and personality (and ideas in between), I take the position that understanding identity is most accurately appreciated through the consequence of relational actions and phenomena related by a person. It is, therefore, theorised in terms of the meaning and motives of different activities in which a person takes part, and that are part of constituting society. From such a perspective, the evolving person and the biographic totality of the societal relations can be reported. This enables the capturing of the complexity, dynamics, and subtlety of human experience and organizational life. In addition, research on the conduct of life of individual subjects cannot be driven by calculating and controlling rationales or interests, but by contributing to a social understanding about how people, as individuals and as collectives, are involved in, as well as subjected to, the powers, forces, and complexities of our shared everyday life.

Between 2016 and 2022, I found that my perception and interactions with others, in and out of my professional work, also developed. I am more aware of the gradual development of my two young boys, and that it is through their doing that more is revealed about who they are now and who they are becoming. I am more aware of my own social practices and how they may have been influenced by my heritage and national culture, and how this may be passed on to my boys. I am also more conscious of the order, arrangements, movement, and
participants of the students I teach, the teachers I observe, and young people in general, particularly when managing community projects. The way I now interact with them has changed – I am more patient and understanding. I am more mindful that the conduct of everyday life of myself, and those around me, is an amalgamation of social context, social practices and social arrangements. The sequence of their events, perspectives of experiences and how they relate to building habits, and areas of change and reflection, are also more visible to me. I feel that my doctoral research contributed to such awareness and reflections.

The opportunity to work alongside experienced professionals and scholars, all treating each other as colleagues, and having time to reflect on their different practices and emerging theories, has convinced me that this thesis would not have become what it is, without their support. I look back on it with a mixture of pride, embarrassment, and incomprehension. My experiences, then as a practitioner, and more recently as a doctoral student and researcher, have spurred reflections of my own educational values, and impelled me to consider how others in similar positions have come to terms with changes, from which they may benefit or suffer, but over which their agency is restricted. It is for those reasons that I dedicate this thesis to my late father, whose actions in the context of his conduct of everyday life produced a true reflection of who he was – an interaction between his personality and identity. After going through this doctoral journey, I truly appreciate and believe that what I do, speaks more deeply about what and who I am.
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Appendix A – A brief history of Yemen

The history of Yemen is characterised by undergoing cycles of unification and fragmentation due to the changes in its leadership, religion affiliation, colonisation and political struggles to gain power (Abbott, 1941; Monges, 2002; Brinner & Lassner, 1996; Landau-Tasseron, 2010). Some of the country’s active historical profile is summarised in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancient history</th>
<th>Middle Ages</th>
<th>Modern History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sabaean kingdom</td>
<td>Advert of Islam and Islamic</td>
<td>Several dynasty rule (Sulayhid,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish-influence</td>
<td>conquests of other regions</td>
<td>Ottoman rule; British Rule;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himyarite Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zaydi’s rule;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North and south of Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>division followed by unification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: A summary of the history of Yemen

I now explore some of Yemen’s rich history with reference to five areas - its religious affiliations, its geographical position, the British in Yemen, the Yemenis in Britain, and finally Yemen’s situation today. This provides a collaborative discussion of the main areas of interest with respect to the context of this research.

Yemen’s religious affiliations

Yemen has experienced many turbulences in its history as shown in Table 1. The entry of Islam to Yemen, in year 630 (Zahniser, 2008) settled the country politically resulting in a more stable country. It became one of the most advanced region in Arabia (Bashear, 1989). Yemen also played a pivotal role in the Islamic conquests across Africa and towards Spain (Lewinstein & Madelung, 2001). The grey areas of Figure 1 show the geographical expansion of Islam, and Yemenis with Yemeni have been active contributors to such expansion.
Yemen has significant Islamic importance (Hillenbrand, 2005), and the roots of the Arabs trace themselves back to Yemen (Faris, 1937). A significant percentage of Yemenis are recorded to be Muslim (Review, 2019; Dahya, 1965). In Islamic traditions, it is believed that Prophet Muhammad was a descendent of Yemen tribes (Graham, 1992). Yemen’s first language is Arabic, which is also the language of the Holy Quran. In addition to religion, each tribe in Yemen previously - and to some extent today - inhabits a definite territory, have a Sheikh (ruler) and have unique traditions and myths of origin and descent, with distinctive customary law (‘urf) and courts (Dahya, 1965).

**Yemen’s geographical position – bringing richness yet disturbance**

Yemen is also known for being agriculturally fertile with densely settled coastal regions (Landau-Tasseron, 2010). The ancient history period of Yemen witnessed the most prominent federation to govern the country: the Kingdom of Saba (Keall, 2003). This was a trading state that included parts of modern-day Ethiopia and Eritrea, and was known for its wealth and success in trade (Yule & Simpson, 2003). The story of the throne is significant in many religious scriptural (Monges, 2002; Brinner & Lassner, 1996; Lemche & Kitchen, 2004). During the late ancient and middle ages time, Yemen was under several independent clans, with constant rebellion between and within tribes (Landau-Tasseron, 2010).
Although Yemen’s geographical location provided richness in its production of resources, it also came with disturbance. An example of such was the control over the emerging market for the stimulating properties of coffee, *Coffea Arabica*, as a beverage (Vega, 2008). The conflict between the Ottomans, the Egyptians, and various European powers that were seeking to control the emerging coffee market caused significant tensions. Coffee was eventually smuggled out of Yemen and transplanted into a variety of new and more-profitable locales, resulting in dramatic effect in the redirection of trade, causing cities, such as Aden and Mocha, to shrink to villages (Bernard, 2020).

**The British in Yemen**

Yemen’s geographical position, particularly the strategic importance of its coastlands as a source of resources with good harbours, as well as important crossroads and river crossings, meant that Yemen experienced greatness in prosperity (Abu-Rabi, 2002). This position was ideal for the British empire to colonise Yemen. Political boundaries could act as constraints on trade, the southern port of Aden provided a spice route for travellers and merchants, and many borders were, in practice, relatively permeable, except in periods of warfare.

Britain colonised the south of Yemen, Aden, for a period of over 128 years, from 1839 until 1967. Searching for a coal depot to serve their steamers on route to India, and taking advantage of a ship sinking incident (Kour, 2005), Britain dispatched a warship (Margariti, 2007) and occupied Aden - primarily for its strategic position as a coaling station but also as a pre-emptive move to secure interests in the southern part of the Red Sea against French expansionism (Petouris, 2018). This was strategic rather than commercial undertaking and was done to guard the lines of communication with India. Friction between the leadership in Yemen and Britain characterised the entire interwar period, causing the British to consolidating their position (Smith, 2015; Margariti, 2007) and in 1967 Britain announced that it would leave Yemen (“Britain and the Yemen civil war, 1962-1965,” 2005). This unleashed the violent political conflict that prevailed in the south of Yemen and the provinces for the next two years. Various organizations fought for control of the south of Yemen (Kour,
A report of the failure of British Policy in the case of South Yemen can be found in Mawby (2010).

Yemen were substantially intensified by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the re-emergence of the Red Sea route as the preferred passage between Europe and East Asia (Margariti, 2007). Aden provided control of the entrance to the Red Sea and in 1937 Aden became a Crown Colony (Roochnik, 2001; Edwards, 2017). Britain expanded north and east from Aden, eventually establishing protectorates over more than a dozen of the many local statelets.

In 1967, Britain was forced to withdraw (Harrington, 2014), and due to such political differences, the continuing friction in Yemen led to many border wars. As a result, Yemen was thus divided into two states - North Yemen and South Yemen. In 1990, Yemen achieved a successful unification with an agreement to revive unity talks, reduce tension in the frontier area, and create a buffer zone (Dunbar, 1992). The relationship between state power and the experience of citizenship in the aftermath of national unification provided further disputes (Wedeen, 2004).

Despite Britain leaving Yemen in a state of conflict, there was a revival of poetry, proverbs and English literature, along with works on philology and dialects (Abu-Rabi, 2002). English was taught as a second language and some cultures and ideologies were instilled in the education system during this period. Influences of political systems, culture and society, films, and books, was noticeable; other ancient traditions and customs continued unaffected. Religion, language, economics, and other cultural practices of the (Britain) coloniser may have been imposed on the Yemenis, but the majority remained true to their home culture (Abu-Rabi, 2002).

**Yemenis in Britain**

During colonisation period, Yemenis migrated to Britain and settles in different cities. Yemenis that settled in Cardiff, Hull, Liverpool, South Shields and Swansea worked primarily as sailors, while industrial employment was more common in Birmingham and the
West Midlands, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newport, and Sheffield (Dahya, 1965). Full regular employment, with better wages, plus overtime, bonuses and better working conditions offered the new settlers economic and social residential stability and the Yemenis in Britain organised their community both at seaports and as members of communal groups (Dahya, 1965). It was not all positive - the social structural differences of race and class were evident during early settlement (Richmond & Collins, 1958). A study by Little (2013) on the social and psychological consequences of socio-geographical urban isolation in the dockland of Cardiff, documented the experiences of prejudice and discrimination of early Yemeni settlers by the host nation.

Yemenis lived a communal life and share a common cultural and religious tradition with their fellow countrymen (Dahya, 1965). Celebrations, family rituals and language were ways in which they continued to connect with their Yemeni culture. Evidence of the continuation of heritage display is also apparent in the narratives of some of the British Yemeni young people today. Although there are some apparent generational changes, the empirical study in this research show how Yemenis remained at large connected to their homeland traditions while at the same time, integrated into the mainstream British society. This is explored in Chapters Four, Six and Seven. The cultural changes displayed by the early Yemeni settlers in Britain, as well as the continuous generations, witnessed a gradual shift from their ethnic, pre-existing roots and traditional customs, to their more national influences of national identity, contributing to the formation of their cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994; Bickers, 2010; Adams & van de Vijver, 2017).

Despite wanting to seem invisible, Yemenis became embroiled in controversies of their own creation, and two examples comes to mind. The first relates to the Yemeni customs of arranged marriages, as in the case of 1986 of the Yemeni father who had arranged the marriages of his two British-born daughters to men in Yemen. The books written to narrate this narrative held much controversy as the journalist who followed the story was western (and so from the opinion of an outsider) and portrayed the girls as cruelly-treated slaves to the injustice of forced marriages (Ware, 1992). That is not to say that there was no injustice in this situation, however such experience and incident casted a dark cloud on the Yemeni
community in general and showed it to be intensely patriarchal, where women had limited or opinions in the running of the household. This shows an example of how the media propagate the perception that Muslims are distinctly sexist (Terman, 2017).

The second, highlighted in the British Press due to its adverse health consequences, is the chewing of the khat (Balint, Falkay, & Balint, 2009). This is a green plant which has stimulant effect on the body. The chewing of the khat is seen as more than a substance to the Yemenis - it is a distinctive social institution and form of recreation (Manghi et al., 2009). It is often chewed in social events, while socialising with other Yemenis (discussing politics, language, sports and family). During these events, matters are debated, business is transacted, and disputes and grievances are settled. Yemeni history and wisdom are also passed on to others, music and poetry are played and recited and dance is often performed, mainly by male dancers dressed in traditional clothes including a janbiyyah (dagger) to mark traditions and customs (Caton, 2010). Such events took place across many Yemeni community cities within Britain. In 2014, the British authorities classed khat as an illegal Class C drug (Anastasio, 2014) reducing the occurrence of such social gatherings. Yemenis feel such traditions may be lost as a result (Khatib et al., 2013). But whether this is a social habit or cultural burden is a continuous discussion among people and writers and it’s detrimental social addiction is continuously being confronted (Khatib et al., 2013).

Yemen today

Yemen remains unsettled. Figure 2 shows the significant events in Yemen in the last decade. The political crisis is ongoing, with endangered domestic stability and regional security being some of the major concerns (Boucek, 2010; vom Bruck, 2011). Following the Yemeni revolution in 2012 (Salih, 2013), the crisis in Yemen continues. This crisis is as a result of kleptocracy government and international interference and influences from different neighbouring countries (Yıldırım & Üzümçü, 2021; Nonneman, 1997; Houissa, 2019).
Today, Yemen is displayed as a harsh and uncivil country facing a unique confluence of crises (vom Bruck, 2011). At present, Yemen is occupied by the Hutheys, a Shiiait sector that share similar origins and principles to the Zaydis (introduced from Iraq that had much influenced of Yemeni direction in religion and civilization) (Boucek, 2010). Yemen continues to experience confusing series of local, factional, and imperial rulers fighting against one another (Sharro, 2015). The chaotic intersection with the interference of Iran and Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (Bachman, 2019), has meant that Yemen is now on a spiral downhill (Hokayem & Roberts, 2016; Salisbury, 2015). Saudi Arabia have tried to avoid the appearances that its war is sectarian by getting other countries to help it attack Yemen) Sharro, 2015). Figure 3 shows the lines of control in Yemen as of October 2020.
With economic collapse, insufficient state capacity, and governance and corruption issues (vom Bruck, 2011), the future of Yemen is on the brink of reformation (International Crisis Group, 2015). The situation is geopolitical and involves many different parties and oppositions, and the matter is ongoing and unsettled (Sharp, 2020). Some conversations around this surfaced in the narratives of the participants in this study, particularly with reference to their inability to visit Yemen because of the continuous war situation (see Chapter Six).

**Summary**

Yemen is the sum of its spiritual, material, rational and societal makeup, and links it inseparably with the culture of the Arabian and Islamic world. The long period of colonisation of Yemen by Britain has encourage Yemenis to migrate and relocate to Britain and this has had an effect on British Yemeni culture and traditions. Yemen has undergone a diversity of modifications, revolutions, and adjustments in its history, and this has undoubtedly informed its current situation and affected migration and diaspora.
Appendix B – A personal reflection of my identity

This writing is an attempt to explore who I am, as Huda Ahmed.

I argue that, at certain times in life, people may challenge themselves by asking deep questions about their identity, perhaps as means of understanding the purpose of their existence. Knowing who I am is critical to me for five main reasons:

1) It allows me to determine what makes me human, my essence.
2) It allows me to establish what differentiates me from others.
3) It prevents any possible voids, doubts and perhaps uncertainty in my thoughts, behaviour, and actions.
4) Pushing aside or ignoring inquiries on self/agency may lead to adverse thoughts and feelings about oneself. This may then be manifested negatively, perhaps in weakness in character and direction, as well as the possible instigation of further troubles and complexities in personality.
5) If I am unsure about my own identity, other external influences may attempt to impose their own ideologies on me – this may directly or indirectly govern the way I live. The vision I may have of my life may become unconscious confused and skewed, with that attempted by others.

I argue that for me, in answering questions on identity, there is an understanding on a person’s being and existence.

I start by articulating some of the theories of identity that may be related to my living and being. Identity is at times encoded in a name (Seeman, 1980) and such name has connections to history, tradition, and ethnic culture of people (Dion, 1983; Jennings, 2006). I am Huda but I am more than that. When I reflect on my personal experiences in the form of constructing my narratives story, I can demonstrate if and how different identity theories may have manifested in my past or daily experiences. With identity, I take both a sociological and psychological approach, one that is embedded in the understanding oneself as well as interpersonal relationships.
As the focus in this research began on youth identity, as means of understanding agency and structure, I reflect on the five different identity theories (shown in italics here), as conceptualised by Côté (2006), as means of articulating my identity. This reflection comes from my memories, when I was a much young person. I start with the *identity status paradigm*. As an adolescent, I may have gone through all four stages - described by Erikson (1968) and Marcia (1966) and summarised in *Table 1* below - at different time of my life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity Diffusion</th>
<th>Identity Moratorium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent has no sense of having choices and so does not attempt to make a commitment. They are permissive with poor self-esteem and there is no clear identity.</td>
<td>Currently in a crisis, the adolescent is exploring various commitments and is ready to make choices. They are still-undergoing identity search.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity Foreclosure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identity Achievement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent seems willing to commit to some relevant roles or values for the future by conforming to the expectations of others. They accept their identity and is at present predictable and stable but can later be unsettled.</td>
<td>Adolescent has gone through an identity crisis and has made a commitment (and chosen) a role or value. They have a clear identity, well-defined personal values, strong ego and is strongly commitment to identity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Four main identity status of psychological identity development*

I can relate to some of these identity stages of development. For example, when recalling my educational direction, identity foreclosure status was evident. I chose my A-level subjects because my friends did so and perhaps because this was a cultural expectation, or that I was conformed to do so by others - I am unsure. At the age of 16, I was only committed to finishing my subjects because I needed to get the grades to progress to university. After graduating with a Science degree, I was unsure what to do next and a friend suggested to go into teaching. And so, I did. Two years later, I was unsure whether teaching was my desired profession and so I returned to university to study for my masters and at the age of 23, I worked at a hospital laboratory. I remained in the exploration stages of development, whereby I continuously re-examined and re-evaluated my commitments, fluctuating back and forth in the identity moratorium phase. It was not until my Science Leader job at a local school did, I feel, that I had found my sense of identity achievement with respect to work. I loved the dynamics of my job, the institution I was with, and the fulfilment it added to my
sense of achievement. This identity achievement fluctuated, however, with changes to my personal life (and becoming a mother) and changes to the academic institutional management at that time. Such changes continued to direct me to other avenues which I am continuously exploring today (motherhood, PhD researcher, manager at supplementary school, possible carer avenues).

The second identity paradigm critical and cultural studies required me to recall possible past incidents that may show elements of cultural interpretation of self and structure, and the spectrum between being individual and collective activities. For example, as part of my Yemeni culture, when friends visited me a home, I had to offer food and drink without asking then if they “Would like a cup of tea?” This may be socially acceptable in British culture but would be considered as ungenerous and rude in Yemeni cultures – this ethnic expectation seems to have rooted from an Arab tradition of generosity and a trait of value for displaying gratitude and sense of welcoming to the guest (Young, 2007). Furthermore, when dinner was served, I, as a host, was expected to sit last and should continue to make the guests feel welcome by filling their plates up with food, even without asking if they would like seconds! I used to think: “What a waste!” but I recognise now that such practice is a rooted cultural habit that belonged to the collective repertoire of practical reason within the Yemeni group. I was bought up in a home where transcendences beyond design was the norm and there was a tendency to put others first. This was culturally imposed and has become somewhat a learned behaviour. I claim that cultural traditions, such as these, are a constitutive of my evolving personality, which I discuss later.

The identity paradigms of symbolic interactionalism and postmodernism do not resonate directly to my exploration of my identity, although there are moments in my life where I may have felt their effects. My understanding of symbolic interactionalism is the way I, and others around me, use symbols to establish meaning, develop views about the world, and communicate with one another. The main symbol that helps give meaning to the experiences in life for me is wearing of the head scarf, or hijab. Literature on the role of the hijab as a symbol of public Islamic identity (Haddad, 2007; Hoekstra & Verkuyten, 2015), as well as the prejudice and stereotypes about Muslim women with regards to discourse of power and
control (Byng, 2010; Strabac, et al., 2016), has been well researched in Europe and across the world. Within the social context of Britain, I believe that the hijab has become a symbol of my Islamic identity - a public affirmation of trust in the British system that guarantees freedom of religion and speech (Swami et al., 2014). It may also be a symbol of anti-colonial solidarity and resistance to some efforts to eradicate Islam in British environment (Haddad, 2007). This of course depends on the political forces, governing the country as well as the specific areas in Britain (Byng, 2010). Wearing the hijab is an action, my choice, perhaps supported by my family and possibly some of my Muslim colleagues and friends, but for me it is to show pride in displaying, externally, my Muslim identity.

Modernism in general follow a set of critical, strategic, and rhetorical practices, used as a critique of structure (Moya et al., 2006), and includes urbanization (resulting in undermining traditional communities), changes in work patterns (and thus a change in family structure), and a shift in public values (efficiency and technique value replace traditional ethics) (Cooper & Burrell, 1988). With respect to postmodernism, and its ability to enable the understanding of social, cultural and economic trends (Usher & Edwards, 1994), there are limited amount of ways in which I relate to this - expect perhaps the possible effect of the mass media to potentially transform experience and character (Mills, 1959). When I was in my early 20s, I remember encountering a phrase displayed at Selfridges’ shopping mall: “I shop, therefore I am”. Advertisement, such as these, became crucial to the operation of global economic and cultural processes (Osgerby, 2004), and the key victims were people like me, young and perhaps searching for an identity. Social media and consumption continues to influence the young person’s construction of contemporary identities (Stald, 2008), with some of the identity exhibited from the possession of new items (Deutsch & Theodorou, 2010). Although consumption is used to mark and mask differences, it also allows a young person to associate to a group, thereby balancing self and society needs. Such phrase “I shop, therefore I am”, stuck, with an unsettling feeling which I cannot completely position myself in.

By studying identity theories have I truly reflected on my past or documented my present. Perhaps because this is the field of my study, or perhaps because it was overdue. My life history or a narrative of my story could have been documented in journals or diaries, but I
never really kept a journal or diary. I am unsure if my events and activities would have been related as being organised in chronological order or viewed randomly resting on important milestones, or whether they would have focused on my feelings that may have instigate my thoughts and behaviour. It may have perhaps included matters involving my educational achievements, my spiritual searching, and the different interactions and relationships with family and friends; it is difficult to declare. What I have come to appreciate is that articulating experiences emerges from more of what I do, rather than who I say I am, and these actions may reflect the society in which I belong to, giving a sense of my social networks. Narrating my story through a description of my activities and actions would reflect areas of my identity.

Other than the youth identity theories explored here, there are also other theories that relate to person being of a specific ethnicity - namely post-colonialism and intersectionality - and I use these theories to I explore my history and social structures that may have help in constructing my identity. This involves my ancestral homeland Yemen. My parents grew up in Yemen and spent most of their youth years there. My father grew up in Aden, during the time Britain colonisation Yemen, but only came to Britain for work later. My parents were keen on taking advantage of the resources and education in Britain, while keeping into contact with the history, traditions, and culture of Yemen – the best of both worlds. Being part of the society that you live in while remaining in contact with your ethnicity and origins was important to my parents. Being British and Yemeni at the same time has meant that I can self-categorising myself in specific national cultural practices while at the same time retaining aspects of older ethnic and cultural practices, modifying them as I live in my everyday practices.

I feel that for me cultural identity is a combination of my ethnic and national identity. Britain is my home, I only knew Yemen when I visited it with members of my family, but I feel more associated with this country, the people, and its way of living. Although I prefer to speak in English, I am also bilingual; speaking Arabic is part of the construction of my identity. I hardly cook Yemeni dishes but I enjoy Yemeni cuisines and, at family gatherings at my parents, usual Fridays (a culturally and religiously significant day) and my mother would make Yemeni dishes. My family would at times sit together on the floor to eat. We
attend family weddings and birth practices, and this allows us to practice our traditions and customs. There are also aspects of my ethnicity that is driven by my religious affiliation. This all allows me to fit into the society I live in without losing my roots.

I understand Intersectionality as means of enriching the understanding of cultural identity of a minority group settled in Britain, such as the Yemenis. The interactivity of social identity structures such as race, class, and gender in fostering life experiences is vital to my being. I adhere to both my Yemeni and British cultures and customs in the activities I perform in my daily life. The social structures I am born with makeup areas of my identity. Therefore, intersectionality can be used as an analytic lens to discuss matters that are more related to power and discourse, prejudice and discrimination, individual and societal view.

Linking between identity and personality is tricky. I have taken many personality tests (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003; Morgeson et al., 2007b; Cloninger, 2008), and although I find these have elements of truth, they are at times inconclusive and changing depending on different social contexts, relationships and circumstances. Personality testing processes and choices often depends on what angle the person is wishing to find out about themselves, and so used to evaluate the personality of a person. However, using self-report personality tests in personnel selection contexts comes with its limits (Morgeson et al., 2007a; Paulhus, Lysy, & Yik, 1998; Morgeson et al., 2007b). I claim that to better understand personality, there needs to be an exploration of actions in daily living. This is where the conduct of everyday life becomes operational. The conduct of everyday life, as articulated by Dreier (2011) reports the theory of a person in the order and arrangement and situated participation and movement in which I involve myself in. This includes my social contexts, social practices, and social arrangement in which I am part of. This will build on my activities and skills and is developed through change and reflection. Together, they build my biography and thus the conduct of my everyday living.

So, I go back to the question on identity: Who am I? Personally, I feel this is a combination of agency and structure – agency constituting the body, mind and soul, and structure as the society, the inputs receive from my surroundings. The environmental factors I choose to be
surrounded by, the places and people, my goals, purpose, all assembling to construct who I am. It is also my thinking, feeling and behaviour – the processes that happen inside myself. It is in simple terms: it is the way I look at myself and the way I look at the relationships I put with others. This includes my daily actions, my dress, what I choose to eat, what I talk about, how I listen, how I write, how I avoid harm directly and indirectly to myself and to others, how I deal with others, how I control my emotions, and from there everything else will follow.

From this articulation, I show how identity and personality are divergent entities of each other but that serve one other to bring about the unique and individuality of me as a whole person. I understand that my personality is the way I act – which is not set and changes as I experience day to day life activities. It is a matter of nature (genetics) and nurture (development), where personality defines how I think (cognition), how I feel (emotions) and how I act (behaviour). However, my identity is the essence of who I am – this may morph slightly during my life. My identity is composed of my driving force, my principles, core values and philosophies that is continuously being filtered through moral standards. And therefore, personality is the way I portray or live my identity.

Through this exploration, I believe that the actions and activities I do give the sense of who I am, my identity, my personality, and my experiences in the conduct of my everyday life - a practicality application. This allows the collective and constant interaction between thinking and doing. With a collection of experiences and experiences, I feel that there are moments of reflexivity resulting in modification, change and development and this gives a greater sense of identity. I am a female student and hold my Yemeni ethnicity and my British nationality as essential elements of my being. I am the mother of two young boys and so my interest in unravelling the identity of British Yemeni young people and understanding how this may be of importance in their experiences, continues to be of personal significance to me. Islam, as my religion, plays an important part in shaping who I am and is often the driving force for my daily activities because it provides a deeper purpose and meaning to my being. I also hold a strong belief that the society that I live in, directly and indirectly, shapes me, and contributes to my views and experiences.
Appendix C – Interview guide

**Semi-structured interview guide**

1) Ask participants to arrange their photos according to the time the photos were taken – this gives them a chance to get comfortable in the surrounding and changes the power dynamics between the researcher and participant.

2) The focus is on actions, and activities of the day - refer to the research questions as a reminder of the aim of the study. The participant may wish to deviate from this, allow it, to an extent, and then go back to the focus.

3) Start by asking an open-ended question – for example: “So, tell me about your day?” This will give a sense of calmness and allow participant a chance to start the dialogue and articulate his/her day in a manner fitting to them.

4) Ask for reasons why a task was done and what is the meaning of such task to the participant. This will allow the participant a chance to justify, if possible, such action.

5) Keep the interview flowing towards conversation about the activities of the day – ask questions such as: “So, what happens next” or “What do you do next?”. Beware of gaps in time and ask about what happened in between certain activities if the time gap is big.

6) Ask about if these activities are repeated in other routine or enriching day setting. As this research only looks at four days of the participants life, it can only give a snippet preview of what the participant does. Asking about whether this is what happens usually and ask about differences may give further insight.

7) Examine areas of social structures within the participants’ life and ask about how these structures affect or change, if it does, their activities.

8) Ask about the different context the participant experience in their lived life. This will come from their photos, however, further explore these areas examining the subjectivity of the persons social context.

9) At any point where the participant feels embarrassed or quietened, then give the participant a chance to pass or move on. This gives the participant the chance to take control again of the interview procedure.

10) Only asked about feelings and memory when the conversation flows that way. People tend to associate activities with feeling and emotions as well as thoughts and memory. Avoid asking too much about the past, focus on the present and the activities that practically give a sense of the participants lived life.

**Interview guide to support semi-structured interview.**

The top priority questions are in bold and there is a general classification of second and third tiers of question that may be raised if time permits.
Appendix D – Participant information sheet (PIS) and consent form

Understanding British Yemeni young people’s experiences

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

This PIS should be read in conjunction with The University privacy notice.

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project to explore British Yemeni Young people’s (BYYP) experiences in their daily lives. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether you wish to take part. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Who will conduct the research?

I, Huda Ahmed from the Manchester Institute of Education will conduct this research. The address is The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.

What is the purpose of the research?

The main aim of this research is to explore BYYP’s relational experiences of their daily lives. By providing a platform for young person’s voice, I aim to give an opportunity to BYYP to express their views and concerns using photo voice methods in a semi-longitudinal study.

Why have I been chosen?

You are chosen because you are British, fall in the age range investigated (16-19), and of a Yemeni heritage. There will be a total of 6 participants in this study, working independently.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You will be asked to produce a photo-diary, using a disposable camera that I will provide for you, of two full days in a week, one during a typical weekday of your choice, and another during a weekend. I will then print the photos and arrange an interview to discuss these photos. The interview will be audio-recorded.
What will happen to my personal information?

In order to undertake the research project, we will need to collect the following personal information/data about you:

- The photos you have chosen to take. You will be taking the photos of your lives using a disposable camera that I will give to you and we will discuss these photos in our interview session. Your photos should not consist of any notable faces or distinctive objects that will give away for identity.
- The audio recording will consist of your voice, and mine, only.
- The recordings will be used only for the purpose of the research. Only the research team will have access to this information.

We are collecting and storing this personal information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 which legislate to protect your personal information. The legal basis upon which we are using your personal information is “public interest task” and “for research purposes” if sensitive information is collected. For more information about the way we process your personal information and comply with data protection law please see our Privacy Notice for Research Participants.

The University of Manchester, as Data Controller for this project, takes responsibility for the protection of the personal information that this study is collecting about you. In order to comply with the legal obligations to protect your personal data the University has safeguards in place such as policies and procedures. All researchers are appropriately trained and your data will be looked after in the following way:

Only I, as the researcher, will have access to your identifiable information and I will be anonymising the data. I will be retaining your contact details for use in completing this research, as Identifiable data will be anonymised as soon as the objective of the project allows and the standard retention period for data once anonymised is 5 years.

I, as the researcher at the University of Manchester as well as my supervisors, will have access to your personal identifiable information, that is data which could identify you, but they will anonymise it as soon as it is practical to do so. I will be contact you similar time next year to be able to examine if there are any changes to your experiences. However, your consent form will be retained within the University for 5 years in accordance with the University of Manchester regulations.

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you, including audio recordings or photographs. This is known as a Subject Access Request. If you would like to know more about your different rights, please consult our privacy notice for research and if you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL. at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office, Tel 0303 123 1113
Will my participation in the study be confidential?

Your participation in the study will be kept confidential to the study team and those with access to your personal information as listed above. Recordings will be used to create transcripts that I will be doing myself. All personal information that easily identifies you will be removed in the final transcript, using pixelation. The photos and audio recording will be protected and kept secure under the University of Manchester regulations, and in accordance with the university retention schedule. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the recordings and photos.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. However, it will not be possible to remove your data from the project once it has been anonymised and forms part of the dataset as we will not be able to identify your specific data. This does not affect your data protection rights.

Audio recording is essential to your participation in the study, and should you be uncomfortable with the recording process during the interview you are free to ask me to stop recording at any time.

Will my data be used for future research?

When you agree to take part in a research study, the information about you may be provided to researchers running other research studies in this organisation. The future research should not be incompatible with this research project and will concern education and social departments. These organisations may be universities, NHS organisations or companies involved in health and care research in this country or abroad. Your information will only be used by organisations and researchers to conduct research in accordance with the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research.

This information will not identify you and will not be combined with other information in a way that could identify you. The information will only be used for the purpose of health and care research and cannot be used to contact you regarding any other matter or to affect your care. It will not be used to make decisions about future services available to you.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

There will be no payment given to any participants in the research.

What is the duration of the research?

The duration of the interview will include three meetings. The first is to explain the process and give out disposable cameras and the second is to collect the cameras so that I can print the photos. The third will take 1 to 3 hours, depending on how much you would like to talk about your photos and daily experiences. You are welcome to take any breaks, should you require it.
Where will the research be conducted?

The research will take place either at your desired college, after contacting and receiving consent from them, or otherwise at a public café, in Moseley, in Birmingham, where there is access to public transport and parking facilities. The café is quite during the mornings and there is a family room on the second floor should you need any additional privacy.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The outcomes of the research, the photos taken, as well as the results of the interviews, will be published in thesis, journals, and other academic articles.

Who has reviewed the research project?

The project has been reviewed by the University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee on 4/10/18.

What if I want to make a complaint?

Minor complaints

If you have a minor complaint then you need to contact the researcher(s) in the first instance. These can be send to myself, Huda Ahmed, via contacting me by email on huda.ahmed@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk, or my supervisor Professor Carlo Raffo on carlo.raffo@manchester.ac.uk or alternatively you can contact Professor Raffo on 0161-275-3282

Formal Complaints

If you wish to make a formal complaint or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact

The Research Governance and Integrity Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 275 2674.

What Do I Do Now?

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the researcher(s) huda.ahmed@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk or by phoning Professor Carlo Raffo on 0161-275-3282.

This Project Has Been Approved by the University of Manchester’s Research Ethics Committee [ERM reference number]
Understanding British Yemeni young people’s experiences

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Initials</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet (Version 1, 04/10/18) for the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</td>
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<td>2 I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself. I understand that it will not be possible to remove my data from the project once it has been anonymised and forms part of the data set. I agree to take part on this basis.</td>
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<td>3 I agree to the interviews being audio recorded.</td>
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<td>4 I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books, reports, or journals.</td>
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<td>5 I agree for you to use any photos which I have taken for your research for the purposes you have described in the attached participatory information sheet.</td>
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<td>7 I agree that the researchers may retain my contact details to provide me with a summary of the findings for this study.</td>
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<td>8 I understand that my data will remain confidential and agree to the use of anonymous quotes.</td>
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<td>9 I agree that any data collected may be archived and used as anonymous data as part of a secondary data analysis process</td>
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<td>10 I agree to take part in this study</td>
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**Data Protection**

The personal information we collect and use to conduct this research will be processed in accordance with data protection law as explained in the Participant Information Sheet and the Privacy Notice for Research Participants.

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<th>Name of Participant</th>
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<th>Name of the person taking consent</th>
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[The consent form will be kept within the University of Manchester storage and no extra copies will be made]
Appendix E - Application to submit the thesis in Journal (Alternative) Format

Faculty of Humanities

SEED Journal Format Theses – Application Form

This form is issued by School of Environment Education and Development and should be used to apply to the PGR Committee for approval of a student wishing to submit a thesis in Journal Format Theses, as described in the Policy on the Presentation of Theses (February 2017).

- FAQ’s in relation to this can be found at - Journal Format PhD Theses FAQ’s

Any candidate wishing to submit their thesis in journal format must first discuss their intentions with their Supervisory Team, and present an outline of the proposed thesis structure. The application must be submitted before the end of year two for full time students and the end of year four for part time students. The application should specify why the Journal Format thesis is more appropriate for the research project and demonstrate how the student will take full advantage of the journal format

All information contained in this form will be treated as strictly confidential.

When completed, this form and any supporting documentation should be returned to your Postgraduate Research Office – pgr-seed@manchester.ac.uk

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<th>SECTION 1: PERSONAL DETAILS</th>
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<td>Current Programme End Date</td>
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**SECTION 2: APPLICATION DETAILS**

*I am applying to submit my thesis in a Journal Format. The reason for my request is: (please provide as much detail as possible)*

I have chosen to submit my thesis in a Journal format based on discussions and guidance with my supervisors. My thesis title is: An exploration of the experiences of British Yemeni young people through the conduct of everyday life. Such exploration represents an original contribution to the field of research theoretically, conceptually, and methodologically. British Yemenis are one of the oldest communities to migrate and settle in the UK and have been under-represented in academic literature. The voice of young people from within this community have previously been overlooked. This research provides an opportunity to redress this imbalance through an exploration of the everyday experiences of British Yemeni young people.

Theoretically, the outputs present reports the finding of the study which contribute to academic literature on the cultural identity of British Yemenis young people, contributing to the body of sociological research that focuses on issues of ethnicity and diaspora in the living experiences of culture and structure. Conceptually, the papers contribute to the application of Dreier’s theory of a person that focus on personality and the conduct of everyday life, with additions of Roth’s understanding of personhood in practice as well as incorporating an analytic lens of intersectionality and post-colonial theory to theorise identity. The methodological contribution – ability to access materials (both photos and interviews) from an ethnic minority that is private/closed. This opens opportunity for other studies on Yemenis in Britain. Thirdly, the publication outputs cover different yet associated themes from which such publication can be generated.

There will be three outputs which will be done in journal format.

| I confirm that an outline of my proposed thesis structure is attached to this application | Yes |
I confirm that the information I have given is correct to the best of my knowledge and that I fully understand the implications of this change to my current programme of study.

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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Huda Ahmed</td>
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SECTION 4: SUPERVISOR SUPPORT DECLARATION

A supporting statement must be provided below by the main supervisor if a supporting letter/email has not been provided/attached.

I have seen Huda’s draft papers and also the connecting text that articulates the unity of the study. I completely support Huda’s application for Journal Format thesis and her proposed papers and journal selections.

I confirm that I support the application submitted by the student.

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<tr>
<td>Main Supervisor</td>
<td>C. Rafio</td>
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<td>8 July 2021</td>
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SECTION 5: TO BE COMPLETED ON BEHALF OF THE SCHOOL PGR COMMITTEE

As Chair of the School PGR Committee I have considered this application and the decision is to:

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Please state below, any conditions attached to the approval, reasons for rejection or further information required before approval can be granted.

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<tr>
<td>Signed</td>
<td>Dr Steven Jones, Director for Postgraduate Research</td>
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Appendix F – Permission to submit the thesis in Journal (Alternative) Format

Huda Huda  
Student ID: 9937654  

Sent by email to: Huda.ahmed@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

25 November 2021

Dear Huda,

**Application: Submit Thesis in Journal Format**

I am writing to you regarding your recent application to change your mode of study. The Director of Postgraduate Research, Dr Laura Black, acting as the Chair of the Postgraduate Research Committee of the School of Environment, Education & Development has considered your case and has approved your request to submit a thesis in Alternative Format.

Please note that before you can submit your thesis you must give **Notice of Submission at least 6 weeks** before the submission date. The Notice of Submission form is available online via eProg, which you can access with your normal University username and password at:

[https://app.manchester.ac.uk/eprog](https://app.manchester.ac.uk/eprog)

If you have any questions regarding any of the above, please contact your divisional administrator.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Jones  
Doctoral Services Administrator

Cc Carlo Raffo  
Susie Miles