Literature-Based Character Development & Islamic Children's Fiction: A Study with American Muslim Children, American Muslim Writers and Middle Eastern Muslim Children

F. Gilani-Williams

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the University's requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2015

University of Worcester

Abstract

This study was an investigation of whether Islamic children's literature could empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. The research question was further delineated into three objectives

a. What is Islamic children's fiction?

b. To what extent does current Islamic children's literature contribute to this through understanding the motives and purposes of those who wrote it?

c. What insight can we draw from social/moral/multicultural education?

This study arose from an awareness and concern for individual, community and global harmony. The promulgation of human kindness and consideration is essential in order to respect the rights of all individuals. If children can recognise the fundamentals of human rights and understand that human rights are inviolable for themselves and for others, then they are in a much stronger and more informed position to contribute to and create a better world.

The initial focus group for this study was Islamic school children in Western lands and Western Islamic writers. As a result the reconnaissance phase was conducted in the USA with Muslim children. However, the research was later moved to the Middle East. Although the Middle Eastern children like the American children were a homologous group in the sense that they were all Muslim, they were also a heterologous group because of their parent's diverse national origins. Since the study sought to determine whether Islamic children's fiction could empower Muslim children to change their negative behaviour the study did not alter from its initial focus despite the change of geographical location. However, the geographical location did create a difference because of some cultural behaviours and attitudes in the Middle East being different to those in America.

As this study was initially concerned with literature-based character development in Western Islamic school settings, Western Muslim writers constituted the focus group. The motives and purposes of the writers had relevance for the Western Muslim child mostly in terms of sense of place, visibility, positive identity and bibliotherapy. These elements were also transferable to the Middle Eastern child especially those who were marginalised through having different nationality.

The methodological approach for the study utilized action research. Action research was conducted with female Muslim children aged between eight and ten. A baseline assessment was conducted using a questionnaire. A cycle of specifically written stories were used to engage thought and discussion on oppression and empowerment. Data was gathered through pupils' work, parent questionnaires, field notes, interviews and observations. In addition teachable moments were reflected on and carpet discussions were held daily to encourage familiarisation and application of the terms 'right thought', 'right speech', 'right action' and 'wrong thought', 'wrong speech' and 'wrong action'. It was found that a combination of these interventions allowed most students to develop their personal, social and spiritual

understanding.

The methodological approach for the second objective used life story methodology. Six writers from the USA, one writer from Canada and one from the UK took part in the study and responded to various questions about their lives. The responses illuminated interesting points about the development of Islamic children's fiction and its purpose. This study also focused on what insight could be drawn from social / moral / multicultural education. As a result this study has introduced a new term, qissa-ihsan or biblioihsan which is complementary to bibliotherapy and aligned to the personal, social and spiritual development of Muslim children. The concept of qissa-ihsan or biblioihsan was formed as a means of empowering Muslim children who are suffering difficulty and hardship.

Finally, in the absence of a theory that promotes an Islamic *Weltanschauung*, Islamic Critical Theory was adapted from Critical Theory to give an Islamic worldview. This was developed using Horkheimer's three criteria definition of a critical theory. It can be argued that Islamic Critical Theory is a new theory in as much as textbooks on theories do not include it. This study outlines the characteristics of Islamic Critical Theory showing Islam has an emancipatory proclivity and ties these to give historic origins dating to the re-emergence of the Islamic message in the Arabian Peninsula. Islamic Critical Theory was used to underpin this study.

Key words: Islamic children's literature, Islamic Critical Theory, personal, social and spiritual understanding, character development, Muslim children's authors, bibliotherapy, biblioihsan, qissa-ihsan, action research, life story

Dedication

This study is dedicated to a man who doesn't need to read it, my father, Shabbir Husain Gilani and to a lady who won't read it, my mother, Munir Fatima Bukhari. Thank you for teaching me my duty to God and the world. I love you.

Acknowledgments

Declaration

I certify that all the material in this thesis which is not my work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Glossary of Terms

Abaya - cloak worn by Muslim women.

Abbasid - The Abbasid dynasty descended from an uncle of Muhammadﷺ and ruled the Muslim world from 750-1258 CE.

Ablution - ritual wash before prayer

Adhan - call to prayer

Ahadith - (singular hadith) sayings and actions of Muhammadﷺ.

Alhamdulilah - praise God

Amal-ul-salihat- good deeds.

Asr - name of the 3rd prescribed prayer and also a chapter in the Qur'an.

Biblioihsan - derived from bibliotherapy, it is concerned with enhancing *Islamic spirituality or love for God through books.*

Caliph- title given to leader by Muslims.

Eid – Islamic celebration.

Hadith – (plural ahadith) saying and actions of Muhammadﷺ.

Hanafi - one of the four schools of thought in Sunni Islam, named after Abu Hanifa.

Hanbali - one of the four schools of thought in Sunni Islam named after Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

Hanukkah – A Jewish holiday celebrated in December.

Hijab - head covering.

Ibn Hanbal - Muslim scholar and theologian 780 – 855 CE.

Inshallah - God willing.

Islam - monotheistic faith followed by Prophet Adamﷺ and introduced to the Arabian Peninsula by Muhammadﷺ.

Jama'a - group.

Kwanzaa – an African American celebration honouring African American heritage.

La ila ha ilal la - The Declaration of Faith meaning there is nothing worthy of worship other than God.

Madrasah - school.

Malaki - one of the four schools of thought in Sunni Islam, named after Malik bin Anas.

Masjid - mosque.

Mashallah - whatever God wills or what God wishes to do He does.

Muslim - a person who submits to peace – mu means of and slim means peace. A Muslim is a follower of the teaching of the Qur'an.

Nicab - face covering.

Niyyah - intention.

Otherisation - is a sociological term where an imagined superior group ascribes imagined inferiority to another group.

Qissa-ihsan – is the Arabic for biblioihsan - derived from bibliotherapy, it is concerned with enhancing Islamic spirituality or love for God through books.

Qur'an - The Final Testament, the last divine book revealed to humankind following the Scrolls of Abraham⸱, the Psalms of David⸱, the Torah or Moses⸱ and the Gospel of Jesus⸱.

People of the Ditch - Ashab-ul- Ukhdud, these were the people who persecuted those who believed in God by throwing them in a pit of fire. This story is related in chapter 85 of the Qur'an.

Salaam - peace.

Salah - worship.

Salat-ul-Dhur - the second prayer or worship after midday.

Samosah - a vegetarian or meat pasty.

Saracens - name given to Arabs or Muslims especially during the Crusades and Roman Empire.

Shafi - one of the four schools of thought in Sunni Islam, named after Al Shafi'i.

Shahadah - Declaration of Faith, stating there is nothing worthy of worship other than God.

Sunnah - the way of Muhammad⸱.

Tadib - good action

Talim - instruction

Tarbiyah - nurturing

Thobe - long garment worn by men.

Wahi - revelation from God.

Wudu - ablution, prescribed washing for worship.

Zakah - charity.

ص –the Arabic letter 'saad' is an abbreviation for 'salallahu alaihi wa salam' which means 'blessings of God on him and peace', this is a salutation said after saying or hearing the name of a messenger of God.

List of Figures

List of Tables

Contents

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of God, is the best in conduct.(Quran 49:13)

The greatest battles of life are fought out daily in the silent chambers of the soul.
David O McKay (Kumar 2006:244)

This thesis is an investigation of a field that has only recently gained academic attention in the West. The research question is concerned with whether Islamic children's fiction has the potential to empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. Muslim scholars have alluded to an educational crisis since the late 1970s (Husain & Ashraf 1979). They were referring to a moral crisis. About this Lemu says, "Unfortunately, much of this moral education does not reach our children for two reasons: (a) they cannot read the Arabic books and (b) the complete translated Qur'an and volumes of Hadith are too advanced for their level of reading" (1999: i). More than thirty-five years on, the crisis is now gaining attention with Western Muslim academics and educators which is evidenced through conference papers and subsequent professional learning communities. Leaders in this area include consortiums such as the Islamic Society of North America, Islamic Schools League of America, Association of Muslim Schools (UK), and the Islamic Teacher Education Program (Canada). General research in personal, social and spiritual education argues that these areas are important for children,

> "schools need to refocus their energies on building community, on nurturing and enabling all community members to develop as socially and emotionally response-able and morally adept leaders, followers and contributors to school life and well-being" (Harris 2008: 368).

My interest in Islamic children's fiction stems from being a writer of this genre and my inquiry into the personal, social and spiritual understanding is informed through two decades of teaching and management experience in Islamic schools in Britain, Canada and the United States. During my early career in Islamic schools in North America, I observed behaviour that was at odds with Islamic teachings. These observations became part of an ethnographic

study (Gilani-Williams 2000). When I met my first group of Muslim American students their behaviour surprised me. I was a young teacher with many assumptions of Islam and Muslims based on my experiences within England. Amongst the American students I observed colour prejudice, unkindness and inconsideration which was also evident in some adults. How could oppressive behaviours be prevalent in an Islamic milieu? Of course Islam is not alone in labelling these behaviours as reprehensible; mainstream society also finds them culpable as they work against basic human rights. However, what made them remarkable was that they were evident in an institution that was entrusted to promote virtues in children (Gilani 2002).

In my ethnographic study of an American Islamic school (2000), my findings revealed that there were a number of reasons why some staff and children behaved oppressively towards others. The two main reasons were: the hiring of individuals that had no school related educational training; and an almost exclusive focus on standardised achievement tests. Since 2000, Islamic schools have developed and improved considerably in terms of recognising that a programme of study is necessary to address personal, social and spiritual education. In response to this need the *Tarbiyah Project* was developed by Tawhidi and the *I Love Islam* series was developed by Ansari, Yousef and Sadoun. Now that Islamic schools are increasingly focusing on how to improve the personal, social and spiritual development of pupils, attention can be given to how successful these curriculum materials are. This study will be the first of its kind to investigate whether Islamic children's literature can empower the personal, social and spiritual understanding of Muslim children. It will also be the first study that explores Islamic children's literature through its writers.

1.1 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The research question, "Can Islamic children's fiction empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding?" is further broken down into the following three objectives:

a.   What is Islamic children's fiction?

b.   To what extent does current Islamic children's literature contribute to this through understanding the motives and purposes of those who wrote it?

c. What insight can we draw from social / moral / multicultural/ education?

This thesis arises from an awareness and concern towards community and global harmony. We live in a world which is becoming increasingly smaller due to advances in transportation

and communication. The world conforms to common standards which can be seen in various social places where strangers meet such as hospitals, cafes and airports. The promulgation of human kindness and consideration is essential in order to respect the freedom and rights of all individuals. The concept of freedom and human rights I believe should be taught to children so that they can identify it, exercise it and know when it is being violated. Children are the future inheritors of the world. If they understand that freedom and human rights are inviolable for themselves and for others, they will consider making positive contributions to their community. If attempts are not made to contribute to a child's personal, social and spiritual understanding then we can expect to see children themselves oppressed and oppressing others. If Islamic children's literature can help towards developing a child's character positively, then it can serve as a useful tool in promoting human rights and freedom within Islamic schools and by implication in wider society.

The purpose of the study is not just concerned with the here and now of how students should acknowledge and promote human rights but there is also a far reaching collective responsibility of humanity to strive towards social justice to create a harmonious world: a world in which nations extend hands to acknowledge and respect the diversity of humankind; a world in which honourable conduct is encouraged and esteemed. As McKay (Kumar 2006:244) said, the only battles that need to be fought in this world are the "greatest battles of life" which are "fought out daily in the silent chambers of the soul." This study investigates whether stories are a viable path to develop positive character within a child. Can stories encourage students to correct the inappropriate behaviour they inflict on other children when no adults are present? Can stories inspire children to step in and come to the aid of the victim? Can children transfer a story character's success into their own lives? The ultimate aim of this study is reflected in Al-Attas's words.

> "Muslim educators unanimously agree that the purpose of Islamic education is not to cram the pupil's head with facts but to prepare them for a life of purity and sincerity. This total commitment to character-building based on the ideals of Islamic ethics is the highest goal of Islamic education" (Al-Attas 1979:104).

"Purity and sincerity" is not restricted to rituals rather they embrace all aspects of a person's life including education, work, family and community. When interacting with the living world or the environment the highest ideals should be applied and the very least of these are justice and kindness. This study therefore seeks to investigate how a commitment to personal,

social and spiritual understanding can be realised. It uses action research to share Islamic children's fiction. It investigates through a series of cyclical steps if there is a change in the understanding of children. Islamic Critical Theory is the theoretical perspective that underpins the research. The action research cycles were developed with consideration to child empowerment by firstly allowing them to share their experiences and secondly by encouraging them to feel positive about encouraging each other to do the right thing.

To date very little research has been conducted on Islamic children's literature, which shares a similar timeline with Canadian children's multicultural literature. I compare Islamic children's literature to the latter in particular because multicultural literature seeks to give Canadian children a sense of visibility and national identity distinct from an American and British identity. This is similar to the aims of Islamic children's literature which is also concerned with identity. The importance accorded to children's literature in Canada can be demonstrated through the commitment of the premier of Ontario who allocated

> "$80 million in additional funding for elementary school libraries. The funding is intended to help all elementary schools add books and alternative formats of print-based resources to their kindergarten to grade 8 library collections"(Howson & Edwards 2009:1).

The Canadians are convinced about "the importance of providing children access to Canadian books that tell Canadian stories with Canadian settings, and celebrate Canadian values" (Howson & Edwards 2009:2). In addition to library funding there are other initiatives that have been implemented. For instance, the University of Winnipeg has a degree program concentrating on Canadian Children's Literature and a journal. The Canadian Children's Book Centre is "dedicated to encouraging, promoting and supporting the reading, writing, illustrating and publishing of Canadian books for young readers" (Canadian Children's Book Centre). Set against the huge strides that have been made in Canadian children's literature one can see the rather obscure and miniscule advances in Western Islamic children's literature. This study, therefore, makes a contribution by investigating Islamic children's literature as a newly developing genre in the West. As a result this study hopes that more academic study is initiated in this field.

1.2 The Researcher: Reflexivity, Positionality & Subjectivity

This study uses an interpretive paradigm which consists of observations and interpretations. With any research it is important to discuss reflexive practice where the researcher "bares all" (Down, Garrety & Badham 2006:26). This is where the researcher asks, "How does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affect data collection and analysis?" (Pillow 2003: 176). In order to provide positionality and perspectives on subjectivity or bias these are questions that will be responded to in this section. According to Mack (2010) "all research is subjective" because the mere act of selecting one paradigm over another signals a subjective orientation. However, by self-disclosure the researcher is able to "look at the data thoroughly so that the data informs the researcher about what is going on in the environment, instead of the researcher's own preconceptions" (2010: 8).

The researcher's life experience and perspectives are important because they inform the study overtly and covertly, consciously and subconsciously. "In the process of knowledge creation and transfer ... Whether the lens of positionality is turned towards the researcher or trained on his/her informants, acknowledgment of standpoints is critical in understanding knowledge produced in the course of field research" (Chacko 2004:57). Self-disclosure and subjectivity are vital because "the investigator and the investigated object are assumed to be interactively linked, with the values of the investigator ... inevitably influencing the inquiry" (Guba & Lincoln 1994:110).

The ontological perspective that permeates this study resonates of an Islamic worldview that is embedded in Qur'anic teaching. My interpretation of the Qur'anic message is one of recognising God's purpose for humans and ensuring that purpose upholds justice, kindness, charity and patience. This study is informed by many of my life experiences and perspectives but four in particular. One as an international educator, two as a writer, three as a reference librarian and four as a Muslim woman with family members who are not only Muslim but also Christian and Jewish. As a teacher my experiences include private and public schools in the UK, USA, Canada and the Middle East. Most of my experience has been as a teacher in American Islamic schools which initially and predominantly served the American-Arab population. In these settings I saw behaviours from Muslim children that were at odds with Islamic teaching. I consequently began to address my concerns. How I did this illustrates how I analyse and look for solutions.

My earliest intervention in addressing my concerns about behaviour in the 1990s was through visiting Christian stores and selecting posters and books that spoke about kindness, sharing, cooperation and caring. I then began to write stories on these positive character traits. I was essentially writing "mirror books" (Bishop 1990). Extrapolating on Bishop's idea, 'mirror books' promote positive self-esteem in children. They begin by focusing on the child's family, home, community, lifestyle, clothes, food, school, daily practices and religion. They reflect the child and validate her or him, yet they do not encompass that which is foreign in the child's everyday life. 'Window books' is another term that Bishop discusses (1990) this term refers to those texts which develop a child's comfort with what is foreign. Window books teach children respect and consideration for diversity, differences and unfamiliarity. I understood the need to create 'mirror books' to cultivate positive self image. I began to work on stories shortly after I graduated as a primary school teacher.

My stories were written in 1994 and later compiled by a Muslim publisher into *The Adventures of Musab* (Gilani 2002). It was not that I was avoiding Muslim resources to teach values which were plentiful through ahadith rather what I needed for my pupils were visual displays of appropriate behaviour. Muslim publishers were not yet producing posters of animate objects so these had to be sourced from Christian bookstores. Creative activities also seemed to be lacking in Islamic schools. For instance Eid was celebrated by an Islamic school with a food party and little else. This reminded me of my childhood where I found Eid to be a boring time. No one at school had heard of the holiday. My teachers and classmates mistakenly referred to it as the 'Muslim Christmas'.

There was very little about Eid that could be likened to Christmas. For instance there were no stories, games, decorations, crafts, movies or songs associated with Eid. Eid was simply a time of new clothes and money gifts. As a teacher working in Islamic schools I would try to create games, stories and recipes for my students which I transferred from my experience of holidays in England and the USA. In December 2002 I was at my local public library in the USA looking through Christmas books and Hanukkah books which I brought home for my daughter. That year Eid also happened to fall in December. Despite it being observed by a billion followers the public library had not a single story about Eid. Yet Kwanzaa which is more obscure had been allocated one shelf of library space. The invisibility served as a springboard to write Eid stories. In 2005 I began to work as a reference librarian in an American public library. When I mentioned to my supervisor that there were no Eid stories

she suggested a number of initiatives that would give Eid more visibility in American public libraries. She stated that the American Library Association advocated for diversity and development of library collections and services and produced the following quote.

> "Diversity is a fundamental value of the association and its members, and is reflected in its commitment to recruiting people of color and people with disabilities to the profession and to the promotion and development of library collections and services for all people" (ALA 1996).

Being in the milieu of an extremely well-resourced library and a director who promoted visibility for all groups allowed me to not only get insights into children's publishing but also attend library conferences and promote Eid stories to children's librarians. This resulted in an article that was published by the *Schools Library Journal* (Gilani-Williams 2007).

Being married to an American who comes from a Judeo-Christian background also has positionality with the study. My family members consist of Jews, Christians and Muslims similar to the early Muslims at the time of Muhammadﷺ. This has generated an attitude of harmony and acceptance with interest about each other's beliefs. My father became a Muslim in his late thirties; his influence of embracing all faiths and cultures accentuates my philosophy as a teacher, writer and librarian. I believe in world peace and looking deeper and working harder to make the world a better place for and with everyone.

Self-disclosure allows a study to reflect how a researcher's past experiences not only affect data collection and analysis but also informs the study. Insights and experience from being a female minority in the West, belonging to a multifaith and multicultural family with experience in educational institutions brings a richer and deeper perspective to the study and how I relate to data and analysis. Throughout the study there are reflections on "who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel" (Pillow 2003: 176). Some researchers believe that "subjectivity is a strength of qualitative research" (Crusoe 2001: 39; Weller et al. 2013: 4). Crusoe (2001) argues for the importance of "researchers to reveal their own feelings and personal reactions" but she cautions that one must have the ability to "differentiate between revealing feelings and imposing judgements" (39). This section not only provides the reader with a wider understanding of the researcher's viewpoints but also allows the readers to determine the extent to which the researcher's subjectivity and positionality strengthen and weaken the study because

> "The task at hand is to create an interpretation of the setting or some features of it to allow people who have not directly observed the phenomena to have a deeper understanding of them" (Feldman 1995: 1).

1.3 Justification for the Study

My early experiences in American Islamic educational settings provided the context for the research and situated the problem. In 1977, the First World Conference on Muslim Education was held at Makkah in Saudi Arabia with the theme, "Basis for an Islamic Education." One of the established views culminating from that meeting concerned the purpose of Islamic education, describing it as the "total commitment to character-building" (Al-Attas 1979:104). More than three decades later, my observations revealed that there continues to be short-comings in the expected outcomes of character-building. As Memon observes, "Islamic schools have by and large accepted the mainstream model of education [with] its overemphasis on standards [and] testing" (2006). If Islamic schools and their stakeholders want to see competent and responsible Muslim youth who can function and contribute to a multicultural world, then they are failing by not delivering the character developing tools children need to survive and navigate the world. The willingness to give an education that prominently addresses personal, social and spiritual understanding though present in Islamic schools is still lacking clarity.

Within Western Islamic schools teachers of Islamic studies are evaluated on how well pupils recite the Qur'an, recall Islamic historical facts and read and write the Arabic language. With the constraints of the school day and with overwhelming curriculum content, teachers are not able to fully reflect on character development. The Council on American Islamic Relations posted the following hadith (saying of Prophet Muhammadﷺ) on its website:

> "Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said: "Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind" (Al-Bukhari & Muslim).

Good relations and peace are concerned with personal, social and spiritual education. This hadith gives impetus to the importance of character building and positions it as being more superior to Islamic rituals. Reciting the Qur'an, fasting, worship and charity are behaviour modifications and can only be beneficial if the person is applying them to promote justice, peace and kindness otherwise they are meaningless.

Media reports about Islamic schools are generally negative (Paton 2008). Islamic schools are seen with suspicion and scepticism with heightened negativity during and after the 9/11 tragedy. Critics view Islamic schools as centres of religious apartheid antagonistic to diversity (Ahmad 2014; Moosavi 2005:41). They believe such institutions indoctrinate children shaping them into deviant individuals unfit to function in Western society.   As a result most of the academic literature that exists on Islamic schooling and Islamic education tends to deal with issues of ideology and function. As such the corpus consists mainly of Islamic school history, pedagogy, assimilation and identity construction. Continuous negativity has kept Islamic schools in a perpetual motion of apologetics.

The Islamic schools movement has suffered from under-development resulting from limited financial support, poor professional influx and hence little academic interest. Zine states, "few studies have explored the social and cultural dimensions of Islamic schooling and their implication for diasporic Muslim communities" (Haddad 2009: 40). Consequently there is virtually no data on what kind of an environment exits within Islamic schools in terms of personal, social and spiritual understanding. Subsequently, if a problem is not discussed then a solution is not sought. But clearly problems do exist as evidenced by my research in the 1990s and 2000s (referenced above).

My teacher-observations identified behaviours such as racism, lying, impatience, name calling, disrespect, cheating, and very occasional incidences of vandalism and stealing. These behaviours may have manifested because there was little time allocated to character development. Most would agree that an unfettered indulgence in these negative traits destabilizes "peace and good relations" on a micro and macro level. Chapter Asr (Time) further stresses the need for behaviour regulation stating,

1. By (the Token of) Time (through the Ages),
2. Verily man is in loss,
3. Except such as have faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of truth, and of patience and constancy (Qur'an 103).

According to Qur'anic instruction destructive actions such as lying and impatience are harmful to the human condition. Moreover, it is not acceptable to just exhibit truth and patience individually instead there is encouragement for collective practice or "mutual teaching". It is not enough to be law abiding by oneself rather the challenge is to be proactive in developing a community that is caring.

Many of the early problems in the American Islamic schools were a result of poorly qualified and poorly trained staff. In the early 1990s, the problems identified at one Islamic school were due to staff not knowing basic rules of classroom management compounded by a principal who refused to address behaviour concerns. It was common for staff to complain about the lack of respect students had for teachers. One teacher remarked,

> "I taught at one Islamic school for two years, those kids were so polite, *Mashallah* [whatever God wills], so polite ... These kids here are so bad!" (Gilani-Williams 2000: 63).

An African-American parent commented on the racial abuse her six year old son suffered at the school.

> "It's not just here. The other weekend school we were at, that was really bad. Those kids would punch and kick Amir, they would call him names they would hit his little sister...I didn't want to tell him to hit them back because I want him to know that Muslims are like brothers ... How can I tell my child to love people who hurt him? ... I don't want my son in a school where he's been treated like this" (Gilani-Williams 2000: 69).

After speaking to the Principal the mother removed her son saying that the Principal was not receptive. The mother felt that the African-American community was not valued by the Arab community and accused them of colour prejudice. A convert American teacher related how he had arrived at the school for an interview and while he was standing in the mosque, a student ran up to him and kicked him on his legs. "You could go to any church, any kingdom hall, you'll never find a kid run up to you and greet you with a kick" (personal communication, August 1993).

A supply teacher who occasionally covered for absent staff said she found the discipline at state schools better than at this Islamic school. "It's the worst school I've ever taught at." During a staff meeting with volunteer college students, one of the teachers addressed the volunteers saying, "If you have any suggestions for disciplining these kids then please let us know because we don't know what to do!" A teacher pleading for advice from undergraduate science students further alluded to poorly qualified staff and poorly trained administrators. Criticism of the school did not just come from oppressed teachers, but also from dissatisfied parents and discontented students. In response to a question of what students liked and disliked about the school, one Year 5 student wrote, "Its islamic, its dirty, too strict, too

mean. too weard (sic), it doesn't have a gimnasiam(sic) not the right teachers, very small" (Gilani-Williams 2000: 59).

A girl from Year 10 said, "We're burned out, there's so many restrictions. They keep finding new rules every week and they embarrass you. None of us want to come back next year." A Year 11 girl spoke of the Principal's stinging words berating her for her choice of clothes. "You are representing the school not your family!" A board member asked if his out-of-state, visiting nephew, an 8th grader could attend the school for a week along with his cousin who attended the school. The boy was permanently excluded by the Principal after two days for a string of offenses. In a meeting the Principal remarked, "Why is it that our students are so quick to copy the behaviour of bad children? Some of them, they have been here for years, are so shy, so weak to correct the bad behaviour." It was a poignant remark, why was it that students who role-modelled appropriate behaviour were not strong enough to speak up and discourage their peers from wrong actions? Bystander apathy (Coloroso 2011: 50) is an important behaviour that will also be discussed in this study.

I contend that the problems at the school resulted from the lack of opportunity for personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU). By PSSU, I am not referring to three minute reminders that certain actions are right or wrong nor am I referring to a "word of the week". I am referring to a focused investment of time which targets values and actions and provides a clear and ongoing process for their implementation. How much would a child grasp if a lesson in history or physical education was delivered in five minutes? Consider a lesson on division, if most students do not understand then the teacher re-teaches. Even to the very last child, steps of intervention are taken to try a variety of ways of re-teaching division. The teacher remains steadfast until the child understands the concept. Understanding honesty, understanding kindness, understanding justice needs the same kind of intervention. It is because time was not allotted to PSSU that unacceptable behaviour such as racism, bullying, stealing, vandalism, disrespect, cheating, teasing, and lying were evident.

Over the years, Islamic schools have improved; this is evident from lower teacher turn-over, the recruitment of qualified teachers, qualified principals and the improved behaviour of students. Nonetheless it remains the case that PSSU needs to be delivered with more effectiveness. Al-Attas maintains that "the purpose of Islamic education is [the] total

commitment to character-building" (1979:104). This study therefore investigates a process for promoting character development, using children's Islamic fiction as a cyclical intervention.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

In forming the theoretical framework I chose to use an interpretive and critical perspective underpinned by an Islamic worldview. However, the literature I studied was Anglocentric, and Americentric. In other words I read about critical theory and critical pedagogy as it pertains to the dynamics of the West with the exclusion of Islam. I was looking for a similar discussion on an Islamic critical theory. However, I did not find any such chapter in qualitative research texts in university libraries nor in search engines. Generally Western scholarship does not equate Islam with freedom but rather with oppression, hence the scarcity of texts on Islam and its social critique. When no theory from an Islamic worldview or perspective was available I developed one from Critical Theory.

In order to map out the study it is important to draw up a theoretical framework. Such a framework provides insight into the philosophical outlook of the research and links the theoretical to the practical aspects of the research. The starting point of which is to select and justify methodologies that will help answer the research question. I selected the methodologies of action research and life story (Etherington 2009). Since these involved individuals it was necessary to consider ethical implications to ensure that participants were safe from psychological, financial or social harm (Polanski 2004: 53, Chaitin 2003: 1145). Ethical precautions were undertaken through the principle of informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were adhered to where necessary and applicable. In addition established procedures from the University of Worcester were followed including data protection through password protection and data locking.

 The justification for selecting action research was concerned with "empower[ing] the powerless and transform[ing] existing social inequalities and injustices" (McLaren 2005:186). 'Critical' is used as a reference to Critical Theory, which is to go beyond the mere description or analysis of what is and to push the analysis into a framework of what could be (Ulichny 1997: 144), that is, asking what is fair, just and ideal, in opposition to racism, sexism or any other form of oppression. I wanted see if it was possible for children to

improve their character through a thought process initiated by Islamic children's fiction. Can students be equipped through fiction to engage in positive behaviours? Action research is a methodological vehicle that can provide a testing ground for questions such as this. Similarly life story is interpretive and gives the insider's perspective on why they act the way they do. Life story is also empowering in that it allows the subject to be in control of their story. There are a number of different ways that Islamic children's literature can be examined. I wanted to examine it from the perspective of its writers in order to project their purpose and motivations. Crotty's schema has been used to map out the theoretical framework (1998:4-5).

Theoretical Framework	
Epistemology	Constructivist
Theoretical Perspectives	Interpretivist, Critical
Methodology	Action Research & Life Story
Methods	Observation, discussion, documents, qualitative life story questionnaire

Figure 1.0 Theoretical framework

My ontological position is constructivist. My epistemological approach is interpretivist. Constructivism is concerned with "multiple representations of reality", and the "complexity of the real world". In terms of an educational environment, constructivism is concerned with "knowledge construction rather than knowledge reproduction." Most importantly these types of learning environments "encourage thoughtful reflection on experience" and "collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation, not competition among learners for recognition" (Jonassen 1994:34).

Action research and life story fit into the paradigm of constructivism, the individual is active and reflective, attempting to make changes, the individual is not passive. The construction of meaning is not static but fluid. Meaning is derived from symbols and conventions. Within different cultural settings these conventional meanings guide belief, behaviour and actions. Constructivist epistemological perspectives rely on interaction and interpretation in order to discover what is happening. The researcher sees people as the integral element in the investigation.

Some may feel that constructivism is a misfit within an Islamic worldview in which Islam is said to be unchangeable. This view is based on Qur'anic verses which suggest that the Qur'an is immutable. Such as,

> "We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)" (15:9).
> "no change can there be in the words of God" (10:64).
> "(Such was) the practice (approved) of God among those who lived aforetime: No change wilt thou find in the practice (approved) of God" (33:62).

Consequently, it can be asked how can constructivism be integrated within Islam. Since constructivism is based on human perception and resonates around encountering reality through the five senses it is changeable and in a state of flux. In defence of this approach I argue that Islam can be delineated along two paths. I use what Saussure calls the langue and the parole (Chengappa 2003, Byram & Hu 2013: 396) which I have represented in the image below.

Figure 1.1: Representation of the langue and parole

The langue does not change. It remains the same. However, the parole is concerned entirely with how humankind encounter the world. Their perceptions therefore vary from individual to individual.

> "*parole* is individual. It is subjective to the accidental circumstances of the act in time and space. However, it leaves speakers a certain liberty for their creative imagination. Acts of speech may contain elements which are not covered by the regularities of the language. Whereas *langue* represents the essential of language, which binds speakers by rules, *parole* represents the circumstantial" (Byram & Hu 2013: 396).

I argue that the Qur'an is the langue, the rule book. The rules do not change. The parole however, is the interpretation that is applied to the langue. This varies according to the time and environment the individual has been raised in. Moreover, it fortifies the Islamic belief that all humankind will be judged separately because every individual's interpretation of God's message is unique to herself or himself. Humankind is therefore judged on their individual interpretations. "Every soul draws the meed of its acts on none but itself: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another" (6:164). In conclusion, constructivism is a viable theoretical lens for this study because it depicts the parole. Below is an overview of the theoretical framework for the study.
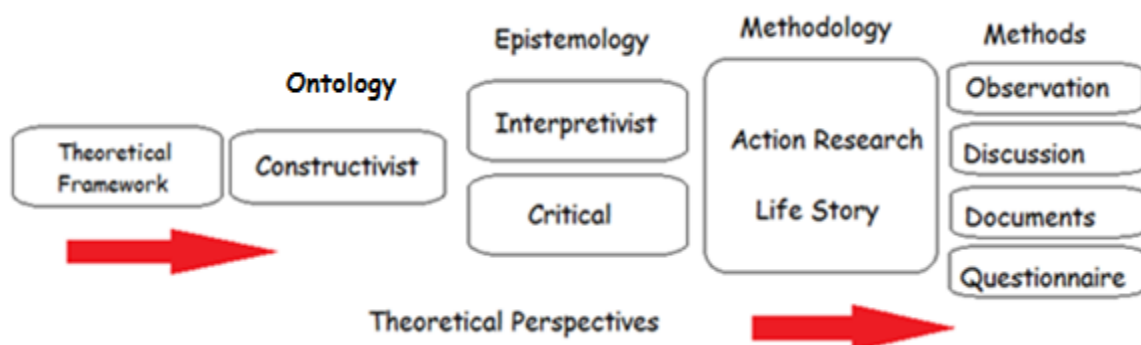
Figure 1.2 Overview of theoretical framework

My epistemological approach is interpretivist and critical. The interpretive approach is "designed to describe and interpret an experience by determining the meaning of the experience as perceived by the people who have participated in it" (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Srensen 2007: 461). This approach gathers data through inductive means such as interviews, discussions and observation. Critical research is concerned with enabling emancipatory results. Such research is generally concerned with social critique where norms are challenged with the intention of exposing oppression and domination. According to Cannella and Lincoln (2009:54), critical research is concerned with who is assisted, privileged and established and who is hindered, oppressed and disenfranchised. Those who employ a critical paradigm in their research are trying to bring improvement. They help to uncover injustice and empower the oppressed.

One of the problems that confront Muslim university students is that textbooks on theory do not reflect an Islamic worldview. Such texts by their nature negate the existence of God.

Muslim researchers, however, have ontological and epistemological assumptions that validate God. A helpful way of explaining this can be shown through a study discussing science education in Malaysia which is imparted using Western curricula without reference to God. Western texts for primary or secondary schools invalidate God. Regarding the perceptions of students who study these texts Robottom and Norhaidah argue:

> "Recent research in science education in Islamic contexts reveals discord experienced by Islamic teachers and learners of traditional western science ... further study of such discord may benefit our understanding of the constructivist hypothesis in science education – that learners construct their own meaning and understanding in ways shaped by their own beliefs, assumptions, traditions, experiences, culture – indeed by their identity and biography" (2005:5).

Unlike Western thought, Islam sees no dichotomy between science and religion. As a result the Malay students and their teachers found it problematic to embrace a perspective on science that exclude God. In a similar way I experienced the same problem as a Muslim researcher. Islam shapes "beliefs, assumptions, traditions, experiences, culture" and "identity" (2005:5) and these do not fit into a paradigm that omits God. As Robottom and Norhaidah further elaborate,

> "The dissonances experienced by Islamic learners in science education contexts exceed the formation of alternative conceptions of western science subject matters – they are of a far more fundamental philosophical nature, entailing issues of epistemology, ontology and religious commitment" (Robottom & Norhaidah 2005:5).

The Islamic belief system informs ontological and epistemological ideas which need to be acknowledged.

> "To dismiss such dissonances as 'misconceptions' (a phrase commonly used within constructivist research to describe instances where learners re-construct taught science concepts in ways that differ from teacher-sanctioned and textbook-codified science) reflects a totally inadequate conceptualisation of the tensions involved in such contexts. Constructivism as a set of theories about the way learners learn needs to embrace such dissonances – to recognise that these dissonances may be seen as expressions of an expanded conception of constructivism" (Robottom & Norhaidah 2005:5).

It is important to disclose the philosophical stance of the researcher so that there is an understanding of the researcher's assumptions. Therefore, this study rests on an ontological stance that resonates with Qur'anic ideas. Consequently the interpretivist epistemology rests

on an Islamocentric worldview. Action research provides the methodological considerations for the study on whether Islamic literature-based character development can assist students in developing their personal, social and spiritual understanding. In addition moral and learning theories are used to provide explanations about how children may develop as they engage with the stories.

The study also develops an Islamic Critical Theory adapted from Critical Theory which underpins a critical Islamic pedagogy suggested by Waghid (2012). Critical Islamic Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy underscore the action research. Critical Islamic Theory underscores the life story methodology. In Chapter Six I elaborate further on the theoretical and conceptual framework in terms of Critical Theory.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and justifies its need. It also situates the positionality of the researcher. Chapter Two is a literature review of Islamic children's fiction and its emergence providing an insight into definitions of what Islamic fiction is and briefly discusses those who write Islamic fiction for children. Chapter Three discusses the purpose, experiences and motivations of the writers of Islamic fiction using life story methodology. This sets the scene for the later discussion of the extent to which Islamic fiction has addressed moral/social/multicultural issues. It also gives us a rounded and nuanced view of the current state of Islamic fiction for children.

Chapter Four discusses the learning and moral theories that provide insight into how children learn. Chapter Five is a review of personal, social and spiritual education (PSSE) with a brief overview of its provision in England, USA and Canada to gain insight into social / moral / multicultural education. Also included is a section on literature-based character development research and Islamic PSSE. Chapter Six is concerned with the theoretical and conceptual framework discussing Islamic Critical Theory and critical pedagogy. Chapter Seven discusses the methodology together with the methods used to collect and analyse the data. It presents an understanding of action research and life story and elaborates on the research designs. Chapter Eight presents the data analysis and interpretation of the action research conducted. Chapter Nine presents conclusions, recommendations and outlines how the study has made a contribution to knowledge.

PART 1: ISLAMIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND ITS WRITERS

CHAPTER TWO ISLAMIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

2.0 The Emergence of Islamic Fiction

In Chapter One the research question was introduced and I provided justification for the need to identify strategies for delivering personal, social and spiritual development programs in Islamic schools. This study is a response to that need. I further clarified and expounded on my positionality by drawing on my background to illuminate any weaknesses and strengths that I may bring as a researcher. In addition the theoretical and conceptual framework was introduced to show the study's alignment to an Islamic *Weltanschauung*. This was necessary in order to remain faithful to the principles of empowerment and critical research which this study seeks to embrace.

For the research question, "Can Islamic children's fiction empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding?" this chapter provides a literature review on the first of the three delineated objectives which are:

a. What is Islamic children's fiction?

b. To what extent does current Islamic children's literature contribute to this through understanding the motives and purposes of those who wrote it?

c. What insight can we draw from social/moral/multicultural education?

Islamic children's literature has not yet been recognised as a classification by the Book Industry Standards and Commissions (USA) or Book Industry Communication (UK). Companies like Gaylord provide book spine labels for libraries to classify books as Jewish Holiday, Christian Fiction, Jewish and Young Adult Christian Fiction. However, Gaylord does not have any spine label for Islamic or Muslim literature. This underscores the point that public libraries do not have a significant numbers of Islamic books suggesting its general meagre presence. This explains the obscure academic position of Islamic children's literature. It has not yet gained recognition. For instance when looking through the archives of children's literature journals such as: *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books,* the *School Library Journal*, *The Lion and the Unicorn*, *The Looking Glass*, *The Horn Book*, *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, *Children's Literature in Education,* and *The*

Journal of Children's Literature Studies there are virtually no references to Islamic children's literature written by Muslims.

However, one journal has attempted to highlight literature that includes Muslim characters or Islam. A special issue featuring children's literature of the Islamic world was published in 1997 by *Bookbird*: *A Journal of International Children's Literature*. Four main articles dealt with various elements of children's literature, but only one dealt with Islamic children's literature which was Tasneema Ghazi's *Islamic Literature for Children Adopts the English Language*. Staples's discussed authenticity on writing about the Islamic world. Garret compared Islam to other belief systems in West African children's literature; and other articles discussed India's Birbal and Akbar, the changing image of Arabs in hostage dramas and Iranian children's literature alongside the Iranian revolution. Islamic children's literature, however, has not been revisited by *Bookbird* in the last 18 years although there are now more Islamic children's publishers and writers to warrant this.

Books for Keeps has reviewed books and written articles about Islam and Muslims. In 2002 an editorial discussed concern for the increase in anti-Islam (Aroian 2012). It highlighted a publication by the Runnymede Trust which stated a consequence of anti-Islam was "injustice, characterised by social exclusion; a sense of cultural inferiority among young British Muslims; and an increasing likelihood of serious social disorder" (Runnymede 1997: iii). *Books for Keeps* noted that according to another British study after the tragedy of September 11 the "British Muslim community was facing unprecedented hostility" (Stone 2002:2). The editor's remark underscored the scarcity of children's Islamic literature (Maughan 2003) stating, "It was also striking how few titles, both fiction and non-fiction, we could find to recommend in this Guide relevant to the contemporary realities, history and culture of the British Muslim community and of Muslims in the wider world"(Stone 2002: 2). More poignantly the editor asked,

> "But what about the depiction of Muslims of whatever nationality in the books available to young readers in Britain? When racial violence is so clearly linked to anti-Muslim prejudice, there is a pressing need for books which challenge distorted and negative images. In our March edition, BfK will carry the first of a number of articles on this important issue" (2002:2).

Torsten Janson produced the only English study investigating children's Islamic literature. His book, *Your Cradle is Green: The Islamic Foundation and the Call to Islam in Children's*

Literature (2003), was published in Sweden. Janson was concerned with understanding the production of children's literature in light of the tradition of dawa (inviting others to Islam) and how it had been renegotiated in a British setting. *Your Cradle is Green* investigates an Islamic publishing house, the *Islamic Foundation* and its production of children's books geared towards English speaking Muslim children (2003:13). Janson's study focuses on the "social concerns of the literature" (2003:17) making clear that his thesis, "neither deals with the reception nor the impact of the Islamic children's literature" (2003:17) but acknowledges that the socialisation cannot be overlooked and therefore his study does deal with "specific social conditions and perceptions" (2003:17). The observation that Islamic children's literature gathered 'historically scant interest' (Janson 2003:19) remains largely true to the present day. There has not been any significant interest in Islamic children's literature compared to children's Canadian multicultural literature which shares an identical timeline.

2.1 Pioneers of Islamic Children's Literature

The pioneers of Western Islamic children's fiction initially focused their writing on the prophets ﷺ and companions of Muhammad ﷺ (Sardar 1978; Feroze 1976). Murad (1982) and Kayani (1981) wrote a series of Islamic hero books. These books were based on ahadith and therefore were not considered fiction but historical. Sajda Nazlee, a British writer, began writing levelled reading books for children in the 1990s. Her books include the *Imran Learns* series and later *The Twins* mystery series. Yahya Emerick, an American, was the first writer to refer to his stories as Islamic fiction. He began with *The Seafaring Beggar and Other Tales* (1992). While working as a teacher in an Islamic school, Emerick noticed that there were no fictional tales that promoted an Islamic identity for his students. Susan Omar wrote *New Friends New Place* in 1993 which was the first book published by the Islamic Foundation, UK with British Muslim characters. In the same year, the American *Invincible Abdullah* series was written by Uthman Peter Hutchinson (American Trust Publications). A landmark book was *Zaki's Ramadan Fast* by Ann El-Moslimany which was probably the first hardback picture book written and produced by Muslims. The Islamic Foundation produced a number of other books set in contemporary Britain including *A Caring Neighbour* (1996) by Karema Bouroubi, and Razana Imtiaz's *A Gift of Friendship* (1997). The *Islamic Rose* series (2005) was written by Linda Delgado in the USA. *Cinderella: An Islamic Tale* (Gilani 2010) synthesised Islamic belief into a traditionally Western story to create a literature that demonstrated religious-cultural hybridity.

Many Islamic fiction writers in Britain and North America are from Christian backgrounds and therefore bring a comparative perspective. Delgado (2011) says that when she became aware of the disparity in books for Muslim children she began to write Islamic fiction. Similarly Emerick says "I felt compelled to begin writing some short stories I could share with the youth. I had never been a writer before" (2007). Emerick later produced the *Ahmad Deen* series in 1993 followed by the *Layla Deen* books. Within Canada a similar venture was initiated by Canadian writer Rukhsana Khan who wrote *The Roses in My Carpets* (1998) and *Muslim Child* (1999) both of which were published by a non-Muslim Canadian publishing company. About the latter title she recalls at the time Muslim publishers were unwilling to publish it.

2.2 The Paradigm Shift

As a participant writer, I contend that Western Islamic children's literature experienced a paradigm shift during the 1990s. The types of books that Islamic publishers were producing in the 1970s were limited to stories about the prophets ﷺ and companions of Muhammad ﷺ (Sardar 1978; Feroze 1976). These stories were initially without illustrations. This can be tagged as the first stage where authors' national origins generally came from countries outside the West. The second stage was marked by the inclusion of inanimate objects and later animate objects but these were restricted to abstract art and here again the authors remained non-Western (Murad 1982; Kayani 1981). The contemporary third stage which generally began in the 1990s was marked by authors being indigenous converts or first generation Muslims. Their stories were located in a Western setting with the inclusion of realistic images. Writers of this stage have generally sought to Islamize their respective indigenous cultures to reflect their Islamic belief system (El-Moslimany 1994; Messaoudi 1999). These authors ventured to give Muslim children a sense of place in the West which was something that mainstream Western children's publishers had continued to ignore.

However, even Islamic publishers were at first not supportive of Islamic fiction as Rukhsana Khan remarked regarding her *Muslim Child* (1999). It is possible that Islamic publishers were initially hesitant to publish Islamic fiction based on their interpretation of the Qur'anic verse, "those who purchase idle tales, without knowledge (or meaning), to mislead (men) from the Path" (31:06). Fiction was generally construed as unislamic and by some groups it still is. Similarly the avoidance of animate objects was based on the interpretation of the following

hadith narrated by Bukhari, "Those who make images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them: 'Bring to life that which you have created.' *Little Explorers* a UK based Islamic magazine for children for instance does not depict eyes, mouth and nose on faces.

The appearance of animate objects transitioning from abstract illustrations to representational illustrations and stories moving from Muslim populated lands to Western lands can be attributed to a range of factors, including generational change in editorship, illustrators and authors. The authors in the 1980s wrote from a foreign perspective limiting Islam to Arab lands. They failed to speak in terms that were familiar to the cultural language of the indigenous. This also served to further otherise Islam. Otherisation is a sociological term. It refers to a "crudely reductive process that ascribes or imagines superior identity to the Self and an imagined inferior identity to the other" (Kamaravadivelu 2008: 16). The otherisation therefore was not only being caused by the indigenous non-Muslim population who saw Muslims as outsiders, but also by the power élite Muslims who controlled publishing. These Muslims appeared to equate Islam with their own homelands based in the East and not the new Western countries where their families were being raised or where the indigenous people were embracing Islam.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Muslim publishing companies in the United Kingdom were mostly influenced by individuals from the Indian Subcontinent, however, since the 1990s and 2000s a growing number have been influenced by indigenous Muslim converts from North America or Britain (Gilani-Williams 2012).This group, along with second and third generation Muslims, interpret Islamic teaching with a different religious-cultural lens. Their religious-cultural lens does not otherize stories that are generally associated with British literary heritage because they consider it to be their heritage.

Throughout the 2000s, the Islamized Cinderella manuscript was presented to various Muslim publishers. This manuscript was not a Cinderella based in Eastern lands such as Shirley Climo's *The Egyptian Cinderella* (1992) and *The Persian Cinderella* (2001) or Rebecca Hickox's *The Golden Sandal: A Middle Eastern Cinderella Story* (1999) but was an indigenous Western Cinderella situated in the West and Muslim. The manuscript of this Islamic adaptation was rejected by Muslim editors. Cinderella, a popular Western story character did not fit into an identifiably Islamic persona, therefore, it was declined by those

whose origins were not Western. Where concerns for the preservation of cultural heritage are an aim, stories might be seen as "an integral part of the process by which nation states create themselves and distinguish themselves from other nations" (Corse 1997:7). Since stories are viewed through a cultural lens, eventually it was accepted by a convert Muslim American editor.

Two personal incidents illustrate the notion of boundaries and cultural gate-keeping concerning Islamic children's literature. In the early 1980s a young Muslim acquaintance in England, born in Pakistan, disapproved of the Islamization of English nursery rhymes. Speaking from an immigrant perspective grounded in religio-cultural ideas from abroad, she asserted "We have our own. We don't need theirs". Later in 2004, an American Christian editor criticised the submission of *The Jinn Who Stole Eid* (Gilani-Williams 2003) saying, "You're taking a traditional Christmas story and making it into an Islamic story. This will probably offend Christian readers so we're declining it." Both individuals demonstrated a strong sense of cultural ownership and exclusivity which was tied to their culturally bound designs of identity. However, identities remain in a perpetual state of flux, cultural persistence, and cultural change (Barrett 1984: 218) as hybrid individuals arise who see themselves as belonging to more than one culture. Cultural and religious hybridity therefore, whether invited or not, is challenging perceptions of heritage and identity which has impacted Islamic children's literature.

2.3 Reasons for the Emergence of Islamic Children's Fiction

There are a number of reasons why writers and publishers have advocated the production of Islamic children's fiction. These reasons include a provision for enhancing the personal, social and spiritual understanding of a Muslim child. Muslim children have access to a wide range of fictional stories from the time they begin school; however, books beginning with emergent readers to young adult fiction include very few, if any, Muslim characters. This was apparent in the Islamic schools where I taught in the USA and Canada. There were no stories that gave visibility to Muslim children within the school textbooks. A result of this textual invisibility is that children avoid writing about themselves, their religion and their culture (Gilani-Williams & Bigger 2010, Gilani-Williams 2014).

I came across the phenomenon of self-invisibility while working as a principal of an Islamic Canadian school. A teacher had worked on a story writing project with her children and had invited other classes to a book party where there was an array of international food in the middle of the room. The food varied from Canadian, Somali, Indian, Pakistani, Lebanese, Iraqi, American, Iranian, Syrian, and Palestinian and there may have been more. The food seemed to set the multicultural backdrop of diversity and harmony alongside Islam. The child-authors sat eagerly behind their professionally bound books. As I looked through the books, I gave encouraging words to the children for their wonderful stories and beautiful illustrations. But alongside my appreciation for the children's hard work, I began looking for cultural and religious markers within the stories and illustrations. They were not to be found, not in one single book. The cultural diversity that was reflected in the food had not transferred to the written word.

Every year the school held a culture day inviting people from the community. Differences were positively embraced. Parents were heavily involved. There were attractive, eye-catching displays of clothes, national flags, kitchen ware and household objects. Parents sat at the booths with children and offered explanations accompanied with food and drink about their respective countries. But despite the heavily encouraged visual display of multiculturalism, internationalism and diversity, these things had not transferred to the children's creative writing. The religious dimension and Islamic culture was completely missing from the books that the children had produced. The books could easily have been written by a monocultural class of children from the 1970s in England. The stories espoused and advocated a culture, but the culture resonated only of English names, English norms and English pictures.

A second incident occurred in Canada in which I was looking over eighty mixed age (8- 14) samples of stories to identify writing levels. After reading the first few stories, I stopped scrutinizing the punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting. Something else had caught my attention. I speed scanned the rest of the stories. I was looking for words that reflected the child's everyday cultural and religious identity. The void was apparent again (except for two biographic accounts where children had written about their Eid day). There were no distinguishing elements in these stories that suggested that the pupils were Muslim. Yet the children's everyday actions were overtly Islamic. When they spoke, their sentences were punctuated with salaams (peace), alhamdulilahs (praised God) and inshallahs (God willing). They called the adhan (prayer call) and the iqama (second prayer call just before prayer

begins). Every day they stood together side by side and bowed in worship. They fasted together. They wore headscarves, some wore prayer caps. But these symbols that represented their spiritual dimension did not transfer to paper. There was no evidence of Muslim self-visibility. I would argue that this phenomenon arises from Muslim children not seeing themselves in literature.

Studies show that when children are not visible in the literature through text and image, then they have poor self-esteem. Discussing the absence of positive images for African American children, MacCann and Woodard refer to the power of the image:

> "The visual image is the most engaging of sensory messages ... Experiments in the subliminal suggestion in advertising offer proof of the lingering and insidious power of even the most fleeting visual image to influence decision making" (1985:183).

Chris Myers (2014) reflects on what he refers to as the Apartheid in children's literature drawing attention to the "few thousands" of children's books published each year in America stating that children's books will include "talking animals", "crazy magical futures", "superpowers", "olden days" but not the African-American child "because you're brown." This, despite the

> "mission statements of major publishers … littered with intentions, with their commitments to diversity, to imagination, to multiculturalism, ostensibly to create opportunities for children to learn about and understand their importance in their respective worlds" (Myers 2014).

Children's books commonly discuss themes that are used to encourage children to undertake a grand role in society. Children's books seek to instil a particular ideology and a sense of identity. This allows children to see themselves as purposeful, accepted and needed individuals who can contribute to their comunity. With regard to the Muslim child, can a positive self-image and sense of belonging be nurtured if a child is nourished on books that accord no place to her, her parents or members of her community? As the Runnymede report suggested, "social exclusion; a sense of cultural inferiority among young British Muslims" can lead to an "increasing likelihood of serious social disorder" (1997: iii).

An example of Islamic and Muslim invisibility can be seen in a book written by Deborah Chancellor, published by Dorling Kindersley, *Holiday! Celebration Days Around the World*

(2002). It is aimed at early readers. Listed in the index page are holidays including All Saint's Day, April Fool's Day, Chinese New Year, Christmas, Diwali, Easter, Father's Day, Halloween, Hanukkah, Hina Matsuri, Kwanzaa, Mother's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Valentine's Day. Missing however are Islamic holidays despite the fact those who were responsible for producing the book consisted of a PhD consultant, a project editor, a senior editor and a U.S. editor. These experts failed to notice that the second largest celebration in the world embraced by over a billion followers was missing. When there is a failure or resistance from mainstream publishers to include the culture of Muslim children, this provides another reason for Muslim publishers to take the initiative. Muslim publishers have essentially followed the same path as other minority groups experiencing marginality and invisibility. This deliberate invisibility was the catalyst that triggered the formation of minority publishers.

Back in 1988, Palomino asked, "What about Asian Americans? What are today's Japanese American children and young people finding in public libraries and schools about themselves" (Bacon 1988:125). The same questions can be asked about Muslim children. As an educator working in Islamic schools the creative writing produced by students is remarkable for its total lack of Islamic or even cultural elements outside of the indigenous Anglo-American and Anglo-Canadian culture. That their own daily life and practices are absent in their writing is peculiar. Another possible reason for this lack of self-visibility is their non-familiarity with Islamic fiction. A recent discussion on the forum for the Islamic Schools League of America showed that many schools do not use Islamic fiction for English language lessons (2013). A study conducted on Canadian teachers had transferable elements that I contend are applicable to Islamic children's literature and can offer some illumination on understanding the gap.

> "The study revealed many reasons why teachers do not use Canadian children's literature, among them the perceived high cost of Canadian books (as compared to the mostly American books available through book clubs); difficulty in finding information about Canadian books; the lack of trained teacher-librarians in the schools; and a lack of time to access professional resources such as book reviews, relevant websites, or professional journals. Alberta teachers were also heavily dependent on locally provided in-service workshops and book lists and on the teacher support material provided by textbook publishers (e.g., reading series)" (Bainbridge, Oberg & Carbonaro 2005:3).

The children's Islamic fiction movement on the whole has been very slow. Purchasers of Islamic children's fiction are generally Muslim parents. Very few if any American Islamic schools invest in class sets of Islamic fiction readers. Throughout my career in Islamic schooling, I do not recall having an Islamic fiction class reader purchased by the school. According to Delgado who worked towards making Islamic fiction visible, there are a number of reasons why Islamic fiction is not abundantly available in Islamic schools. She believes those responsible for making,

> "money decisions at masjids rarely provide adequate funding for library books. Most do not even provide any money at all. This is why the schools have annual and/or semi-annual book fairs to raise funds and get parents involved in buying books for their children. Unfortunately Scholastic and other non-Muslim publishing and book retailers have the funds and large inventories of many genres to offer. They give deep discounts, offer free shipment, and give the schools free board games and other educational products as inducements to have their products promoted by the school" (personal communication, June 8, 2012).

Islamic publishers, says Delgado, are unable to compete. Delgado is critical of Islamic school principals and teachers in the USA, who she says,

> "told me they didn't buy Islamic fiction because they did not have time to read the books prior to using them with students. Does this mean they don't read the non Muslim authored and published books? ...Teachers and principals told me that they buy secular books because many have teacher study guides. So I had developed five teaching study guides ... but they still did not buy the novels ... wouldn't even get one copy for review." (personal communication, June 8, 2012)

Delgado's experience is indicative of the current situation of Islamic schools and their lack of interest for Islamic fiction. Interestingly there are some similarities with Canadian teachers and Islamic school teachers. The researchers conclude by giving Canadian teachers a challenge.

> "Finally, we challenge readers of this paper to consider the ways in which they might be complicit in failing to recognize the importance of Canadian children's books in their own practice. The importance of children's books – and of the independent companies that produce those books – are overlooked at our peril" (Bainbridge, Oberg & Carbonaro 2005,14).

The emergence of Islamic fiction resulted from individuals who were responding to the invisibility of the Muslim child. The emergence also supported transferring Islamic

knowledge as it appears in the Qur'an and ahadith (collection of sayings and actions of Muhammad ﷺ). Muslims in England still use the madrasah or mosque to teach their children how to read the Quran. Although some mosques try to include Islamic teaching in the vernacular of the children, most restrict the teaching of the Qur'an to just reading it in Arabic with no translation. As a result, Muslim children do not know what the Qur'an is saying. By creating fiction that contains elements of Qur'anic messages, writers and publishers are making Islamic teaching accessible and relevant to a Muslim child's daily living. They are in effect contributing to the personal, social and spiritual understanding of a child.

Cultivating a sense of place is another reason for the development of Islamic fiction. Islamic fiction gives Muslim children positive visibility in the world. If a story setting is within England, Canada or the USA, a Muslim child can feel acknowledged and recognised which fosters an attitude that s/he belongs. Canada has invested heavily in developing Canadian children's literature so that its citizens have a specific Canadian identity. As Black and Jobe ask:

> "How do Canadian children come to understand and appreciate the uniqueness of Canada and of their Canadian-ness in the books they read? Young people must see themselves reflected in what they read and view so as to develop a sense of identity" (2005).

Similarly it may be asked how do Muslim children understand Islam and their Islamicness in the books that they read? At a detrimental level Muslim children must also see themselves reflected in the books they read to develop their identity. Reading about practices such as visiting a mosque, fasting, praying, giving charity and loving God are important because:

> "Familiar emotions, activities, families, and surroundings are sensed through the depiction of the characters and story settings. To evolve a national identity, youngsters need to develop a sense of place, a feeling of 'This is where I belong'. It is crucial, therefore, that they see their communities, regions and country reflected accurately and authentically in literature. Also, it is equally important for children to gain a sense of their nation's past and the impact of the land on our history" (Black & Jobe 2005).

Stories are a very important self-visibility tool for children. During one school year I was teaching in an Arab elementary school in the Middle East. The children were all Muslim girls. During a lesson I asked the girls to draw pictures of themselves and their family members to accompany work that they had written. Those had been my specific directions.

The girls proceeded to draw images of girls and women who had yellow, brown and orange/red hair. The indigenous attire consisted of black abayas (outer garment) for women and white thobes (long male garment). But the clothes that the girls chose to draw were those that one might suppose would be worn by children living in Britain and North America. There were two exceptions to this; one girl was gifted and the other girl had special needs. Unlike their classmates both girls drew pictures of girls or moms wearing a shayla or head-cover and dressed in black.

I mounted the girls' pictures on the bulletin board along with their writing. My students all had various tones of black hair; moreover, all their mothers wore black abayas and virtually all covered their faces in conformity with their Islamic standards. The next day I asked the girls to look at their drawings. I was curious to know why they had not drawn anyone with black hair and tan skin like themselves. They exuberantly responded that they had drawn American girls. Their response was interesting. It brought an immediate thought of American students and what they would draw if asked to draw pictures of themselves. Would they draw Muslims wearing abayas and head-covers? This incident demonstrated that the children were drawing pictures of images that they saw in books and media which were mostly of Western children minus Western children who were dark skinned and dark haired.

Stella Miles Franklin made a poignant remark when she said, "without an indigenous literature people can remain alien in their own soil" (1956:3). It seems in the case of the Arab Muslim students the Arabic books and media they were exposed to, did not allow them to see themselves. I noted that book illustrations almost exclusively showed people with fair hair or brown hair and pale skin. This point was further corroborated by a leading British children's educational publisher who sold books to the Middle East and India. "The images of the characters in their books are always pale, never dark-skinned" (private conversation 2014).

Another reason for the production of Islamic fiction is authenticity. An authentic voice needs to be heard as MacCann and Woodward note, "The books that reach children should: authentically depict and interpret their lives and their history" (1985:21).There is now an abundance of texts that explain the importance of children's literature promoting minorities. Such literature that gives visibility to the Muslim child allows the child to walk in the shoes of the protagonist with confident self-identity and self-assurance. How often has a Muslim child living in North America been able to take a book from the public library that portrays a

Muslim character in a positive manner? As Canadian writer, Rukhsana Khan notes in *School Library Journal:*

> "A few years ago I came across a *For Better or For Worse* cartoon strip in which Elizabeth and a friend are in a cafeteria. In the background, standing in line, was a Muslim girl in hijab. It gave me a ridiculous sense of joy–of validation–to see "myself" reflected in a cartoon strip. Especially since this Muslim wasn't doing anything bad. No bombs. No threats. No screaming headlines. She was just getting lunch. And she was pretty, too!" (2006).

Khan, echoes the disconcertment of Muslims adding, "The desire to fit in, the intense longing to be part of the community, is hardwired into our psyches. These days this need is particularly critical for Muslim children in North America" (2006). For a practicing Muslim child to truly identify with a character she or he needs to read about religious and cultural markers within the text. Visibility comes with seeing Muslim names that a child can relate to. Similarly, Muslim actions like wudu (ablution), salah (worship), and zakah (charity) provide endorsement. Reference to a mosque, a prayer mat, prayer beads, a kufi (cap) or nicab (face covering), bring familiarity to the text. Faith symbols like fasting or Hajj signal acceptance. The common talk of Muslims that are intermittently dispersed with subhan Allah (glory to God), alhamdulilah (praise God), mashallah (whatever God wills) and inshallah (God willing) all provide the Muslim child with visibility and acknowledgement. Having a sense of place can be ingrained with reading Islamic fiction. An example of this can be seen in the following extract from *The Lost Ring*:

> "The children played with Grandma, while Dad hung Eid lights outside and around the doorway. Soon it was time for *Salat-ul-Dhur*. Rahma's brothers Taha and Hamza, laid out a sheet on the floor for everyone to pray on. Then Hamza called the *Adhan* and Dad led the prayer. When everyone had finished the prayer, Grandma made some tea for the adults and hot chocolate for the children. Meanwhile Mum began to prepare the *samosah* mixture for the children" (Gilani-Williams 2007: 9).

Another purpose of Islamic children's literature is that it is problem solving in that it invites choices and decisions on ethical matters pertaining to justice, truth and kindness. These are focus areas in my own writing which is informed by the behaviour of my students. Similar to other children's literature, Islamic children's literature also seeks to focus on social justice. Stories that focus on characters who achieve their goal or come to a better understanding of their situation project the genre as emancipatory. Since "Muslim educators unanimously agree" that the purpose of Islamic education is the "total commitment to character-building

based on the ideals of Islamic ethics" (Al-Attas 1979:104), I contend that Islamic children's fiction is a tool to aid that goal.

2.4 A Definition for Children's Islamic Fiction

I came across only two definitions relating to fiction that are based on an Islamic world view. Delgado defines Islamic fiction whilst Ahmad defines Islamic science fiction. These definitions however refer to adult fiction but may also include children's fiction. According to Delgado,

> "Islamic fiction refers to creative, imaginative, non-preachy fiction books written by Muslims and marketed primarily to Muslims. Islamic fiction may be marketed to mainstream markets, too. The content of these books may incorporate some religious content and themes, and may include non-fictionalized historical or factual Islamic content with or without direct reference to the Qur'an or the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh). The stories may also include modern, real life situations and moral dilemmas" (2010).

She elaborates further saying,

> "Islamic fiction authors intend for readers to learn something positive about Islam when they read Islamic fiction stories ... Islamic fiction does not include harmful content: vulgar language, sexually explicit content, unislamic practices that are not identified as unislamic, or content that portrays Islam in a negative way." (2010).

Ahmad defines Islamic science fiction as,

> "any speculative story that is positively informed by Islamic beliefs and practices ... that strives to state the existence of the One God ... that exhorts universal virtues and/or denigrates universal vices ... that deals in a positive way with any aspect of Islamic practices, like hijab, fasting, etc ... that features a Muslim as one of its main characters and the actions of this Muslim in the story reflect Islamic values ... which takes on one or more elements from the Qur'an or the teachings of the Messenger." (2010).

Whilst Delgado's definition is comprehensive, her dismissal of preachy books may exclude those books that are overtly didactic. Moreover her opinion that Islamic fiction "may incorporate some religious content and themes" gives a fuzzy and unclear idea of what Islamic fiction is. Ahmad on the other hand provides a more succinct concept of Islamic science fiction which can easily be applied to Islamic fiction. There does not appear to be any significant difference. Since there has not yet been a specific definition of Islamic children's

literature, I provide one drawing on the present definitions and on my study which promotes an emancipatory perspective.

> Islamic children's literature is defined as stories that reflect Islamic beliefs and teachings and strive towards personal and social improvement or personal and social justice to make the world a better place.

2.5 Religious and Cultural Hybridity and Islamic Children's Literature

The definitions of Islamic fiction and Islamic children's fiction provide an idea of how this genre differs from other types of children's literature. Islamic children's literature can be said to be confessional, preachy or message driven. It also reflects religious and cultural hybridity. This point can be argued using *Cinderella An Islamic Tale* (Gilani 2010). At an international conference in Rome on the topic of Cinderella, a space was provided for the discussion of my broadly Islamic version. The choice by the indigenous British illustrator, Shireen Adams, to geographically locate the supportive illustrations on the Iberian Peninsula of Europe, specifically in pre-Spanish Andalusia, reinforced her Western perspective. Although both myself as the writer and Shireen as the illustrator had constructed the story as a Western tale, it was instead received as a Middle Eastern tale by conference attendees. It seems that cultural exchange and the production of cultural hybridity in Western Islamic fairy tales was largely overlooked. This might account for the general failure or resistance to locate *Cinderella: An Islamic Tale* within the West. Hence, I believe the platform at the conference to discuss this phenomenon was timely (Gilani-Williams 2012).

This interpretive disparity in viewing Cinderella as a Middle Eastern tale rather than a Western tale suggests that there might be a persistence amongst non-Muslim Europeans and non-Muslim North Americans to otherize Muslims, despite Islam's common origins with Judaism and Christianity (Levenson 2012:8). Muslims who are indigenous to the West are usually not Arabs rather they constitute a diversity of white Europeans much like the earlier Romans and other nations of Europe who underwent a cultural process of Christianization. In fact, much of Mediterranean Europe's ethnic and racial composition from Andalusia to the Sicilies to Albania was at one time simultaneously Muslim and Caucasian (Weaver 1949).

The production of cultural hybridity in Western Islamic children's fiction has a fairly recent history (Hutchinson 1992; Emerick 1996; Khan 2002; Delgado 2003). This includes the sub-genre of Western Islamic fairy tales (Gilani 2010; Gilani 2013; Gilani 2016). Previous

Muslim writers sought to convey Islam through oriental story plots that situated the tale within another culture. They wrote from a foreign perspective situating Islam in Arab lands. Failing to speak in terms familiar to the cultural language of the indigenous paradoxically served to further the orientalization of Islam, which further "hides historical change" (Said 2003: 334). When we consider how the Germanic tribes, as newly-converted Catholics, Christianized their culture (Murdoch & Read 2004:93) and then turn our attention to contemporary Western indigenous Muslims – we witness a similar cultural adaptation as they work to Islamize their cultures. This can be demonstrated by McDermott's (2007) Islamization of English nursery rhymes and Hutchinson's (1992) Muslim adventure heroes in the *Invincible Abdullah* series.

2.6 The Permissibility of Islamic Fiction

Since the inception of Western Islamic children's literature there has been a debate in various Muslim discussion groups on the permissibility of fiction. Some see it as beneficial and entertaining. However, others believe it is forbidden to produce or read suggesting that Islamic fiction is an oxymoron. Muslim critics in online discussions concerning the reading of fiction, say that fiction is akin to "idle tales" which distracts people from the message of God. This view is based on their interpretation of verse 6 in chapter 31 of the Quran.

El-Shamy writes, "Islamic teachers, who assumed the responsibility for telling the best and most truthful narratives, considered narrating for entertainment an idle activity that bordered on violation of religious doctrine" (2005: 244). I contend that children's Islamic fiction is not a form of "idle" tale but rather is concerned with a child's personal, social and spiritual understanding. As such it does not seek to mislead children nor does it seek to ridicule the teachings of God. Rather Islamic fiction seeks to encourage children to enter "a truly human condition" with the hope of rescuing them from every "kind of barbarism" (Adorno & Horkheimer 1997: xi). Islamic children's fiction serves as a form of empowerment because it gives voice to those who are "silenced or marginalised" (Bercaw & Stooksberry 2004). It allows Western Muslim children to see themselves in the setting by stepping into the shoes of story characters who bring about positive and emancipatory transformation. This gives a sense of self-worth and a sense of belonging.

The Islamic Writers Alliance has a website called *Questions and Answers About Islamic Fiction*. Here it responds to those who question the permissibility of Islamic fiction. Some Muslims wonder whether fiction is a form of lying and therefore not acceptable in Islam. I contend that lying is not synonymous to Islamic fiction. Lying alludes to something negative that deceives or hurts. The function of Islamic fiction is not to hurt or deceive. The Qur'an itself uses "mithaal" or examples or parables as a way to give advice and counsel. "We have put forth for men, in this Qur'an every kind of Parable, in order that they may receive admonition (39:27)." Islamic children's fiction is one way that children can understand Islamic teaching through the actions of characters. Lemu's (1999: i) point that moral education is not reaching Muslim children because they cannot read Arabic or it is too difficult to understand can be addressed in part through Islamic children's fiction. Western Islamic children's fiction does two things. One, it puts the teachings of Islam into the vernacular of the children; two, it shows the application of verses of Qur'an and ahadith. It allows children to reflect on values such as responsibility, honesty, patience, kindness and courage and also on personal weaknesses and negative traits.

2.7 Message Driven Stories

Specialists in children's literature claim, "no text is innocent" (Stephens & Watson 1994:14). Others note that, "all texts embody an ideology; all texts foreground some ideas and suppress or omit others" (Bainbridge, Oberg & Carbonaro 2005:1). That said Bainbridge, Oberg and Carbonaro also note that, "it is important to recognize that ideologies are not necessarily undesirable." Since we strive to live in a world where free will is encouraged, the emphasis should not be on censorship or exclusion but on educating readers how to be critical in order to develop their own preferences. Children should be taught skills for text analysis because:

> "The values which shape a book are the author's politics. The promulgation of these values through publication is a political act ... most of what children read is filled with ideology ... whether consciously promulgated by the authors or not ... ideologies have potential powers of persuasion, they are no less persuasive because they're hidden" (Sutherland 1985:157).

There is a general disdain in the West over children's books that are message driven, didactic or 'preachy' as reflected in Delgado's definition of Islamic fiction (above). Publishers prefer to produce books that are fun. However, if it is true that all books have a hidden or covert ideology then all that is really being applauded is how well an author has hidden the message.

Those that are trumpeting the silence of message driven books should consider the counter argument:

> "Those who are threatened – and who fear the work's persuasive power – may try to limit the work's accessibility to young minds; and thus we have ideological rejection of manuscripts by publishers, the writing of negative book reviews to discourage sales, official silence (nonmention) on the part of librarians and teachers, and movers to censorship and banning" (Sutherland 1985:147).

Moreover, there are books written for teens in America and Australia that promote or preach atheism, and promote witchcraft, "the representations of Witchcraft in the mass media and in popular books are overwhelmingly positive. Few other new religious movements have entire shelves in mainstream bookstores devoted to books by practitioners of the religion or magazines" (Berger & Ezzy 2009:504). The general opinion is that children should be able to make up their own mind. As mentioned all books are ideologically motivated, some are more subtle with messages than others. Preachiness therefore becomes a matter of how well a reader is able to identify elements of innocuous or overt indoctrination.

2.8 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the emergence of Islamic children's literature and those who pioneered it causing a paradigm shift both through writers, illustrators and editors. I have discussed the reasons for its emergence and also provided a new definition based on those formed by Delgado, Ahmad and Islamic Critical Theory. I have shown how Islamic children's fiction can also be considered an emancipatory tool. I contended that Islamic children's fiction is not a form of lying but a means of promoting personal and social justice and wellbeing. I also argue that didacticism should not be depreciated in children's literature but simply regarded as an approach that makes its intention obvious.

CHAPTER THREE: THE WRITERS OF ISLAMIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

3.0 Introduction

Having discussed the need and development of Islamic fiction, I move now to examine the motives, purposes and life experiences of some key writers of Islamic children's fiction. In order to do this I have used life story methodology which is related to ethnography (please see Chapter Seven for methodology details). Life story allows the researcher to discuss a person's memories through questioning and interview. Although memories are interpretations of a life, they contribute to our understanding and can be checked with other sources. As Atkinson notes, "What is important is that the life story to be told in the form, shape, and style that is most comfortable to the person telling it" (2002:125). Once data is gathered the researcher then interprets what has been shared. I present the analysis and interpretation in the form of a narrative structure because:

> "Narrative descriptions exhibit human activity as purposeful engagement in the world. Narrative is the type of discourse that draws together diverse events, happenings and actions of human lives" (Polkinghorne, 1995: 5).

Narrative is a favoured method of presenting data analysis and interpretation within qualitative research. Within the field of education day to day events become part of our experiences; and research experience through narrative (Connelly & Clandinin 1990: 18). As Silverman comments,

> "all we sociologists have are stories. Some come from other people, some from us. What matters is to understand how and where the stories are produced, which sort of stories they are, and how we can put them to intelligent use in theorizing about social life" (1998: 111).

For this section, I used both the inductive and deductive approach. Inductively I focused on "where patterns and themes ... emerge[d] from what the research participants" said and did, whereas, the deductive approach involved "returning to the literature that informs ... [the] study and applying pre-existing frameworks and typologies" (Goodnough 2011:41). In reflecting on themes I "identif[ied] reoccurring ideas or patterns in the data." In considering pre-existing typologies and frameworks I focused on invisibility, children's sense of self and identity and empowerment through Islamic Critical Theory.

The earliest writers of Western Islamic children's fiction date back to the 1980s. However, this study is limited to writers from the 1990s and 2000s. This is because the writers from the 1980s were deceased or I was unable to locate them or they declined to participate in the study. The writers involved in this study represent a paradigm shift in Islamic children's literature which until the 1990s generally avoided fiction. Many of the pioneers of Western Islamic fiction were second generation Muslims born and acculturated in the West or came from Christian backgrounds. Editors and writers indigenous to the West transferred their cultural heritage including their awareness of a long tradition in fiction to their Islamic worldview. Their familiarity with fiction was transferred to create a new field of Islamic writing. They adapted their previous culture which had no inhibitions towards fiction to fit into an Islamic form. This phenomenon can be elucidated by Islamic Critical Theory (see Chapter Six).

Islamic Critical Theory is explanatory, practical and normative. In applying it to one aspect of the writers, the explanatory phase asks "what is wrong with the current social reality" (Bohman 1996:190). This research has demonstrated that there is very little representation of Muslim children in children's books. The next phase is the practical phase where actors are identified to change the current reality, that is, the writers. The final phase is the normative phase where transformation occurs. In this case stories have been written, published and presented to Muslim children who can now experience "literary visibility" (Dillon 2004: 34).

As Robbins et al. noted theories of empowerment "provide conceptualizations of social stratification and oppression" and identify "political barriers and dynamics that maintain oppression" and further locate people who have the ability to remove oppression through their "strengths, resiliency, and resources" (1998:89). Islamic Critical Theory as a theory of empowerment (Kazmi 2000; Gilani-Williams 2014) shows how the writers used their own "strengths, resiliency, and resources" to make a positive change.

In analyzing the life stories of the writers Atkinson (1998) believes there are important points to consider which thwart subjectivist attitudes:

> "we do not judge, we make connections. Rather than assuming a stance "over and against" the person telling the story, analyzing, limiting, or classifying the storyteller in anyway, we seek to find the relevance of the story itself ... is there a central theme or pattern to this story?" (Atkinson 1998: 70).

By reflecting on the words of the writers, certain affinities and congruences did emerge through what the writers said, experienced, observed and explained. Although the writers were not connected geographically or through personal acquaintance their experiences had common elements. These common elements helped to illuminate ideas on the general development of Islamic children's literature and their motives and purposes. Some of the experiences of the writers resonated with my own experiences and allowed further insight into the social dynamics that create similar experiences. Atkinson argues:

> "an individual life story may help us understand general development or social processes ... if any part of it connects deeply or clearly with any part of our experience, we know it is not a unique experience and is very likely one that others share" (1998: 70).

A number of themes emerged from the coding phase leading to established themes or prominent themes. In deliberating over the established themes, I began to group them into positive stands and negative strands. The negative strand included invisibility, struggle, bullying, prejudice, immigrant experience, survival, withdrawal, opposition and lack of support. The positive strand included helping, counselling, influential other, compassion, love, encouraging, attentive, justice, identity, empowering, faith, experience in Islamic schools, reading culture, books as friends, internationalism and multiculturalism.

As stated earlier taking an inductive approach led to the emergence of themes through analyzing what the writers said. This approach defers theoretical perspectives until after the data has been collected. Atkinson advises that "especially for life story interview ... it would be best to at least suspend theoretical assumptions until after the interview and see then if and what theory emerges from the story" (Atkinson 1998: 66). After reflecting on the positive and negative strands of the themes, it appeared that the themes concurred and conformed to a conceptual framework of empowerment theories. The writers showed through their life experiences and writing that they were empowering either themselves or others or both.

Incorporating the deductive approach which involved applying "pre-existing frameworks and typologies" (Goodnough 2011:41) showed that empowerment theories could be used to provide insight on the writers. The literature discusses how marginalised groups try to enact change through acquiring literary visibility. Essentially, empowerment theories provide

"frameworks for promoting human empowerment and liberation, identify practical strategies for overcoming oppression and achieving social justice, build on people's strengths, resiliency, and resources" (Robbins, Chatterjee & Canda 1998: 89).

The writers of Islamic children's fiction were confronting "literary invisibility" (Manuel & Derrick 2003: 457; Pollock 2003: 447) and they were addressing this form of literary oppression.

The idea of strength, resiliency and resource was particularly evident in Linda who ran away from her foster home to alert authorities on her abuse and the abuse of the other foster children. Her actions resulted in the closure of the foster home and the emancipation of both herself and the abused children. As an adult she became a law enforcement officer and continued to promote the ideal of justice and care. Similarly Yahya Emerick, Uthman Hutchinson and Mehded Sinclair were involved with helping youths either in camps or at centres where youth programs were held. In addition Mehded attended an empowerment group, "I spent many years sitting in AA groups for family member of alcoholics and believe I learned important skills that helped me." According to Perkins and Zimmerman:

"Empowering processes for individuals might include participation in community organizations. Empowerment outcomes for individuals might include situation-specific perceived control and resource mobilization skills" (1995: 570).

According to Islamic Critical Theory individuals are encouraged to work towards creating a "just society" (Gilani-Williams 2014). A just society is one in which there is peaceful co-existence of people who represent the panorama of human diversity which is based on the Qur'anic ideal that nations and tribes were created that people may "get mutually acquainted" and not "despise each other" (Qur'an 49:13). Despising a group results in its exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, foisting on it cultural imperialism and concocting within it violence. As Islamic Critical Theory demonstrates these five faces of oppression (Heldke & O'Connor 2004) manifested themselves in Makkah at the time when Muhammadﷺ was reintroducing the message of Abrahamؑ. According to the following hadith, God instructs, "O My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another" (Muslim). Oppression can come in many forms and some forms may be harsh and overt and some may be extremely subtle and covert. Whatever its form oppression harms aspects of an individual's self-image. The writers were challenging

oppression in order to fortify aspects of child development and positive self-identity. Bishop notes:

> "When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part" (Bishop 1990).

Bishop introduced the idea of mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors to emphasise the power of books. She likened books to windows that allowed children to understand the world.

> "Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror" (1990).

Further extrapolation of Bishop's analogy suggests that mirror books are concerned with giving children positive self-esteem whilst window books are concerned with building children's respect and comfort with unfamiliar people, places and lifestyles. Mirror books achieve positive self-esteem through giving visibility to the child's family, home, lifestyle, clothing, food, holidays, school, culture and community. Window books develop a child's respect and appreciation for people, culture and places that are unfamiliar. For the most part the writers of Islamic children's books are concerned with mirror books, however, some also combine mirror elements with window elements such as *Yaffa and Fatima* (Gilani-Williams 2016) and Linda Delgado's *Islamic Rose* series (2005). That the writers are producing mirror books further underscores their work to be explained by an empowerment theory. By giving children self-visibility they are allowing children to shift from an oppressive situation to one that is emancipatory. The writers are enabling transformation.

The positive and negative themes that emerged from the writers suggests that empowerment theory is a good fit. All the writers from various locations, without external support independently arrived at the conclusion that books were needed that centralised the Islamic child. The writers made Islamic children's fiction a form of writing that is concerned with promoting positive values such as acknowledging God, kindness, charity, honesty, justice, patience and respect. These are all elements that Waghid promotes in critical Islamic pedagogy to allow children to apply "responsible action," make choices that result from "deliberative and reflective" thinking and engage in "social activism" that results in the

removal of oppression (2011: 34). Kazmi states that "the pedagogical and educational aim of critical pedagogy is to empower people to act in and on the world for the realization of social justice" (2006: 519). Through the creative works that the writers produce children can reflect on the stories and critically ask "Why are things the way they are and could they be different?" (Kazmi 2006:519). The writers essentially worked on empowering the Muslim child by giving him and her books that promote justice, honesty and good deeds.Additionally the books allow them to navigate their spirituality. Moreover, since Islam is a universal faith there are many opportunities to teach about multiculturalism and how this should be considered a gift (Qur'an 49:13).

Compared to other theories that are concerned with "description and prediction" empowerment theories are concerned with "application and practice" (Robbins, Chatterjee & Canda 1998: 90). The writers are concerned with applying positive character traits and seeing their implementation in daily practice. Copious research has been conducted on a sense of place, sense of belonging, positive identity formation, and self-visibility (Fox & Short 2003; Bradford 2007; MacCann & Woodard 1985; Bercaw & Stooksberry 2004; Bainbridge, Oberg & Carbonaro 2005; Cai 2006). These are elements that have been addressed by the writers in producing children's Islamic fiction.

3.1 Life Story: Data Collection
The life stories were collected through email correspondence. In some cases the writers were well known and had a number of online resources or articles that had been produced about them or their work or they had written themselves. Where convenient writers referred me to online resources to avoid duplicating things that they had already answered.

3.2 Life Story: Data Analysis
Lieblich et al. discussed two ways of "reading, interpreting and analysing life stories" (1998:12). These are holistic and categorical which are further delineated into content and form. They suggest that the categorical approach be used "when the researcher is primarily interested in a problem or phenomena shared by a group of people" (1998:12). In the case of the Muslim writers, I view them as a group. Set against this is the holistic view of approaching a life story, where it "is taken as a whole and sections of the text are interpreted in the context of other parts of the narrative" (1998:12). There is a further subdivision of

content and form. Whilst the form is concerned with plot structure, sequencing, time related reactions, depth, style and metaphors (Lieblich et al. 1998:13), the content is concerned with "the explicit content of an account, namely what happened, or why, who participated in the event, and so on all from the standpoint of the teller" (Lieblich et al. 1998: 12-13).

Categorical-content or thematic analysis approach was utilized in the study where categories were made from the collected data. According to Braun and Clarke thematic analysis "does not appear to exist as a named analysis in the same way other methods do (e.g. narrative analysis, grounded theory)" (2006:6). However, it is an analysis technique which "offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data" (Braun & Clarke 2006: 2) According to Reismann,

> "The thematic approach is useful for theorising across a number of cases – finding common thematic elements across research participants and the events they report. A typology can be constructed to elaborate a developing theory. Because interest lies in the content of speech, analysts interpret what is said by focusing on the meaning that any competent user of the language would find in a story. Language is viewed as a resource, not a topic of investigation" (2005: 2-3).

An Islamic constructivist approach is taken to "generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings" (Cresswell 2003: 9). The interpretivist paradigm is used to understand "the world of human experience" (Denzin 2009: 114) that manifests through the writers of Islamic children's literature. The primary step in thematic analysis is coding. Here the data is read and re-read. From the reading inferences are made and patterns are sought. The patterns are then connected to make possible themes. The themes are then described and discussed for their importance or interest (Braun & Clarke 2006). It is from this final collection of themes that conclusions can be made. Below is a diagram that shows the steps in data analysis.
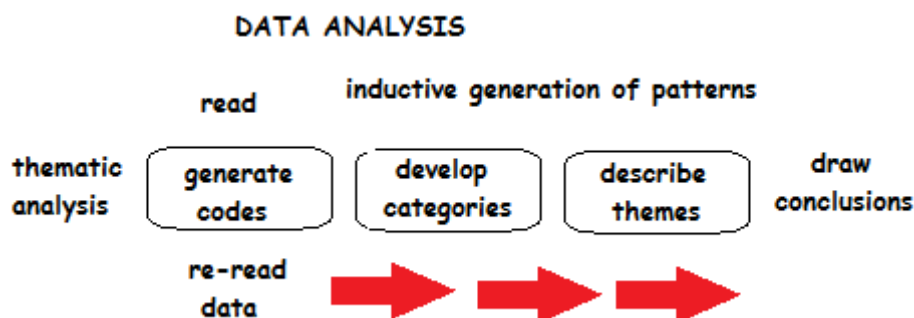

Figure 3.0: Data analysis

In the next section I discuss how I apply Islamic Critical Theory (also see Chapter Six) to make sense of the data gathered for the writers of Islamic children's literature.

3.3 Applying Critical Islamic Theory to the Writers

Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with identifying oppressive situations and seeking out solutions that when applied will result in a better life. Islamic Critical Theory employs three steps which are explanatory, practical and normative (see section 6.4). It identifies a problem, creates a solution and applies the solution until transformation is achieved. According to Robbins et al. (1998) theories of empowerment "provide conceptualizations of social stratification and oppression", "identify personal and political barriers and dynamics that maintain oppression", "offer value frameworks for promoting human empowerment and liberation", and "build on people's strengths, resiliency, and resources" (Robbins et al. 1998:89). The remainder of the chapter discusses the findings from life story methodology investigating the motives and purpose of the writers. Applying Islamic Critical Theory to the writers we seek to understand their problems, solutions and whether transformation was achieved.

3.3 Uthman Peter Hutchinson

Uthman is one of the earliest writers of Islamic children's fiction published by a Muslim publishing house in the West. He is the author of the *Invincible Abdullah* series which was published by American Trust Publications in 1992. He also wrote thirty-six short stories about a Muslim family in the US, published by Amana Press. Uthman was born in 1951 in New York. Speaking of his early memories he says he was raised in a single family household by his mother from the age of nine. He lived in the Ardsley, New York suburbs. His house was nestled within horse trails, woods and a golf course. Across the road was a summer camp situated in a forest. The setting gave him a "huge wilderness playground growing up." His family were arts orientated. He had a "happy and abundant childhood" growing up with his mother and an older sister. About his mother he says, she was a university graduate who was a "voracious reader".

> "She read to my sister and me even into middle school. We had books everywhere and I was always reading. I went to a summer camp in the Adirondack Mountains in upper NY State from age 9 up to being a counselor at Camp Lincoln. It was much

more important in my life and formation and sense of self than school. A truly great experience."

Serving as a mentor from a young age Uthman was empowering children at the camp. He was showing them survival techniques and how to cooperate and collaborate. I asked Uthman if as a child he was a reader or writer or both. To which he responded, "Reader, reader, reader." There was an abundance of books in his home so he was not sure what his favourite stories were as a child but recalls that,

> "I used to read my mother's books after her so I was reading adult books even in middle school. Favorite books she read to my sister and I, maybe Huckleberry Finn & Catcher in the Rye."

I asked him about the person that had the strongest influence on him he says it was the Prophet Muhammadﷺ and his, "shaykh and father in Islam, Habib Abu Bakr Al Haddad (Rahmatullah Alay [may the mercy of God be with him])." However, he points out that before Islam it was his mother and regarding influence through books he says, "If we're talking about literature, Hemmingway."

Uthman began studying Drama and Speech at university but his interest dwindled and after a year he stopped his studies to pursue "his own personal meaning and the meaning of life," which eventually led him to becoming a Muslim in England in 1977. Asked why he writes Islamic children's fiction he said, "I don't anymore." Regarding profitability, I asked if the Islamic children's book field was financially rewarding he replied, "Ha ha ha." When Uthman began writing he says, "the only Islamic children's books were preachy and written in poor English and not at all inviting to kids brought up in the west." About difficulties in getting published he says,

> "I met with a mainstream publisher in the UK, and they would only do vanity publishing for me, as they'd done with other "Islamic" authors. The only one interested was an "Islamic" publisher which was a wing of an "Islamic" organization. They were immediately interested, though not really professional, and as it turned out, ethical either."

According to Atkinson, themes like "(overcoming difficulties, achieving success); character, events, and happenings that are central; career paths; key turning points; and important influences" (1998: 68) can have a detrimental effect. The important themes that seemed to have led Uthman to write Islamic children's fiction include his childhood of "voracious"

reading, attending summer camps in the wilderness and serving as a youth counselor. His studies in Drama and Speech could have easily flagged recognising that Muslim children are not being spoken about or heard. His conversion to Islam would have further underscored his ability to see how Muslims were not being given a voice. Uthman was one of the earliest writers to engage with Islamic children's fiction. His motives and purposes as reflected through his earlier life with books and camps show that he wanted to empower children by giving them positive self-identity with a sense of place in North America. Uthman currently works at a school in the city of Medina in Saudi Arabia.

3.4 Yahiya Emerick

Yahiya Emerick is a prolific writer of not only Islamic children's fiction but also nonfiction. He suggested using the information in his articles to help with his life story in addition to his email responses. He was raised in a small town in south-eastern, Michigan. His earliest memories he describes as "Regular stuff: I remember a stuffed animal I liked, riding a tricycle in a kitchen, a special sailor's hat. Not much more than that for under five years old." His favourite teacher was "Probably Mr. Thomas. He was the most interesting person I had ever met in my life up to that point." Yahiya describes Mr. Thomas's influence as a person who "knew a little about everything and he wasn't afraid to take chances or laugh at himself."

Asked to comment on one book that he felt had the most significant effect on him, Yahiya says "I think *The Hobbit* opened my eyes to a world greater than my own." His grandmother had the most impact on him, "I think my grandmother's example of what it meant to be an upstanding person with refinement and elegance made a big impression on me." When asked about any difficulties or hardships that he faced in his youth, Yahiya says, "I did go through a bout of being bullied in junior high school, and my dad was a bit on the stern side, but those were not unusual factors for a kid growing up in the 70s and 80s in the Midwest." Wondering whether his talent for writing was discovered by teachers or family he says,

> "I had a teacher in tenth grade who was a sub for my creative writing teacher, and she encouraged me a bit with good comments on my short stories. Other than that, after I had first converted I established a newsletter for a Masjid near where I was staying, but no one really seemed to care all that much about it."

He used to enjoy playing *Dungeons and Dragons.* The skills he developed in this past time appear to have informed aspects of his writing career.

"I played *Dungeons and Dragons* for about two years, and I sometimes created 'dungeon' scenarios, which required a lot of forethought, planning and imagination. I credit that experience most of all with helping me to organize characters, create scenarios and envision a full story line."

Yahiya went to Michigan State University where he obtained a bachelor's degree in History and later a master's degree in Education. In his freshman year at university he became a Muslim. He compared the Islamic view of Jesusﷺ with the Trinitarian Christian view.

"I accepted Islam at the end of 1988. I had already been troubled by the trinity idea since I was about 15, so it was pretty easy to transition to Islam's more logical position."

Asking about the struggles he encountered as a Muslim writer he says,

"Muslims, in general, don't buy books, so a Muslim author is usually a self-funded one. I have written books for over twenty years now, and I'm still paying for a lot of things out of pocket."

Yahiya became a teacher in the 1990s, but this was not something he had planned to do.

"I became a teacher by accident. I was a member of ICNA [Islamic Circle of North America] for a while and they charged me with starting a youth group in a growing Muslim community in Michigan. I went to the monthly community dinners and after a lot of struggle got the teens there to form a youth group. It actually became quite successful with a lot of activities and community support. That community (MCWS) made a joint project with some Muslims from Dearborn to open an Islamic school in Canton. I would go to that school/masjid on the weekends to work with the youth."

Yahya, "after a lot of struggle" formed a youth group. Islamic Critical Theory would suggest that Yahya successfully achieved transformation by providing the young Muslims with an activity centre where they could be supported with worthwhile pursuits. Based on the success of Yahiya's work with the youth, he was contacted by Dawud Tawhidi, the principal who had formulated the *Tarbiyah Project* for personal, social and spiritual education,

"After some months, the principal of the school (Dawud at-Tauhidi) approached me and said he liked how I work with the youth. He invited me to teach in his school. At the time I was selling furniture for a living (hated it!) so I agreed so I could try something new. That was back in 1992. Even though I was really young, I got the teaching job!"

Yahiya elaborates on his experience in an Islamic school. It was to become the springboard that launched him into his writing career.

> "Along the way, I began to realize something: even as the youth were learning from some pretty boring textbook materials, they had absolutely zero reading literature that reflected any type of Muslim identity. In vain, I searched through the catalogs of Muslim booksellers for stuff I could recommend" (Emerick 2007).

Yahya identified the fact that mirror books (Bishop 1990) were absent. As a result he initiated what Islamic Critical Theory uses as a three step process of recognising a problem, naming actors to bring change and bringing transformation. The gap initiated a spark in Yahiya to address the invisibility:

> "I felt compelled to begin writing some short stories I could share with the youth. I had never been a writer before, but I did have a very active and creative mind – honed by many years of reading sci-fi and playing *Dungeons and Dragons*. By the winter of 1992, I had enough stories and poems to put together a small book. I entitled it, '*The Seafaring Beggar and Other Tales*'" (Emerick 2007).

Yahiya produced the *Seafaring Beggar and Other Tales* independently of any publisher or any support. It gave him a sense of accomplishment even though he was not particularly impressed with the quality. But it did not matter, as Yahiya saw it, "a little seed of hope was planted in my mind." His heart soared as he began to wonder about writing literature for Muslims, "something they would enjoy." As his thoughts drifted into an assortment of creative literary dimensions, he "hit a brick wall." Yahiya could not have anticipated the reaction and reception to his work.

> "I thought the Muslims around me, especially the activist types would be happy to get something for their kids to read that had some kind of an Islamic flavor. I thought the youth would be enthused at the same time. Neither happened. I offered my book to everyone I knew for a mere $3. No takers. Then I lowered the price to $2. I think I sold two copies. By the end of the week, I was just giving the books away to anyone who would take them" (Emerick 2007).

He was puzzled. He had not expected such a poor response. It did not make sense. Obviously there was a need for children's Islamic fiction, but why was it being ignored? He wanted to know. He wrote another book, this time a nonfiction Islamic title, but still there was no interest. He remarks, "Enter more speculation on the eternal question: why don't Muslims buy books?" In 1995, Yahiya moved to New York to take another teaching job at another Islamic school. Yahiya wanted to make the history lessons more appealing to the children,

"[S]o I began to use my imagination to weave tales that would connect them to the subject at hand. One day I started a yarn about one "Ahmad Jones" and how he discovered spectacular archaeological treasures. I guess I got carried away and turned it into a full-fledged tale that was so compelling - I sat down one week during a vacation and wrote a whole short novel about him" (Emerick 2007).

The book was a success and it cemented Yahiya's views on the need for Islamic children's fiction. The reaction was astonishing. For the first time, these children were reading a fiction book that made them visible, "to hear their excitement and love of the book confirmed to me that more was needed." But although Yahiya and the children recognised the need for the books, the adult Muslim community, in general, did not.

"I expended so much effort in the mid-Nineties in promoting these books and lost so much money doing so that I wondered aloud how Muslims could ever hope to have a voice of their own in the bookstores of America. I actually had many parents discouraging their children from purchasing books from my table with reasons that ranged from "don't you want a candy instead" to "why buy a book – you read it only once and throw it away" (Emerick 2007).

It was the parents' reception towards his books that finally allowed Yahiya to answer the question that had baffled him since the beginning of his writing career.

"I realized then that many of these parents, who came from other countries, never really grew up reading fiction themselves. That was my eureka moment, and I steeled myself for the long struggle. The immigrant parents just didn't know the value of Islamic fiction because they didn't have much of it when they were a youth" (Emerick 2007).

Despite Yahiya's present preoccupation with nonfiction, his loyalty to fiction has not diminished.

"I got sidetracked by non-fiction again, and for the last ten years I've been concentrating on textbooks and such, but soon I want to go back permanently into fiction and literature – my first love" (Emerick 2007).

Yahiya reflects on the struggle of Muslim writers,

"I know of so many Muslim authors who have as much passion about providing good literature for our youth as I do. Each of them is struggling – unless they compromise with the non-Muslim world and remove the Islam from the books – making them mere 'ethnic' tales" (Emerick 2007).

His stories reflect his positive outlook in considering the world to be a wonderful place where Muslim can make a valuable contribution.

> "Islam is a part of life, but it is not just a one dimensional thing. To really savor the flavor of our collective spiritual journey we must activate our imagination and look at our place in the universe in a new and interesting light. Indeed, Islam is good, and if enough Muslims realize that the world is beautiful and not just a place of desperate struggle, then our efforts can have more meaning and we might make ourselves truly good examples of Allah's way of life."

Yahya spoke of his favourite teacher having a sense of humour and not being afraid to take chances. These are both qualities that are reflected in Yahya's drive to persist with an idea which he knew could improve the literary experience of Muslim children. His view that Muslims do not buy books is certainly reflected through Islamic schools who still invest negligibly in Islamic children's fiction (Gilani-Williams 2014). My first Scholastic Book fair at an American Islamic school was in 1994, I was puzzled as to why there were no Islamic books offered to children. I saw the same practice at other Islamic schools in the USA throughout the 2000s. In 2009 I witnessed the same in a Canadian Islamic school. Neither school governors, teachers, parents, students or principals seemed to notice that Islamic children's books were missing. In retrospect this can in part be explained through cultural imperialism (Bolland 1987: 60).

> "Cultural imperialism involves … experiencing oneself as invisible … the injustice of cultural imperialism [is] that the oppressed group's own experiences and interpretation of social life finds little expression that touches the dominant culture" (Young 2004: 66).

Insight into this lack of self-visibility can also be understood through most Islamic schools' preoccupation with trying to be identical to state schools. Islamic schools have generally "accepted the mainstream model of education" (Memon 2006). Since Islamic books are not visible in state school book fairs, they are not visible in Islamic school books fairs.

The main themes that resonated from Yahya's life story are his experiences with youth in Islamic community centres. Like Uthman he also worked with children. As a teacher at an Islamic school he was also aware of the gap and the "need for children to see themselves in books" (Thomas 1996: x). His discovery of why Islamic schools do not purchase Islamic fiction was also significant and concurred with both Linda Delgado's experience and my own where we also noticed that Islamic schools did not appear to show an interest in Islamic children's fiction.

Lee and Low are one of the largest publishers of multicultural books in the USA. Their experiences are relevant to developments in Islamic children's literature. Since their inception in 1991 they have been observing the rise of multicultural books about which they say,

> "we have monitored the number of multicultural children's books published each year … Our hope has always been that with all of our efforts and dedication to publishing multicultural books for more than twenty years, we must have made a difference. Surprisingly, the needle has not moved. Despite census data that shows 37% of the US population consists of people of color, children's book publishing has not kept pace" (Low 2013).

The problems cited are reductions in funding and the low sales associated with multicultural books. Says Horning, Director of Cooperative Children's Books Center, "I've heard many times from publishers that the "buyers at B&N" believe multicultural books don't sell. When they are not stocked in these bookstores, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Low 2013). These issues may in part also be relevant for Muslim publishers who also must look at the financial viability of books.

Islamic Critical Theory as a theory of empowerment explains that Yahya made a positive change through his strength as a writer and his attitude of resiliency to not give up when faced with adverse conditions. Much has not changed with the demand for Islamic books. Islamic Critical Theory looks at how problems could be practically transformed. In this case it may require the funding power of external agencies. A good example is the Ontario government who allocated "$80 million in additional funding for elementary school libraries"(Howson & Edwards 2009:1) to acquire children's books that promote Canadianess. Yahya's experience demonstrates that his motives were not at all financial. Through his work with youth and in Islamic schools his purpose overlaps with Uthman's in providing Muslim children with literary visibility and a sense of place.

3.5 Rukhsana Khan

Rukhsana Khan is a Pakistani-born, Canadian writer. She moved from Pakistan to England and then from England to Canada when she was three. When I contacted Rukhsana to ask if she could respond to some biographical questions she was immersed in a number of projects and deadlines. She suggested that I should access her interviews on her website. Any questions that could not be answered through the websites, she was happy to respond to. The

accounts she speaks of provide a thorough and detailed insight into her background, her motivations, aspirations and purpose for writing. I draw on both sources. Rukhsana was born in 1962. In a paper that she delivered at the Copenhagen IBBY world congress in 2008 she spoke about the oppression that she grew up in. She highlighted the Qur'anic message for diversity against how difficult it was for immigrants in Canada. She speaks about the aggressive racial hardship that her family faced.

> "At his workplace they wouldn't call my father by name, they called him black bastard. And he put up with it because he had a wife and four kids to feed. My father was not alone. In many countries, immigrants make tremendous sacrifices and tolerate all kinds of insults for the sake of dependent family members. By the late '60's the civil rights movement began in America. We saw people of colour demanding full equality, no longer settling for the back of the bus, no longer apologizing for being dark in skin tone" (Khan 2008).

Rukhsana's family was the only Pakistani family in her town other than one other Indian family. She endured school bullying which pursued her mercilessly.

> "When I went from grade six to grade seven, it was a different school, but the kids who'd been bullying me previously told all the other kids, and they ganged up on me there" (Jenkinson 1999).

Rukhsana sought refuge in books. The children wilfully alienated her so she made friends of a different kind. She reached out to books. The books she read launched her into deep thoughts about who she was. Unlike the children around her who would come and go, push and shun, the books she read never deserted her and they embraced her unconditionally. And she reciprocated. She never left them.

> "It turned out to be very difficult. Because we stuck out so much, we were persecuted from day one. If it hadn't been for that negative treatment, I don't think I would have become a writer because my growing up was so horrible that I went to books to escape. Having no friends, I spent my recesses among the trees. I used to think a lot, and that's when I really came to terms with what my beliefs are, who I am, and what my place is in the universe. I also read a lot, tons of books, and some have stayed with me" (Jenkinson 1999).

Rukhsana speaks about the general attitude of the Canadians back in the 1960s which was to assimilate the new immigrants in exchange for a better life. But her childhood suffering suggests that the new world was not better, at least not for her.

When I first arrived in Canada, it was 1965 and it was automatically assumed that immigrants would assimilate. There was no choice in the matter. The message was, "Shut up and be grateful for being allowed in to this western country club and the way you show that gratitude is by adopting our values. It'll take a generation or two, but if you behave yourself and keep your nose clean, maybe your kids will grow up to be prosperous. And if you don't like it, go back to where you came from" (Khan 2008).

But according to Rukhsana, the civil rights movement had gained momentum. It had a more favourable impact on the Canadians than on the Americans. Whilst the Americans wanted assimilation, the Canadian government was more benevolent.

"Canada wouldn't be a melting pot, we'd be a salad, where everyone maintains their individual characteristics and flavours but still is part of the whole. Nobody had to assimilate if they didn't want to, and as long as they followed the laws and paid their taxes they were free to live as they pleased" (Khan 2008).

Despite the ambitious multicultural objectives of the Canadian government, Rukhsana says there were those who disagreed with it. Blunt words from those who could not appreciate multiculturalism offended her.

"When I was growing up, one of my teachers once told me that no matter how hard any immigrant community tries, in three generations they lose all semblance of their cultures and are completely assimilated. It made me angry when he said that. As if it was inevitable and only logical that I, just like everyone else, would eventually succumb and abandon my faith and culture in light of the far more progressive Western culture" (Khan 2008).

At some point Rukhsana looked deep within herself and transformed herself from being a confined, shy, easy target to a confident and self-assured free spirit.

"In high school, I turned myself around and became very outgoing. I went up to all kinds of people and learned how to make a buffer zone around myself. I had some friends and wasn't alone any more. I was still a target, but not such an easy one" (Jenkinson 1999).

It was Rukhsana's English teacher who recognised her talent as a writer. His remark jolted Rukhsana who had hitherto thought that writers could only be white.

"He gave us a creative writing assignment of writing one's thought in a journal every day. When I handed mine in, he wrote me a beautiful long note that said I was a writer. I thought, 'Nah, I'm not a writer. Writers are white and from England or America.' But then something started in me, and I thought, "I'd love to be able to

write the stories that I love to read." When I was 14, I wrote a novel, 'Carla, the Gypsy Girl' that's about 278 pages of handwritten text" (Jenkinson 1999).

It was not only Rukhsana's teacher that recognised her aptitude for writing. When Rukhsana was sixteen, she wrote a story for young children. At the time she cleaned house for an English professor. Rukhsana gave the manuscript to the professor.

> "He liked it so much that he sent it to a New York editor friend of his. I thought, 'Wow! I'm going to get published.' Instead, I got a rejection letter in which the editor said that it was a nice story" (Jenkinson 1999).

The rejection was stinging. Rukhsana put it behind her and moved on. She got married in 1979. Her husband encouraged her to remain in education. When she was expecting she began writing for her unborn child and then for a community magazine. A decade later she found the rejection letter again and re-read it. She had misinterpreted what it had implied.

> "I wrote songs, and then I started writing stories for a community magazine. I was still writing, and I didn't realize it. Ten years later, I found the letter again, reread it and realized, wait a minute. She's encouraging me" (Jenkinson 1999).

Ultimately the letter served as a springboard and the rest as they say is history. Rukhsana Khan went on to become Canada's most famous Muslim writer. Rukhsana, however, is not concerned with writing for just a Muslim audience. Instead she prefers to reach a wider audience. Her work is considered multicultural. Undoubtedly she is an ambassador for the Muslim child and works to give that child visibility and a sense of place. I asked Rukhsana how she would describe her motives and aspirations as a writer in relation to Islamic children's fiction. She said,

> "I became a children's author for two reasons. The first reason is because I LOVE stories! Always have! The stories I read as a kid helped make a very difficult childhood, bearable. I doubt I would have survived without them. I want to write EXCELLENT stories, the kind I like to read! Secondly, I belong to a community that is often marginalized. With my stories I hope to show everyone that we Muslims are just like everyone else. We have funny stories and we have sad stories. Basically I want to humanize Muslims in the eyes of those who would consider us 'other'."

The themes that emerged from Rukhsana included struggle, invisibility, bullying, immigrant experience, prejudice, survival, books as friends, identity, justice, influential others, empathy

and compassion. Both Rukhsana and Linda experienced severe bullying in their childhood. According to research long term negative outcomes can result from childhood bullying.

> "Children who are bullied-and especially those who are frequently bullied-continue to be at risk for a wide range of poor social, health, and economic outcomes nearly four decades after exposure. Interventions need to reduce bullying exposure in childhood and minimize long-term effects on victims' well-being" (Takizawa, Maughan & Arseneault 2014:775).

Rukhsana shows a similar persistence and self-empowerment philosophy to Linda, they both overcame obstacles which the research suggests should have imposed long term negative consequences. However, they transformed their oppressive situations and empowered themselves through writing and creating books that gave them solace in childhood. Telling stories and in this case writing stories "is an important step in the person's struggle to make some kind of meaning out of seemingly inexplicable suffering, humiliation, or terror (Zingaro 2009:11).

Biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan are terms that I coined from bibliotherapy which is concerned with self-transformation through reading stories where the child can identify with a character and gain inspiration to make a change. One of the motives and purposes of Rukhsana's work is to empower the child, not only the minority child but also the majority child. Rukhsana's stories serve as mirror books for minority children and window books for majority children (Myers 2014). Rukhsana's books make the image of the Muslim child familiar. Familiarity cultivates empathy. Familiarity is therefore a key ingredient to thwart discrimination and prejudice (Oskamp 2000:109). Rukhsana like Yahya reveals a resilient nature and strength that has contributed to a Muslim presence in mainstream children's books.

3.6 Ann El-Moslimany

Ann Paxton El-Moslimany was born in southern California in 1937. In 1994 she wrote *Zaki's Ramadan Fast* which was the first hardback Islamic children's picture book written and published by Muslims in the West. She says, "I have written two more children's books, but haven't got them to the point of looking for a publisher as I feel the non-fiction book I am working on is more important." Asking her who had the most impact on her she says "My husband was the greatest influence on me, may Allah grant him paradise. He never pushed, prodded or argued with me - just set an example." As a child Ann was "a voracious reader. I

can hardly get into my room because of piles of books. I also wrote." Her favourite stories were "Heidi and any and all horse stories as well as the series that all children read. In my day it was *The Bobbsey Twins* and *Nancy Drew*."

After graduating she studied for a PhD and worked as a "college-level teacher and a consultant in palynology [study of dust]." I asked her what her reasons were for writing *Zaki's Ramadan Fast.* She said, "At that time there were virtually no picture books about Muslim children in the west. There were stories, but they were all about children living in other countries. I wanted to portray children who were Muslim, AND American. This was particularly important to me because of the children I was with on a daily basis at the Islamic School of Seattle. Zaki is the name of my oldest grandson, but the children were modelled on the family of a very close friend who was African American married to a Pakistani."

Asking if she thought children's Islamic fiction was important she said, "Children learn to read primarily through fiction … quality literature by Muslims for Muslims is of the greatest importance. Children especially want to read about someone they can relate to." About her thoughts on the progress of Islamic children's fiction she says, "Alhamdulillah [praise God] there are more and more quality books about Muslim children. I am especially happy to see an increase in the number of young adult books. It is one of many ways that we Muslims are making our presence felt.

The themes that were identified in Ann consisted of experience in Islamic schools, identity, invisibility, voracious reader and multiculturalism. She is the first Muslim in North America to have produced a hardback book with realistic illustrations for Muslim children. Like Linda and Rukhsana she made the image of the Muslim child familiar and placed the Muslim child in the USA thereby giving the Muslim child a sense of place in North America. This is important because "When a child experience[s] nature, culture, and family as an interwoven entity, his or her connections and attachments were indeed strong and meaningful" (Derr 2002: 135). However, it is not just a sense of place that is important, educators also cite a sense of belonging as essential to personal development.

> "A sense of belonging is essential to all of us. It is the basis for children's positive adjustment, self-identification, and sense of trust in both the system and themselves. In fact, studies have shown that school connectedness in elementary school decreases incidents of risky behavior into young adulthood" (Whelley 2004: 25).

Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with empowerment and transformation. Ann's work was one of the earliest to give visibility to the indigenous American Muslim child in his/her own land. Prior to this most children's Islamic books positioned Islam in the Middle East. This breakaway was empowered by indigenous Muslims like Ann, Uthman and Yahya. Their books therefore made a significant contribution in repositioning Islam as a Western religion and not just an Eastern religion. As Reiss notes, "Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam is a Western religion that is deeply monotheistic" (2002: 30). The Institute for Curriculum Resources states that "America has offered Jews relatively more tolerance, acceptance, and opportunity than other countries" (2012). It is possible that the Islam may follow the same path since American immigrant history appears to follow a pattern for "Each new wave of immigration to the United States has met with some degree of hostility" (Hirschman 2006). Ann's storybook can be regarded as a landmark book because its format was the same as many popular picture books.

3.7 Linda Darleen Delgado

Linda Darleen Delgado's international best sellers include the Islamic Rose series. Linda was born in the northern Ohio city of Akron. She was the third of five children. Looking back at her childhood she says,

> "I was born in the mid 1940s; a different era than what children are born into in the USA today. Each day children across the USA in classrooms began their day by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag - instilling a sense of belonging and loyalty and respect for the nation. We began our day with prayer bringing God along with us throughout our day. There was respect for teachers and others and a sense of decency that is lost today. Children living in the cities walked many blocks to school or rode busses alone without fear from abduction or attacks by pedophiles or gangs. Bullies were few and promptly dealt with on the playgrounds by watchful teachers. It was a gentler and kinder era for most."

Regarding her path to becoming an author and her early association with books, she says,

> "From my earliest memories I had one book or another with me,
> always reading. I would find a quiet place…sometimes behind an
> overstuffed chair near a window and with a stack of books and spend
> many hours reading."

As a child, her mother described her as very quiet, "almost secretive" and one that "hardly ever cried and never gave anyone any problems." Linda's siblings were four to five years

older and three to four years younger. She recalls how she was not able, "to have a sibling to pal around with…be close to." Her memories are strongly attached to her maternal grandfather who she visited on weekend**s**. One of her happiest memories is of a basket and bonnet that she made with her grandfather,

> "The music teacher played the song "In Your Easter Bonnet" and all the kindergarten girls trooped back and forth across the stage showing off our bonnets and baskets. I remember thinking when I saw my Grandpa sitting in one of the folded chairs that I must be the prettiest girl in the whole parade because I had the prettiest bonnet and basket. This is the only time in my life where I ever felt that I was beautiful and my grandfather gave me this gift."

Linda's life was heavily influenced by her grandfather, who was a methodical and systematic person. She believes that society was more benevolent when she was a child in the late 1940s and early 1950s. She recalls the manner in which children played together despite the age gaps.

> "What I remember most was that from the youngest like me to the oldest being teenagers, we all played the street games such as Red Light-Green Light and Red Rover. Seems today, looking back, that kids were kinder to each other back then."

Linda recalls her dislike for gender specific toys like dolls. She did not adhere to the general view of some toys being for girls and others for boys. She made her own choices.

> "My mom and other relatives and friends always bought me girl type toys for gifts when I was more interested in Tonka trucks, army men and forts, race cars and trains. My mom kept telling everyone I should have been born a boy. I didn't try to be a boy or act like a boy. It was just that their toys were toys while toys for girls were like things you would have to do (dishes/babysit/clean house) the girls toys were just doing chores in small size. Yuck…who wanted to play at doing chores I thought back then."

Linda's childhood was happy until she reached the age of nine.

> "During all the bad years I lived through I always used books to escape the reality of my situation and I often escaped into the memories of Grandpa and me. What I learned from him I have carried throughout my life. My Grandpa will always be the greatest hero in my life and most beloved."

She recalls that up until the month before her ninth birthday, she spent every weekend and every summer at her grandfather's home. And then tragedy struck, Linda's grandfather died and this had a devastating effect on her mother who already felt abandoned from her divorce. Life became increasingly difficult and demanding for Linda's mother. Society in the 1950s treated divorced women harshly. Linda's mother tried to cope with raising five children but it became far too much. There was little food and the bills could no longer be paid. Hardship lingered and began to strike aggressively. Eventually the children became wards of the state. They were separated. Linda was ten and was sent to a foster care facility a hundred miles from home.

At first Linda settled in well to her new foster home, but things began to take a turn for the worst. She says, "Many horrible things happened there." The school that she attended whilst living at the home was neither a welcome shelter nor a safe haven. The children at school were cruel. She blames the parents and adults for marring the perception of the school children. There was an attitude towards children who came from foster facilities. She did not fit the description of respectable, she was without parents or family, she had no one she could call her own. Linda endured a great deal of harshness, cruelty, discomfort and discrimination during her time in foster care and elementary school. Since Linda was a quiet child, she became an easy target. When she was wronged who was there to turn to? She says, "My only 'escape' from the horrible conditions at the foster home and taunts and cruelty of my peers was escaping into the stories I read. I immersed myself in books to escape my reality." When Linda was in sixth grade, the teasing and contempt became so overwhelming that she began to hide during recess to conceal herself. She would disappear into a closet. She recalls about this terrible time,

> "I would hide in the supply closet in the Art room during recess. The
> art teacher, Mrs. Mona Robinson, found me there and through my tears
> of anger and hurt I explained why I was reading in the supply closet."

What Mrs. Robinson was about to share at that moment was to become the turning point of the sixth grader's life. Now in her sixties, Linda still recalls the words of her teacher with affection and conviction,

> "She told me that if I wanted to find my way out of what I felt was a
> hopeless life, I should read books, study hard, and make better grades

than my classmates. She said that my knowledge could not be taken
from me and would help me to succeed in life.”

Linda listened to the words of her teacher and committed them to her heart. She made a commitment to life-long learning. Linda explains that not only was life at school harsh, but it was much more oppressive in the foster home in which she lived. She was fifteen years old when she took courageous steps with her two foster brothers to bring emancipation and transformation.

“When I was a Freshman in high school me and two foster brothers took a bus to Akron to the newspaper and told them the story about the foster home and the cruelty, beatings, etc. etc. The Children's Home authorities were forced to close the foster home. The man and woman operating it fled to Florida and got away with their crimes against me and nineteen other kids in that house of hell.”

If we compare Linda's childhood actions to those of the early Muslim who fled Makkah and sought sanctuary in Abyssinia, they bear similarity. Both the early Muslims of Makkah and Linda wanted to live an abuse-free life. Both took transformational steps. Both showed others that that they could escape to a better life. Linda was resilient.

As Linda grew older, she embarked on a personal quest. Her mother had only visited her twice at the foster home. She had disappeared. Linda's mission was to find her mother. She made a plan and worked various jobs and over years painstakingly saved her money. On the day that she finished high school she gathered all the money she had saved and bought a train ticket. She had finally tracked down her mother. Her long and arduous quest took her from Ohio to Arizona where she was finally able to embrace her mother. The hardships that Linda experienced during her childhood and adolescence informed the type of career she chose.

Linda was an astute student, her many years of reading a varied ensemble of books provided her with a heightened imagination and a natural talent for using an analytical lens. She was able to grapple with complex work demands and quickly became labelled as the go-to-person for ideas, problem solving and project development.

“As an adult I seemed to have a natural talent for reading and analyzing complex works pertaining to my employment. I became known also as an 'idea' person and problem solver. I went to university and got a degree, and also took professional

courses which honed my writing skills and ability for analyzing and then developing projects and programs to solve problems in the workplace."

She became a student at the University of Phoenix and a few years later earned a degree in Business Management. Her command of English was exceptional and served her well for many years in technical areas relating to work. Linda had seen more than her fair share of wrong and so it was not altogether surprising that she became an officer for the Arizona police department. She dedicated her life to upholding justice and doing whatever she could to ensure that the victim was given support.

> "I graduated from the University of Phoenix with a BA degree in Business Management and spent 26 years working as a professional law enforcement officer for 2 police agencies. I retired as an Arizona DPS Sergeant in 2000."

It was through her work as a state police officer that Linda found her passage to Islam. This came by way of two Saudi police officers who had come to the USA to study at the Arizona State University and improve their police tactics in cooperation with the Phoenix Police Department. This was Linda's first life encounter with Muslims. Linda and her husband invited the young officers to stay at their home. A friendship grew and Linda soon came to regard the officers as foster sons. From them she learned how closely Islam was aligned to Christianity and about Jesusﷺ. In time the Saudi officers became witnesses to Linda's conversion.

As the years passed by Linda began to volunteer at a local elementary school to work with children who were challenged with reading. It was after 26 years of service that she retired from the police force. She suffered a heart attack and developed several chronic diseases. Linda's plans to become a teacher had to be abandoned.

> "The last 4 years I was employed I had also volunteered at an elementary school as a teacher assistant. I worked with children having reading comprehension problems. After retiring and suffering a heart attack and developing several chronic diseases, my retirement plans and dreams of becoming an elementary school teacher had to be abandoned. I was sad and felt great disappointment. This was during the first year after my reversion to Islam."

Abandoning her hopes as an elementary school teacher however, would project her into a field that would not just affect one classroom of children but classrooms of many children in

many countries all over the world. It was Linda's eight year old granddaughter that suggested she write stories. Linda was a good storyteller and her grandchild knew it. It was a fanciful idea at first, but Linda bought into it. And so she began writing her first fictional tale.

> **"**My young 8 year old granddaughter (she lived in my home) noticed how sad I was and she suggested I write stories. She reminded me of all the stories I had told her dad and his sisters when they were growing up and then later told her. She said I was a good story teller and she offered to 'help' me by making sure what the 'kids' in my then future books said would be how kids talked. I had to smile when she made her offer. If she liked my stories, maybe other children might like them too."

It was not apparent to Linda at first that she was writing under the genre of Islamic fiction, a sub-category of literature that she would later research and be the first to define. Linda knew exactly what kind of book she wanted to write.

> "I was determined that my stories would be creative and about Muslim youth living in a westernized society in these modern time. I wanted my books to promote, peace, tolerance, and appreciation for diversity. I was also determined that my stories would show the readers how Islam was applicable in these modern times to issues and challenges our youth face as minorities in a larger secular society."

Linda decided to focus on realistic fiction. She had a wealth of experience to draw on. She knew the message of Islam was no different to that of previous messages in Judaism and Christianity, she knew its worth and she wanted to project that message in her stories.

> I decided to write what I knew… fictionalizing the stories and book characters while including non-fictionalized facts and truths about Islam in a non-preachy way by showing and not telling. Writing my *Islamic Rose Books* series was the beginning of my work as a professional Islamic fiction writer. Becoming a publisher in 2005 and re-publishing this series was the beginning of my work as a professional Muslim book publisher. I then began publishing other Islamic books for authors as well as a couple of poetry books and a few non-fiction books.

Linda's award winning and bestselling series the *Islamic Rose Books* served as a springboard to her becoming one of the first Islamic publishers of Islamic fiction in the USA. By 2005 Linda was a published author and owner of *Muslim Writers Publishing* which thrust her into the role of editor and other publishing related roles. Linda simultaneously began forming the non-profit organization *Islamic Writer's Alliance*. Other Muslim writers from around the USA and Canada began to gravitate towards Linda's group which was the first of its kind for Muslim writers. She was instrumental in gaining recognition for Islamic fiction. Her Islamic

writers group that initially began with a membership of one grew to have worldwide membership.

Though Linda's writing and publishing has become a success, she relates that the path was full of impediments and negativity. Linda's resourcefulness and personal sacrifice commandeered her dream. She listened to rejection after rejection. But she was resolute. She sent box loads of books to Islamic schools and Islamic centers. She believed in the power of stories but she was up against a perpetual wall of Muslim adults who could not see their worth. Linda noted how Islamic schools promoted Scholastic book fairs in their schools. She also noted that the very people who understood the influence of stories were not convinced about having an Islamic book fair. In an interview with *American Muslim Mom* she said,

> "At that time I did not know that very few Muslim publishers published English language Islamic fiction books for youth, teens, and adults. I did not know that Muslim bookstore retailers wouldn't stock and sell Islamic fiction books, and I did not know that all the Islamic schools in the USA sponsored and sold Scholastic books at their annual and semi-annual book fairs while rejecting Muslim authored/Islamic fiction books for the book fairs. I did not know that most Islamic schools in the USA did not have Islamic fiction books in their school libraries and most only listed secular fiction books on their recommended book reading lists. I learned that most Muslim publishers only published fiction books for very young readers: color illustrated books with limited text-early reader books." (Sabra 2009).

But Linda remained undeterred. She continued to give her books away for free. She sponsored creative writing contests and even produced teacher study guides for six of the Islamic books she published. Her efforts did not stop there. Linda created web sites for writers of Islamic fiction and created a list of Islamic fiction to assist schools and parents.

The strongest themes in Linda's life story were struggle, an influential person, books as friends, persistence, justice, cruelty, tragedy and emancipation. When Linda saw that Muslim publishers were not receptive she created her own publishing company and later created a Muslim writers group. In addition she was the first to give Islamic fiction a definition. Her ability to rise above difficulty and hardship transferred to the world of publishing where she was able to give visibility to not only Muslim children within a multicultural and multi-religious context but also writers who may otherwise not have been published. Through her experiences and insights she was able to share meaningful observations on the development of Islamic fiction and the reception of Islamic schools.

3.8 Mehded Mary Sinclair

Most of the pioneer writers of Islamic fiction are Muslims who come from Christian pathways. Mehded Sinclair also fits into this group. I asked her to tell me about her early memories. It is interesting that Mehded discusses her birth against international events. This may indicate that she has a concern about what is happening in the world. The political events she lists can be categorised as oppressive.

"I was born in the year of the momentous and tragic partition of the British Indian Empire into the sovereign states of the Dominion of Pakistan and the Union of India. And the slaughtering of 400,000 people as they were being relocated. It was the year that India finally gained independence from Britain, and the year of the National Security Act of 1947 which brought the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, the Joint chiefs of Staff, and the National Security Council into being. It was the year of the first recorded use of the word *computer*, referring to an electronic digital machine. It was the year of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the year of the completion of the Periodic Table with the discovery of promethium in the products of nuclear fission."

Mehded was born in Cleveland, Ohio, USA in 1947. She is the author of *Musa, Prophet of Allah: The Fall of the Tyrant; A Trust of Treasures* (2009), *A Mercy to the Worlds: the Coming of Muhammad may Allah bless him and give him peace, The Bowing of the Stars: Moments from the Life of the Prophet Yusuf peace upon him*(2008)*; Miraculous Happenings in the Year of the Elephant* and *When Wings Expand - the Journal of a Muslim Girl* (2013). The latter was the winner of the 2011 UK Muslim Writers' Association Competition. Mehded like Linda is from Ohio. About her earliest memories she says,

"I remember playing in the sand on the beach near our house on Lake Erie in Euclid, Ohio. I remember the sun sparkling on the waves. My ten-year-old brother was passionate about teaching me to swim, and my five-year old sister just as passionate about telling me I would never learn. I did learn anyway, and spent every available summer morning, afternoon, and evening in the municipal pool. I would be the last one out in bad weather just before they would close the pool, and I can still remember the wave of grief that swept over me one cold January day in my 5th grade classroom when I saw a picture in my textbook of kids splashing around a big pool on a summer day."

Those who could talk about Mehded's childhood have all now passed away. She says,

"I remember being told that I was stubborn and headstrong … I am grateful for having had those traits; I believe they helped me to survive some rough seas … my ability to create a world with my imagination and then inhabit it. Later, as an adult when I began studying the theater arts and storytelling I learned how to use these capacities for specific purposes, not for escape, and I discovered that this capacity, which Allah has created for humans alone, is a gift with tremendous potential for healing and spiritual advancement … English is my first language. I have studied

German and Russian extensively but used them minimally. I have extensively used Turkish and Arabic but studied them minimally."

Mehded's skill in other languages underscores her desire to communicate, know and understand people. According to Gargiulo (2006) "effective communication depends on stories." Gargiulo lists three functions of stories: speaker empowerment to create an environment, sharing information and using stories as a tool for thinking (2006: 3). These functions are evident in Mehded's work. That she talks about survival suggests that she confronted some of life's harshness at an early age. Mehded attended a Catholic school. She recalls the teacher who had a positive influence on her.

> My teachers were Ursuline nuns and my classroom teacher in particular was dreadfully strict and severe. I remember her wire-rimmed glasses and behind them her cold watery critical eyes and can still remember the stinging inflicted by her wooden triple-edged ruler when she was dissatisfied with my attempts at handwriting. Her words are indelible: "Don't ever tell anyone it was I who taught you how to write." But life is forgiving, alhamdulillah. Eleven years later I had *another* writing teacher who left me with enthusiasm for language and creativity. She wore a small stuffed owl standing on her shoulder and whenever she saw any of us in the halls she would cluck at him and bid him to greet us. She taught me how to spell *onomatopoeia* with a little story that ended with the utterance, "Oh no, Mat! Oh! Poe! Iiiii! Aaaaa!

Mehded's academic background is in theatre and dance and counselling. Talking about stories she says,

> "I discovered the power of story when my sons were babies. I noticed how they responded whenever I told them anything, so I started telling them whatever I could, whether it was an account of our trip to the grocery store that morning or a rundown of what we had to do to make dinner or an actual story. I noticed when they were a bit older how they would act out, over and over, a story I had told them, endlessly exchanging roles."

Mehded dealt with tragedy when she visited her brother but she recalls that the sad event taught her a powerful message about story.

> "When they [her sons] were still toddlers I traveled from our home in Vermont back to Ohio to visit my older brother who was dying of cancer, and that's when I learned even deeper layers about the power of story. He was in excruciating pain when I arrived and his doctors were predicting a long, slow progress to the end. He was saying things to me that on first hearing seemed to make no sense, and indeed those around him dismissed them as pain-medicated ravings."

But Mehded had a different take and was not so quick to be dismissive.

64

"I was coming from my two toddlers, who always had their own way of seeing and talking about things. I had learned that most of the time what they were saying, though often maybe not logical, made perfect sense within their own little contexts. So I started listening to my brother's words with that in mind and I was amazed to find that he felt himself to be in the middle of a momentous preparation. And what's more, the moment I started reflecting his speech back to him instead of passing it off as irrational or trying to correct him, his distress, his agitation, even his pain began to ease. Soon we were living an inner story that had its own logic and momentum, and it seemed to change him."

Acknowledging her brother's outpourings reflects Mehded's propensity as a listener and reflector. Her training as a counsellor and background in theatre underscores her affinity for allowing the unbridling of emotion.

"The night before he died I returned from a visit to the hospital coffee shop to find him leaning up on his elbow in bed, in a state of remarkable clarity. All the other days he'd been mostly flat on his back, and hadn't acknowledged me directly, hadn't mentioned that I had arrived from Vermont and that we had not seen each other in a long time. But this was different. He looked straight at me and wanted to know how I was, how my children and husband were, how my trip had been. I stayed chatting with him for how long I can't remember, and then took my leave to go home for the night. The hospital called a few hours later to say he had died peacefully in his sleep."

Mehded's ability to listen to her brother shows her inclination to give voice to those who are being ignored and misunderstood. Mehded believes in empowerment because through it comes transformation.

"I have always felt that this alternate story, the one above and beyond where we are, the unseen one, is the REAL one, and healing comes from tapping into it. As a Muslim now, I see that it is the Mercy, the foremost of the Names of Allah, and it is what we were created to know and touch and submit to, by the grace and permission of Allah. It changed my life, this encounter. Things are not what they seem. I am reminded of a line from Wendell Berry. "I will go free of other singing, to hear This Song clearly.""

I asked Mehded who had the most influence on her life. She said her hero and heroine had been Jesusﷺ and his mother Mary who she also credits for leading her to Islam.

"[T]hey became my doorway to Islam. When I discovered what Islam had to say about each of them, it was all over for me alhamdulillah. I honestly cannot think of anyone else who fits that description for me. From my mother I probably inherited a certain aesthetic longing, and from my father perhaps I remember more and more the numbers of times he said 'if God wills." He knew nothing about Islam as far as I know, and what I am left with is his saying that about so many things. The day after

he died at the age of 80+ I had the sensation all day that he was saying to me, "I love you so much. I couldn't love you enough when I was alive, but I *love you so much*." I can still remember the warm powerful ease I felt from those words."

I asked Mehded about the hardships she had faced in life. About this she said,

"The hardships I had came from growing up in a dysfunctional family. My mother died at the age of 52 when I was fifteen, from excessive smoking, wrong eating, and lack of movement. My older brother died at the age of 36 from colon cancer, after a life of Ritz crackers, beer, and sausage. My older sister died at the age of 40 from tranquilizers, alcohol, and wrong eating. My younger brother has refused to receive messages from me for twenty years and I have reason to believe he is an alcoholic. Though I have never been particularly involved with alcohol I spent many years sitting in AA groups for family members of alcoholics and believe I learned important skills that helped me recover from my growing up, at least partially. I see now that my father was always on about nutrition and exercise and I see now it must have been painful for him to watch his wife destroy herself. To this day I still have a terrible time with this."

Although Mehded's hardships came as a result of growing up around people who she describes as self-destructive, it seems because of her close proximity to them she gained resiliency.

"[G]rowing up among people who were destroying themselves....I had from Allah the will to survive alhamdulillah so from the very beginning I had to strike out on my own. I still have great difficulty being a team player because I never learned how to trust that the people around me would do the right thing and always felt I must do it myself or be destroyed. I left my family as soon as I could when I went off to college and only kept minimal ties with them. For the past twenty years I have been the only one left, except for my younger brother, whom I cannot reach and who rejects my conversion."

I asked Mehded why she writes, her response provides her motives and purpose for producing Islamic children's fiction and her other works:

I write what I write, be it fiction (the cd's) or non-fiction, (*When Wings Expand*) because I believe in what literature can do to open hearts, expand points-of-view, dissolve prejudices and cultural blind-spots, and inspire love. It is our humility and gratitude and love that will save us. I believe these traits are cultivated when we have the opportunity to look through the eyes of others, to walk in their shoes, to develop a stronger connection with the unseen and the realms of the imagination, to learn how to step into another's shoes and show empathy, to make shukr [thanks] that our hardships may seem smaller than someone else's, and to encounter an increased capacity for changing ourselves and our ways and committing ourselves utterly to the good.

66

Mehded's call for empathy highlights her view that change is needed to make the world a place free of prejudice, arrogance and hate.

> "And then there is the world we live in....we are surrounded by the fallacy that Islam is nothing of consequence. The history has been erased, the truth has been highjacked, and most of the books we come into contact support that theft, so much so that we don't even know how much we believe it ourselves. So basically everything needs to be rewritten, reformulated, re-researched, re-told."

Mehded's call for the removal of disinformation is a valid point, corporate agendas dictate what diet of news the public must be fed, "Media people have a trained incapacity for the whole truth, Their job is not to inform but disinform, not to advance democratic discourse but to dilute and mute it" (Parenti 2002: 12). Despite hearing negative points about one of her stories and the need to water it down, she stayed resolute,

> "In writing Wings, I was afraid that I would have to tone down Nur's family's commitment to living the deen as it is prescribed to be lived. People told me that nobody would want to hear about that. But while I was writing I just couldn't bring myself to tone it down....and then the book ended up winning the prize in the UK Islamic Writers' Association. Alhamdulillah. And since then the reviews, as few as they may be, are positive. If even a single person can find the courage to change their behavior for Allah, I will be so grateful."

I asked Mehded if she found the field of Islamic children's fiction to be financially rewarding. About this she said,

> "I don't see avalanches of cash from my writing but on the other hand I experience great ease in terms of my rizq, which means more."

I asked her if she was a reader, writer or painter in her childhood, she replied.

> "I was a reader, a writer, a dreamer, a painter, and a swimmer!"

I asked her what her purpose was in writing. She said,

> "My message for the people I write for: Allah is Real, the Deen [faith] is Real, and – wallahi [by God] - the moment we accept on His terms, and live the deen as He has prescribed rather than according to our own preferences, the ease and inner security are remarkable, worth more than the dunya [world] could ever offer one."

Similar to Linda, Mehded's themes centre on difficulty and hardship but this is mostly a result of her family rather than outsiders. The themes of tragedy, influential other, justice, visibility, counselling and struggle are elements that may have motivated Mehded to write to

give visibility and understanding to the Muslim child. Mehded was the only writer to reflect on the world as a whole, like Uthman she moved from the USA to live in various places around the globe including Turkey and Jordan. She understands that certain voices are silenced whereas others are given a platform. Her background in theatre, dance and counselling were helpful for her to understand the need for children to be heard and given a voice.

3.9 Freda Crane Shamma

Freda Crane Shamma was born in Chico, California in 1943. She is the co-author of Ayat *Jamilah/Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents* (Conover & Crane 2004). Her latest book is a *Treasury of Muslim Literature: The Golden Age 750-1250 CE* (2013). Her earliest memories of stories were with neighbours. "My father and our housekeeper (my mother died in childbirth) wouldn't read me stories because "you can read them yourselves". I loved going to my neighbor's house because my friend's mother would sit in her yard and read to us. I had another neighbor, a single lady I called Aunt Sarah and she would also read to me. My favorite story was Wilde's "The Selfish Giant." I cried every time." The most significant person in her life was her cousin's grandma because "She was a great reader always suggesting other good books for me to read. Because of her I read "Pollyanna", and "Girl of the Limberlost" and Zane Grey novels. Pollyanna was another important book to me. I thought to myself, this attitude makes sense."

Regarding her motive and purpose for writing Islamic children's books she responds, "I'm not basically a writer, and I only write when something is urgently needed but no one else is doing anything about it." Concerning the message of her books she says, "We do not have to lose our Islamic identity to western culture. We have a fantastic, worldwide, thousand year history of wonderful stories and writings in so many genres." I asked her about any special person who changed her life, she said, "My husband, who introduced me to Islam."

The advice she would give the younger generation: "Identify the strengths that you have that can be used to help others, especially the Muslim community in the country you are living in. Be patient, be perseverant, and know that if your work is what Allah wants to be successful, it will be successful. And if it isn't, look to see what lessons you can learn from it, so you will be successful in your next Islamic based work." Freda earned her doctorate in Curriculum

and Instruction and is the director of the Foundation for Advancement and Development in Education and Learning. Asking about the most important book she read she says the, "Qur'an because that is what changed my attitude toward Islam."

Freda's themes revolved around identity, reading, and books as friends. Through her experience of stories, she knew they could impact upon children in a positive way. They seemed to have a therapeutic effect on her and served as prompts to engage her critical thinking. This concurs with research on bibliotherapy which "has been used to enhance understanding, self-esteem, and adjustment to a developmental crisis" (Iaquinta & Hipsky 2006: 209-210). Freda did not have a mother and there may have been elements in stories that served to help her cope and understand. By transferring this to her writing, she would have been able to see how books can guide and assist children.

According to research children's attitudes can be changed through guided reading and bibliotherapy (Amer 1999). This does not just include ideas on identity and self-perception but also on how marginalised groups such as those with disabilities should be treated. Recognising that Muslim children need books that will help them navigate daily life, Freda says she "only write[s] when something is urgently needed but no one else is doing anything about it." Freda like Ann, Linda and Yahya does not regard herself as a writer but someone drawn into writing because of a need. She believes that Muslim children do not have to lose their Islamic identity which has a very rich history. She believes that patience, perseverance and self-reflection are attributes that young people need. Her co-written book, *Ayat Jamila,* was published by a non-Muslim publisher. This suggests that she is trying to present Islam to a wider audience like Rukhsana in order to dispel myths about Muslims and Islam.

3.10 Fawzia Gilani-Williams

I was born in Walsall, England. My parents were child refugees originally from India and then displaced to Pakistan. In their early 20s they came to England. There was a strong reading culture in our home. My parents would take us to the library at least once a week. A large number of books were carried home. Mine were mostly fairy tales. I attended a typical infant and junior school, unfortunately, it was quite far away and so we caught a bus. My brothers and I were the only Indo-Pakistani children on the bus. We were aged five, six and eight. The other passengers were English teenagers attending the comprehensive school

which came a few stops after ours. The teenagers would sometimes pick on us. We never talked on the bus. We sat silently, the three of us in a row like frightened mice. We always sat in the seat closest to the driver. I was always afraid. As soon as the bus stopped we would jump off and instantly start running, skipping, talking and chattering. The chains on our mouths and limbs were lifted.

National identity was not important to my parents. It did not surprise me especially with my father. He was around eleven years old when he was smuggled out of his Indian village with his family and made to walk towards the newly created Pakistan. The Partition of India resulted in the largest upheaval and mass migration of people in history. Fourteen million were made homeless and one million lost their lives (Black 2006: 162). My father walked alongside his father. The torrential rains made the journey even more difficult. My father fell into a ditch when he called to his father. My grandfather was a very old man and he did not hear the cries of his son. He continued walking in the unrelenting rains with thousands of people. That was the last time my father saw his father. Countries and national identities cannot mean much to someone for whom they symbolize a deep loss especially a child who is old enough to remember.

In my early years my parents did not teach us about our culture, heritage or even religion. My understanding of religion came through my junior school. There were stories about the Biblical prophets with comprehension sections. I loved reading and writing about them. The only holidays I was aware of other than those at school were the family Christmas parties at the hospital where my parents worked. We would receive Christmas gifts, meet Father Christmas. Loud songs played in the hall and everyone did the hokey cokey dance. During these years, I was unaware that I was different to other children in school. But slowly things began to change when my father became a Muslim. I began to notice hostility towards my mom from teenage boys. They would shout at her and sometimes they threw stone but I didn't understand why. She would tell us to run and we did. In my last year at infant school I learnt that some people did not like those with darker skin. I sat and wondered about that for a long time. I remember thinking it was very strange. I wondered how these people felt about black cats and what about black and white cats, what then?

My father began to tell us stories about the messengers ﷺof God at some point in my junior school. His stories reinforced what I had learned in school and differed only slightly. The

stories cultivated a deep love for the prophets that carried over into my dreams. I would place myself in their stories. I told Abraham ﷺ he was in a lot of trouble for breaking the idols. I pulled Joseph ﷺ out of the well. When Moses ﷺ was in the basket, I ran alongside him pretending to be his sister and watched him from the bulrushes. I was holding Jesus�' hand while we ran from his persecutors. I begged John the Baptist ﷺ not to go to Herod's castle but he did not listen to me. I learnt the stories of all the prophets ﷺ because my father not only narrated the stories but he had bought a series of books called the Prophets of Allah. So they were reinforced orally and textually.

It was outside an American Islamic school in 1994 that I saw my first hardback picture book: *Zaki's Ramadan Fast*. In 1995 my only child was born. In 1997 I suffered chemical burn from a triazine added to a wallpaper paste. As a result I embarked on a medical odyssey that lasted many years. In early 2002, my first published book appeared. It was a collection of stories that I had written in 1993, the year I had gotten married and graduated as a teacher. The stories in the book were all concerned with character improvement (Gilani 2002). Since our first year of marriage we had observed behaviours in Islamic schools that needed to be addressed with character development. So the stories were written to serve as a resource for teachers. In the autumn of 2002, I was diagnosed with an atypical lymphoma and began aggressive chemotherapy. At the time I was living in Ohio. The only place I would go to with my child was the public library.

In 2002, Eid also fell in December alongside Hanukkah and Christmas. I would take Christmas books and Hanukkah books home for my child to read because the messages were about kindness and love and no different to the messages of Islam. It must have been the visibility given to Kwanzaa that made me question why there were no books on Eid. I was no stranger to a library, but on a subconscious level I had always thought that a public library reflected the culture of the indigenous group and did not really care so much about giving visibility to ethnic minorities. Seeing Hanukkah books in American public libraries was encouraging and reflected societal change showing a people to be embracing towards those that had once been the target of genocide. I recall seeing my father's tears only on two occasions: once when his mother died and once when he was watching a documentary on the Holocaust. There were dead Jews, starved, white bodies in piles.

Seeing Kwanzaa, an obscure celebration against Eid, which is celebrated by over a billion Muslims (Ahmed 1998: 1) made me question where was Eid? I asked the librarian if there were any books on this Islamic holiday. She did not know what Eid was. She took me to the non-fiction section and showed me books on Islam. I went back to the shelves of Christmas and Hanukkah books and began counting them. There were over a hundred Christmas stories and forty-six Hanukkah books. The absence of Eid left an impression. It became my springboard to write holiday stories.

I could see from what the Jews had achieved with Hanukkah and what the African Americans had achieved with Kwanzaa that one of the ways to humanize a people was to show that they had celebrations which are associated with happiness, entertainment, food, games and gifts. Through celebration comes familiarity. Since all groups can identify with celebrations, the idea of 'they are like us' can be nurtured. I wanted people to understand that Muslims were just like other people they had stories too.

Since 2008, I have been working on the Islamic fairy tale series. This project was initiated in the 1990s. My first rendition of *Cinderella* had been written in 1995. I called the story *Muslimella*. However, the story was declined multiple times by Muslim editors because it was not considered an Islamic tale. This view changed with the arrival of new editors born and raised in the West. Cultures are dynamic and this was apparent to me through my daughter who had British Muslim, Punjabi heritage and an American heritage. When one culture is not antagonised by another what results is an amelioration. I consider the Islamic fairy series is an example of Islamic cultural amelioration.

I rewrote *Cinderella* thirteen years later and sent it to Kube Publishers, a UK based Islamic publishing house. It was declined. A few years later there was staff turnover and the new editor was Fatima D'Oyen, an American convert to Islam and a writer of Islamic children's books. Fatima was part of the paradigm shift allowing the grafting of culture and religion. Another way to see it was the hybridization of cultural texts grounded in religious thinking. She was comfortable in taking *Cinderella* as part of her literary cultural heritage and allowing its transformation to be aligned with Islamic belief. Later Yosef Smyth took over as editor. His cultural heritage was half English and half Turkish.

As I wrote the fairy tales I underpinned them with an Islamic worldview in order to give Muslim children visibility. This required the removal of story elements that could be problematic. I also included where possible verses from the Qur'an and ahadith (sayings of Muhammadﷺ). In *Snow White* I picked Chapter Falaq from the Qur'an because it resonated with the evil character of the stepmother who practiced secret arts and envy. Snow White therefore sought refuge in God "from the mischief of those who practice secret arts; from the mischief of the envious one as he practices envy" (Qur'an: 113). I substituted the seven dwarfs for seven dwarf sisters-in-faith. This allowed me to project strong female characters who had skills and benevolent qualities. Atifa was kind, Batrisiya wise; Basilah was brave, Gufran forgiving, Sabira was patient, Adla was just and Karima generous. Each of the sisters-in-faith taught Snow White skills like calligraphy, helping injured animals, making herbal medicine, reading the Qur'an, entrepreneurial competence and generosity. While Snow White lived with the dwarfs, she not only became more competent and skilled but also developed her personal, social and spiritual understanding. She was the epitome of her mother's prayer, as "patient as Job, as peaceful as dawn, with a heart as pure as snow" (Gilani-Williams 2013: 4).

Where possible I included Islamic practices such as fasting. When the wicked stepmother finally caught up with Snow White it was Ramadan. Disguised, she gave Snow White poisonous dates to break her fast. Snow White fell into a deep sleep and this is when the prince arrived. When he saw her he prayed for her. Later he asked his mother to visit Snow White. Snow White is eventually cured with the help of a cordial made from black-seed and honey both of which were considered to have good healing qualities by Muhammadﷺ. I had considered two endings to the story, one in which the stepmother died which is aligned to the traditional tale and the other in which there is forgiveness. I discussed it with a friend who suggested the idea of forgiveness. I chose forgiveness because Islam has a great propensity to encourage forgiveness towards those who have wronged.

Sleeping Beauty was also edited by Yosef. This story line was significantly changed from my original draft. Yosef wanted it steered more towards boy readership because he felt Sleeping Beauty really did not do much once she fell asleep which was true. Yosef's perspective as the editor is tied to the objectives of Kube Publishing which describe Kube as an,

"independent publishing house that publishes general interest, academic and children's books on Islam and the Muslim experience. Inspired by our Islamic faith, Kube is committed to serving Muslim communities worldwide by publishing innovative, relevant and authentic books. In today's ever changing world, Kube seeks to enable Muslim spiritual, cultural, intellectual and creative expression in ways that are engaged and exciting, traditional and modern." (Kube 2013)

Whilst Kube are interested in Islamic stories, there is also a concern for profit-making viability. The changes suggested for *Sleeping Beauty* were suggested in order to increase the reader appeal. The story whilst set around the traditional tale focuses on the male character Haris, who has to go to Makkah on a quest to get water from the zamzam well. Count Lahab who I substituted for the wicked fairy is Haris's adversary intent on thwarting his plans.

Giving Muslim children stories that they could enjoy and emulate was also another reason why I adapted the fairy tales. The Disney version and traditional versions of Cinderella were problematic for Muslim children on a number of levels. For this reason, I removed what might be perceived to be unislamic elements to allow a conflict free reading for Muslim children. In addition to adding verses from the Qur'an and ahadith, I also incorporate words that are spoken daily by Muslim children like asalaamu alaikum (peace be with you), alhamdulilah (praise God), inshallah (God willing). I also include Islamic rituals and practices.

In 1999 I was teaching in a British Islamic school. I was reading the Ladybird version of *Little Red Riding Hood* to my Year 1 and 2 students. While I read it, I interspersed it with phrases like asalaamu alaikum (peace be with you), inshallah (God willing), subhan Allah (glory to God). One child said, "Ustadah (teacher), it doesn't say that in the book." He was referring to the Islamic terms. I asked the boy how he knew this to which he replied, "Well show me then." At this point he stood up and walked around. This caused many of the other children to get on their knees or stand up and reach for the book. It was true *Ladybird* did not have terms that Muslim children hear on a daily basis but the incident reinforced the idea that children needed to see themselves and their way of life validated in books.

3.11 Summary
In summary, the writers of Islamic children's literature have struggled independently to address the literary gap that exists for Muslim children. Their motives and purpose include

visibility, sense of place, character development, identity and spiritual development through biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan. Applying Islamic Critical Theory's three step process the writers identified the problem of Muslim invisibility in children's fiction.They addressed the practical aspect by writing stories. The final transformational step was achieved when children began to read their stories.

Writers continue to confront barriers that ignore Islamic children's fiction. Islamic schools generally do not understand its' worth as a means of developing a positive identity. In their own way the writers continue their struggle with Islamic children's fiction utilising their "strengths, resiliency, and resources" (Robbins et al. 1998:89).

PART 2: THE POTENTIAL OF ISLAMIC CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FOR PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER FOUR PERSONAL, SOCIAL & SPRITUAL EDUCATION

4.0 Introduction

In Chapter Two and Chapter Three insights were provided into what Islamic children's fiction is along with definitions, reasons and author motives and purposes for its development and production. According to Fenske, "More than any other genre, children's literature seeks to convey values and desirable modes of behaviour" (2008: 425). Beshir states, "Storytelling is a very effective method of *tarbiyah* [nurturing]" (2005:9). Such ideas resonate with the general belief that children's books provide substance for personal, social and spiritual development. Since the 1980s there has been a heightened concern for character development in the USA (Fass 2013: 427). This research is one of the few studies that investigate literature-based character education (see section 4.9). As a result it hopes to inform character development programs in Western Islamic schools and may even be useful to International schools in Muslim countries that utilise English as a second language.

This chapter therefore briefly outlines the existing contemporary initiatives in the field of personal, social and spiritual education or character education in England, the USA and Canada. It focuses on the third objective of the study which seeks to gain insight on what can be drawn from social/moral/multicultural education. This is an important review in order to understand the need for personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU). It also engages with the argument that literature-based character development is not effective (Narvaez 2002). It further considers what the literature says about Islamic literature-based PSSU. The ways of teaching literature-based PSSU is also analysed and lastly studies that used literature-based PSSU are also discussed. This chapter positions the relevancy of this study specifically towards literature-based PSSU. This is the first Islamic literature-based character development study with children and therefore serves as a contribution to this field.

The researcher has more than twenty years of participant observation experience in the field of teaching in Britain, Canada, USA and the Middle East. Living in different countries avails one of a perspective on how people really are through direct experience. I have come to understand that although the landscape, the language,the culture and the flag is different - yet

the social aspirations are the same in the East and the West. Everyone wants a peaceful society. The starting point of attaining a peaceful society from a teacher's perspective is the classroom and centres around those who enter it. Will pupils be able to cooperate in a civil manner and as a result have an enjoyable and beneficial day or will some children experience oppressive behaviour? Intervention to stop oppression comes in the form of personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU). Most schools have policies on behaviour which are articulated under different names but the overall idea is to bring about a better world for the individual and society through right thought, right speech and right action.

4.1 Definition

Specialists in the field of personal, social and spiritual understanding use various nomenclature depending on what country they are from and what has informed their thinking. In this study I refer to it as personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU) or character development or character education. According to Berkowitz, Co-Director for the Center for Character and Citizenship there are a great variety of labels used for PSSU. He describes them as a "semantic minefield" (Berkowitz 2012). Some of these are, "moral education, values education, character education, civic education, citizenship education, democratic education, moralogy, social-emotional learning, positive psychology" (Berkowitz 2012). Others include ethical reasoning, moral reasoning, critical thinking, cognitive development, life skills education and conflict resolution. All of these terms suggest that there is considerable interest in promoting PSSU in the West. In the following sections, I briefly discuss government initiatives in England, the USA and Canada to improve PSSU.

4.2 England and Character Education

The Department for Education stipulates that all National Curriculum subjects are required to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in students. It mentions that there are explicit opportunities to develop these areas through religious education, and personal, social and health education and citizenship. Regarding moral education the Department of Education has a number of skills and attitudes that it wants pupils to develop. These can be broken into the following:

1. Knowing the difference between right and wrong
2. Discerning a moral conflict
3. Having concern for others

4. The will to do what is right
5. The ability to reflect on their actions and resulting consequences
6. Learning how to forgive themselves
7. Learning to forgive others
8. Making responsible moral decisions and acting on them through the development of knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes (Department for Education 2011)

A relatively recent programme for delivering PSSU includes *Learning for Life*. *Learning for Life* is funded by the American John Templeton Foundation. The programme has undertaken five research projects which encompass character in schools, and higher education. The John Templeton Foundation is also responsible for establishing the Jubilee Centre of Character and Values located at the University of Birmingham. The research centre aims to cultivate character within "schools, families, communities and companies," with a focus on "self-restraint, hard work, resilience, optimism, courage, generosity, modesty, empathy, kindness and good manners". According to Seldon (2012), the 2011 UK summer riots were a catalyst for the Jubilee Centre's inception. He cites school focus on standardised testing, media outpouring, irresponsible leaders and family disintegration as major factors contributing to Britain's current moral crisis.

4.3 USA and Character Education

The Character Education Partnership (CEP) is one of America's responses to promoting ethical and moral standards in students. There are a large number of organizations that seek to dispense programmes that are geared towards creating school environments that produce morally, ethically, socially and emotionally well rounded students in school. Character education is a curricular area that the American government has allocated considerable funds and research towards. This is one of the prominent differences between England and the USA.

The CEP has formulated eleven principles through which it fosters character development. The second principle relates to 'thinking, feeling and doing' which is advocated by Thomas Lickona, a leading proponent of character education. This is to ensure that character development is recognized by action and not just intention. Listed below are the 11 principles:

1. The school community promotes core ethical and performance values as the foundation of good character.
2. The school defines "character" comprehensively to include thinking, feeling and doing.
3. The school uses a comprehensive, intentional and proactive approach to character development.
4. The school creates a caring community.
5. The school provides students with opportunities for moral action.
6. The school offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character and helps them to succeed.
7. The school fosters students' self-motivation.
8. The school staff is an ethical learning community that shares responsibility for character education and adheres to the same core values that guide the students.
9. The school fosters shared leadership and long-range support of the character education initiative.
10. The school engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.
11. The school regularly assesses its culture and climate, the functioning of its staff as character educators, and the extent to which its students manifest good character. (CEP 2009; Beland, Tolman & Davidson 2009)

Marvin Berkowitz, another American key figure for advancing character education served as the lead investigator in producing the study, *What Works in Character Education* (2005) which was funded by the John Templeton Foundation. He was also the recipient of a grant by the US Department of Education to establish a national resource centre for character education. Berkowitz's study lists almost all the character development programmes that are available in the USA. The number of programmes that have been developed in the States is testimony to its need.

4.4 Canada and Character Education

In 2008, the Ministry of Education for the Province of Ontario released a publication entitled, *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K–12*. The publication was a result of discussions held in 2006 and 2007. The booklet seeks to ensure that all schools in Ontario are implementing character education. The government wants to produce students who will be empathetic and respectful as well as producing civically minded citizens in an interdependent world. The call to action is addressed to all Ontarians to make character development a foundation of the Ontario education system.

The publication defines character development as relevant to schools, gives key messages and beliefs and principles and outlines responsibilities. It discusses respect for diversity,

citizenship development, parent and community partnerships, and discusses how implement character development. Other Canadian provinces have also developed programmes in character development. Recent initiatives (2015) include the first national character conference called *Character Canada* organised by Character Abbotsford in British Columbia. Similar to England, Canada is also promoting character development with government support.

4.5 Literature-Based Personal, Social and Spiritual Understanding

The personal, social and spiritual understanding of children is being scrutinized in terms of creating a caring environment that optimizes learning. If children cannot model honesty, responsibility, kindness and justice then the communities in which they live will be decadent and unsafe. Regarding the character education of children Bigger asks,

> "What kind of young people are being turned out by the education system? Youngsters who know facts about academic subjects? Or motivated responsible young adults with a thirst for understanding, a curiosity about life, a concern to contribute to the communities in which they find themselves, and to build relationships with other people?" (Bigger 1999:3).

Concerns for the need for character development are evident which is suggested by the rise of adolescent misdemeanours leading to a call for intervention (Morrell, Scott, McNeish & Webster 2011). Acknowledging that teachers are burdened with standardized tests and a slew of other curriculum related chores, a way is needed that does not add more pressure to teachers yet allows them to cultivate in children "the development of responsible attitudes" (Bigger 2001:4). If schools do not empower children to develop their personal, social and spiritual understanding then we can expect to see dire consequences. According to Hamdan "The most significant trend in families today is a decline in basic morals and values ... Cheating, gambling, consumption of alcohol and drugs, premarital and extramarital relations ... have become the norm in many countries of the world. In relation to children ... disobedience, deceit, and disrespect are the three dangerous Ds of this era." (2009:19). Hamdan's view can be extrapolated to include Islamic schools where my findings showed that there were concerns about inappropriate behaviour such as disobedience and disrespect (Gilani-Williams 2000). The relevance of Hamdan's statement on whether every school suffers from these concerns will vary according to region and school. There is very little

research on Islamic schools in general to allow further discussion on Hamdan's view. Furthermore Salahuddin's (2009) examination of how character education was implemented in an Islamic school provides insight into whether character education is being delivered but does not focus on issues.

One of the ways a limited number of schools are addressing their responsibility for personal, social and spiritual understanding is through literature-based character development which will be discussed in the following section. Since this study is limited to the effects of literature-based character education in a school setting, family, peers and media are not discussed.

4.6 Islamic Literature-Based Character Education

I found no literature on the effects of Islamic fiction on the personal understanding of Muslim children other than two articles that resulted from this research project (Gilani-Williams & Bigger 2010; Gilani-Williams 2014). The first article discusses how Muslim children through Islamic fiction could address the otherization of themselves. The article drew on the finding of an Islamic school in Canada and the deficient use of Islamic fiction which was thought to impede student self-visibility. This was evident in the creative writing of the children. In the article Bigger discusses how a multicultural story can allow children to develop their personal understanding through self-reflection and transfer strategies used by characters in their own lives. The article concluded that children's creative writing is a vehicle through which children can improve their personal understanding about themselves and their world. The second article draws on the almost total lack of Islamic children's fiction in North American Islamic schools and links this to poor self- identity.

In my experience as a teacher in Islamic schools in North America observations revealed that texts that were used for the subject of English were not sourced from Islamic publishing houses. Literature was purposely selected so that it was in conformity with state school curricula materials. In every case with the school boards (school governors) where I worked, it was incumbent that the state school text books be used for Muslim students to ensure that they were on par if not exceeding the standards of state schools. It is then reasonable to assume that if Islamic fiction is not being used in classrooms then research dealing with the

effect of Islamic fiction will not have been carried out. Also this point needs to be contextualized with the emergence of the Islamic school movement in Britain, the USA and Canada. The indigenous American based Sister Clara Muhammad schools were formed in the 1970s. Prior to this they were Nation of Islam schools. They changed to mainstream Islam in the 1970s when Warith Dean Muhammad led the largest mass conversion to Islam in American history. Other Islamic schools were established by Middle Eastern, African, Asian expatriates and indigenous Muslims, however, these did not appear until the 1980s. The simple case is that research on Islamic schools is fairly new and Islamic literature-based character development has not been considered.

We can however, consider here the effect of stories that Muslim children read in Islamic studies lessons. One would assume that Muslim students learning about the character of Muhammad ﷺ and his companions might impact and carryover into classroom behaviour. I draw on my observations from the early1990s when I was teaching science to year eight and nine students in an American Islamic school. There were some high ability students who always demonstrated very good character. They were diligent, honest, polite, kind and helpful. However, what was puzzling was why they were never vocal to their other classmates to do the right thing. For instance in the following hadith the first two items were not exercised by the children,

> "Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith" (Muslim).

The class had a reputation for being highly disrespectful to substitute teachers and to the Arabic teacher. There were about eight students, boys and girls, who were disruptive and could goad other students to laugh and play along with them. The children who were well behaved would not admonish their peers and ask them to follow the Islamic etiquettes of consideration for others. Many social experiments are now being conducted within various parts of the world to see how people behave when they see an unjust situation (Zhong 2010; Grissinger 2012; Mugge & Greitemeyer 2013; Coloroso 2011; Brinkman 2012). Will individuals be active to stop the injustice or will they ignore it? Within Islam the aforementioned hadith recommends that when a person sees a wrong he should change it with his hand. For example if a person is being hit, one should intervene by blocking the hand of

the aggressor or if someone is vandalising something, s/he should be stopped by restraining her or his hand. But if a person does not want to use their hand then s/he should call to the person and say, you should not do such and such. If however, the person is not even able to do this, through perhaps fear then in their heart they should acknowledge that what they are witnessing is wrong. But this is considered in Islam to be "the weakest of faith". It could be said that when students do not step in to correct the wrong of their peers, they are demonstrating weakness of faith. Social psychologists, however have given a name for this apathetic behaviour. It is called the bystander effect. It

> "reveals that the more people present in a helping behavior situation, the less likely that each individual person present will actually help. Whether donating to a fundraising campaign or reporting an emergency, people are less likely to offer help in the presence of others than when they are alone" (Garcia, Weaver, Darley & Spence 2009: 215).

The bystander effect has relevance to this study because it is this apathy that literature-based character development seeks to counter. How can students be motivated to not only speak up but take action when they see an injustice irrespective of who else is present?

In considering literature-based character development, I suggest that child empowerment can be initiated through children being equipped with phrases that question the wrong actions of a perpetrator. Plays should be created where students can participate in scenarios. Phrases can be taught to empower children to speak up when they see an injustice. These can be as simple as, 'wrong action', 'stop right now' or 'I'm calling the teacher'. Stories show how characters deal with problems. But children still need to be taught what kinds of empowering expressions can be said and what empowering actions can be taken that lead to transformation.

One of the few books that is geared towards using story to develop PSSU for parents is Beshir's book, *Once Upon a Time: Parenting Through Storytelling* (2005). This book specifically discusses Islamic children's storytelling. It contains helpful and important information on the use of Islamic children's fiction. Storytelling is considered a method for tarbiyah. Tarbiyah linguistically means growth but in Islamic educational terminology refers to development and training in educational, spiritual, physical and moral growth. The following Qur'anic verse shows that stories are a method through which moral instruction

can be given, "There is, in their stories, instruction for those endued with understanding" (12:111).

Beshir (2005:9) explains that there are three categories of story within the Qur'an. These are stories of the prophets; stories like that of Cabeel (Cain) and Habeel (Abel); the third category refers to individuals whose names are not mentioned like the sleepers of the cave. Prophet Muhammadﷺ is also said to have shared stories with his companions to cultivate patience and perseverance in his followers who were undergoing persecution. He would tell about the suffering of those who went before like the People of the Ditch who are mentioned in Chapter 85 of the Qur'an. The story tells of aggression and oppression against innocent people.

Hamdan refers to the prophetic practice of using parables and stories to teach moral values and religious principles. She notes, "Parables have been used throughout the course of history by prophets and learned men" (2009:74). It is generally assumed that reading stories such as those in the Qur'an promotes personal, social and spiritual understanding. This belief, however, has been challenged by some scholars such as Narvaez (2002) who say there is no substantial evidence in research findings to support this claim.

4.7 The Effectiveness of Literature-Based Character Education

Narvaez writes, "Traditional character educators have convinced some parents and teachers that merely reading stories to children will develop their characters" (2002:167). Here Narvaez is criticizing the assumption of passive reading leading to full understanding and that all readers will arrive at the same meaning. This she believes does not happen. In Narvaez's view educators who advocate this are ignorant of the research conducted by educational psychologists. She draws on the idea that current research shows that reading is an active process and that children grasp ideas from texts based on their personal knowledge and experience, which at times can lead to meanings that differ from the author's intent. Another point she highlights is that themes constructed by children do not come easily. Narvaez recommends that in addition to these points, traditionalists in moral education need to understand that moral messages are a type of theme that the child then designs based on reading skills and moral development.

Narvaez's advice to traditionalists of character education is to "drop their simplistic understanding about reading moral stories to build character" because it conflicts with current conceptualizations of personality and new approaches to character education that she herself has contributed to (Narvaez et al. 2002:169). Narvaez, has a point that not all children may arrive at the same understanding; teachers are well aware of this disparity between children which is evidenced by moral and cognitive theories. Yet there are a number of scholars who give merit to moral literacy and its effectiveness merely by its reading.

> "Residual influences from early character education efforts are visible in the current philosophies of certain character education theorists today (e.g. Bennett 1993, 1995; Kilpatrick, Wolfe & Wolfe 1994) who suggest that the very act of sharing moral stories increase moral literacy" (Schmidt & Pailliotet 2008:146).

However, according to Leming there is very little research to substantiate this claim (Schmidt & Pailliotet 2008:146). Research by Humphrey (2005) used action research to investigate the effectiveness of literature-based character education. Humphrey's study involved pre-steps and reinforcement of character ideals. This helped to reinforce the message of the stories. Humphrey's study is by far one of the most comprehensive on how literature-based character education can have a positive effect on children. In a private email exchange with the co-director of the Center for Character and Citizenship, Marvin Berkowitz, I questioned the sparse availability of research on literature-based character education. His response,

> "There has been a long-standing belief that reading character literature promotes character development (The Book of Virtues made a fortune on this untested premise). There has sadly been very little research to directly test this. Jim Leming's research on Heartwood (one of the first and most extensive such programs) showed no impact. Other programs include literature, but only as part of the program (Child Development Project, etc.) so it is hard to conclude that reading literature works" (personal correspondence, June 2013).

Another leading name in character education, Thomas Lickona, director for the Center for the Fourth and Fifth Rs (Respect and Responsibility) offered his views (personal correspondence, June 6, 2013) on the assertion of scholars who, say "there is no research to suggest that moral stories can affect character development." Regarding this he quotes from James Leming (1993), who said,

> "Those interested in character education have long believed that morally inspiring literature should be part of any character education program. Surprisingly, not one research study has attempted to assess whether reading such literature has the expected effect on character" (Leming 1993:69).

Lickona pointed out that the time lapse since the observation has been "nearly 20 years." Lickona feels that "individual practice of using stories to teach character remains something that researchers have not gotten around to studying." He clarifies his position saying. "That, of course, does *not* mean that stories are ineffective. It just means that their effectiveness hasn't yet been studied. As Drs. Berkowitz and Bier say, that's true of many character education practices" (personal correspondence, June 6, 2013). I concur with Lickona's next point about the durability of stories as vehicles of virtue.

> "However, it's significant that stories have been—across cultures and history—one of the most enduring ways of teaching virtue. While it's true that human beings sometimes continue to engage in educational practices that *don't* work, I'm inclined to take the fact that stories have endured cross-culturally as an appealing form of character education as an indication of their value" (personal correspondence, June 6, 2013).

Lickona, provides a strong argument concerning the effect of stories on character. He brings the aggregate research from sister fields of enquiry saying,

> "We *do* know that one value of inspiring stories is that they present positive role models, and there is research from the field of social learning showing the power of example to influence behavior" (personal correspondence, June 6, 2013).

This correlates with a common hadith (actions and sayings of Muhammadﷺ) recorded by Bukhari which states that Muhammadﷺ said "I have only been sent to perfect good manners." This is further supported by the following verse, "And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character" (Qur'an 68:4). Within Islam stories about Muhammadﷺ and the other prophetsﷺ serve as morally "inspiring" stories. Lickona also refers to research on childhood which he says shows that "direct instruction in moral values helps to shape conscience and conduct, and many stories include direct teaching about good and evil, right and wrong." Lickona acknowledges that although there is no conclusive support there are other forms of validation.

> "So in these indirect but nevertheless important ways, there is empirical support for teaching virtue through stories. For that reason, I would disagree with scholars who 'say there is no research to suggest that moral stories can affect character development'" (personal correspondence, June 6, 2013).

4.8 Ways of Teaching PSSU

In this section I discuss the different ways that scholars have advised that character education might be taught. Edgington draws attention to the increasing number of American states that are mandating or encouraging the use of character education programmes. One of the problems he noticed was that educators though wanting to implement ways to teach children virtues were just not sure how to do this. Edgington writes that teachers have been providing lessons on moral values and virtues since the inception of schools in America. The method he says, "has been a very simple one – through literature" (2002: 113).

He cites four different approaches that teachers have been using. These include values inculcation, values clarification, values analysis and moral reasoning. Edgington along with others believes that literature-based character education is fundamental to disseminating values to children (Lickona 1991; Andrews 1994; Wynne & Ryan 1997). The challenge today is how can values be transmitted within literature. Initially there were concerns about what values or virtues should be taught because of the overlap with religious values (Haydon: 1997). This conflict has been avoided by shaping values so they are universal and acceptable to all groups of people. There is also discussion over integrating PSSU throughout the curriculum.

Educators believe that the subject of English language is the easiest through which PSSU can be delivered (Lickona 1997; Parker 2005). Literature has been identified as a means to help students develop into compassionate, respectful, and responsible members of society (Leal: 1999). Minchew found that her students reacted positively to sports literature which she taught using Steven Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.* Matching these habits to accounts in sport narratives revealed that students benefitted and developed their character (Minchew 2002: 38).

According to Karen Parker children's literature is a successful approach for transmitting character education. However, for this to be effective she lists three elements that should be apparent: identification, involvement and insight. Identification is where the child equates herself with main characters and with the events. With involvement the child is able to empathise and connect with the situation and feel an emotional connection with the character.

Insight is where the children "explore effective alternative behaviours to replace old inappropriate behaviours" (2007). Parker's steps are somewhat similar to Humphrey's (2005) who did a study on literature-based character education. Both Parker and Humphrey used strategies that emphasized or reinforced elements in the stories.

4.9 Studies in Literature-Based Character Education

Stephen Milne investigated what he calls a "previously unexplored mode of reading" (2008: 3) namely moral rehearsal. His investigations produced an interpretive case study where he analysed the moral responses of school children to fiction. He did this using interview, peer group talk and children's written work. Milne's central argument was "that children's reading has a role to play in the formation of ... moral imagination" and that "story and imagination are important vehicles by which children can be initiated into the moral and spiritual values of a culture" (Milne 2008: 11).

Jessica Bischalaney (2009) conducted a study with grade 4 students on the effects of literature in relation to a student's character development. She selected three stories that centred on the theme of being different to others in three phases. Her data consisted of student surveys, student written responses, observations, and data collected from other staff regarding the students. Picture books were used to allow the researcher to extend the students' thinking by going beyond the story plot and look for a deeper meaning which she hoped would then offer an opportunity for character development. Bichalaney found that the results informed her about her own teaching and offered insights into student learning as well as seeing improvement in student character development through literature (2009: 19-20).

Mary Humphrey (2005) conducted a very significant and important literature-based character development study on American children in which she used stories through action research to build character and self-esteem. I expand on Humphrey's method in Chapter Seven where I discuss how I adapted some of her methods in conducting this study. Humphrey used fairy tales through combining Bloom's Taxonomy Model with Four Action Models which she called "right action, right speech, right thought and no action." Her students were required to

identify and apply the Four Action Models to the fairy tales. This was foregrounded with discussions on desirable character traits.

Narvaez and Berkowitz state that there is insufficient data to conclude that stories can improve character development. In the last few years Bichalaney (2009), Milne (2008), and Humphrey (2005) have concluded from their respective research that stories can contribute to improving a child's character. Results from this study will further contribute to the debate on whether literature-based character development can contribute to personal, social and spiritual development in children.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this chapter show that governments are engaged with initiatives of delivering curriculum that focuses on promoting a child's personal and social understanding. Also that more research needs to be undertaken to see the potential of literature-based character education and its impact on children's behaviour. The investigations that have been conducted by Humphrey (2005), Parker (2007), Milne (2008) and Bischalaney (2009) further promote the effectiveness of using literature-based character education. This will be the first Islamic literature-based character development study with children and will therefore provide valuable data on personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU) that can have implications for the delivery of moral/social and multicultural education.

CHAPTER FIVE LEARNING THEORIES & MORAL THEORIES

5.0 Introduction

This study investigates whether Islamic children's literature can empower Muslim children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. In Chapter Two and Chapter Three I introduced Islamic children's literature and provided insight on its development, its definitions and the motives and purposes of its writers. In Chapter Four I positioned the study against current initiatives in character development in England, the USA and Canada. It is evident that there is a considerable effort to promote positive behaviour in schools, however, there are very few studies that show the theoretical steps that allow such changes. In this section I discuss the literature concerned with moral theories and learning theories to explain how children may learn and develop themselves. The action research study is concerned with acquainting children with character developing stories in order to see whether the stories can enable children to recognise that certain behaviours like cheating, stealing, hitting and bullying are inappropriate, irresponsible, unjust and oppressive. Following from this it investigates whether the stories can motivate pupils to strive towards creating a harmonious environment.

Moral theories and learning theories offer explanations on the stages that show how children might be able to do this. For example a certain high ability pupil had a problem with anger. When other children were not able to comply with her wishes, she routinely resorted to slapping them quite hard. This presented a challenge for the offending pupil. How could her ingrained and oppressive behaviour be stopped by her own volition? Another student who was low ability felt justified to take her classmates belongings with no remorse. She was told that her actions made her classmate cry. To which she had replied, "So what?" The challenge for this student was how could she replace her egocentric and insensitive behaviour with behaviours in which she recognised the rights of others. To understand theoretically how these pupils could do this, moral theories and learning theories explain the progressive steps involved in a child's thinking, feeling and action. Below is a diagram in which I have assembled the theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, Dave, Krathwohl and Bloom. This compilation serves as an overview of the theories that are discussed in this chapter to help explain how children progress from one stage to another. The theories look at the affective, the cognitive, the moral and the psychomotor domain.
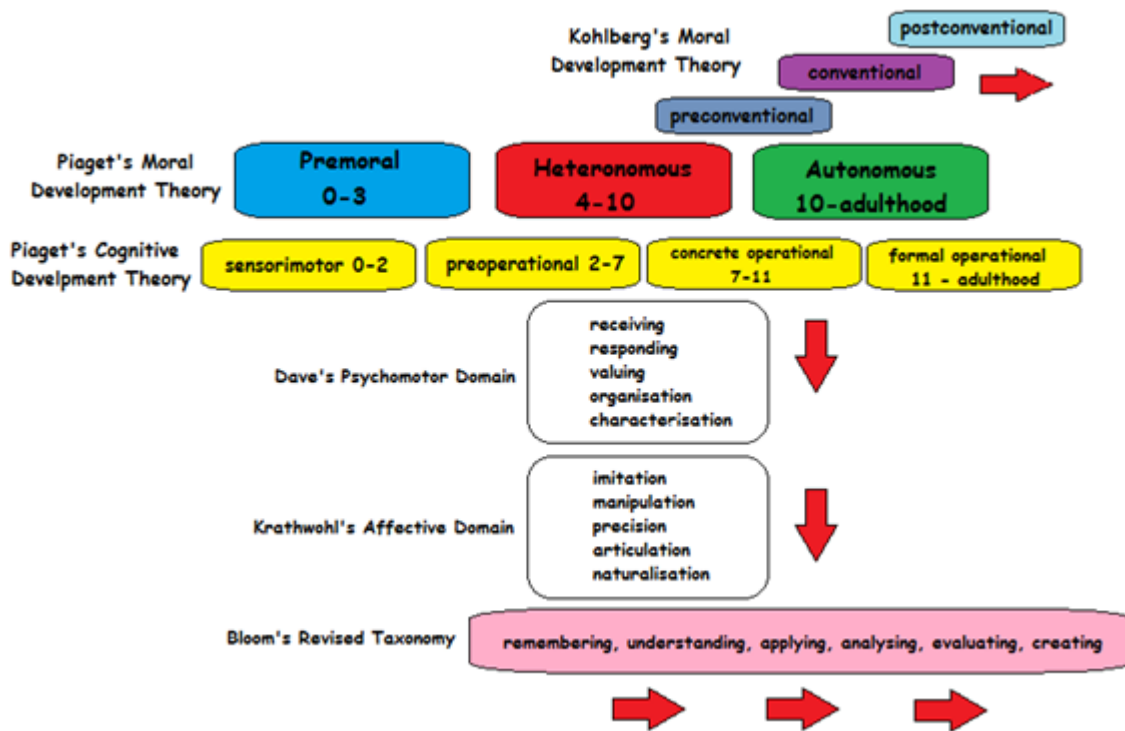
Figure: 5.0 Moral theories and learning theories

5.1 Piaget's Theory of Moral Development

Piaget believed that "all morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules" (Piaget 1965: 13). Essentially Piaget saw morality as justice and fairness. This is similar to the Islamic concept of morality where the Qur'an states, "That which is on earth We have made but as a glittering show for the earth, in order that We may test them - as to which of them is best in conduct" (18:7). Justice and fairness are related to conduct. In a hadith Muhammadﷺ is reported to have said, "I have been sent to perfect virtues of courtesy and good behaviour" (Inter-Islam 2001).

In terms of applying Piaget's theory to the students, the research question sought to investigate their change in conduct. Piaget used two methods of enquiry to investigate moral development. He watched children play a game of marbles in which he would ask them to explain the rules and their reasons. The rules were indicators to Piaget of how children moralised without the interference of adults. He also used stories relating to motives which he followed with questions. The following are an example of two of the stories he used.

"A little boy who is called John is in his room. He is called to dinner. He goes into the dining room. But behind the door there was a chair, and on the chair there was a tray with fifteen cups on it. John couldn't have known that there was all this behind the door. He goes in, the door knocks against the tray, bang go the fifteen cups, and they all get broken." (Piaget 1997: 122)

"Once there was a little boy whose name was Henry. One day when his mother was out he tried to get some jam out of the cupboard. He climbed up on to a chair and stretched out his arm. But the jam was too high up and he couldn't reach it and have any. But while he was trying to get it, he knocked over a cup. The cup fell down and broke." (Piaget 1997: 122)

Piaget developed three stages of moral development beginning with the premoral. He identified children between the age of birth to three to be at this stage (some texts suggest that the age limit is four years and others five years). At the premoral stage the child is considered to have no concept or understanding of morality. The next stage is seen as the heteronomous stage and refers to children around the age of four to ten years of age. At this stage children's moral reasoning is dictated by the rules set by others (Lickona 1976: 220). These others may be parents, older siblings or teachers. Children at this stage believe that punishment is meted out according to how great the infraction is and that a punishment will take place immanently. So for instance regarding the above stories of John and Henry, children at this stage of moral development cite John as the naughtier, because he broke more cups. Children do not see that John's intentions were innocent but Henry's were blameworthy. They see things in terms of their outcome rather than the intention. Piaget believed that children had to progress through cognitive stages in order to develop moral aptitude. Relating cognition to morality can be understood through the child's egocentricism which according to Piaget's cognitive theory decreases around the age of seven. Higher perspectives in moral attitude become more salient when a child can see things from the point of view of others or can think empathetically.

According to Piaget's next stage, which refers to children from the age of ten (Shaffer &Kipp 2010: 588), although some texts say eight or nine, a child enters autonomous morality. This stage is where the child recognises that rules can be fluid or flexible and that intentions are what determine the severity of the consequence. As children get older they begin to understand that rules are made by people no different to themselves and can be questioned. Whereas before children accept views of authority figures as final, they now begin to question them.

> "Piaget suggested that the transition to autonomous morality begins around age 8 but may not be complete until 12 or 13. Autonomous morality is a product of increasing cognitive maturity, gradual release from adult control and increasing peer interaction. Through the latter … children develop a morality acknowledging their different perspectives on moral action and one that is beneficial to all (Cardwell & Flanagan 2002:130).

The child understands that rules can change if there is a consensus to change them. Another characteristic of this stage is that the child has learned that wrongs and mishaps should be judged on the intention and not what resulted. According to a hadith (sayings of Muhammadﷺ) recorded by Bukhari and Muslim, actions are judged by their intention. From an early age, Muslim children are taught the word "niyyah" which means intention. Children are told to make their intention or niyyah for prayer, fasting and ablution. Niyyah is used in the context of actions. If one's niyyah or intention was good, then they are not blameworthy. So intention for Muslim children is a concept that is introduced at an early stage. When children commit a wrong they are asked about their niyyah, their motive. According to Islam a person will not be held accountable in the next life for an act that resulted in wrongfulness if their intention was good.

Within the classroom setting, my first question after a complaint is always "Was it an accident or deliberate?" If the intention is malicious then it requires a consequence, verbal, written or an office visit or the victim may choose to forgive the person. If however, it was accidental, the accused is asked to say sorry and the plaintiff is encouraged to say "I forgive you." If Piaget had carried out his stories with Muslim children, it would be interesting to see if they would make the connection that Henry had wrong niyyah whilst John's niyyah or intention was good.

Research on niyyah or intention was later conducted by Lickona as part of his doctoral thesis: (Lickona 1971). Lickona developed "three experimental interventions with 6 year olds that were intended to test Piaget's theory that children develop more mature moral judgment as a result of their growing cognitive ability to simultaneously hold in mind more than one relevant factor (Lickona 2014). Lickona designed a fourth non-Piagetian intervention which he referred to as "didactic instruction" (Ryan & Lickona 1992: 157; Lickona 2014). In his study Lickona used didactic instruction to simply explain "to the child why one should consider intentions when judging who's naughtier" (Lickona 2014). He found that this helped the child's progression in sensitivity,

"All four of my experimental conditions produced a significant shift in my 6-year-old subjects' thinking – toward greater sensitivity to intentions ... contrary to the predictions ... derived from Piaget's theory – namely that non-directive methods would be superior to directive ones in advancing children's moral thinking – the 6-year-olds who received direct, didactic instruction made the biggest gains on story items like the one about the broken cups" (Lickona 2014).

Piaget's cognitive development theory is based on "biological maturation" and rests on "readiness" whereby the child should master the information and concepts of each consecutive stage before he or she can go to the next. This means that "children should not be taught certain concepts until they have reached the appropriate stage [in] cognitive development" (McLeod 2009). In the case of the low ability child who was not able to understand why she should not take other children's belongings, it seems that according to Piaget's cognitive stages she was operating at a preoperational stage where she was still exhibiting strong egocentric behaviour. This, however, needs to be understood in a social intervention context. Parents generally teach discipline in matters of right and wrong. In the case of this particular child, her mother was very old and pampered the child excessively. The vice principal made a comment that the child was smothered by the mother and would yield to the child's sometimes outrageous demands. This negative parental reinforcement may have kept the child at a preoperational stage.

Lickona documents a similar case. He was asked to interview a ten year old boy who had "repeatedly been caught stealing from other students' lockers". Through a series of questions the boy revealed that he knew stealing was wrong because it could result in punishment if caught by adults. Lickona points out that the ten year old was oblivious of his victims' feelings. The boy's responses indicated he was functioning at Kohlberg's Stage 1 (see section 5.2). Further questioning revealed that home life was "probably responsible for his slow moral development and stealing" and what the boy lacked was "moral reasoning that would help him understand how his behaviour affected other people" (Lickona 2014).

The age range of the pupils (8 – 10) who took part in the study indicates that they would be operating at the concrete preoperational stage. According to Piaget this means developmentally they would be able to "perform rather complex operations on problems as long as they were concrete and not abstract" (Hergenhahn 1982: 289). Children at this stage

of intellectual development can deal logically with events that they experience directly. Piaget believed that a child interacting with his/her environment allowed the construction of knowledge. Proponents of this theory suggest that it is important for a child to be an active participant and not a passive learner to enable and perpetuate development (Cameron 2001:3). Transferring this to the study suggests that the children have to be at an appropriate developmental stage in order to understand the stories. Moreover if the pupils can actively participate with the story such as utilising drama then the children are more likely to develop a better understanding as Winston notes, "learning in drama lessons can effect substantial change in children's social and moral attitudes" (1998: 87).

Students were not initially trained to pick up their rubbish in the classroom, school bus, during field trips or in the lunch area. At lunch time they would drop their rubbish on the floor for the cleaners who were standing a few paces away. It seems likely that children were imitating the behaviour of adults from home. However, through modelling expectations children were taught to put their rubbish in the bin. This active participation led to the construction of knowledge on what was an appropriate method of disposing of rubbish.

The scaffolding and modelling of expectations is aligned with Piaget. Piaget's work has been credited for many educational programs that implement a staged system of development where children are taught at a level for which they are developmentally prepared. Whilst Piaget's work was pivotal as a springboard in educational research, his theories have been criticised and contested. For instance Piaget had no control groups and the sample sizes were small, moreover the research was done with his own children who represented a particular social and cultural group. This meant that his results were Eurocentric and therefore not transferable to other groups in other cultures. This flagged bias and subjectivity (Buck-Morss 1978).

Piaget's stages of development have also been criticised because they are seen to be too rigid. Research suggests that there is more fluidity in the demarcations of stages and in some cases the formal operation stage may not even be reached (Keating 1979; Dasen 1994). Hughes further criticised Piaget for underestimating the cognitive competency of young children

showing that they were more cognitively able than Piaget initially thought (Hughes 1975; Gelman 1979; Donaldson 1984). Piaget also did not take into account the influence of social learning on cognitive development as Vygotsky did (Orlando 2012).

5.2 Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Kohlberg's work was extrapolated and built on Piaget's three stages of moral reasoning. Kohlberg's theory outlined three levels of moral development which were divided into six stages. Within these stages a person progressed from one stage to the next as moral understanding intensified, this is akin to Piaget's cognitive development theory which also required mastery at a lower level before the next could be achieved. The three levels are referred to as the preconventional, conventional and postconventional. Each of these in turn have two stages. Stage one the most basic stage is where children view rules as absolute where they feel a violation will lead to punishment. Stage two encompasses self-interest. Rules are followed for reasons of self-centeredness. Many classrooms use stickers and other motivational gifts that work on this premise.

Stage three leads to a realisation that social expectations must be conformed to. This involves the "need to be a good person in your eyes and those of others. Your caring for others. Belief in the Golden Rule" (Kohlberg: 1976: 34). Stage four progresses to the understanding that the larger society must be considered when making judgments. Duty and authority are key factors in following rules at this stage. Stage five advances to the understanding that rules and laws are important but coupled with individual rights there is the consideration that people should agree on common standards. Regarding stage six, Kohlberg later felt that there was no data to substantiate its justification. However, as it stands the stage referred to internalised principles of justice which are followed even if they are in conflict with contemporary laws and rules (Robbins, Chatterjee & Canda 1998: 246 -247).

As the child theoretically progresses through the moral stages, the child simultaneously progress through cognitive stages which would include moving from concrete operational to formal operational. One of the criticisms of Kohlberg's theory was that it was largely andocentric or projected a masculine point of view. It was therefore seen as having bias in

favour of males and overlooking the female perspective. Carol Gilligan challenged Kohlberg's theory of moral development for the very reason that it did not articulate the female position. Gilligan developed a theory based on the morality of care, proposing that women spoke "in a different voice" to men (Rich 1985:117). Her argument rested on the premise that women drew on care and interpersonal responsibility when making moral judgments. This differed, she claimed, from men's language which drew on "individual rights, liberties, duties, and their attendant protection" (Rich 1985:117). Although there were flaws in Gilligan's original results her work has reflected the need to add the element of care into the moral development framework. Gilligan noted that females are taught and trained to be more empathetic and nurturing than males.

Thus far I have discussed theories developed by Piaget and Kohlberg and also referred to Gilligan's theory. In the next section I begin a discussion of the affective domain. Learning has generally been divided into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor (Bastable 1997: 394; Salim et al 2013: 1; Edelman 2014:223). Each of these provide insight into how children learn, however, the affective domain is the most relevant for this study because of the area it focuses on. That said it is important to acknowledge that "any 'cognitive' or 'psychomotor' objective has some affective component to it (if at no deeper level than a willingness to sufficiently interact with learning resources to achieve the learning)" (Smith & Ragan 1999: 250).

5.3 The Affective Domain

The affective domain is concerned with "attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, and emotions" (Neumann & Forsyth 2008: 248). Unfortunately, this domain receives the least amount of attention (Pieere & Oughton 2007; Denac 2004); . Some suggest that this is because education authorities have for some time tied funding to standardised tests. "This fear of non-renewal due to the performance level of their students fuels educators to keep their absolute focus on the cognitive domain. Little time or energy is focused on the affective domain" (Santrock, 2003 in Pierre & Oughton 2007). This point is reiterated by Hansen concerning physical education teachers who like teachers of personal, social and spiritual education (PSSU) focus on affective skills.

"The seeming lack of attention given to affective development may be the result of many teacher preparation programs failing to adequately prepare future educators with strategies for teaching important affective skills. Many physical education teacher preparation programs focus predominately on psychomotor and cognitive development, but do not spend an adequate amount of time preparing for affective development" (Hansen 2009:14).

Although personal, social and spiritual understanding uses the affective domain, it does not operate in exclusion to the cognitive domain, rather there is a convergence where the two "interact significantly in instruction and learning" (Martin & Briggs, 1986: 3).

Mohidin (2010) argues that the affective is the basic building block of learning. The affective domain's initial stage is receiving. This refers to attentive listening. Aligning this to the study, the stories are read to the children. They do not read them by themselves. Therefore the children have to apply the first stage of the affective domain in this study. Below is a model of Krathwohl's affective domain which consists of five levels.
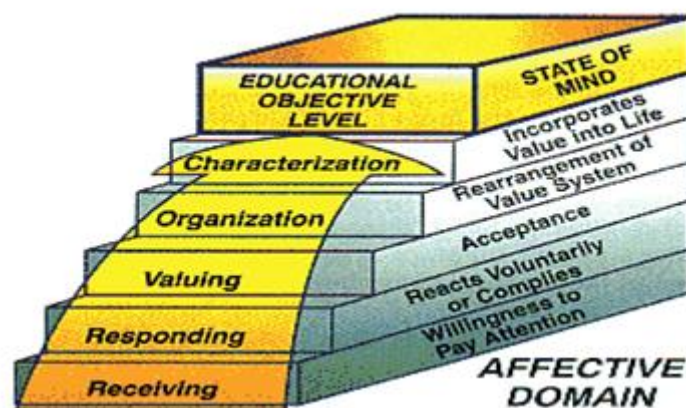
Figure 5.2: Krathwohl's taxonomy for the affective domain (Miller 2014).

Within the affective domain there are five levels beginning with receiving, responding, evaluating, organizing and finally internalizing values or characterization. Others add two more traits of "wonder, and aspire" (Dettmer 2006: 72). These five sequential areas progress from simple to complex. The simplest stage of the affective domain begins with receiving. Receiving refers to awareness or paying attention. It involves deliberate attentiveness, the willingness of an individual to receive knowledge is controlled by attitude, "Without this, you cannot even embark on the learning process. All learning comes to a standstill. It is therefore the foundation for all learning" (Mohidin 2010). Applying the affective domain stages to

using stories to improve children's character would suggest that at the receiving stage the child is listening to the story intently, with purpose.

The second stage of the affective domain is referred to as responding which involves diligent participation. Within responding the child has to apply and practice new information that has been presented. Essentially when the child willingly listens to the story, she is "responding" voluntarily to the story. This is where she is processing the story, making sense of what is happening, questioning and clarifying events. The third stage is called valuing. This is where students begin to initiate change. Allen and Friedman (2010) argue:

> "students actually begin the process of learning as they compare and contrast new material with their existing beliefs, and attitudes. Students at this level can articulate a value, defend it, and describe its origin and rationale" (4).

This process combines application with internalization. The child has made a commitment to accept certain behaviours. This change is observable through action. Within a story there may be certain behaviours that are acceptable or unacceptable. The child through her own volition begins to avoid behaviours that have been deemed inappropriate and tries to enact behaviours that she deems are appropriate. At this point the child has successfully reached valuing. In the case of the pupil who slapped her classmates, she would demonstrate valuing by stopping her oppressive action.

The fourth stage is known as organizing. This is where the child compares, relates, and empathises leading to the child forming her own value system. At this stage the child has recognized that she must accept responsibility for her behaviour. She understands how to balance freedom with responsible behaviour. The stories have informed the child's value system and the child has modified previous attitudes. For instance through a story that teaches that stealing lunch money is hurtful to the victim, the child if previously engaged in stealing, will have developed a higher moral attitude through the story and can empathise and understands the discomfort associated with stealing. This then result in her modifying her attitude to no longer stealing. At the organizing stage the child has established an improved value system. The fifth stage is referred to as characterization.

"This is when your value system controls your behaviour. Your character is guided by your value system. Your behaviour becomes consistent and predictable. It becomes characteristic of you as a person and determines how you react personally, socially and emotionally" (Mohidin 2010).

The characterization stage reflects the ability to work independently, cooperate, employ ethical knowledge on problems and modify behaviour based on new understanding. It enables a child to discern the world meaningfully rather than superficially. At this stage the child is able to incorporate their value system into their daily life. The stories with follow on discussions and activities that the child has participated in will have, in theory, now transferred to the child's personal value system and the child freely exercises these new ethical practices. As Bednar and Levie note,

"Affective learning inculcates the values and beliefs we place on the information we engage with. It refers to our attitudes and willingness to take part in new things, and ability to make decisions about how we operate and behave in a variety of circumstances. Attitudes are not directly observable, but the actions and behaviours to which they contribute may be observed." (1993:135)

If the pupil who slapped classmates has reached the characterisation stage and stops her oppressive behaviour, it means that she now understands the physical and emotional pain of her victims. This parallels with Gilligan's Ethics of Care and Kohlberg's Moral Stages where the child has progressed to a higher level of understanding (Winston 1998: 77). In the next section I discuss Bloom's taxonomy as revised by Lorin Anderson in the 1990s (Anderson & Krathwohl 2001) and show how this also helps understand the process of progression.

5.4 Bloom's Taxonomy

As stated earlier the affective domain does not function in exclusion to other domains, there are overlaps. However, generally cognitive learning is concerned with knowledge, comprehension and critical thinking. The stages in Bloom's revised model for cognitive development move from basic to higher order thinking beginning with remembering, understanding, applying, evaluating: the highest form of cognitive learning being creating.
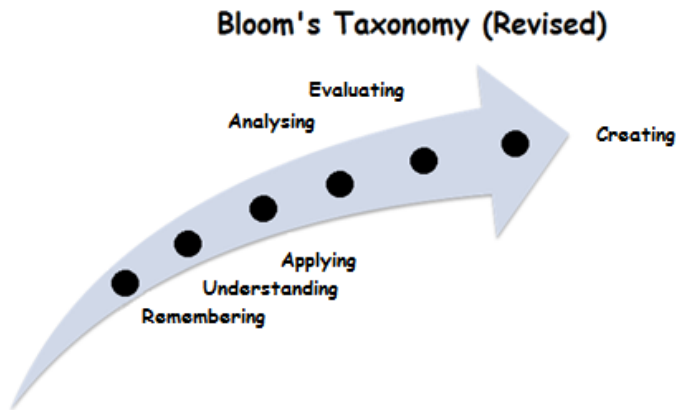
Figure 5.3: Bloom's revised taxonomy

The knowledge stage is seen as the lowest order of cognitive skills. This involves the task of recollection of data or information. All stages in the cognitive domain rely on the mastery of the first level in order to progress to the next. If we apply the stories to this stage, it would involve the child being able to tell the story from memory. It involves recitation and being able to label, match, outline, recognise, recall or know. This overlaps with the first stage of the affective domain. Being able to do these operations suggest that the child has mastered the most basic level of cognitive skill. Understanding is the next stage which involves being able to explain or interpret. For instance a child should be able to take a story and be able to explain the story. Here the child will be able to rewrite, translate and summarise.

Application is the third stage; this involves the child being able to apply what has been learned. The child can demonstrate this through parallel situations. For instance if a story is teaching situations for saying 'thank you', then, the child can apply this in their own daily lives as opportunities present themselves. This could involve the child in saying thank you to another pupil for passing a book or getting change from the lunch lady. This stage however, can be modelled for the students who will eventually grasp how they can transfer this to their own daily situations. According to Schunk "Children are likely to perform modeled behaviors that they believe are successful or that will lead to rewarding outcomes" (1987:156). The concept of reward ties in with the children's Islamic philosophy that good actions are rewarded by God (Qur'an 64:9).

The stages of knowledge, understanding and application are referred to as lower order thinking skills because they are regarded as basic processes. The next three stages comprise

of analysis, evaluating and creating and are thought of as higher order thinking skills. Analysis, the fourth stage requires the child to be able to discriminate, distinguish, infer, identify, compare, illustrate and differentiate. These are all cognitive activities implementing discernment. The child breaks information into parts and raises questions about the focus item. So for instance the child scrutinises the stories and asks herself questions like: How are the messages in a story divided? Which behaviours should be kept and which should be discarded and why? The process of analysis is being carried out at the first level of higher order thinking.

In Bloom's taxonomy the last two stages of synthesising and evaluating have been changed in the revised version to evaluating and creating. Evaluation is concerned with making judgments. In the case of the stories, a child is making judgments on the actions of the characters and selecting and transferring these to be used in their own situations. Selecting and justifying the best fit shows that a child has evaluated successfully. Creating is concerned with taking different elements and combining them to make a new one. In terms of character and behaviour development this could be shaped through the child taking different values from a story and combining them with other elements to practice a new or improved behaviour.

5.5 Psychomotor Domain

Bloom did not give stages for the psychomotor domain, however, other theorists such as Simpson (1972), Harrow (1972) and Dave (1970) developed different taxonomies for this area. In this section I will discuss Dave's stages for the psychomotor domain. This domain again contributes to a holistic understanding of child learning. The first stage is called imitation, this refers to the child being able to copy what she sees. In transferring this to a story, it would refer to a child being able to duplicate the actions of the teacher who is acting out parts of the story.

The second stage is called manipulation which refers to the child's ability to perform an action through guidance or instructions rather than observation (Huitt 2003). This could refer to a child being directed by the teacher to say and do certain actions that are within the story.

The next stage is referred to as the precision stage which is when the child can shows mastery in the action without a prompt. This is where the child is now able to perform their part in a play based on the story.

The next stage is articulation and refers to the child's ability to take two or more skills and perform them. The final stage is called naturalization, this is similar to the articulation stage but requires that the skills are done with ease or automatically. If within a story the message is to pick up one's own litter, the naturalization stage will have been achieved if the child automatically disposes of their litter in the appropriately modelled manner. Dewey believed that children learned by doing and that learning should reflect real practical life (Pound & Hughes 2006: 21).

5.6 Constructivism

Thus far this chapter has provided insight on how children make use of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains as they progress through stages of self-development. The following sections discuss constructivism, social cognitive theory and social learning theory. Each provides further ideas on how environments can inform learning. These insights suggest that learning is gradual and nuanced.

Constructivism is a theory which is concerned with building knowledge and understanding through experiencing the world and reflecting on the experience. This approach uses exploration, interrogation and investigation. New knowledge is assembled on existing knowledge. Classrooms that implement constructivist ideas make use of experiential learning, discovery learning, hands-on learning, and project based learning. The underlying philosophy of constructivist learning is socializing. Learners cooperate in working together to gain new knowledge.

Constructivism shows that new knowledge can be created through socialization. Carpet time or circle time would allow the girls to tell of their experiences relating to right and wrong action and right and wrong speech. According to Yazigi and Seedhouse (2005) "Sharing Time conforms to a social constructivist learning model." It was possible for this to create a type of social cohesion with the girls where they would be empowered by being given a platform to share aspects of their personal lives. Discussion time could lead to better

understanding of matters of right and wrong and how to deal with them through listening to others. This type of knowledge construction could in turn empower listeners to make personal transformations.

5.7 Social Cognitive Theory - Vygotsky

Vygotsky elaborated on the influence of cultural and social contexts to learning. He argued that social interaction was fundamental to cognitive enhancement. His emphasis was on culture, social factors and language which he felt shaped cognitive development. As children interact with their socio-cultural environment, their memory perception, sensation and attention is affected giving rise to what he refers to as higher mental functions. Vygotsky saw intellectual learning tools as culturally determined (Daniels 2005: 65). For instance in places where children are taught to write notes for memory, others in non-literary societies may defer to using shapes or other markers to help them remember (McLeod 2007). Greater emphasis was placed on modelling through cooperative learning (Klecker 2003: 217), collaborative dialogue where the child is seen to internalize what she is being exposed to through a more knowledgeable person. This leads to higher cognitive development.

> "Vygotsky's concept of differing zones of proximal development led to important new techniques for diagnosing children's learning needs and the development of teaching techniques to meet them. The idea of matching tasks to children's current competence to scaffold their learning comes directly from his work. His theories changed the way educators think about children's interactions with others, and led to peer tutoring approaches and to apprenticeship views of learning" (& Hughes 2006: 39).

Two principles are fundamental to Vygotsky's work, one is the Zone of Proximal Development and the other is the More Knowledgeable Other. The Zone of Proximal Development is directly informed by the More Knowledgeable Other. It refers to what a child can do independently and what a child can do with guidance. In between these two is the Zone of Proximal Development which leads to higher mental functions. Language is another area which according to Vygotsky plays an important role in cognitive development. Contemporary applications of Vygotsky's theory can be seen through scaffolding and peer teaching. Vygotsky's principles were used in the classroom where the study was conducted. By grouping the girls in mixed ability groups they were able to brainstorm ideas and those who were more knowledgeable were able to assist less able students in their Zone of Proximal Development.

Vygotsky "saw the experience of talking with adults about familiar everyday experiences as crucial, not only for building up knowledge of language but also for an awareness of particular ways of thinking and interpreting their own experiences. The very naming of particular attributes, he thought, helped concepts to form" (Pound & Hughes 2006: 38). The stories were to be read by the teacher and discussion and activity would follow which is in agreement with Vygotsky's view that talking with adults is crucial.

Vygotsky's work transfers to the study because it allows the teacher to make use of children who have already mastered ideas to help others in their Zones of Proximal Development. Moreover one of the most important points Vygotsky makes is of talking about familiar events and this was consistently applied in the study to reinforce the ideas of right action, right speech, wrong action, wrong speech. By allowing the children daily time to share how they had acted, what they had seen, or what they had heard and place these into the categories of right and wrong would show that they understood what constituted kind behaviour and oppressive behaviour. This would create a familiarity with the terms so that the pupils could use them frequently and with confidence.

5.8 Social Learning Theory - Bandura

Bandura developed social learning theory. Like Vygotsky he believed that the environment influenced behaviour but he also believed that behaviour influenced behaviour and referred to this as "reciprocal determinism" (Hergenhahn 1982: 336). Through experimentation he showed that modelling influences children's behaviour together with rewards or punishments. His experiments conducted in 1961 and 1963 studied the behaviour of the children after they had watched an adult show aggressive behaviour towards a five foot inflatable, vinyl, Bobo doll. The experiment sought to measure children's behaviour after watching the adult hit the doll. The children would see the adult being rewarded, punished or not given any consequence. The experiment demonstrated Bandura's social learning theory which suggested that children learned not only by being rewarded and punished themselves (behaviourism) but also watching others being rewarded and punished (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1961).

> "Comparison of the subjects behaviour in the generalized situation revealed that subjects exposed to aggressive models reproduce a good deal of aggression resembling that of the models, and that their mean scores differed markedly from

those of subjects in the non aggressive and control groups" (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1961: 582).

Relating Bandura's social learning theory to action research, if the stories model the consequences and rewards students can learn appropriate behaviour and thereby develop their personal, social and spiritual understanding. According to Brain and Mukherji:

"Studies tend to suggest that if good and moral behavior is modeled on TV then there is more likely to be positive behavior shown in real life. This adds to the evidence that suggests that social learning theory is correct in predicting that we imitate what we see in certain situations" (2005: 70).

5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed theories that show how children progress through stages in moral, cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. I have also discussed constructivism. These theories show how children can develop or impede their personal, social and spiritual understanding. These theories are important to the study because they show where a child may be located in terms of her moral, cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. This in turn informs the analysis of the results.

CHAPTER SIX THEORETICAL & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapters have served to provide background and foundational information on the study. Chapter One discussed the research problem, Chapter Two and Chapter Three introduced Islamic children's literature and the motives and purpose of its writers. Chapter Four provided insight into the current initiatives of character education and Chapter Five described theoretical approaches to how children develop their personal, social and spiritual understanding by progressing through stages in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical and conceptual framework. Essentially theories used in the West are not founded on an Islamic worldview. This is problematic for Western Muslim researchers who investigate the world through an Islamocentric lens. In developing a theoretical framework Critical Theory and critical pedagogy were initially researched, however, their Marxist origins conflicted with an Islamic worldview. As a result I researched Islamic Critical Theory and Islamic critical pedagogy. Whilst Islamic pedagogy is being used in the West in some circles, the concept of Islamic Critical Theory was mentioned in a limited sense by only three scholars: Kazmi (2000); Sharify-Funk (Bahi 2008); and Sadek (2012). I was seeking a comprehensive theoretical framework which was aligned to the Islamic world view which I could apply to the study. However, I was not able to find one. This led me to develop a theoretical model based on Islamic Critical Theory that could be applied to the study. I developed Islamic Critical Theory using my knowledge on Islam and on Horkheimer's three criteria definition of a critical theory.

This chapter therefore demonstrates how Islamic Critical Theory is an emancipatory theory. I begin with the need for an Islamic theory followed by a discussion of Critical Theory and critical pedagogy to show how they inform Islamic Critical Theory. I then discuss how Kazmi, Sharify-Funk and Sadek use the term. Following this, I enumerate on the characteristics of Islamic Critical Theory and tie these to give historic origins dating to the re-emergence of the Islamic message in the Arabian Peninsula.

6.1 Critical Theories

My interest in formulating an Islamic based critical theoretical and conceptual framework developed when reading Critical Theory. Critical Theory concerns itself with giving voice and action to those who are marginalised or oppressed advocating transformative empowerment. Helping the oppressed is a worthwhile human pursuit and this is what its supporters hoped it would do. "The ultimate objective of Critical Theory, then, is to empower agents to change oppressive worlds which alienate the possibilities and horizons of human flourishing" (Barrywell: 2013: 371). The first burden of Critical Theory is to ask questions relating to oppression, marginality, invisibility and silence. These questions can also be directed at theories. Are there theories that give invisibility to certain groups? As I read the literature, the critical question for me became which theory uses an Islamic worldview? Which theory empowers the Muslim researcher?

> "Modern epistemology, many Islamic pedagogues insist, minimizes the knowledge one derives from revelation (*Wahi*) and thus reduces the knowledge to a material realm wholly dependent on reason. In other words, they continue, Western thought assumes a secular starting point" (Merry 2007:52).

Theoretical frameworks that are non-theistic or non-God-centric are problematic for Islamocentric research conducted by Muslims. Essentially it must be asked how can Muslim researchers interpret knowledge underpinned by an Islamic worldview within a non-theistic theoretical paradigm? Addressing the lack of an Islamic paradigm, Duderija refers to what he calls "critical-progressive Muslim scholar-activists" (2013: 69). About them he says, "they are reinterpreting the normative teachings of the Muslim worldview and developing a distinctly third-way approach." (2013:69) This approach he says, "refuses to accept either a hegemony of Western secularism or Islamic fundamentalism" (2013:69). Although Duderija calls this reinterpretation, I would argue that it is an effort to return to the initial interpretations at the time of Muhammadﷺ. Duderija argues that Muslims who are concerned with enabling self-visibility, use the Qur'an and Sunnah (way of Muhammadﷺ) as their primary source. The Qur'an and Sunnah are directed exclusively to achieving peace. The very first greeting that a Muslim gives is "salaam", peace. The Islamic worldview or *Weltanshauung* is concerned with actualising Muslims to become universal law-abiding citizens. Consequently law-abiding individuals advocate peace. Duderija states,

"The Muslim worldview engenders a coalescing of morality and ethics and the fusion of religious and political domains. The religious [domain], therefore, permeates through the social, cultural, legal, political, and economic spheres, thereby motivating, guiding, and directing behavior of Muslims and cultivating a law-abiding citizenry" (2013:69).

British Muslim educational researchers who are engaged in critical action research need to vocalise hegemonic barriers. If this vocalisation is absent then the research would lack the hallmark of a critical action research; with that understanding then this study necessitates the use of a paradigm that gives Islam and Muslims sensitivity, visibility and the right to dialogue from within. As a result I use a theory that endorses and advocates Islam. A theory that does this is Islamic Critical Theory.

Western theories have emerged to try to explain what is happening in Western society, just as one would suppose that Islamic theories emerged to try to explain what is happening in Islamic society. For the longest time there was no convergence, however, the world is experiencing the global village phenomenon (Binder & Smith 2013: 221) which has led to intense heightened awareness of cultural, social, religious, political and economic matters mostly through technology. This together with first and second generation British Muslim academics is allowing new perspectives in knowledge. New perspectives evolve as cultures blend. In this chapter I make a case for Islamic Critical Theory which I derive using Horkheimer's definition of a critical theory. Prior to my discussion of Islamic Critical Theory I provide an introduction to Critical Theory and critical pedagogy. I follow this with a discussion on critical Islamic pedagogy.

6.2 Critical Theory

It was Horkheimer of the Frankfurt School who initially coined the term Critical Theory. The Frankfurt School formally known as the Institute for Social Research, moved from Germany to New York in the Nazi era as key members had Jewish ancestry. Leading developers of Critical Theory include Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and later Habermas who formed the second generation. Critical Theory emerged from a group who wanted to promote social justice and equality. Their early work was pre-Holocaust but the Nazi atrocities would become a factor. Scholars from the Frankfurt School wanted to understand how people could behave savagely but also how such brutal behaviour could be remedied.

Critical Theory took as its focus "nothing less than the discovery of why mankind, instead of entering a truly human condition, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (Adorno &

Horkheimer 1997: xi). The function of Critical Theory is empowerment, it seeks to encourage transformation for those "whose voices are silenced or marginalised" (Bercaw & Stooksberry 2004). After critiquing society and understanding "what is," its agenda then becomes "what should be" in order to elevate the human condition to create a "better life" (How 2003:9).

The theorists of the Frankfurt School were generally concerned with developing critical theory from the works of Marx but at the same time revising Marx's ideas. Perhaps most importantly they developed a critique of the mass media's effects on mass society. They referred to mass media as the culture industry. Developers of Critical Theory saw how mass media or the culture industry "played a highly manipulative role in modern society and served to control or subvert oppositional consciousness, thus removing any threat to the dominant capitalist class" (Strauss 2012). Essentially the Frankfurt School theorists saw the effective support that the culture industry was giving the powers that govern society.

Critical Theory draws on many disciplines and many fields but central to Critical Theory is the imperative to abolish social injustice. It is a theory that is provocative because it does not just analyse, it equips and gives momentum to positive change: essentially it delivers a social critique. One of its tasks is to show how science, economics, politics, in fact any field that impacts people has subjugating tendencies. According to Habermas, "critical knowledge was conceptualised as knowledge that enabled human beings to emancipate themselves from forms of domination through self-reflection and took psychoanalysis as the paradigm of critical knowledge" (Huttunen: 2011). Habermas developed the theory of communicative action which refers to interpersonal communication geared towards mutual understanding. Mutual understanding is the champion of accord. This raises humanity and civility and shuns barbarity and atrocity. This was a powerful approach when viewed against the Nazi atrocities. Here was a way that people could work together and produce positive social transformation.

> "Actors do not primarily aim at their own success but want to harmonize their action plans with the other participants. Opposite to communicative action is the concept of strategic action, which means calculative exploitation, or manipulation, of others. An actor who acts strategically seeks primarily his or her own ends and manipulates other people either openly or tacitly" (Habermas 1984:285).

Hegemony involves the calculated exploitation and manipulation of others. This is relevant to any society where the powerful oppress the weak. Well documented are the atrocities that were visited on the Native Americans, African Americans, Japanese Americans and Jewish

Americans. For these oppressed groups Critical Theory behaves as the amplifier, the whistleblower and the Good Samaritan.

6.3 Critical Pedagogy

 "Historically, critical pedagogy was perceived to be one realization of the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School" (Breuing 2011: 4). Like Critical Theory, critical pedagogy was initially based on Marxist theory (Lyles 2008:38). However, critical pedagogy has now branched off into the various disciplines that use it. Critical pedagogy is not only a theory but also a practical educational philosophy. Paulo Freire created a radical educational and socially steering movement. Leading academics who embraced the philosophy of critical pedagogy include Kincheloe, McLaren and Giroux (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). Critical pedagogy is concerned with social justice. In his most influential work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), Freire understood schools to be "impediments to the education of the poor, and thus sought to find strategies for students to intervene in what he considered to be a dehumanizing process" (Breuing 2011:4). He called for the liberation of the oppressed through learning.

Critical pedagogy is concerned with questioning authority which in a way makes it subversive. This was evident with Freire who empowered the poor by teaching them to read and write and thereby allowing them to challenge what was happening to them. Freire was imprisoned for his antagonistic views against the status quo which resulted in his exile. Emancipating the oppressed by challenging the beliefs and systems that dominate them is the charge of critical pedagogy. It seeks to empower the student to be critical about whatever s/he encounters. In the case of the study this means that students will be empowered to develop a democratic school environment which removes oppression and allows students to have a voice. This in turn will lead to positive changes such as safety, responsibility, cooperation and learning. Ultimately students are empowered personally, socially and spiritually.

According to Shor (1992) students need to look beyond the received knowledge and opinion by looking at deep meaning, social contexts and personal consequences in action, policy, subject matter, texts and what is being said and by who? In doing this the student is empowered to help herself against those who are subjugating her and preventing her from improving. Students are encouraged to look at the power interests, the winners and losers, the

privileged groups and the status quo that protects the interests of certain groups (Kincheloe 2007). Kincheloe discussed the importance of indigenous people's knowledge who are being subjugated by another group. There is a liberating effect on people who learn about their own history, accomplishments, heritage and religion. It leads to empowerment through the knowledge that one comes from a group that has made a positive impact in society.

Accomplishment feeds self-worth. Positive visibility of one's heritage and religion has a liberating effect on Muslim children. Since all education is political and teachers have their own attitudes and beliefs that they bring to classrooms, students are made aware that political agendas are in constant motion (Kincheloe 2007). Students need to be aware that oppression occurs in practically all areas such as gender, race, religion and class (Kincheloe 2008). Students who are taught to be critical of the curriculum will understand that certain areas of knowledge are deliberately suppressed. For instance illustrations in children's books that show certain races and groups whilst excluding others send a message about acceptance (Myers 2014).

Critical pedagogy or critical educational theory is not solely attributed to Freire. It also has distinct American roots emanating from John Dewey and continuing with civil rights activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X (McLaren 2005:183). According to Bercaw and Stooksberry, critical pedagogues "share a goal of academic success for each student, manifested in the preparation and experience of children to be active citizens in a fully democratic society" (2004). Giroux and McLaren believe that changes need to begin in the classroom, or "public sphere" (Giroux & McLaren 1986:213), and then move outwards as students live beyond the classroom. Although dominant powers try to perpetuate their belief system, there is the possibility that institutions especially schools can change unjust systems.

> "In order for teachers to be change agents of reform towards making schools public spheres, they must take a critical stance ... as transformative intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice in the service of educating students to be thoughtful, active citizens" (Bercaw & Stooksberry 2004).

Entities that promote injustice and inequality sometimes have exclusivity or monopolies to channels where only their voice is heard.

> "Because public and private elites, by definition, exercise disproportionate power through the media and other value-forming outlets, they can in turn limit the range of policy options available for consideration, meaning the average American may

receive limited or no information about alternative ways to address problems or even what qualifies as a problem" (Bercaw & Stooksberry 2004).

"Value-forming outlets" are the mechanisms through which the masses are taught to behave in a certain manner. The Frankfurt School scholars came face to face with one such horrific "value-forming outlet".

6.4 Islamic Critical Theory

In reviewing the literature about Islamic Critical Theory or critical Islamic theory, I found three references to the term used by Kazmi (2000); Sharify-Funk (2003); and Sadek (2012). I will discuss these later in the chapter. Before continuing I would also like to propose an academic amelioration in line with the spirit of Critical Theory. I have implemented this from the beginning of the study but have chosen to discuss it here where it can be contextually understood. Where I have used Arabic Islamic terms, I have not italicised them but have left them as they are because just as Arabic cuisine such as couscous and hummus are now part of Western or English vocabulary, I contend Islamic terms that are used by indigenous British Muslims are now also part of Western or English vocabulary. Italics depict otherization, or something foreign, so I have removed the otherization to make it ourization in line with the empowerment ethos of Critical Theory.

In reading about Critical Theory and its historical roots, a case can be made in describing what Islamic Critical Theory is. In time, there will be a multitude of Islamic critical theories in the English language because neither Islam nor Muslims are monolithic. Kincheloe's explanation underscores the point that theories are plentiful and not necessarily agreed on or binding. Although he writes about critical pedagogy, his words are nonetheless very relevant here.

> "All descriptions of critical pedagogy - like knowledge in general – are shaped by those who devise them and the values they hold. The description offered here is no different. Many will agree with it and sing its praises, while others will be disappointed - and even offended by what was included and what was left out. As with other descriptions I would offer about any social or cultural phenomenon, my delineation of the central characteristics of critical pedagogy is merely "my take" and reflects my biases and perspectives" (2004:6).

Similarly, I make a case for *a* kind of Islamic Critical Theory as it relates to my educational practice and pertains to my biases and perspectives. I base my delineation on the *Weltanschauung* of Islam: the Qur'an and Sunnah. As my quest for a theory arose from my understanding of Critical Theory, I argue my form of Islamic Critical Theory using Horkheimer's definition of a theory. Horkheimer believed that,

> "a critical theory is adequate only if it meets three criteria: it must be explanatory, practical and normative, all at the same time. In other words, it needs to give explanation for what is wrong with current social reality, identify the actors to change it, and provide both clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for social transformation." (Barani & Yahya 2012: 147; see also Bohman 1996:190; Carr, Herman & Harris 2005: 485; Hartas 2010: 45).

I would argue that Islamic Critical Theory critiques every aspect of life and presents a solution that is in harmony with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. I will apply Horkheimer's definition to this theory point by point to show that it qualifies as a critical theory. I begin by acquainting the reader with excerpts from the sunnah (practice of Muhammadﷺ) to demonstrate that Islam has an emancipatory proclivity. The Qur'an is a book of guidance which according to Islamic belief is one of many that were sent to humankind since the creation of Adamؑ, the first man.

> "Say ye: "We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to God." (Qur'an 2:136)

Messengers and books of God according to Islamic belief were sent at various times in history to locations where humankind exhibited great violations against each other. The Biblical prophetsؑ are the same Quranic prophetsؑ as Muslims are told that the message of the Quran is not new religion but a reiteration of the message sent to previous prophetsؑ:

> "The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believes in God, His angels, His books, and His messengers. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His messengers." (Qur'an 2:285)

Messengers are sent as reformers, emancipators or champions of human rights. Over fourteen hundred years ago in the Arabian Peninsula a need arose for a prophet who could bring

human rights to a decadent society. Muslim historians refer to this period as Jahilliya (Age of Ignorance) which was marked by barbarity and inhumanity. I draw on two Sunnah narratives to describe the change that came in Makkah as a result of the message brought through Muhammadﷺ. The first is between the Christian king of Abyssinia and Jafar Ibn Abu Talib, the spokesperson for the Muslim refugees that were taking sanctuary in Abyssinia after fleeing Makkah. Emissaries from Makkah came to the king and asked for the return of the fugitives who they accused of being subversive. The king wanted to speak to the refugees before he handed them over. In addressing the king, Jafar spoke about the transformation that the message of Muhammadﷺ had caused which raised the human condition and led to personal and social emancipation.

> "O King, we were a people in a state of ignorance and immorality, worshipping idols and eating the flesh of dead animals, committing all sorts of abomination and shameful deeds, breaking the ties of kinship, treating guests badly, and the strong among us exploited the weak. We remained in this state until God sent us a Prophet, one of our own people whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness and integrity were well-known to us. He called us to worship God alone and to renounce the stones and the idols which we and our ancestors used to worship besides God. He commanded us to speak the truth, to honour our promises, to be kind to our relatives, to be helpful to our neighbours, to desist from all forbidden acts, to abstain from bloodshed, to avoid obscenities and false witness, and not to appropriate an orphan's property or slander chaste women. He ordered us to worship God alone and not to associate anything with Him, to uphold salah [worship], to give zakah [charity]and fast in the month of Ramadan. We believed in him and what he brought to us from God and we follow him in what he has asked us to do and we keep away from what he has forbidden us from approaching" (Quoted in Hamid 1995).

These emancipatory changes were violently opposed by the bourgeoisie of Makkah. They preferred to keep things as they were. Makkah profited greatly from the pilgrimage of those who lived in the peninsula and came to visit the Kabah which housed more than three hundred idols. At the time Muslims faced Jerusalem in prayer and gave no importance to the Kabah which was originally built by Abrahamﷺ and his son Ishmail ﷺ. The Makkan elites therefore saw Islam as a threat to their economic monopoly. Also they saw the effect of Islam on the silenced and marginalised as well as those in prominent positions as a threat to their own power. The second narrative is from Muhammad'sﷺ Farewell Sermon.

> "... Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. ... You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity ... it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. ... treat your women well and be kind to them for they are your partners and

committed helpers ...an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; white has no superiority over black, nor does a black have any superiority over white; except by piety and good action" (Sarker 2004: 63)

The key points in the Farewell Sermon, refer to honesty, trust, non-aggression, equity, kindness to women and equality. The elements of human civility that Jafar spoke of in Abyssinia and those that Muhammadﷺ spoke of in the Farewell Sermon are derived from the Qur'an. It is these character traits and attitudes that ensured that the weak were no longer oppressed in Makkah. A society that subscribes to these values, subscribes to safeguarding human rights. "Critical Theory arose in extreme historical circumstances" (Waugh 2006: 198) and similarly, I would argue, Islamic Critical Theory, arose in extreme jahilliya (ignorance). Both of the narratives indicate that historically the modus operandi of Islam was emancipatory.

Returning to Horkheimer's definition of what constitutes a theory, we need to show whether in contemporary society Islamic Critical Theory meets the criteria of being "explanatory, practical and normative all at the same time" (Hartas 2010:45). This can be demonstrated though applying Islamic Critical Theory to a contemporary issue which is familiar to the reader. Let us consider the issue of forced marriages amongst young Muslims in the UK.

The first part of the criteria is "explanatory". Islamic Critical Theory needs to explain what is wrong with "current social reality", the critique of "what is". Islamic Critical Theory would say that the practice of forcing individuals to get married to someone that they do not want to marry is unjust and oppressive and against the teachings of God. This satisfies the explanatory aspect. The second criterion is that the theory must be "practical" this means that "actors" must be identified "to change" the oppression, which will as How (2003:9) indicates, leads to "what should be". Actors may include the very persons who are being oppressed. If Muslim individuals are being forced into marriages against their will, then it means they are unaware of the stipulations in Islam that render such a marriage null and void. In this sense giving knowledge to the victim is one practical mode. Essentially emancipation can be achieved through knowledge. Many young Muslims and Muslim parents are unable to distinguish between Islam and their own oppressive attitude or culture. This problem stems in some Muslims from an inability to understand the Qur'an in their own vernacular and in

other Muslims from an obdurate manner to adhere to their own whims or polytheistic and cultural mores that are against Islamic teaching. According to a hadith recorded by Bukhari,

> "if a woman wants to marry and is already a divorcee or widow, her right of free consent and free choice is superior then the right of her guardian. If she is not previously married and this is her first marriage even then her parents or other guardians cannot enforce their choice on her. They are not allowed to force her to marry any one against her free choice and free consent" (Qadri 2009).

This underscores the Islamic understanding that God has given every individual freewill. Other hypothetical actors to bring change may include individuals in the community that understand Islamic rules on marriage who can then represent the "silenced". This satisfies the practical aspect.

Horkheimer's third qualification asks that a critical theory be normative. This means that it must "provide both clear norms for criticism and achievable goals for social transformation" (Hartas 2010: 45). The "better life" is achieved when the individual is emancipated from the oppression of marriage to someone they do not wish to marry. This social transformation occurs on the ability to acquire knowledge and then share that knowledge with oppressors. In some cases emancipation has been achieved through dialogue, in other cases the victim achieves emancipation through exodus. Either way the victim will have achieved a personal "better life" in terms of overcoming that particular oppression. Actors who suffer such hardship, may be inclined to ensure that their own children do not experience the same oppression so it becomes normative from that perspective too. In using the hypothetical example of forced marriages, I have demonstrated that Islamic Critical Theory meets Horkheimer's descriptions of explanatory, practical and normative (Hartas 2010: 45). I have therefore argued that Islamic Critical Theory is explanatory, practical and normative.

I will now tentatively apply it to the study of whether children's Islamic fiction can empower the character development of Muslim children. In this case I need to identify "what is wrong with the social reality". Currently I see the behaviour of some Muslim children in the schools where I have worked as oppressive through their behaviour towards other pupils, the environment and some staff. Next I determine who the social actors are to change the oppression. I identify teachers as actors who can change the oppression as well as pupils and parents. Thirdly, I must provide "both clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for transformation" (Hartas 2010: 45). I will use Islamic fiction applied through action

research in order to see if social transformation can take place. Further discussion on this will be discussed in Chapter Eight which deals with the data analysis of personal, social and spiritual understanding and Chapter Nine which presents conclusions.

6.5 Kazmi, Sharify-Funk & Sadek

In this section I discuss the three scholars who referred to Islamic Critical Theory or critical Islamic theory. These include Yedullah Kazmi (2000) from Malaysia, Meena Sharify-Funk (2003) from the USA, and Omer Sadek (2012) from Lebanon. Kazmi argues that critical theory can empower a person to be interactive with the world and not withdrawn or be indifferent. In *Historical Consciousness and the Notion of the Authentic Self in the Qur'ān: Towards an Islamic Critical Theory*, Kazmi writes that once a Muslim says the shahadah or declaration of faith, which is a very simple line, "la ilaha illa llah," then a critical process is initiated. The declaration begins in the negative, "there is no god," or "there is nothing that can be worshipped", or even, "there is nothing worthy of worship" and then the declaration ends, "except God". Kazmi argues that once an individual has said this phrase and made a commitment then it requires action.

> "The demand made on a Muslim is that it is not enough to just accept la ilaha illa llah, but that he/she has to do something to make the truth of the phrase happen or come to be. It is not enough for me to want to play a game; I have to work at learning the game in order to enjoy it." (2000:394-395).

My understanding of Kazmi's argument within the context of it being critical is that an individual who has entered into a relationship with God has to act in such a way that all previous mannerisms or attitudes that were against the teachings of Qur'an are relinquished. Moreover, the individual now has to behave in a way that s/he is speaking up against different forms of oppression. By this I refer to the oppression that a person can cause on themselves for instance by taking drugs or on the environment, for example, by littering or on others, for example stealing. Kazmi's use of Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with the struggle of the individual in life within the context of a relationship with God and the world. He emphasises the concept of justice and how it relates to what one has with the fluke of birth, "Justice results when human beings realize that this life is just a test and try their best to do well in the test" (2000:398). Kazmi refers to whatever a person owns or faculties a person processes in terms of a trustee. This perspective prevents a person from being egotistic. "I will have no reason to be proud of what I own or process" since possessions and talents are

given by God. Hence they, as Kazmi explains, are considered an obligation which have to be used in the service of God and humankind, "obsession with one's needs to the exclusion of the needs of others is greed and greed is a form of ego-worship negated by la ilaha illa llah" (2000:398).

Kazmi's Islamic critical theory is embedded in the Declaration of Faith or Shahadah and works on the principle that justice and knowing oneself, "the authentic self" in relation to God,

> "In other words, while seeking to realize justice in his/her life ... [has] success in realizing social justice. In Islam the road to social justice and to personal justice are not two separate roads but a single highway. You cannot achieve one without realizing the other" (2000:398).

This complements Haberman communicative action (1984: 285) and verses from the Qur'an (103: 3) that individual action of well-being is not alone sufficient, but there is a responsibility to encourage others to do positive acts and stop negative acts. This is further reiterated in another verse, "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" (Qur'an 3:104). Sharify-Funk (2003) has discussed critical Islamic theory in relation to the hegemonic male dominated interpretation of the Qur'an that oppresses Muslim women.

> "A theory of critical Islamic interpretation, like Western critical theory, is exposing the picture of hegemonic power in order to achieve an ideal of human emancipation. However, a critical Islamic theory is founded upon a different claim than Western critical theory's general tendency to assume that religion is more likely to have a counter-progressive agenda, and hence remain silent or indifferent in the face of injustice" (Sharify-Funk in Bahi 2008).

Her ontological point that Western critical theory is negative towards religion underscores the need for a coherent Islamic version of critical theory where it "must challenge hegemonic claims of absolute context-free knowledge by putting forward an alternative approach to communal values and focuses on the interaction among text, interpreter and context (Sharify-Funk in Bahi 2008). Kazmi's work precedes Sharify-Funk's and focuses on the fallacy of immobility and stagnation. "The point, however, is not to keep society frozen in time in its pristine form by preventing it from changing" (2000:395) This, he cautions would be like plucking society out of time and suspending it in a fictional space (2000:395). Kazmi speaks

about the Qur'an as a mode for all time, "If a society founded on the principles of the Qur'an was prevented from changing it, it would be not only not natural but one wonders if Islamic at all. For one thing, it would definitely vitiate the universality of the Qur'an rendering it true for one time only" (2000: 395-396). Kazmi tasks the Muslim world with "deconstruction and construction initiated by la ilaha illa llah is a continuous and unending process" (2000:395).

Kazmi wants the traditional interpretation to be challenged to reclaim it and free it from its oppressive patriarchal shackles. For instance some Arab countries deny women the right to drive cars. In looking at the Sunnah, Muhammad'sﷺ wife, Aysha would ride on a camel. She was not prevented from doing this. By extrapolation the modern form of transport though still a camel in some regions can also be a motor vehicle or airplane. The prohibition of some Arab countries therefore does not reside in a motive to be closely aligned to the way of Muhammadﷺ, but to actually impede and restrict the freedom of females for whatever ulterior motives.

Sharify-Funk calls for the accountability of those who oppress through the encouragement of creating a new voice which "hold the hegemonic state and its substructure accountable for their actions" (Sharify-Funk in Bahi 2008). Whereas the traditional approach directs all attention to the authoritative text while ignoring questions about *who* is interpreting and under what circumstances, a critical Islamic approach balances the claims of the text with consideration of the needs and existential circumstances of the Muslim society and its interpreters. It focuses on the interaction among text, interpreter, and context (Sharify-Funk 2003).

Sadek has not developed an Islamic critical theory, "I do not have or develop an Islamic critical theory" (Sadek, personal communication March 7, 2014), rather he takes steps towards developing an Islamic critical theory. He states, "The dissertation thus, takes initial steps in developing an Islamic critical theory by putting forward a radically democratic conception of Islamic politics" (2012: iv). Sadek explains,

> "Through the intellectual rapprochement between Honneth's recognition theory and Ghannouchi's political thought I take initial steps in developing an Islamic critical theory. I make these initial steps by arguing that a critical perspective that accepts the unquestionable authority of *al-nass* (*qur'an* and *sunna*) does not have to be authoritarian, and that such acceptance undermines neither the autonomous agency of

those who employ it nor of those who are subjected to it. Capitalizing on some elements in Ghannouchi's theoretical model of the Islamic state I make explicit resources internal to the Islamic tradition that can fend off the charge that Islamic politics would be authoritarian" (personal communication February 5, 2014).

In summary Kazmi's discussion on critical Islamic theory centres on Muslims being proactive after saying the declaration of faith (shahadah). Sharify-Funk's discussion centres on reinterpreting Islamic laws and texts which currently are male dominated. Sadek takes initial "steps" in developing an Islamic critical theory that relates to a democratic concept of Islamic politics.

6.6 Characteristics of Islamic Critical Theory

I now elaborate on some defining characteristics of Islamic Critical Theory. The theory is grounded in the acknowledgment of one God and His command for humankind to practice and engender social justice. Also grounded in the theory is the belief that humankind will be judged in the afterlife for their earthly conduct. Humankind is exhorted to encourage the doing of good deeds. "Indeed, God orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded (Qur'an 16:90).

The Qur'an's declaration of freewill is also a very important aspect of Islamic Critical Theory. About freedom, the Qur'an states, "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (2:256). A second verse states, "If it had been thy Lord's will, they would all have believed, - all who are on earth! wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!" (10:99). Chapter 88 says about Muhammadﷺ "You are only a reminder, you are not over them a controller" (88:21-22). This point is again revisited in chapter 18, "Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject [the Message]" (18:29). Islamic belief as embodied in the Qur'an is that no one can be coerced or forced to accept any ideology or belief because as the Qur'an reiterates people are free to choose what they wish because they, unlike angels, are a creation of God that has been given freewill as part of the earthly test.

Following on from this Islam advocates equality. This is evident in the way that prayer lines in mosques ensure that rich and poor, young and old stand shoulder to shoulder. Moreover, the clothes that are worn during pilgrimage to Makkah are such that ensure one's earthly status is obscure. Everyone is dressed in the same simple clothes. Further the early caliphs

who presided over the community's affairs were not distinguishable from servants. Humility and equity were the expected norm. Islamic understanding is that all humankind will stand alone and answer for their deeds, "Every soul draws the meed of its acts on none but itself: no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another" (6:164). Chapter Asr (103) of the Qur'an calls for people to have faith and do good deeds but alsoto collectively encourage others towards truthfulness and patience. This verse actualises humanity to strive towards building a healthy society. According to Islamic teaching truth is a necessary ingredient in creating an emancipatory world as the following verse shows,

> "O ye who believe! stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that ye do" (4:135).

As previously mentioned there are parallels between the Islamic call for the encouragement of truth and patience and Habermas' theory of communicative action. As in Islamic Critical Theory, which calls for people to work together to produce a just society, Habermas advocated group success with others and not egotism. Amal-us-salihat or good deeds through communicative action promote responsible citizenry.

Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with ideas about human experience and life in general from an Islamic centred perspective. Its initial focus is the life of a Muslim. Ontologically it is concerned with viewing the social world from the vantage point of Islam and it seeks to create a better world for all people. This is possible if every individual adheres to the Qur'anic code of not harming or oppressing oneself or another. Islamic Critical Theory develops a critical understanding of society in the service of justice, service to humanity and service to God. It is grounded in the belief that humankind must be constantly aware that situations and choices are presented that may lead to wrong thought, wrong action, and wrong speech. It then suggests ways in which these can be overcome leading to right thought, right action and right speech. As the Quran states, "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" (3:104). Islamic Critical Theory can be defined as recognizing, critiquing and providing normative action on any matter that oppresses the individual or the society socially, economically, scientifically, politically, psychologically and through any other manner. Islamic Critical

Theory therefore has many applications. For instance it would seek to show how Muslims are ignored in literature and media, how they are misrepresented with prejudice and also how these oppressive situations can be remedied. Islamic Critical Theory would also seek to show how Islam makes positive contributions.

In the above section, I have provided a context for the application and recognition of an Islamic Critical Theory which arose from my reading of Critical Theory and my understanding of Islam. Islamic Critical Theory is an Islamized adaptation of Critical Theory. This theoretical perspective underpins the research.

6.7 Islamic Pedagogy & Critical Islamic Pedagogy

Critical Islamic pedagogy or Islamic critical pedagogy has been discussed by Kazmi (2006), Hussein (2006), Sabrin (2010), Memon (2010) and Waghid (2011). The discussion on Islamic pedagogy in the English language as it relates to full time Islamic schools in North America and Britain has taken a while to emerge. Knowledge diffusion amongst Muslim educators in Islamic pedagogy is still somewhat restricted. The Islamic Society of North America holds an annual conference every year in Chicago and recently it started to hold a similar event in California. Islamic schools typically underpay teachers (Merry & Driessen 2005: 419), so travel, hotel stay and registration is an economic factor that precludes many from such venues. This means even though knowledge is available, it is still not fully accessible. Knowledge dissipation is not restricted to conferences of course, however, there has been very little written about critical Islamic pedagogy.

Generally the full time Islamic schools that I have worked in were developed by Muslims from the Indian Subcontinent or Arab immigrants. These have been functioning in North America and Britain since the 1980s. Islamic schools have only recently in the last few years been able to hire trained teachers and principals. This is another reason why the discussion on Islamic pedagogy has taken longer to surface. Islamic schools are generally not a magnet for trained teachers and administrators because many are still not able to match government school salaries. Memon and Hussein consider that the problem with Islamic schools is that they chose to imitate the mainstream schools:

> "Muslim educators who established Islamic schools have by and large accepted the mainstream model of education, its overemphasis on standards, testing,

accountability, and efficiency as an inherently good thing. It has been this core ideology that has immobilized us from being able to think differently" (Memon 2006).

Hussein asks why pertinent questions relating to the type of Islamic education being delivered are not being addressed:

> "If emancipation is the aim of education for Islamic education, then it is imperative to look at Islamic education itself, in terms of what kind of Islamic education teachers teach, who should be taught, how should they be taught, and whose interests would be served. These questions have not been asked, and even if they have, no attempt has been made to answer them" (Hussein 2007:88).

I would disagree with Hussein, that the questions have not been asked or answered. They have. Unfortunately, those who have asked them and answered them are the disempowered teachers and principals who do not have a voice. Hussein is also critical of the social reproduction which results from traditional pedagogy:

> "Critical pedagogy arises out of the dissatisfaction of the inequalities perpetuated by traditional pedagogy in education. Traditional pedagogy, like traditional theory, assists in the social reproduction of class and promotes inequalities of race and gender through organised and deceptive schooling practices. Today, public schools serve to replicate the existing values and privileges of the dominant class" (Hussein 2007: 93).

Islamic schools following traditional pedagogy will therefore eventually exhibit the same problems of traditional schools. Hussein identifies one of the issues as freedom of thought. Freedom of thought gives free license to creativity and moves away from the one-size-fits-all attitude of cultural and educational homogeneity (Scot, Callahan & Urquhart 2009: 40). Freedom of thought was the key ingredient that propelled the early Muslims to heights that have not been matched since. As Weaver notes,

> "The Saracen [Muslim] universities had no formal organization - Mohammed contended that too much organization leads to corruption. The rules were few. There were no standardized programs, no regular curriculums, no examinations. To guard against the fallacious idea that education ends with graduation, the Saracens' schools granted no diplomas, no degrees. They were institutions, not of teaching, but of learning. Students went there to acquire knowledge" (2010 [1953]:105).

The ability to be creative requires that there is no barrier, no hegemony, no hampering. Many Muslim academics have wondered what caused the demise of the Muslim world. Hussein

identifies the advent of the four schools of thought as a deterrent to freedom of thought (2007:95). Prior to the stagnation Weaver talks about the contribution of Muslims to civilization.

> "Rivalling their work in astronomy and navigation, the Saracens [Muslims] made important contributions in the field of health and sanitation. They translated Galen's works into Arabic for use in their schools and did original research in medicine and surgery. Nine hundred years ago, they were using the medical pharmacopoeia of today, excepting only the recently discovered chemical compounds. There was not another great advance in medicine from the time of the Saracens until the American century (Weaver 2010[1953]:108).

During the time of Muhammadﷺ, there had been no need for devising schools of thought. Hussein argues that it was because of the freedom of thought in interpretation that humankind excelled in all the components of the world that improved spirituality, humanity and life,

> "Muslim scholars sought knowledge based on their own understanding and interpretation of the Qur'an and the world. This is the reason for their great achievements in various fields of knowledge. Knowledge was sought because to be knowledgeable was considered to be a virtue that enabled them to become better Muslims and better vicegerents of Allah" (Hussein 2007:95).

Where interpretations were needed they were made by a myriad of scholars relevant to the place and social customs they were in. There were many ways of interpreting hadith, "During that time a host of accumulated legal opinions flourished in places like Iraq, Syria and Egypt. These different legal thoughts were due to the various ways of interpreting the Qur'an in the light of local customary law and the various ways that reasoning and personal opinion were used to understand the Prophet's Tradition" (Hussein 2007:95). The ahadith are an integral component of Islam. However, their accuracy can be determined in a simple way. If they are in line with the spirit of Qur'an they are plausible and acceptable but if they go against the spirit of the Qur'an they are weak and to be discarded. Brown, a Muslim expert on hadith writes,

> "The Qur'ān rebukes earlier communities for adulterating their revealed books, an iniquity from which God avows to shield the Muslims by assuring the perpetual protection of the final revelation. Yet it was not the Qur'ān but the Prophet's Sunna that would be the great item of contention in debates over authenticity among Muslims. The Sunni study of ḥadīths emerged from a widespread recognition that countless ḥadīths were being falsely attributed to the Prophet, the raison d'être of the science of ḥadīth criticism was 'sorting the sound ḥadīths from the weak'" (Brown 201:2).

Furthermore malevolent leadership that took hold of the Muslim world was able to devise ways to restrain the masses to allow for their dictatorial regimes. As Nahim notes,

> "true Islam, never condones toleration of unjust rulers. Another fabricated tradition is also narrated by Abdullah ibn Omer who quotes the Prophet (S.A.W.) supposedly saying, "Put up with whatever conduct you do not like in your rulers because if you abandon the Jama'a (group) even the distance of one foot then die, you will die as unbelievers ... Such fabricated "traditions" are not only in total contrast with the Qur'an and the sunnah as well as other verified tradition" (2012: 58-59).

Such oppressive rulers and regimes use religion to enslave the Muslim mind and unwittingly thereby also curb the innovation that comes from a free society. The Muslim masses bought into the subjugation because without knowing what the religion said first hand they were at the mercy of those who delivered the religion to them. The religion that was delivered was written and interpreted in a way that empowered the elites and subjugated the masses. As an example to illustrate this point, in her study of the early Muslims Afsaruddin discusses the life of Ibn Hanbal, one of the hadith compilers. The Abbasid caliph wanted Ibn Hanbal to promote a belief that was against the teachings of Islam. When Ibn Hanbal refused he was "persecuted and imprisoned" and under the next caliph "tortured" (Afsaruddin 2008: 140).

The worth of critical Islamic pedagogy lies in its ability to encourage students to bring changes that foster a world which strives towards harmony. Students are encouraged to ask deep questions relating to power and control, subjugation and freedom which will then in turn allow them to determine if they need to be liberated from subjugation. Humankind's quest for quelling hunger, maintaining shelter, and securing raiment if done with justice, honesty and compassion, the hallmarks of good deeds, lays the foundation for a peaceful society. A peaceful society cannot be attained if oppression is permitted. As the Qur'an states "things that endure, good deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes" (18:46). Critical Islamic pedagogy can be a road that leads to the engenderment of goodwill and allows humankind to enter "a truly human condition" (Adorno & Horkheimer 1997: xi) rising to an inspirational and passionate new kind of civility.

Critical Islamic pedagogy should allow students to compare how life was during the time of Muhammadﷺ and how it was directly after him and during the Golden Age of Islam when Jews, Christians, Muslims and minorities lived in peace. Questioning what elements stifled Muslim creativity can allow students to distinguish what factors allow freedom and what

factors create enslavement. Memon scrutinises learning to show that it is geared towards material wealth and steers a person away from developing good character or personal, social and spiritual improvement.

> "By reducing all forms of learning to concerns driven by profit gain is oppressive in itself. Success is defined by those that have material wealth versus those that do not. The core of this ideology is the ability to measure the accumulation and vying for material objects – everything is objectified into things that need to be attained and the discourse of ethical values and virtues are swept away. Both educators and non-educators would agree that the absence of nurturing students toward good character, or what Freire would call a universal human ethic, has had a tremendous effect on society" (Memon 2006: 14-15).

Sabrin's work on Islamic pedagogy provides techniques on how to nurture students. He proposes case-based learning which utilises classroom incidents as teachable moments. This is "where students practically apply knowledge through an apprentice-style relationship with their teachers and cooperative group work which allows them to participate in their own moral and cognitive growth" (Sabrin 2010: 3). This he states was the pre-colonisation mode of teaching in Egypt. Sabrin calls for an:

> "Islamic pedagogy, with its high emphasis on caring apprenticeship relationships between teacher and student allows teachers to utilize their personal relationships with students to scaffold them to higher concepts. When teachers draw on classroom occurrences / disturbances to model appropriate behaviour and elaborate on various academic concepts, they will construct live learning experiences inside the classroom" (2010: 4).

I drew heavily on Sabrin's method using "occurances" and "disturbances" to discuss and model appropriate behaviour through having pupils appy critical thinking to suggest or show what may have been done. The problem for a classroom teacher who has diligently worked on a forty-five minute to an hour lesson plan will be to give preference to the planned science content rather than the character building content. In some cases a teacher may even turn a blind eye to a "disturbance". In most cases a consequence may be given which is usually a verbal warning, a written warning or time-out but there is nothing sufficiently embedded that will show a student why such behaviour is completely unacceptable. By using case-based-deep-focus teaching children will understand that oppression is wrong and needs to be addressed with as much if not more attention than is given to solving a mathmatical problem that may occur on a standardized test.

In order to develop a child's personal, social and spiritual demeanour time has to be assigned to deliver it. This point is emphasised by Lickona. "By using daily occurrences, positive or negative, in the classroom as teaching moments instead of mere disruptions, Lickona shows how educators can act out the moral reflection process right in front of their students" (Sabrin 2010: 9). The benefit of this is that "Students' participation in their own moral growth empowers them to begin to act independently, raises their self-esteem, and has longer effects on their long-term behaviour (Sabrin 2010: 9). It is the children's ability to internalise appropriate behaviour that will allow them to contribute to a peaceful world as they get older. Through Critical Theory Adorno and Horkheimer wanted to raise the human condition (1997: xi) and give it hope. Valiante, a Canadian Muslim, writing on 9/11 asks,

> "Will the children, be able to transcend ethnic and religious hatreds, and the lust for power and wealth, to foster a global civil society based on the principles of fundamental freedom and human rights for all? It will depend on what and how we teach and nurture our children, the future generation-in-the-making, to be good and worthwhile citizens of the world. There is indeed a way out of the vicious cycle" (Valiante 2002).

Steps towards answering Valiante's point about what we teach children can be constructed through critical Islamic pedagogy. The initial discussion on critical Islamic pedagogy was initiated by Kazmi who referred to it as Islamic critical pedagogy showing how it could be used by Muslim educators. Kazmi introduces critical pedagogy from the work of Freire. He describes it as a commitment to social justice, "the pedagogical and educational aim of critical pedagogy is to empower people to act in and on the world for the realisation of social justice" (2006: 519). He emphasises the essential element of critical pedagogy is to teach students to look at the world critically and ask "Why are things the way they are and could they be different?" (2006: 519).

Kazmi draws on Socrates and Freire to explain how critical pedagogy works. The Socratic method of making students think critically by asking them questions and the Freirean method of problem-posing which asks students to "learn to question answers rather than merely to answer questions"(2006:530). Kazmi, however, is not so much concerned with defining an Islamic critical pedagogy but rather on showing how it can be used to offer "the kind of educational theory and practice that would, by resuscitating their voice, [the Muslim voice] put Muslims back on the path of being Allah's vicegerents on this earth" (2006:557). He

precedes this point by discussing the disenfranchised and voiceless poor who have no means at their disposal to be heard. He compares them to the Muslims saying,

> "The lot of Muslims today is like that of the poor; they are unable to speak – forbidden to speak ... there is a need to develop and nurture the conditions that would allow the Muslims to speak with their authentic voice, and express their needs and desires, and not mouth what others of whatever authority tell them to speak" (2006:557).

Kazmi believes that Islamic critical pedagogy can allow the Muslim to achieve emancipation. Systematic steps to understanding how this can be done are presented by Waghid (2010) who formulates a critical Islamic pedagogy by initially situating the practice of Muhammad ﷺ. Waghid explains that Muhammad ﷺ would look at a situation and determine that it was oppressive, he would then offer ways in which the oppression could be removed. Waghid argues that applying critical Islamic pedagogy was the method that Muhammad ﷺ used since "a critical pedagogy requires one to look at a situation often dominated by exclusion, marginalization and repression and then to offer possibilities to change such a distortion" (2010: 27).

Waghid shows how concepts that have traditionally been associated with Islamic education can be adapted to impart a critical pedagogy. He refers to the terms tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim (instruction) and tadib (good action). Waghid provides an elaboration on the term tarbiyyah equating it with the virtue of respect. Through respect an individual is able to listen to the views of others though not necessarily agree with them. Through respect or tarbiyyah, there is an enablement "to act on the basis of concern for human freedom" (2011:28). Waghid qualifies tarbiyyah further by saying that respect has to be approached critically to ensure that there is questioning and the "ability to disagree" (2011:29).

Talim (instruction) is the next component of Waghid's framework. He reconceptualises talim as "reflective and deliberative engagement". Waghid calls for a non-policed conversation between teacher and student to allow for more risk-taking behaviour because this he feels, "is exactly what a critical pedagogy has in mind". He encourages an exploration of the other's point of view through "freedom and belligerence" though he cautions that he does not mean "teachers and students should have unconstrained freedom" because this would jeopardise the effect of positive risk taking. Taking risks implies that the boundaries are more relaxed and

participants are more willing and open to achieve the unexpected or the improbable" (2011: 29).

Even though Waghid stresses that it is a controlled belligerence, I would argue that it is better to apply "deliberative and reflective" teaching that is more in line with Qur'anic teaching which encourages speaking "with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way" (16:125). Speaking with a belligerent voice is not a practice that is suited to critical and constructive talk. On the temperament of an individual, the Qur'an encourages humility, and an even tone of voice,

> "And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for God loves not any arrogant boaster. And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass" (Qur'an 31:18-19).

Moreover, the non-violent technique that Muhammadﷺ used against aggression should be overly emphasised in a world that is quick to resort to violence. Waghid provides an example of how talim as deliberative engagement can lead to students being "taught to condemn atrocities perpetuated against Muslims" but if it is not taught comprehensively to include all humanity then it can result in the same students not to be "outraged by harmful actions inflicted on non-Muslims." This type of freedom is what Waghid warns against since justice cannot be partial. Students must be taught to demand justice for all humankind regardless of their condition or belief (2011:29).

The third component of Waghid's critical Islamic pedagogy includes tadib (good action). Waghid explains that good action cannot be divorced from human consciousness about justice. This implies "that one recognises injustice and actually does something about changing, rectifying or modifying a situation – that is, transforming it" (2011:29). Waghid uses traditional Islamic education terminology and provides practical applications through aligning the Arabic terms with English terms that promote critical pedagogy. Tarbiyyah, he explains is better understood as "responsible action", talim as "deliberative and reflective" and tadib as "social activism". On a theoretical level, Waghid discusses how critical Islamic pedagogy can be used to promote "democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism" (2011:34).

Having navigated search engines, as far as I am aware, there is no available research that has used Waghid's model of critical Islamic pedagogy to see if it can produce emancipatory results within the classroom. This study uses Islamic Critical Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy to investigate whether Islamic fiction can empower the personal, social and spiritual understanding of Muslim children. I do this through action research.

PART 3: METHODOLOGY, ACTION RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER SEVEN METHODOLOGY

7.0 Introduction

In Chapter Six the theoretical and conceptual framework was discussed and Islamic Critical Theory was developed to reflect an Islamic *Weltanschauung* or worldview. This theory will be used to provide the theoretical lens through which the study will be interpreted along with the data driven themes. Islamic Critical Theory is an empowerment theory that is concerned with transformation. The idea of transformation and empowerment is also evident in the methodology of action research that was used to conduct this study. Action research is an empowerment research strategy and concerned with effecting social change (Armstrong & Moore 2004). This chapter initially discusses action research in relation to the research question "Can Islamic children's fiction empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding?" In addition life story was used to explore a corollary objective which sought to understand the motives and purposes of those who write Islamic children's literature (See Chapter Three).

7.1 The Three Groups: Western Muslim Children, Western Muslim Authors & Middle Eastern Muslim Children

This section highlights the similarities and differences in the three groups involved in the study. From the very beginning the logistics of this study were always centred around three nations: UK, USA and Canada. The subjects were always intended to be minority Muslim children in Western Islamic schools, and Western Muslim authors. This was because my experiences were limited to these geographical regions and mobility to access Muslim writers and children at Islamic schools was easy. The reconnaissance where I conducted a pilot investigation was with American Muslim children. It was my intention to conduct a study that was Western based. However, circumstances led me to take a teaching position in the Middle East. This changed my focus group from Western Muslim children in an Islamic school setting to Middle Eastern children aged between 8 and 10 for whom English was a second language. At this stage it is helpful to explain the commonalities and the differences between the groups and how the three groups relate to the study.

One group constituted of girls at the Middle Eastern school. This group could further be divided into two groups; one was indigenous whilst the other included girls from different parts of the Arab, African and Eastern world. Approximately half of the girls were indigenous to the region. Those who were indigenous generally came from wealthy families. Those who had skin tones that were a shade darker were at times picked on. Some of the children had the same father but different mothers. For instance an indigenous child might have a half sibling whose mother was Filipino, Indian, Moroccan, Russian or Omani. Despite the Qur'an's teachings on embracing tribes and nations (49:50) prejudice was evident. In this respect what the Western children had in common with some of the Middle Eastern children was that they both understood what ethnic prejudice and colour prejudice was and they both understood exclusion in books whether this was Islamic exclusion or colour exclusion.

Many of the countries within the Middle East have become multilingual implementing Arabic and other European languages. As a teacher in this region what surprised me were the Anglocentric books that were being used to teach English to children in the primary years. No attempts had been made to make the stories Arab-centric to reflect an Arab culture. The images did not allow children to build on familiarity. On a similar level Arabic books produced for the Middle Eastern children by Arab publishers although giving visibility to the landscape, food, buildings and animals did not contain representational images of the children who had dark hair and dark skin. Interestingly characters in stories all had pale skin and light coloured hair. This is of interest because whilst the second group - Western minority Muslim children in the USA - may have felt marginalised by society because they were not visible in the literature as Muslims, the Arabian Peninsula children were oppressed in terms of skin tone. Knowledge of this awareness was evident in observations and discussions with students and staff.

Another difference between the two groups of children was that American Muslim children are raised in a society that has laws against prejudice. American society generally does not demean someone for the work that they do. For instance in my experience cleaners are addressed with respect in American Islamic schools. However, in the Middle Eastern school they were looked down on by the children. Perhaps not all children had this attitude but enough of them did for it to be a concern. Another difference was that most Middle Eastern families had maids, chauffeurs and cooks. As a result children came to school with poorer skills on how to be independent compared to the American group. For instance many of the

children initially could not cut using children's scissors nor could they use a broom. Another initial difference was the high level of physical abuse the Middle Eastern girls would inflict on each other. In my experience of Islamic schools in the West, I do not recall any instances of children slapping each other although they did occasionally kick and push. In the Middle Eastern school girls were very quick to slap faces and pull hair, they also kicked, pushed and pinched.

The third group in the study - Western authors - are a group that either through observation in mainstream society or through working in Islamic schools identified the need to write books that gave Muslim children positive self-identity, visibility and a sense of place in the West. They provided a service not only to Muslim children in the West but also to Muslim children in the Middle East by making Islam overt in the English language. Their work is important also because it teaches against prejudice and encourages all children to reflect on their moral aptitudes. This study did not use the stories of other writers, rather my own were used which were specially written using classroom disturbance and incidents so that the children could relate to them.

If my stories were used for Western Muslim children they would be applicable because they focus on character traits. I would, however, not need to write stories for Western children about respect for cleaning staff or maids because these issues are not relevant. Eight stories were written for the purpose of implementing the action research which formed the corpus for my research. These include *Laleelia, Sabah's Happy Heart, Neena, Strong Halima and the New School, Ayah and Kowah, Miss Maysa and Anaya, The Queen and Her Four Daughters and Hannah and Her Grandfather.*

7.2 Overview of Research Process

In the following diagram I map out the theoretical paradigm to provide an overview of the research process. The diagram shows the research question and the integrated research objective. The ontological and epistemological views were constructivist, interpretive and critical. The theoretical perspectives rested in an Islamic worldview. The methodologies used were action research to investigate whether Islamic children's fiction could empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding; and life story to explore the motives and purposes of the writers (see Chapter Three). The methods used for the action research

included observation, discussion, documents, questionnaire and interview. Life story made use of interview and documents. As raw data emerged it was coded. By coding the data themes were produced to which meaning and interpretation were given. A narrative approach was used to discuss the findings.

Figure 7.0: Overview of research process

The themes were "induced from empirical data – from texts, images" (Ryan & Bernard 2003: 88). Theme identification was done through various techniques one of which was repetition or frequency (Bendassolli 2013). Another technique was indigenous typologies (Smith 2010: 334) which involved the use of terms that "may sound unfamiliar or are used in unfamiliar ways" (Ryan & Bernard 2003: 89) that were common in this Middle Eastern setting. This also led me to look at what I refer to as indigenous gestures which are concerned with unfamiliar actions. Some pupils would make a sign with their hands to demonstrate that they were no longer speaking to another person. Another technique for theme identification was to look for similarities and differences (Ryan & Bernard 2003: 91). Here the focus is on the ways that the participants have similarities and differences.

Researchers are told that "qualitative data are multi-layered and may be interpreted in different but equally plausible ways" and to avoid the pitfalls of "immediate, impressionistic, surface reading" (Gibbs 2007: 143). The data that I had gathered consisted of material from observations, discussions, documents, questionnaires and interviews. With the exception of the questionnaires, I typed out the data and followed Gibbs' advice to engage in multiple readings. I was now ready for coding the data. Further directions on coding suggest "at this stage you should highlight any interesting-looking passage even if it is not directly linked to your immediate focus area. This is how new insights can emerge" (Dornyei 2007) 251). In the margins of the sheets I wrote notes. I highlighted words, phrases and actions. In terms of

the students I was looking for any negative and anything positive. These codes then became themes based on right action, right speech and right thought. In terms of the writers the codes revealed negative experiences and positive experiences. These were then put into themes of hardships and making a difference. The themes were then related in a narrative structure.

In the following diagram adapted from Ball (2011), Ryan and Bernard (2000) which shows a five stage process I elaborate further on how themes were produced. The first stage is to pick apart the research questions and identify key components or elements. In this case the research is looking for changes in the children's personal, social and spiritual development. In addition it is looking at the purposes and motives of the writers of Islamic children's fiction. According to Ryan and Bernard (2003), "themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that link not only expressions found in texts but also expressions found in images, sounds, and objects" (87). The discovery of a theme is evident when a researcher is able to "answer the question, What is this expression an example of?" (Ryan & Bernard 2003:87).

Stage 2 involves the repeated reading and processing of audio, visual and textual data (Brenner 2006: 365). This in turn collates the codes and leads to the emergence of themes. The emerging themes are then corroborated by other sources to become established themes.
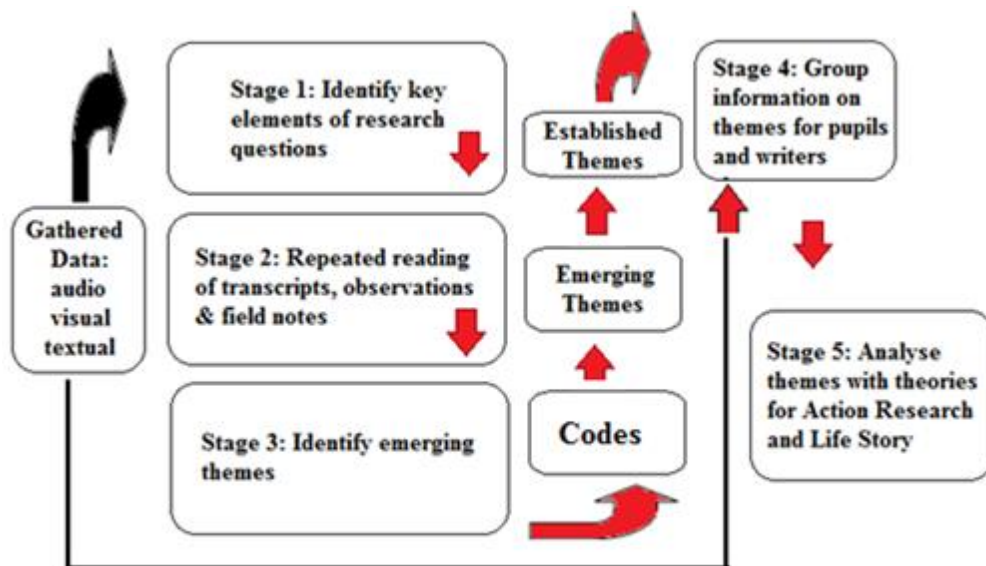
Figure 7.1   Cycle for analysing gathered data to produce themes

This study is concerned with investigating whether children's personal, social and spiritual understanding can be empowered through children's Islamic literature. It therefore

concentrated and focused on negative, undesirable and inappropriate behaviours so that these in turn could be reflected on and changed to positive, desirable and appropriate behaviours. I identified categories of behaviour: right action, wrong action, right speech and wrong speech and codified them The codes were made up of behaviours that could be put into categories of right action, right speech, right thought and wrong action, wrong speech, and wrong thought. The categories were then singled out as themes. These included aggression, arrogance, belligerence, carelessness, unkindness, laziness, dishonesty, greed, jealousy and impatience. Further emerging themes which were also codified comprised of positive characteristics like taqwa (God consciousness), kindness, helpfulness, honesty, hard-work, guilt, respect, responsibleness and patience. A further theme developed which responded to how the girls would contribute to their community and develop themselves in terms of careers. The emerging themes were then put into established themes from which the stories were composed.

The established themes consisted of hurting others and forgiveness, laziness and responsibility, delinquency and leadership, lying and honesty, bullying and caring, exclusion and acceptance, taqwa (God consciousness). The last one was contributing to society. The stories were written in a cyclical manner and were informed by what was happening in the classroom and school. When significant incidences occurred that caused either disruption to the class or upset individual students the stories would be written along the lines of what happened and what problems and feelings ensued. "Social issues and inappropriate behaviours that arise at school can now be seen as teachable moments" say Harmon and Jones (2005: 78).

The Teachable Moment Model argues Fish (2006) "suggests that there are certain times when an individual is especially ready to change behaviour and thus, especially open to receiving messages about behaviour change" (iii). These changes are most likely when the following three elements converge: risk perception, emotional response and self-concept (Fish 2006: iii). If pupils can extrapolate to understand the danger or problem resulting from an action and can respond to it empathetically and see how it impacts them, then they may be able to make a change. The stories took into consideration how the children felt. For instance stealing was considered a very inappropriate act and caused an emotional response from the class. It was therefore helpful to have a story on stealing to teach that it was an undesirable behaviour that needed to be stopped. Stories that resulted from teachable moments were then

used to develop tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim (instruction) and tadib (good action) (Waghid 2011).

This chapter initially discusses action research, and then discusses the research design, the research methods, data collection, data analysis (see also Sections 3.1 - 3.3 for life story methodology) and ethical considerations. Methodology can be described as the selection of "what procedures or strategies should be used to learn about people and the world" (Duffy & Chenail 2008:23). It is in the umbrella term for research questions, research design, and theoretically supported analysis. Methodology has also been described as a bridge between theory and method "serving as a strategic, but malleable guide throughout the research experience" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2006).

Epistemological assumptions generally fall into two types of approaches: positivism and interpretivism. These paradigms signify how knowledge and reality is understood. Social science research through positivism adheres to processes that are used by natural science research. The interpretivist approach, however, looks for interpretations of what is happening socially, historically, culturally and personally. "Interpretivism accepts that the world is constantly changing and that meanings are shifting and contested ... It is not appropriate, therefore, to employ the methods of the natural sciences" (Thomas 2009: 75). Interpretivism is concerned with *Verstehen* which means understanding whereas positivism is concerned with *Erklaren* which means explaining. According to Glass, *Verstehen*:

> "differs from "traditional" methods of science as it uses an "empathic understanding"
> of another to generate information and understanding about that other. As such, it has
> been characterized as an "interpretive" or qualitative method of inquiry" (Glass
> 2005:1)

Through *Verstehen* a researcher is able to place themselves into the situation of the one being studied, "By seeing and understanding the world as the other under study sees it, the social scientist could then understand not only the culture of that other, but also the motivation for, and the meaning of, the other's behaviour as well" (Glass 2005:2). Social research methodologies can be classified into three main groups. These are qualitative research, quantitative (including positivist and experimental) research and mixed methodology. The purpose of quantitative research is to test hypotheses and look at cause and effect and make predictions (Johnson & Christensen 2008). Quantitative research is concerned with precise

measurements using validated data-collection instruments. As such it relies on deductive or inductive reasoning. Its application embraces large and randomly selected groups where variables are specifically studied (Lichtman 2006).

Mixed method research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Its main goal is to approach research questions with any applicable method and any workable perspective. The rationale for this is that it leads to more comprehensive results than results that come from only one perspective. Chen defines mixed methods research as "a systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study for purposes of obtaining a fuller picture and deeper understanding of a phenomenon" (Johnson et al 2007 119).

Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with understanding how people interpret their reality or situation. Its style is empathetic because it gives the viewpoint of the insider. This type of research allows theories to emerge from the collected data unless it is theory driven. It is by convention subjective because its data is perception bound by those who declare it and by those who gather it. That said, this type of inquiry makes it important to disclose the background of the researcher (see Chapter One, section 1.2) so that the reader can make assumptions on possible subjectivity. "In qualitative methodology, the researcher is encouraged to reflect on the values and objectives he brings to his research and how these affect the research project" (Ratner 2002). This serves to enhance the validity of the research. The overall purpose of qualitative research is to gain deep and rich data or "thick description" (Geertz 1973). Since this approach has people as its primary collection instrument subjectivity is immanent at all levels.

Qualitative research focuses on small specifically selected groups (Johnson & Christensen 2008:34) and uses words, images and objects made up of interviews, observations, field notes and reflections which are sorted and analysed to show patterns and themes (Creswell 2009). As a teacher-researcher, I sought to understand and interpret social interactions partly through inductive reasoning and partly through Islamic Critical Theory. Qualitative research is not concerned with numbers as quantitative research is; rather it is concerned with words and actions which the researcher is burdened with interpreting.

Both action research and life story will be discussed in the next section. This will be followed with a discussion of the research design, research methods, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

7.3 Ethical Considerations

When research is concerned with people ethical implications have to be considered. This is because unintentionally the researcher may cause harm to the participants. Harm can manifest itself psychologically, financially or socially (Polanski 2004: 53). The study involved children in a school setting and writers of Islamic children's fiction. In both cases protocols had to be followed to ensure that the rights of the individual were not violated. Researchers are required to take permission in the settings they are studying and from those who are impacted by the study. Permission always needs to be taken from participants. The principle of informed consent evolved in response to the systematic abuse of research subjects. The 1949 Nuremberg Code

> "was among the earliest doctrines of research ethics and the first to achieve widespread acceptance. The code was written by the judges who tried and condemned Nazi physicians for the murder and torture of individuals in concentration camps under the guise of science" (Zink, Wertlieb & Kimberly 2005:371).

Despite the existence of the Code abuses still existed demonstrated by the infamous case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study carried out between 1932 and 1970 where subjects were not informed of their condition and were not given medical attention and as a result died (Ponterotto 2010:587). In England in 1972 the Medical Research Council used 21 unsuspecting Punjabi women in Coventry as guinea pigs feeding them radiated chapatis. (Sarkar 1995). To thwart such malpractice, guidelines have evolved overtime that not only safeguard subjects but also researchers and institutions. Essentially any action that bears the potential of being harmful is avoided.

Institutions have to ensure that its investigators understand regulations, laws and policies relating to ethical research. This begins with the principle of informed consent. Yet "informed consent is not limited to obtaining a signature on a consent form, but [is] a process of decision making designed to protect the rights" of participants" (Zink, Wertlieb & Kimberly 2005: 371). Cowell describes the informed consent process beginning with a "full disclosure" of the research followed by "adequate comprehension on the part of the

participants" with "voluntary choice to participate." Further details include "providing information that is understandable" with consideration that "participants have sufficient opportunity to consider participation" with no coercion and ensuring that the rights of the individual are protected. Moreover "parents give consent for their children and children provide assent" (2011: 247). Also there is consideration given to confidentiality. The names of the children and the school are kept confidential.

In the case of the writers interviewed for this study, the confidentiality was of a different nature since their real names were used. For this reason due regard must be given to the dangers of malfeasance. For instance in the case of researchers who deal with medical investigations there is possibility of "harming a client (i.e. maleficence) through publication, or through seeking permission to publish clinical material involving a client" (Sperry & Pies 2010:90). Although there is no confidentiality in terms of the identity of the authors, there is confidentiality in terms of disclosing only what the author has asked to be made public. The ethical considerations with this aspect of the study concerned itself with ensuring that accurate portrayals were made and what the writer had asked the researcher to keep confidential, remained confidential. The nature of life story methodology makes it necessary to check with the subjects that they have been quoted correctly.

In conducting the research permission for the study involved obtaining consent from the writers of Islamic children's fiction as well as from the principal of the school and parents of the students involved. Additionally students were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without reason. The action research project was validated by the school principal who was interested in knowing if a literary-based character development programme could work school wide. She considered the study a pilot study and added students to the research from other grades that were identified with behavioural concerns. Parents asked questions and shared information about their child's behaviour during parent-teacher conferences and participated through completing a questionnaire.

Ethical considerations are not just limited to interactions with subjects. There are also clear and established procedures from the University of Worcester that require raw and processed data to be password protected and locked. Moreover I submitted an application to the Ethics Committee at the University of Worcester to approve the action research and life story.

7.4 Critical Action Research

My focus in personal, social and spiritual development was essentially towards the empowerment of children. I was attracted to action research because of its emphasis on "social solutions" enabling children to transform themselves. Action research has been described as,

> "a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities" (Reason & Bradbury 2001: 1).

Action research is a social change methodology concerned with empowering those who are powerless. My study sought to investigate whether Islamic children's fiction could enable Muslim children to develop their personal, social and spiritual understanding to bring about transformation. Critical pedagogy is concerned with strategies that "empower the powerless and transform existing social inequalities and injustices" (McLaren 1989:60). Problems of injustice and inequality were present in my classroom. Reminders for kind words, cooperation and care, whilst acknowledged and practiced by some, only resulted in repeating offenders to exercise their oppression covertly.

Action research is a good fit for this study because it seeks to empower the subjects which in this case are the pupils. Pupils who are oppressed or taken advantage of need to learn how to confront and resist or overcome those who oppress them. They need to build their confidence and understand and practice what to say or do to empower themselves. In addition pupils who victimise others need to transform their oppressive actions to caring actions. Action research is:

> "designed to improve the researched subjects' capacities to solve problems, develop skills (including professional skills), increase their chances of self-determination, and to have more influence on the functioning and decision-making processes of organizations and institutions from the context in which they act" (Boog 2003: 426).

The research question, "Can Islamic fiction contribute to the personal, social and spiritual understanding of Muslim children?" is concerned with bringing a positive and self-improved difference in the attitude and action of children. The most common reasons for high teacher

turn-over in Islamic schools in North America have been disruptive student behavior and poor administration (Ezzidine & Moes 2004). This of course is not a problem that is exclusive to Islamic schools; discipline problems are considered to be "one of the most common causes" for teacher stress in state schools too (McPhee & Craig 2009).

Disruptive behaviour does not affect the teacher alone, it also affects other pupils in the room. Action research enables student empowerment because it is concerned with identifying problems, analysing problems and creating solutions to those problems. Action research has become a preferred method especially for classroom practitioners since it empowers the teacher to become part of the process that seeks to find a solution. The teacher's perspective is central to decision making in relation to themselves, their pupils, parents and administrators. As these groups "come in touch with one another, with their personal vision and with the way they would like their schools to be" they "take deliberate action to move towards them" (Barth 1990:158). According to Ferrance, action research is an investigation carried out by a teacher who wants to improve practice using his or her class environment "on questions that deal with educational matters at hand" (2000: 1).

My students had demonstrated through my management interventions that they could follow rules in my presence. But they were not all able to monitor their actions and make responsible choices when no adult was present for example there were still issues in collaborating, sharing, forgiving, dealing with anger or controlling their desire for their needs. I wanted the students to independently and autonomously select admirable choices without the intervention of an adult. I wanted to see if stories could empower them to improve their character.

Action research is concerned with focusing on the teacher's concerns rather than an outsider's concerns. Teacher researchers are better placed to close the gap between theory and practice because the teacher is the classroom expert and in a position to be a "reflective practitioner" (Taylor 1996). Zuber-Skerritt describes action research as the "practical improvement, innovation, change or development of social practice, and the practitioners' better understanding of their practices" (1996: 83). A teacher researcher has a number of advantages over the non-teacher researcher the most beneficial of which is familiarity with the pupils. However, even here there are ethical issues in terms of who has power in the student-teacher relationship. As Skanfors notes, "Power relations are inherent in relationships

between children and adults and cannot be ignored, and researchers need to recognise that children are subordinate to adults" (2009:8).

7.5 The Action Research Method

The literature shows a number of different models for the action research process. Generally however, the models take a spiral or cyclical form. McNiff (2002:12) list the steps as

  i.   identifying an area to investigate
  ii.   imagining a solution
  iii. implementing the solution
  iv.   evaluating the solution
  v.   making change based on the evaluation

An alternative yet similar description is provided by Elliot (1991: 69) who describes the process as

  i.   identifying the initial problem
  ii.   conducting a reconnaissance overview
  iii. a general plan made up of action steps
  iv.   the implementation of action steps
  v.   observation or the monitoring of the effects.

This then leads again into a reconnaissance followed by a revision of the general idea. This sequence of steps is then followed in a cyclical manner. The following chart is an interpretation of Elliot's model cited by MacIsaac (1996).
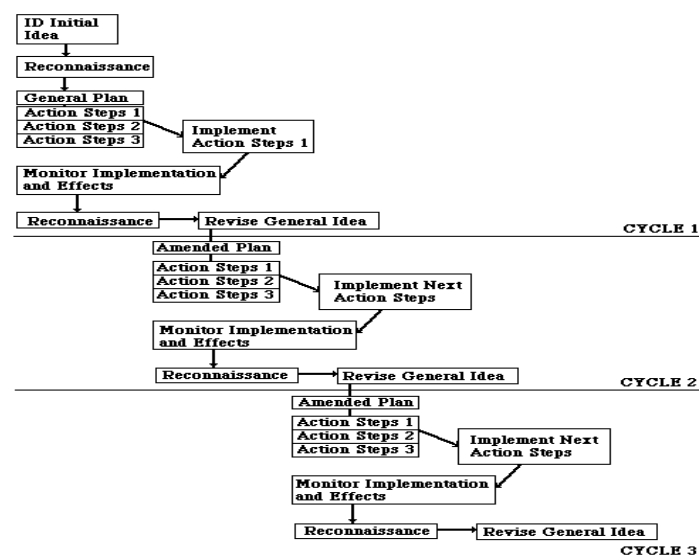
Figure 7.2: Action Research Model (cited in MacIsaac, 1996).

The above model can be condensed to show an alternative representation which focuses on the four steps of plan, action, observe and reflect. This is known as Elliot's model and represented as follows.
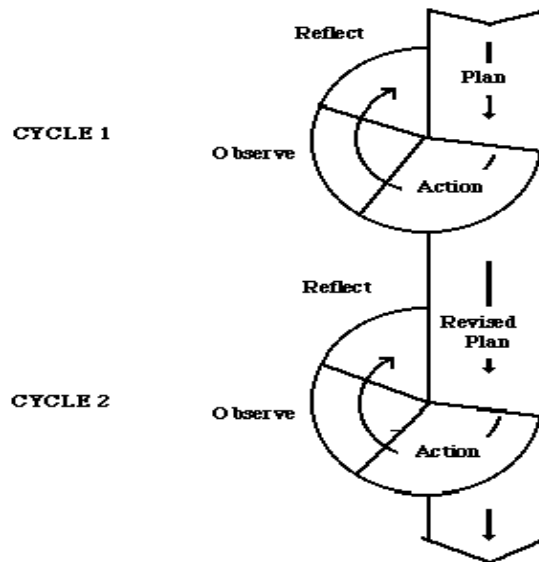
Figure 7.3: Elliot's Action Research Model (cited in MacIsaac, 1996).

Models for the cyclical process of action research are generally composed of four processes: plan, action, observe, reflect. Monet (2012) developed a conceptual model for action research which provides steps of the action research process for teacher researchers. Her model is helpful because it breaks down each of the components and provides details on what informs each step. The initial requirement is identification. This is when the researcher identifies the problem within the needs of the classroom. The problem I identified was the oppressive behaviour of children towards other children and the inability of oppressed children to seek freedom from the oppressor. From this I formulated a question. Monet (2012) includes a baseline assessment tagged to identification prior to any engagement as this serves as evidence for how things were before an "action" or intervention. I followed this step at the reconnaissance stage. I read Islamic fiction to children and documented their behaviour.

Triangulation is also a part of the process to ensure that data can be supported from other sources. Triangulation is essentially ensuring validity that when one assumption is made it can be corroborated by other sources independently of the first. In my case I observed students. I looked at their work, their questionnaires, I interviewed them and then I interviewed other students about them. This ensures that assumptions are feasible. There are a

number of ways that baseline assessment can be conducted these include observation, archived data, surveys, portfolios and diaries. This data allows for triangulation. Survey data can triangulate data from portfolios or archived materials. I initially conducted a questionnaire to establish a baseline. I kept notes and also had access to documents.

The second step of the model is concerned with the intervention or the action. The planning phase is concerned with creating an intervention activity and knowing how it will be carried out. This step also includes assessment. The third step involves the collection and organisation of the data. At this stage the teacher-researcher has an effective way of showing that the intervention was measureable. The fourth step is analysis. Here the researcher looks for "pattern, trends, and insights" (Monet 2012). The fifth step is referred to as the revise and reflect stage. Here the material analysed is being reflected on to see what has been learned from the study so far. This is followed by revision of the initial plan to produce a second plan for the next cycle. The following diagram shows Monet's model.
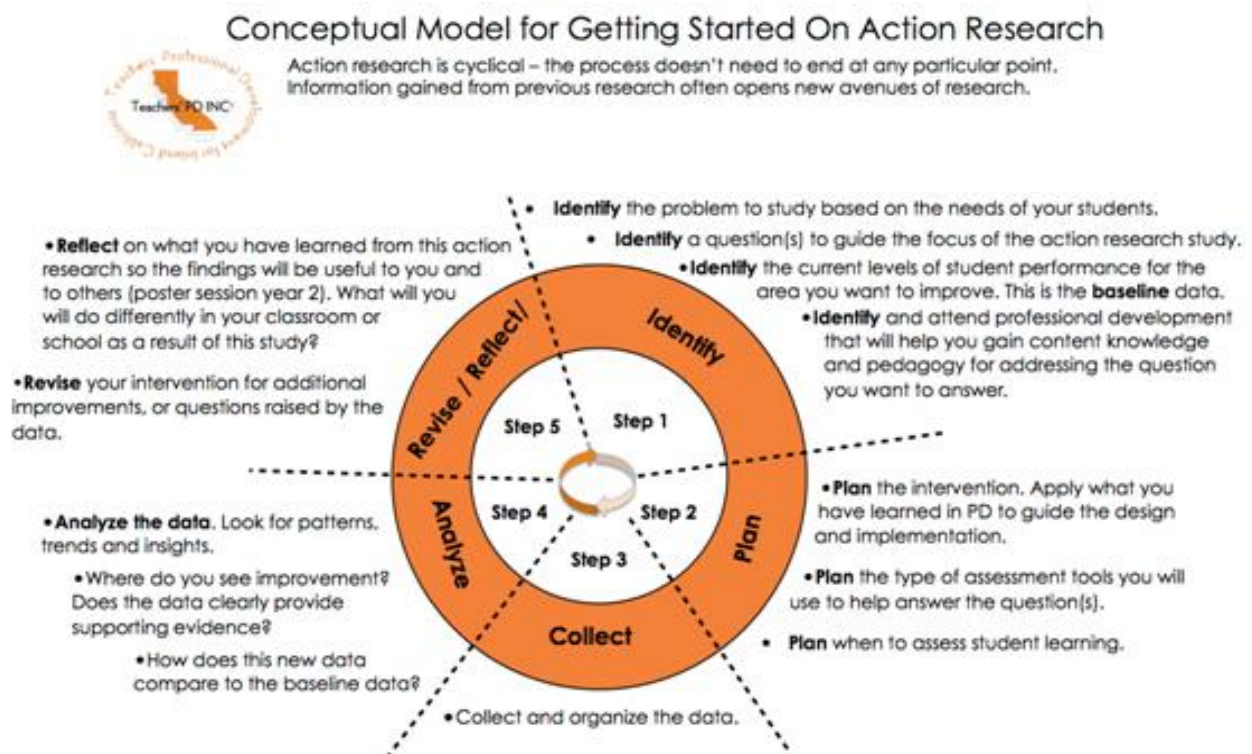
Figure 7.4: Steps in Action Research from Monet (2012)

Action research augments a flexible approach because dealing with human subjects creates situations that cannot be predicted. This is also one of the strengths of action research.

7.6 Reconnaissance Stage: Writing for Muslim Children

The research design made use of criterion sampling. Muslim writers were selected who had been published in the 1990s and 2000s (see Chapter Three). Participants were informed about the nature of the study and asked to share their life stories. Plans were made for face to face meetings involving travel to the locations of the writers. This was later modified when participants advised that phone calls would be more convenient. This was then further modified after conducting the first few phone interviews. When participants were sent transcripts of interviews they felt that either I had not understood them correctly or that they wanted to revise what they had said. It seemed less time consuming and easier to let participants reflect on the questions and write responses without the immediate and constrained nature of phone or face to face interviews. I mused over Detzner's (1992) point about obtaining a person's life story through a written account. "It seemed a good idea because it removed the error margin and empowered the teller" (Lieblich et al. 1998:13).

Writers were sent a detailed and comprehensive list of questions totalling one hundred and two separated into four sections (see below). These questions were selected from McAdams (1995) and Atkinson (1998). Writers were asked to familiarize themselves with the questions and use them as guides. There was no intention of asking writers to laboriously answer each question as the list was intended as a guide where writers were free to choose as many or as few as they were comfortable with.

> **Section 1**: Significant earliest memories, from approximate age 0 - 4 (these might include what relatives or friends might remember about the interviewee).
> **Section 2**: Significant elementary school age memories, from approximate age 5 – 11 (these might include school, teachers, friends, stories, parents, relatives, brothers, sisters, vacations, activities, movies, successes, failures, dreams and aspirations, etc).
> **Section 3**: Secondary school age memories, from approximate age 12 – 16 (these might include school, teachers, successes, failures, music, movies, books, friends, brothers, sisters, parents, relatives, field trips, dreams, aspirations, tragedy, world events etc).
> **Section 4**: College, university and/or work force memories, from approximate age 17 – 26 (these might include learning to drive, work or university interviews, peers, media, world events, the prospect of marriage, expectations and aspirations, family). (From McAdams 1995 and Atkinson 1998).

Allowing the writers to think about what they wanted to say provided a more relaxed and reflective attitude to gather responses. Writers had time to review, edit and rephrase their responses so that by the time I got them, I was concerned mostly with just asking for more

clarity. The purpose of the original list of questions was really intended as a memory prompt. I expected writers to answer only the questions they felt comfortable to respond to. However, it seemed that some participants saw the list as overwhelming. Moreover, some questions may have been trigger questions that resulted in unpleasant memories. Therefore, I reduced the number of questions. The new list was condensed and shown below.

Section 1: Significant earliest memories, from approximate age 0 - 4
- When were you born and where?
- What are your earliest memories?
- How would your family describe you?
- Do you remember anyone telling you stories? What kinds of stories? What were your favourite?

Section 2: Significant school age memories
- Did you like school?
- What school memories stand out for you?
- Who was your favourite teacher ?
- How did he/she influence you?
- What was your worst memory of school?
- What was your favourite subject?
- What's the most important book you read?
- Who made the most significant impression on you?

Section 3: College, university and/or work force memories
- What kind of higher education or training did you undertake?
- When did you get married?
- Is there anything about your community you would like to share?
- What was the important thing given to you by your family?
- What are the struggles you encounter as a Muslim writer?
- Why do you write Islamic books?
- What is the message of your books?

Section 4: Memories of family life, community living
- What do you do with your time?
- What have been your greatest accomplishments?
- Was there any special person that changed your life?
- What is your greatest worry now?
- What advice would you give to the younger generation?
- How would you describe your personality?
(Taken from McAdams 1995 and Atkinson 1998).

My assumption that Muslim writers would be interested in participating in a life story account was ill founded. I had not realized initially how difficult it would be to get writers involved in a life story project. I had not realised how invasive this could be. Some writers

were too busy, some were not interested, some were chronically ill, some were dead, some were alive but not to be found, some only wanted to share very little and some shared but got writer's block and withdrew. So the initial challenge was to find writers who would share their life to some degree of detail to allow key elements to emerge. I had initially decided to interview two writers from the USA, UK and Canada; six writers in total. But over time this changed. Eventually I decided to add other writers for whatever small amount they were willing to share because I felt it would help with drawing conclusions. The most important part of the life story was their purpose for writing and I was able to obtain this from the writers I selected. The final number of participants included one writer from Canada; one from England – myself and six from the United States. Both the Canadian and British writers had Muslim-Punjabi heritage. All the American writers had Christian heritage with European lineage. The following diagram shows the research design for life story.
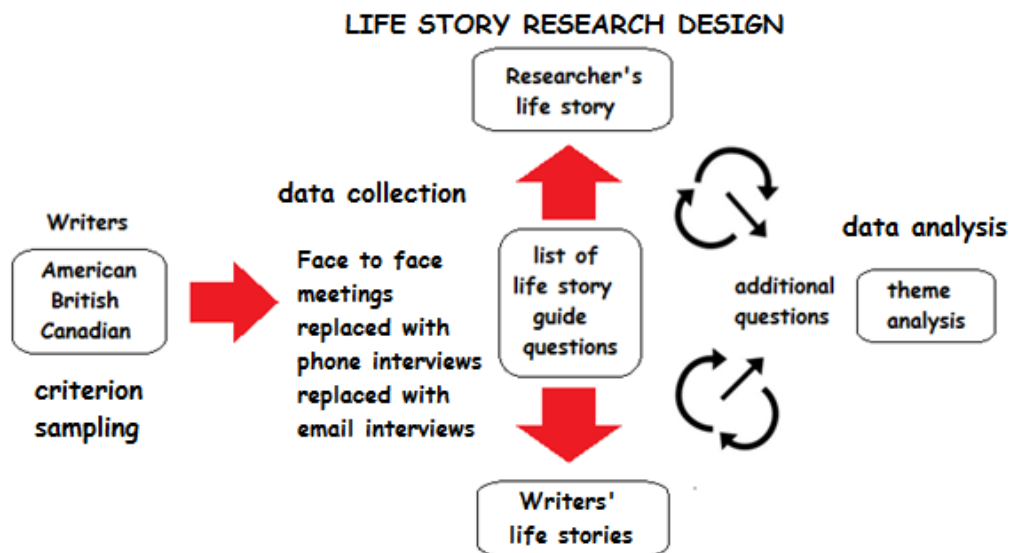
Figure 7.5: Life story research design

7.7 Context of the Action Research

The main purpose of this part of the research was to see if Islamic children's fiction could inform children's personal, social and spiritual understanding to a degree where they could take responsibility for improving their own behaviour towards others and towards their environment. My hope was that this would be discernable not only in the school environment but also be internalised by the student to the extent that she could apply it outside of school and in matters which required ethical and moral thinking. I wanted the students to regulate and patrol their own actions rather than be directed by a teacher or other adult. Essentially I

wanted them to promote positive behaviour in themselves that would allow them to succeed in society, not just in the present but for the future.

Action research is concerned with worthwhile human endeavours. Personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU) tentatively impacts a person, the local community and the global community to higher standards of harmony so it is a worthwhile struggle. However, the reality is that very little time is assigned to PSS development. Svirbel noted many "found no time in the instructional day, week or month for a separate character education program" (2007: 96). Many teachers entice students with rewards for appropriate behaviour. Critics of this approach view it as ineffective because it is temporal (Kohn 1999).

Within the school there were policies that referred to student behaviour. These sought to develop empathy, moral and ethical character. In order to accomplish these positive behaviours a sustainable manner of imparting values needed to be applied. This was so that character traits were not just exercised within school but also transferable to life outside the school in line with the educational authority's mission for life-long learning. The study took place in a government school within an affluent region of the Middle East where I worked as a teacher. It had a multinational community consisting predominantly of Arabs and minorities of Africans, Filipinos, and Indo-Pakistanis. My students consisted of girls with ages ranging from eight to ten.

7.8 Advantages and Disadvantages

The advantages of action research are that it focuses on the specific and allows teachers to be participants rather than "distant and detached from the situation" (Koshy 2005: 21). Action research is based on "continuous evaluation and modifications [that] can be made as the project progresses" (Koshy 2005: 21). It also allows a teacher to make changes that improve practice as well as the advantage of empowering students and themselves.

Limitations of action research include the lack of time. This affects rigour and data gathering because although observation is done almost constantly there is not enough time to write or record everything that is being seen. At times notes that were made in a hurry were difficult to read and put into context. What did I mean by my note? Sometimes I did not know. Researcher bias is a criticism of action research especially if the study is conducted by a lone

researcher. However, bias is inevitable in data gathering and analysis. Action research also produces results that some regard as not generalisable. However, I would argue that the action research used here could clarify a general principle which teachers could apply.

7.9 The Research Design

Formulation of the research design took longer than expected. Reading through the literature gave an idea of how the action research process worked but it was not until I began the process that understanding and clarity set in. The initial reconnaissance phase was carried out in a school in the USA.

> "The reconnaissance is a situational analysis which produces a broad overview of the action research context, current practices, participants, and concerns. Apart from designing and implementing the improving change to practice, the reconnaissance follows exactly the same action research cycle" (Tripp 2005).

The reconnaissance was carried out in a class of American Muslim boys and girls. Most of the boys were indigenous Americans. Five of the boys had individual behaviour plans. In the reconnaissance phase stories were shared with the children and discussions took place, students wrote about stories and how the stories affected them. However, my observations appeared to show that there was no obvious difference in the students' behaviour. The children who were disruptive continued to be disruptive. What the reconnaissance showed was that the stories were not really empowering the student. They did not encourage students to stop oppressing others. Neither did they empower weaker students to defend themselves or stimulate bystanders to intervene. A difference was that I was reading published stories rather than writing stories that were relevant to classroom experience. Moreover I did not implement action research. I basically read the stories and followed them with questions and discussions. The reconnaissance stage was an important part of the research because it allowed me to see what would work and what would not.

It was after I read about North Carolina's character education model linked to Bloom's taxonomy in Humphrey (2005) that I was able to make a more solid research design. I still did not feel completely knowledgeable on how the process would work but this was a concern that others had voiced too. "I found it easier when I did it" (Burns 2009:23). Similarly action research became easier to understand and explain once the process was started, "AR made sense after I put it into my teaching context" (Burns 2009: 23).

During the year notes were kept about student behaviour and student attitudes as part of the daily routine. The protocol at the school was to send students who were being disruptive to the specifically designated staff called advisors. Advisors were assigned classes for whom they were responsible in terms of behaviour problems.

The research design comprised a number of steps. The initial step included a qualitative questionnaire to establish a baseline on student behaviour together with teacher notes. This was followed by introducing students to what I will refer to as 'person conducts' which were right action, right speech, right thought and no action. These were adapted and transferred from Humphrey (2005). I removed "no action" because I did not require the girls to apply the information in that category to making sense of the stories.

The descriptions below were simplified and "no action" was removed.			
Right Action	**Right Speech**	**Right Thought**	**No Action**
Acting fair Picking up litter Showing cooperation Showing patience Showing consideration Showing kindness Giving help Being humble Praying Reading God's Book Reading ahadith	Being respectful Using polite words Using kind words Offering help Asking for forgiveness or forgiving another	Having taqwa – God consciousness Having Ihsaan – Love for God Thinking of the kiramun katibeen – two angels assigned to write daily deeds Thinking of others' needs Considering what is fair and right	Using your intuition Using your senses Gather information through observation

Table 6.0 First stage person conducts adapted from Humphrey 2005.

The original conducts and descriptions I produced are shown above. But I had to cut these down because there were too many.

Right Action	**Right Speech**	**Right Thought**
Showing cooperation Showing kindness	Kind words Giving help Forgiving	Thinking of: Allah, others needs Thinking what is right
Wrong Action	**Wrong Speech**	**Wrong Thought**
Not cooperating Not being kind	Saying unkind words Not helping Not forgiving	Thinking something that Allah will not like

Table 6.1 Second stage person conducts adapted from Humphrey

Once the children were given the person conducts a discussion ensued about them after which students were put in groups and asked to brainstorm right action, right speech, and right thought. I again condensed the descriptions of the person conducts but later removed the descriptions altogether and then added wrong, action, wrong speech and wrong thought since these were necessary to help children pick out inappropriate behaviours from the stories. Humphrey had not used the term 'wrong'.

Right Action	Right Speech	Right Thought
Wrong Action	Wrong Speech	Wrong Thought

Table 6.2 Third stage person conducts adapted from Humphrey (2005)

When the children had gained an understanding of the person conducts, carpet discussions were held in which children shared episodes from their day and applied the person conducts to actions they saw, things they heard or thoughts they had. Then began the first story called *Laleelia* which highlighted "wrong action" and "wrong speech". This was followed by a discussion about the story and an activity. All stories were connected to some incident or problem that highlighted behaviour or character in the classroom or school. This was something I had not done in the reconnaissance stage. The action research cyclical process of "plan, action, observe, reflect" became:

Plan	Writing story resulting from a school or classroom incident.
Action	Preliminary carpet discussion, reading story and picking out right and wrong actions from the story.
Observe	Observing students and interacting with to them as they complete story task.
Reflect	Looking at the completed tasks and reflecting on what pupils said and wrote.

Table 6.3 Cyclical process of action research

Steps leading to first cyclical process

Figure 7.6: Steps leading to first cyclical process

Observations were constant and on-going. The cycle of planning the story, telling the story, observations following the story, reflecting on the observations and then planning the next story ensued for four weeks. Elliot's model is shown below depicting the 3 stages of action research.
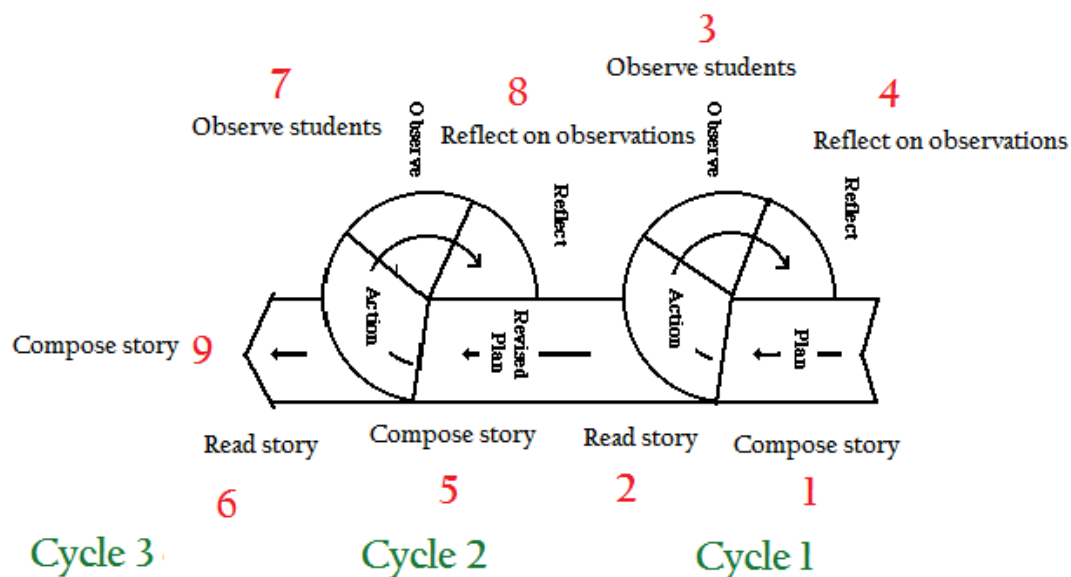
Figure 7.7: Three stages of action research

Humphrey used the model on American children for whom English was a first language. Below I have reproduced what Humphrey used to show the similarities and differences in what Humphrey used and what I used.

Right Action	Right Speech
Being responsible	Being respectful
Showing perseverance	Using polite words
Keeping promises	Choosing words that don't hurt
Showing kindness	Choosing words that are helpful
Right Thoughts	**No Action**
Thinking of others' needs	Using your intuition
Planning with care and consideration	Using your senses
Considering what is fair and right	Gathering information through senses

Table 6.4 Humphrey's right action, speech, thoughts and no action

7.10 Stories for Social Change

Stories have been credited for bringing personal transformation, "The spoken word (e.g. parables, myths, fables and legends) and the written word have been used and are believed to be two of the most influential tools to heal and change the human condition" (Jack & Ronan 2008:161). Bibliotherapy is concerned with helping individuals who are suffering. Bibliotherapy uses stories that individuals can relate to and identify with. This approach is similar to Parker's three step approach to self-improvement discussed in Chapter Three, section 3.8. Bibliotherapy involves the actualisation of self-transformation through a character. The reader relates to the story in a deep and personal way where empathy, sympathy and action converge. Bibliotherapy is therefore an emancipatory technique.

> "The process of bibliotherapy is based in classic psychotherapy principles of identification (with the character or situation in the story), catharsis (wherein the student gains inspiration), and insight (which leads to motivation for positive change)" (Iaquinta and Hipsky 2006:209).

Reading stories and telling stories are thought to overlap in the way that they both shape and strengthen wellbeing. According to Zingaro the telling of stories:

> "is an important step in the person's struggle to make some kind of meaning out of seemingly inexplicable suffering, humiliation, or terror. With the best of intentions, many of these stories are advanced or encouraged in the context of an ideology of empowerment that equates speech with power, implying that the benefit of having one's story heard has enduring political, social, and therapeutic value to the speaker" (Zingaro 2009:11).

In the context of the study which is concerned with developing morally based stories that encourage children to develop deep understanding and engage in moral discussion "stories are precious ... stories help all of us to understand ourselves, they give us the courage to face the unbearable, and they allow us to hope for change" (Zingaro 2009: 187). An example of a story designed to promote such moral discussion on the idea of right thought, right action and right speech is provided below. This provides a window into how the action research was carried out and also provides a way of exploring issues of writing stories for an educational purpose.

The Chocolate Box

Miss Alia loved eating chocolate. On her desk was a box with her favourite chocolates. She didn't lock the chocolate box away because she believed her students were strong-willed and could overcome their desire to take something that didn't belong to them. "Sometimes we see things that we want but we can't have them," she had told her students. "Life is a big test. We have to always do our best."
The girls knew that stealing was wrong thought and wrong action."

But one day just as Miss Alia and the children returned from lunch they saw the chocolate box on the floor. There were loud gasps and little hands covered little mouths and eyes were wide with disbelief. All the chocolates were gone!
 "Subhan Allah! (Glory to God)" said Amaya.
"Oh my goodness!" said Bella.
Miss Alia picked up the empty chocolate box and put it back on her table.
Miss Alia heard someone say, "I saw you in here with Kareema."
"I didn't take the chocolates! I came in here for my lunch money!" replied an exasperated voice.
"Wrong speech," said Miss Alia. "Please don't accuse anyone if you didn't actually see them take the chocolate."
Miss Alia asked the girls to sit down and then she said, "Let's see if we can all help each other to figure this out."

The above story opens up a number of different issues. The obvious one is honesty. Others may include blame, suspicion and self-control. The story allows for critical thinking and moral reasoning. The story serves as a prompt for children to discuss day to day temptation and what strategies they could implement to overcome temptations that involve wrong action, wrong thought and wrong speech. The action research used real life incidents and created stories such as this one.

7.11 Data Collection

In action research a variety of methods can be used to collect data. The research question generally directs and guides which data collection methods are better suited to provide answers. In order to achieve my aim I needed to collect evidence that showed student progress in terms of their personal, social and spiritual understanding. The methods employed by action research include diaries, notes, observation, documents, questionnaires and interviews. This study used observation, interviews, notes, student work and questionnaires. A questionnaire was devised in order to have a baseline of student behaviour. A questionnaire was also made for parents to share perceptions of their child's behaviour. The benefits of questionnaires are that they "enable you to collect background and baseline information quite easily; provide a format making it easy to represent information" and "are suitable for collecting initial information on attitudes and perceptions" (Koshy 2005: 89). The disadvantages of using questionnaires are that respondents may be influenced by the teacher-researcher and select an option they think the researcher wants to see. Questionnaires can also contain bias. An advantage and disadvantage can be that they are either easy to compose or time consuming. This depends on the type of questionnaire and the number of questions used.

Questionnaires are one way of gathering information, but a richer and more informative method of data collection is through conducting interviews. Data can also be accumulated through documents which include policies, report cards, letters and records. Other documents such as "students' written work and portfolios can help the researcher to note progress over time. Photographs capturing critical moments and products are also useful as evidence" (Koshy 2005: 96). The advantages of gathering documentary evidence especially student work which is easily obtainable can provide valuable insight into whether there has been progress. The disadvantage of documentary evidence is that usually only an insider has access to them and not every document is necessarily shared (Marshall 2006).

Notes and diaries are subjective writings of the researcher's observations, ideas, feelings and conversations as they see and remember them. The advantage of note or diary keeping "helps to personalise your project. This is important in an action research project as the main purpose is to make changes in practice. Diaries help to keep a progress check on the project. Field diaries often supplement information obtained from other sources" (Koshy 2005: 97). A disadvantage of diary and note keeping is that it may be difficult to write regularly due to time constraints or too much may be written.

Observation is probably the most common instrument used in action research. As a teacher researcher being a participant observer necessarily creates subjectivity and bias. This has to be acknowledged and the researcher should try and be conscious of this to minimise its effect. Observation or kidwatching (Owocki & Goodman 2002) is a common tool used by teachers to assess their students. It is valuable because the teacher having spent months with a student can see when changes are evident. The main advantage of observation is that it is easily accessed. The main disadvantage is that is can cause the researcher to accumulate too much data and this then makes the analysis more difficult because there is too much material to get through.

7.12 Data Analysis

Data analysis has been defined as "The attempt to fully and accurately summarize and represent the data that has been collected" (Mills 2003: 116). Qualitative data analysis is concerned with sifting, sorting, selecting and seeing. It is "an ongoing, emerging and iterative or non-linear process" (Henning 2004: 127). In some ways it is very time consuming because of its data techniques. This relies heavily on observation, interview and note taking because it emphasizes description. "Transcripts and notes are the raw data of the research. They provide a descriptive record of the research, but they cannot provide explanations" (Pope, Ziebland & Mays 200: 114). It is the researcher's task to make sense of the data by interpreting it. Qualitative data analysis is "fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions" (Maykut & Moorhouse 1994: 121).

The nature of action research makes data analysis a perpetual process. A three component model is suggested to analyse data (Silverman 2010: 234) comprising of "data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles & Huberman 1984: 21). Data reduction "is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified" (Miles & Huberman 1994: 11). This process can be thought of as the weeding phase. Large amounts of data have been gathered, the researcher must now pick out those that are pertinent to the research question. The researcher determines at this point which "data chunks to code and which to pull out, which patterns best summarize a number of chunks, which evolving story to tell" (Miles & Huberman 1994: 11).

Data display is concerned with putting the data in an easily readable format to allow the researcher to see the emergence of patterns from which conclusions can be made. As Koshy notes, "The purpose is to make organised information into an immediately available, accessible, compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw conclusions or move on to the next step of analysis which the display suggests to be useful" (2005:114). Data display however does not need to be restricted to graphic form, it can also be done textually (Mac Naughton & Hughes 2009: 187). Miles and Huberman (1994) caution that "extended text" can overwhelm the researcher due to its bulk. They describe a display as "an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action" (1994: 11). This can take the form of "matrices, graphs, charts, and networks. All are designed to assemble organized information into an immediately accessible, compact form so the analysis can see what is happening" (Miles & Huberman 1994: 11). This phase leads into the conclusion drawing phase.
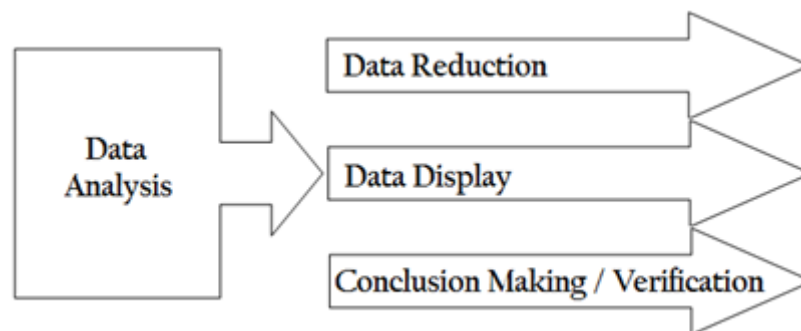
Figure7.8 Miles and Huberman's three component model for data analysis

Conclusion drawing refers to the process where the researcher is trying to make sense of the data. The researcher is "noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions" (Miles & Huberman 1994: 11). These are however, fluid and fuzzy. Yet their clarity increases with data corroboration. This is where the tool of verification is introduced. Verification refers to testing the validity of a tentative conclusion for "plausibility". Miles and Huberman (1994) see verification as the partner of drawing conclusions,

> "Verification may be as brief as a fleeting second thought crossing the analysts mind during writing, with a short excursion back to the field notes, or it may be thorough and elaborate, with lengthy argumentation and review among colleagues to develop "intersubjective consensus," or with extensive efforts to replicate a finding in another data set. The meanings emerging from the data set have to be tested for their

plausibility, their sturdiness, their "confirmability" – that is, their *validity* otherwise we are left with interesting stories about what happened, of unknown truth and utility" (Miles and Huberman 1994:11).

In summary the steps leading to writing the results of the study begin with the gathering of the data, and then sifting the data followed by grouping the data in codes and themes. This then leads to the evolution of the story which can be done chronologically or thematically. Figure 6.8 shows the steps involved from raw data to writing the analysis and interpretation.
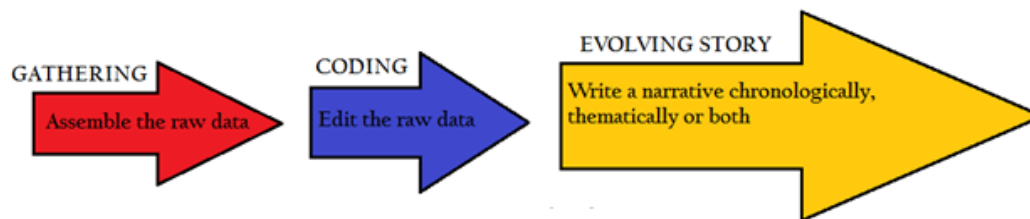
Figure 7.9 Steps in constructing a research story adapted from Patton (1990:388) & Miles and Huberman (1994:11).

CHAPTER EIGHT ACTION RESEARCH ANALYSIS

8.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings from the action research investigating whether Islamic children's fiction can empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding (PSSU). In other words through reading Islamic children's fiction can Muslim children empower themselves to transform oppressive, unjust or irresponsible behaviours and situations. I have presented the data analysis and interpretation through narrative showing how the investigation unfolded during my research journey. I have done this chronologically and thematically. Some believe that narrative structure is complementary to educational research because the latter is concerned with personal experience. "Education and educational studies are a form of experience ... narrative is the best way of representing experience" (Clandinin & Connelly 1990: 18). I have chosen to use narrative because I find it is well suited to action research. Incorporated within the narrative are samples of student work, student activities, observations, interviews and discussions.

The underlying motivation of this research is to solve the problem of oppressive and inappropriate interaction and behaviour of pupils in and outside the classroom. Action research is a cyclical process "of planning, transformation and evaluation which draws on insider practitioner enquiry and reflection" (Armstrong & Moore 2004:2). Action research is considered to be the "most appropriate for addressing the needs of vulnerable populations because it encourages the direct and active involvement of the members of those populations. Such an approach seeks to mitigate inequalities and oppression among vulnerable groups" (Olshansky 2005:270). In this case there are two vulnerable groups. One group consists of children who are bullied or display bystander apathy. The other group consists of those who instigate or practice oppression or inappropriate behaviour. This study considers both groups to be oppressed, one by others and one by themselves (self-oppression). According to a hadith, he who oppresses should be helped, "By preventing him from oppressing others." Both groups, therefore, are in need of transformation in order to achieve a "better life" (How 2003:9). The optimum result is to have a classroom and school environment in which pupils cooperate and interact in a positive manner.

According to Calhoun (1994), "Action research is a fancy way of saying let's study what's happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place" (40). In this spirit, this

study has discussed learning theories and moral theories expounded by Piaget, Kohlberg, Krathwohl (affective domain), Bloom (cognitive domain) as revised by Anderson, Dave (psychomotor domain), Vygotsky (social cognitive theory), and Bandura (social learning theory). In addition Islamic Critical Theory has been introduced which will be applied on a macro and micro level. Action research and Islamic Critical Theory do in fact converge on a practical and philosophical level in the sense that both are looking to change oppressive situations. When Islamic Critical Theory is applied on a macro level one is looking at the classroom as a whole. In this case Islamic Critical Theory uses a three step process of explanatory, practical and normative on the entire number of pupils in the class. The explanatory stage is that classroom behaviour has been identified as oppressive, the second step of the theory utilises pupils, parents and teachers as the actors to change the oppression. The third step results in social transformation with the removal of the oppression.

On a micro level, Islamic Critical Theory is applied to individual children. In this instance the explanatory stage asks what is wrong with an individual child. This could be a variety of different things. For example the child may be well behaved; however, the child is subject to bystander apathy. When the child sees something inappropriate she does not intervene to create a better situation or remove the oppression. Here Islamic Critical Theory would identify the child herself, her peers and the teachers as the actors to bring social transformation to her own condition. The normative stage will have been reached if the child is able to change her bystander apathy to bystander action. In this way the theory can be applied to individual children as well as a whole class. The difference would be that intervention would be tailored to the specific needs of the individual. This would involve an approach that is similar to individual behaviour plans where specific behaviours are noted and ways of improvement are listed and shared with the child and then implemented.

Learning theories, moral theories, Islamic Critical Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy will also be discussed as suggested by Waghid (2011).Waghid uses the terms tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim, (instruction) and tadib (good action) to negotiate the day to day issues of the classroom (2011:28). His concepts were used in the delivery of the action research cycles. In the following sections I discuss the data and interpret the findings through applying the theorists and theories discussed in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

8.1 The Process of Problematising Right and Wrong

It is important to initially understand how the pupils problematised right and wrong. This can be demonstrated through the opening activity which consisted of brainstorming right and wrong speech and action. Evidence of the students' collaborative work suggested that they had made use of prior knowledge. Although I did not teach Islamic studies it was a subject in which ethical behaviour was covered through the reading and understanding of Qur'an and the practice of Muhammadﷺ. It was not necessary to tell students if something was acceptable or offensive as the eight, nine and ten years olds already had a repertoire of right and wrong. A homework session included making a poster of right and wrong actions and speech. This was carried out at home where students could use self-reflection and family help. The posters or pictures and phrases were then brought to school and shared with the class and put on a display board.

Figure 7.0 Pupils mounting homework pictures showing right and wrong conducts.

Further insight on how children decided what was right and wrong can be constructed from moral theories. According to Piaget (1965) children develop their moral understanding by going through three stages. They begin at a premoral stage and move to a heteronomous stage where they consider rules to be absolute. The final stage is the autonomous stage where children understand that rules can be changed.

> "Infants and toddlers do not distinguish right from wrong ... preschoolers and school-agers consider right and wrong to be direct opposites, with nothing in between ... Adolescents begin to view right and wrong as a matter of degree. They take into account intention in judging an act" (Berns 2004: 471).

Piaget's theory of moral development would project the pupils to be at the heteronomous stage based on their age, however, in light of further research that contested Piaget the stages are considered to be more fluid suggesting some children are functioning at an autonomous stage (Keating 1979; Dasen 1994). The pupils brought previous knowledge of right and wrong and almost all demonstrated through closed and open ended questioning that they understood for instance that hitting, unkindness, derogatory words, teasing, stealing, and lying were wrong.

The circle-time sessions also involved problematising. Here students were asked to share what they had seen, heard, or had done. They were then asked to classify the acts and provide an explanation of why they were considered right or wrong. In addition to this children's aptitudes for empathetic problem-solving were initiated through moral reasoning. As they shared their experiences of wrong action and wrong speech, they were also asked to provide an idea of how they or the person they were sharing about could have improved the situation through using a positive character trait. Students began to also label actions as they occurred in the classroom, this was usually when something inappropriate happened for instance not sharing school supplies or throwing pencil shavings on the floor. Occasionally students would say right action when they saw someone helping another or picking up rubbish and throwing it in the bin. But they were initially keen to point out the negatives of others rather than the positives.

According to Bloom (Bloom et al 1956) cognitive domain knowledge is divided into progressive levels of complexity which rank from lower order thinking to higher order thinking. Referring to Anderson's revised version of Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl 2001) the first stage is remembering, the second stage is understanding and the third stage is applying. These three stages will have been accomplished if the girls were able to explain right and wrong action and speech and apply it to new situations. The students were able to demonstrate this during circle time when they would share things they had seen and heard. It is important to understand how the girls could reach higher stages in moral development. This could be explained through Krathwohl's affective domain stages which are concerned with "attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, and emotions" (Neumann & Forsyth 2008:248). Krathwohl's first stage of the affective domain is "receiving" (Allen & Friedman 2010). Receiving refers to deliberate and deep attentiveness where the girls are listening. This is followed by "responding" where the girls participate and apply what they have been

listening to. The third stage is "valuing" where the child combines application with internalization and is observable through the child's behaviour.

The knowledge that the children brought with them in terms of right and wrong can be further explained by social-learning theory which was espoused by Bandura (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1961). In this case it is thought that children can learn by observing others. Through example children can imbibe traits that are either positive or negative. Social-learning theory works on the understanding that learning principals combine with cognitive processes. Bandura believed that children's aggressive tendencies were a result of the people they interacted with or saw (Ashford, LeCroy & Lortie 2001:92).

> "According to social-learning theory, models are critical in the development of personality because of the principle of observational learning. Bandura assumed that learning can occur by observing others without direct involvement in the learning experience." (Ashford, LeCroy & Lortie 2001:92).

Further reinforcement of children's notions of right and wrong came through morning assemblies which sometimes focused on character traits. These were 5 to15 minutes sessions in which other children (and sometimes teachers) spoke about the positive effect of traits like kindness to others. Children did a performance to demonstrate types of behaviour by sometimes showing inappropriate behaviour and setting either a comparison or engaging in questioning. Even though the girls in the audience did not participate in the plays that showed right and wrong behaviour, social learning theory suggests that they are developing their personality through cognitive processes and observational learning. Social learning theory also discusses self-efficacy which is linked to confidence. Bystander apathy which will be discussed later ties into the idea of a child taking action because she is confident.

> "An important aspect of Bandura's approach to social-learning theory is the notion of self-efficacy (Bandura 1997). Self efficacy refers to a person's belief about his or her ability to perform certain behaviours, their confidence is high. This confidence means they are likely to persist in their endeavours" (Ashford, LeCroy & Lortie 2001:92).

Initially only a few children would share their experiences of right and wrong action, but over time other girls grew in their confidence and they too would share with the group. It appeared that their self-efficacy improved.

8.2 The Baseline Assessment

The baseline assessments were conducted in the form of a questionnaire. These were handed out before the action research commenced. In administering the questionnaire, I wrote the following categories on the white board: "never", "rarely", "sometimes", "mostly", and "always." I then explained what they referred to. Just in case some of the girls did not understand I drew a smiley face above "always" and a sad face above "never". I then asked one of the higher ability girls to translate what I had said.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Mostly   Always

There was an error on question 12. So I asked the girls to write their response regarding their bags. Student bags were placed outside the classroom. Girls would throw their bags haphazardly on the floor. They were instructed on how to line them up neatly. Their ability to follow an organizational and safety rule was questioned here.
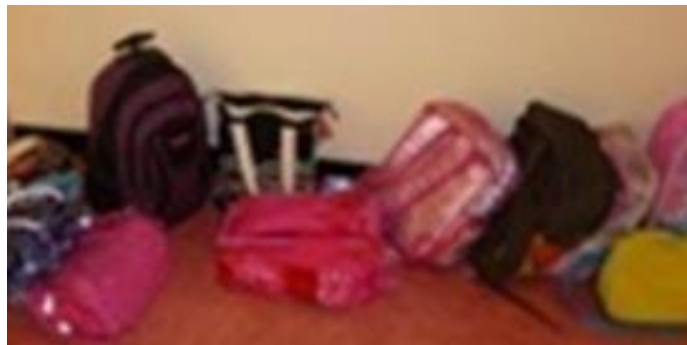
Figure 7.1 Bags thrown carelessly on the floor

For the second part of the questionnaire I had to reverse the smiley face and the sad face to show that now "never" represented appropriate behaviour. Using a Visual Analogue Scale is helpful with young children. Wong-Baker designed a pain rating scale for children using faces that started with a big smile and ended with a big sad face and tears. The smileyometer scale operates in a similar way (Read & Fine 2005).

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Mostly   Always

I made use of Vygotsky's More Knowledgeable Other when I sat two of the lower ability pupils with a higher ability pupil. In this way lower ability pupils received peer assistance with their Zone of Proximal Development while I was reading and explaining. The following table 7.1 provides a copy of the questionnaire and shows the range of questions included. At the time of administering the questionnaire, it became evident that the girls may get confused over the reversing of the question style for which I had used sad and smiley faces. At this point I went over the section several times until I was sure that the girls understood where they needed to colour or shade to show their choice. Questionnaires are considered a valid data gathering tool because they can accumulate a range of diverse information.

> "Questionnaires are the most frequently used data collection method in educational and evaluation research. Questionnaires help gather information on knowledge, attitudes, opinions, behaviors, facts, and other information" (Krishna 2007).

My design of the questionnaire was based on my observations in the classroom where I had concerns on a number of issues. These related to children's personal behaviour, behaviour towards others, classroom rules, school rules and health and safety compliance. I divided the questions into two sections. The first section dealt with questions relating to positive behaviours. The second section dealt with questions relating to negative behaviours. I used a five point scale where children had to select an option from "never, rarely, sometimes, mostly" and "always". I had conducted a preliminary questionnaire asking children if they saw birds, cats, camels, tigers, dogs, lizards and chickens in order to acquaint them with questionnaire taking and understanding the five point scale. Issues with the questionnaire resonated around its length. At the time of administering it, I felt that it was too long.

On the same sheet as the questionnaire I added space for a written response where children were asked to write the top three behaviour changes they would like to see in themselves. This addition was incorporated to see if children wanted to empower their own development and what they wanted to see an improvement in. I was aware that children might copy their friend's work. During spelling tests and other tests, I would use dividers that would conceal each child's work from the glance of another. In this case the dividers were intended to alleviate any potential pressure from other children. As the teacher, I encouraged the children to answer as honestly as possible. However, the nature of questionnaires is that they can only be as truthful as the participants allow them to be. Ong and Weiss argue:

"Although the validity of the self-report is often called into question, there is little alternative when the researcher seeks information about the events in a respondent's past, because only the respondent is likely to have ready access to such information" (2000:1691).

About My Behaviour

	Answer the questions below about yourself.					
1.	I follow Allah's way	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
2.	I tell the truth	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
3.	I listen to the teacher first time	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
4.	I forgive others who hurt me	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
5.	I say sorry when I hurt someone	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
6.	I am silent when the teacher talks with another adult	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
7.	I clean up	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
8.	I sit and read quietly on when the teacher says	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
9.	I help other children	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
10.	I write or draw kind things about others	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
11.	I am kind to everyone	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
12.	I keep the classroom clean and tidy (bags)	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
13.	I am shy	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
14.	I work well in groups, I listen to everyone	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
15.	I take turns	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
16.	I share classroom materials	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
17.	I share my materials from home	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
18.	I feel safe in class, fussah and the school bus	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
19.	I let others do their work and don's disturb them	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
20.	I walk in class and the school	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
21.	I listen to the bus monitors	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always
22.	I am kind to the cleaners	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	Always

	Answer the questions below about yourself.					
1	I get angry and hurt others with their hands/feet/objects	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
2	I do unkind things to others	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
3	I say unkind things to other children	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
4	I go where the teacher tells me not to go	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
5	I draw or write unkind things about others	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
6	I take things from others that do not belong to me	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
7	I push in line	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
8	I throw garbage on the floor	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always
9	I kick the drink machine.	Never	rarely	sometimes	Mostly	Always

Write the top three behaviour changes you would like to see in yourself.

1._____

2. _____

3. _____

Table 7.0: About my behaviour questionnaire

Regarding the parent questionnaires a few girls said they told their mothers to select options to show they were excellent in everything. Some said they pleaded with their parents to not reveal any behaviour concerns. However, it was evident that parents wanted improvement in their children and gave responses that seemed impartial. The names of the students have been changed for anonymity. Students were also reminded that they could withdraw from the sessions without the need for justification

8.3 Introducing the Conducts and Descriptions

Once the baseline assessments had been done, it was time to introduce the first part of the project. This involved familiarising the students with the terms that I had adapted from Humphrey (2005). Initially I used right action, right thought, right speech and no action. But the term "no action" seemed obsolete. In addition I did not know how I could explain it to the lower ability students. I did try. The children brainstormed right action and right speech. I left out right thought. They then worked in mixed ability groups and wrote examples of right action and right speech on a worksheet showing the outline of a person. Some girls decorated it with a face, hair and clothes.

Figure 7.2 Decorated outline of a person labelled with right and wrong actions

I had the girls work in groups of four. In the plenary session the girls shared what they wrote. The intention behind the group work was twofold. One, I was observing how the girls interacted with each other and documenting their ability to work together cooperatively, two, I was using a Vygotskian framework which "links cognitive change to collaborative interaction with a more competent partner" (Fawcett & Garton 2005:157). It was important that the girls were able to share their ideas on right action and speech since,

> "Research shows that children working collaboratively obtain a combined higher performance output than children working individually" (Fawcett & Garton 2005:159).

When the morning session was over, I made notes on what I needed to change or add. In the afternoon session with a different class I added "wrong action", "wrong speech" and "wrong thought". It seemed lopsided to discuss right conducts but not clarify wrong conducts. Wrong action and wrong speech were not terms that Humphrey had used and I was initially trying to follow Humphrey's approach. But I quickly realised that I needed to tailor it to my pupils' needs. One of the benefits of action research is that it is "fluid and flexible" (Lodico et al. 2006: 321) and therefore whenever situations presented themselves that were in need of modification, modifications were made.

Initially I had descriptions of right action and right speech under each conduct, however, I did not see the need for reading or explaining these since it would require the children to sit and listen for an extended amount of time. Instead I had the students act out behaviours individually or in pairs giving visible examples of the right and wrong conduct. According to Winston, "when dramas are clearly focused on moral development objectives, significant growth in moral reasoning becomes possible due to drama's ability to yoke the realms of the affective, the visual, and the kinaesthetic to the moral reasoning process" (1998:76-77). Also since the children were ESL learners, it was important to show visual examples as well as cater to their individual preferences:

> "Auditory students prefer to learn mainly through talking or hearing …Visual learners are helped most when they can see a visual equivalent or encounter the thing or process itself in a visual way ... Kinaesthetic learners have a need to touch and get physically involved in the work" (Fielding 1996: 88).

By allowing the children to give demonstrations of the actions or act out scenarios, all three approaches of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning were being applied. As a result I found this session more productive. I felt the students understood better because they could recognise the acted behaviour and as a result it encouraged others to volunteer to act out their own examples. This was followed by the brainstorming activity where I placed the girls in smaller groups of two, three and four.

During the plenary the girls shared their work. The plenary session is important because it allows children to consolidate what they have learned and further it provides the teacher with a diagnostic opportunity to assess individual and group learning (Dean 2009: 114). The group activity allowed girls to work together and collaborate on what they regarded to be right and

wrong actions. One worksheet concerned right action and the other wrong action. I went from table to table and asked the girls to share examples of each. I continually referred to the six conducts of right and wrong action, speech and thought so that they became familiar.
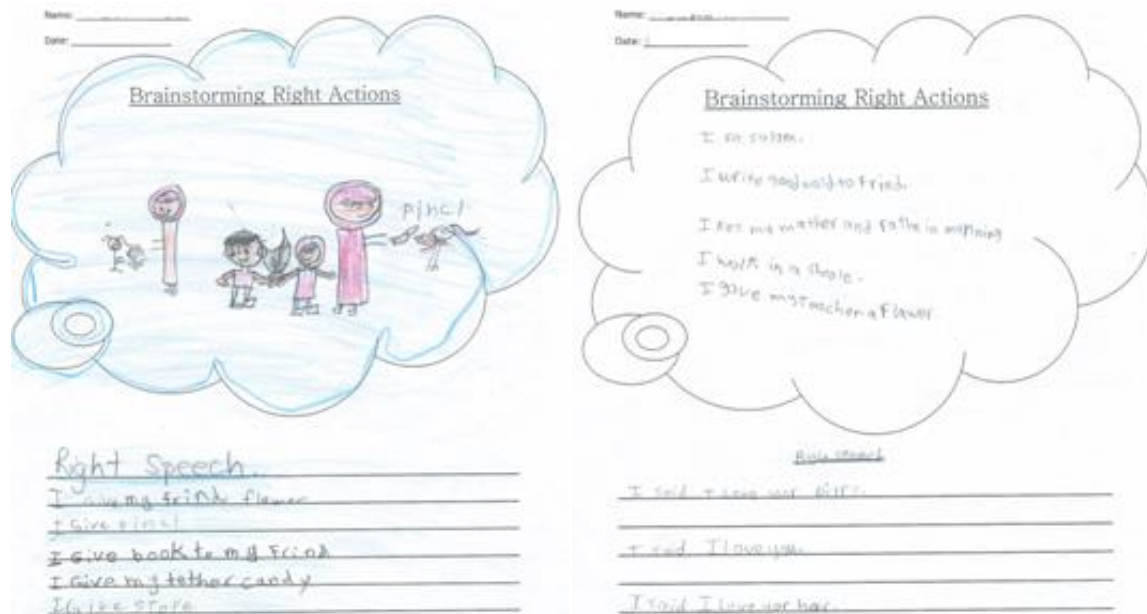
Figure 7.3 Brainstorming of right action

8.4 The Morning Discussion

The next day I began the first carpet discussion or circle-time session. The girls had brainstormed the conducts the day before and so now I wanted them to apply the brainstorming to their own actions or to what they had seen or heard. According to Bloom's taxonomy the first stage of cognitive learning is remembering (Anderson & Krathwohl 2001). According to Krathwohl's (Miller 2014) affective domain the first stage is attentive listening. According to Dave's (1970) psychomotor domain, the first stage is imitation when the child is able to copy what she sees. The fusion of listening, remembering and imitation would allow the girls to show their understanding and proceed to the next step.

I asked the girls to share with me any examples of right action or right speech they had done. No hands went up. I rephrased the question. Still no hands went up. I asked a student to ask the question in Arabic. And still no hands went up. I said, "So no one did any right action, any right speech or any right thought from the time they opened their eyes to now?" Still no hand went up. The girls stared at me and I stared at them. I was puzzled. I had expected a show of hands. There appeared to be no indication that the girls had mastered the first and

most basic stages of cognitive and affective learning. Then I wondered, did they all do wrong actions? I braced myself. "Ok so did anyone do any wrong action and wrong speech?" All hands were still down. I was relieved. This was a good example of misinterpretation and misunderstanding which is explained by symbolic interactionism.

> According to the symbolic interactionist perspective, people attach meanings to symbols, and then they act according to their subjective interpretation of these symbols. Verbal conversations, in which spoken words serve as the predominant symbols, make this subjective interpretation especially evident. The words have a certain meaning for the "sender," and, during effective communication, they hopefully have the same meaning for the "receiver." In other terms, words are not static "things"; they require intention and interpretation" (Zgourides & Zgourides 2000:10)

It was important for me to keep in mind that language barriers and cultural subjectivism opened up situations that could be misinterpreted. The girls in fact were not able to immediately understand what I wanted them to do. I wanted them to match the person conduct (right action and right speech) to something they had done. So then I asked, "Did anyone say alhamdulilah (praise God)?" Some hands went up. "Good," I said, "That's right speech." I then asked, "Did anyone smile?" More hands went up. "Great!" I said, "That's right action." Then I asked, "Did Mommy make breakfast?" I nodded as I said it. "Did anyone say thank you?" One child, answered, "She made, but I didn't eat, I don't like." Some of the girls laughed and the conversation for a moment drifted into Arabic on whether or not they ate their mom's cooking. Then I asked "Can you think of anything that you did that might be right action or right speech?" Then Abeela raised her hand and said, "I kiss my mom head," as she spoke she raised her hand to touch her forehead and she smiled. "Oh my goodness," I said, "That's a beautiful right action!" Then other girls simultaneously said that they had also kissed their mom or their dad before leaving home. I repeated the morning session in the afternoon. As expected the girls were not able to match their actions and speech to the conducts. However, after some similar prompts they shared some right actions and right speech.

Throughout the research I implemented Waghid's (2011) critical Islamic pedagogical concepts of tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim (instruction) and tadib (good action). It was important to give the children positive reinforcement when they correctly identified behaviours that were desirable. It was also important for them to see that I saw actions like dishonesty,

unkindness and irresponsibility as undesirable. Modelling appropriate behaviour is very important to set a classroom ethos. According to Battistich (2005), an essential aspect of "establishing a caring and supportive classroom environment is for the teacher to model caring and respectful behavior in his/her interactions with students." The teacher's behaviour will affect the way children view the world and construct their own attitudes and manners.

> "In the process of developing their own identities, students seek role models that help them to personally understand what it means to be a good person and effective citizen, and their teachers are influential in this process" (Battistich 2005:7).

My interpretation of Waghid's framework is that I see it as an integration of character education (e.g. kindness, truthful) and performance education (hard work, confidence). In this way nurturing, instruction and good action are infused and lead to making every moment of the day a character moment. This embracing attitude on all aspects of life is fashioned on the Islamic worldview which does not divide life into a religious domain and a non-religious domain. It treats them as one. When pupils plug in headphones to a listening station they say bismillah (in the name of God), when they pick up a pair of scissors, they say bismillah. They see this as right speech. The constancy of remembering God in their actions allows them to see that certain actions cannot be done beginning with God's name. For instance, they cannot say bismillah if they are about to push in line or snatch a book. Using expressions like bismillah are a learned behaviour from home, the school and the community. Bandura's social learning theory is based on the process of modelling. There are four conditions that enable this:

> "attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. The theory's central concept is reciprocal determinism, whereby the interacting factors in learning are both cognitive and environmental, acting on the learner's behaviour" (Nsamenang & Tchombé 2012: 182).

The next day I began asking if anyone had seen examples of right action, wrong action, right speech or wrong speech. Hands went up. Aziza said, "I said to my friend, you are beautiful." I asked the class if they could identify what that was an example of. They chimed, "right speech." Habibah said, "I am give candy to my friend." The children chorused, "Right

action." But I knew if the school nurse has been in the room, she would have said, "Wrong action!"

Right Action	Right Speech	Right Thought
Wrong Action	Wrong Speech	Wrong Thought

Esha put up her hand and said, "The bus monitor told me sit. I said no!" To which I responded, "O dear, what is that an example of?" The girls said, "Wrong speech." And then Esha followed up saying, "Wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong action!" We briefly discussed the Kiramun Katibeen, the Respected Recorders. According to Islamic belief, two angels are assigned to each human being (apart from the guardian angels) whose job is to record the individual's good and bad deeds.

> "Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and noted them), one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it)" (Qur'an 16:18).

The book is closed when the individual dies. On Yawm-ul-Akhirah, the Day of Judgment, the book is presented to the human after s/he is awakened from death. The girls mentioned they had talked about the recording angels in their Islamic studies lesson. They said right action and right speech is recorded as a good deed and wrong action and wrong speech is recorded as a bad deed.

Critical Islamic pedagogy is concerned with tadib (good action). Through understanding that the day to day actions can be grouped into right and wrong encouraged the girls to identify other examples throughout their day. One of my concerns about the attitudes of my pupils was that they did not seem to give visibility or appreciation to maids and cleaners. This appeared to be a behaviour that some children carried over into school from home. It was learned behaviour but it was not Islamic behaviour which encourages humility and equality and the consideration that all humanity is one family.

> "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you" (Qur'an 49:13).

Part of Critical Islamic Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy is to encourage pupils to think how the world can be improved and how oppression can be removed. By drawing on the girls' experiences and observations they reflected on the idea of kindness and related this to the cleaners, office attendants, lunch staff and bus drivers. They were beginning to think about and challenge behaviours that were oppressive. I asked the girls if anyone had said, "Thank you for driving me." to the bus driver or "Thank you for cleaning." to the cleaners. The girls said they did not. I said, "Well, that's an easy right speech, maybe next time you can say that. Then I asked the girls "Take a look at your neighbour, smile and shake their hands." While they did that I asked, "What are you doing?" "Right action!" they said and the girls nearest to me extended their hands and smiled and shook hands with me. I then asked the girls to give me some examples of wrong actions and wrong speech.

Throughout the previous week, I had been making notes on what kind of story I could write that would help with reinforcing the conducts. By drawing the girls' attention to acts of right and wrong around them, the girls were beginning to develop a sensitivity to wrong actions and wrong speech. Waghid's concept of tarbiyyah (nurturing) and tadib (good action) were empowering the girls to begin to speak up when they saw something wrong. This in turn would allow them to transform themselves from being apathetic bystanders to active compassionate participants. Nurturing children to be active participants "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (Qur'an 3:104) leads to positive peer influence. For instance:

> "Positive Peer Culture (PPC) is a strength-oriented approach ... to prevent or reverse negative peer influence by building a climate of peer concern and respect" (Steinebach, Steinebach, & Brendtro 2013:18).

8.5 Class Rules & Following Allah's Way
The class rules were introduced on the first day of school. Number two was extended to include the words "first time" because I found that students listened to me but some of them would wait until I had repeated the directions two or more times. In the event of an emergency I needed to know that the students could follow my directions quickly and correctly. I therefore felt that the words needed to be added.

> **Classroom Rules**
> 1.Follow Allah's way.
> 2.Listen to the teacher first time.
> 3.Keep hands, feet, body and objects to yourself.
> 4.Raise your hand to speak or to leave your seat.

5.Bring all materials to the classroom.
6.Be kind.
7. Whisper

Number five was also modified. Students would bring their supplies but their pencil case or ruler would be outside in their bags. Number seven was also added later. It was necessary that students engaged in discussion as much as possible to allow for collaborative work and drama. Using Vygotsky's social learning theory it is believed that:

> "learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement" (Taruk 2008:249).

However, sometimes the girls would talk loudly, but if students used a low tone or inside voice, even if every child was talking simultaneously, the atmosphere was still learner-friendly. The first rule, "Follow Allah's way" was an umbrella rule. It was applicable to everything so if an incident occurred that did not fit into any of the other rules, this rule would suffice.

8.6 Routine, Rules & Adults

One of the differences between the Middle Eastern school compared to an Islamic school in the USA was the number of teachers that children had to engage with on a weekly basis. Most children in Islamic schools in the USA may have up to three teachers (class teacher, Arabic/Qur'an teacher and PE teacher). In England from my experience of primary Islamic schools, there were usually two teachers. A specialist teacher served in the delivery of Arabic and Islamic studies alongside a classroom teacher. But generally in mainstream primary schools there is usually only one teacher. Regarding children who come from homes where there is a lack of routine and structure, it is believed that:

> "School can play an important role in the lives of these children simply because it is predictably in one place, starts at the same time every day, and has the same person as teacher every day" (Howes & Richie 2002: 92).

The fact that the children had seven different teachers during a day appeared to have implications for their behaviour. Moreover, there was an added issue that the classroom rules for each teacher were different. Children from Year one who were six years old had the same

number of teachers to those who were in Year five. There were in fact separate teachers for the delivery of ICT, PE, Art, Music and Social Studies, another teacher for Arabic and Islamic Studies and yet another for English. Added to this, the curriculum was delivered for half a day in Arabic and half a day in English. It is very likely that the children experienced difficulty in trying to remember the rules and routines for seven different teachers.

> "Routines help children to anticipate what they need to do throughout the course of the day. Routines increase predictability and classroom structure that may decrease the likelihood that children will engage in problematic behaviours" (Bray & Kehle 2011 :431).

Some of the behavioural problems may have resulted from the large number of teachers that pupils had to navigate on a daily basis in addition to the movement of going to different classrooms. ICT, PE, Art, Music and Arabic were in different locations within the school. Another problem was that the administration wanted English teachers to make use of the science room, ICT and the library during the week. This involved more movement and whilst it may not have been too problematic, it was an issue for younger children and took time from the lesson. The school did not provide any assistance to English teachers who had children with ADHD or other learning difficulties. In one class almost half of the children appeared to need an individual education plan to assist with learning difficulties. According to Ryan and McDougall (2009) rules, routines, structures are all very important since "the first steps in any process of intervention is to create an orderly, well structured environment" (145).

8.7 The Pupil-Teacher

During term time I had to go on a four day planned conference. Knowing that there was a strong possibility that my pupils would be left alone during my absence with no adult supervision, I began to work on interventions where they could be empowered to run their own classroom and engage in self-directed learning. When I returned I was informed by the vice-principal that she had visited the class and found the children on task and working diligently without a teacher. The administration was very impressed and recognised the class during assembly.

The children were not doing group work but had individual work and activity packets to complete. However, what probably helped the children successfully run their own classroom was the provision of a pupil-teacher. Over the weeks the pupil-teachers had been trained to

take attendance, review the rules and assist others who needed help. The pupil-teachers also had the respect of their peers. There was also my promise to the children that if they behaved well, I would reward them with a party. What was evident from this was that all the members of the class collaborated in keeping a harmonious environment. Positive peer pressure could be cultivated.

The behaviour management techniques used in class varied from motivational to drilling. I used drilling for various safety related procedures such as fire alarms. In these cases students were required to follow a specific conduct such as no running or talking. The morning class routine consisted in part of reading the classroom rules to remind themselves to contribute to a caring classroom community. This was necessary because the children had so many different teachers. I implemented a daily student-as-teacher rotation. This was to promote the idea of shura (mutual consultation). There are three instances of shura being mentioned in the Qur'an (3:159; 2:233, 42:38). Shura is making decision in consultation and agreement with others so that autocracy cannot exist. This is similar to Habermas's theory of communicative action where "Actors do not primarily aim at their own success but want to harmonize their action plans with the other participants" (Habermas 1984:285) in order to achieve positive outcomes. Moreover, educators suggest that it is important for children to have ownership over the rules so that they are more likely to follow and uphold them (Cooper & Olsen 2001:51).

The pupil-teacher as the leader of the class has to keep a harmonious environment, this she will recognise has to be done with the cooperation of everyone around her. A classroom based on shura tendencies encourages students to be involved as decision makers and infuses student-centred management and learning. This is in line with Waghid's idea of critical Islamic pedagogy where children learn that exclusion is wrong and "offer possibilities to change such" practices (2010: 27). By encouraging children to participate in imparting tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim (instruction) and tadib (good action) (Waghid 2011:28) allows them to internalize ideals that lead to emancipatory attitudes.

If students breached classroom rules they were given a verbal reminder followed by writing their name on a behaviour log and eventually having to visit the advisor. The students also knew they would miss their turn as student-teacher. Very few were willing to forgo the opportunity to sit in the teacher's chair, take attendance, mark work, give motivational

stickers and reminders. It helped in sustaining a relatively harmonious classroom atmosphere, but not always.

8.8 The Themes & The Stories

In interpreting the data for this study, I initially described children each in turn focusing on how as individuals they had developed in their personal, social and spiritual perspectives. To evidence this I used their beginning and ending questionnaires and other data such as observations, interview and documents as evidence. I included the stories that were used in the action element of the four phases of actions research (i.e. plan, action, observe, reflect) in the analysis. However, after consultation, it was advised that the data could be better presented by analysing the themes rather than individual children. The data analysis and interpretation that was previously completed has now been placed in the Appendix and will be useful as a supplementary reading to this chapter. The following data analysis and interpretation will now be discussed by theme.

Selecting themes was a process that entailed "identifying reoccurring ideas or patterns in the data." It was possible to identify the themes either inductively or deductively. An inductive approach involved a process "where patterns and themes ... emerge from what the research participants say and do." The deductive approach involved "returning to the literature that informs ... [the] study and applying pre-existing frameworks and typologies" (Goodnough 2011:41). I did both. I drew themes from the data and I also drew ideas from Islamic Critical Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy. The themes evolved from the behaviour of the children and the desirable behaviour sought from the children. Critical Islamic Theory and critical Islamic pedagogy provided the Islamic attitudes found in Qur'an and hadith that promoted character and virtue. Since the study sought to investigate whether Islamic children's literature could empower children's personal, social and spiritual development, the themes came from the observations that related to these areas.

Action research was implemented to empower pupils to develop their behaviour through children's literature. The methodology implements a four step cyclical process of plan, action, observe and reflect. The recommendation is that "what one learned in one cycle should be applied judiciously in further cycles" to allow for "new directions" and growth (Redmond 2004: 65). My first cycle of planning was a lengthy one because I drew on many observations and experiences in the time that I had before beginning the cycle. The themes

together with a critical Islamic pedagogical framework were incorporated into stories that would become part of each action cycle.

8.9 Theme One – Hurting Others

The first theme I engaged with was comprised of anti-social behaviours such as pushing, pinching, hair pulling, slapping, foot stomping, lying, face making and scribbling on another's work. The episodes of physical violence between the children at this school were far more evident and frequent compared to the Islamic schools in North America and England where I had worked. However, that is not to say that all schools in the Middle East region were the same. Indeed a school fifteen minutes away from this school had girls who had virtually no incidences of physical abuse. That said there were similarities to the frequency of violence at this school compared to a non-Muslim inner city state school in England where I had worked in the 1990s. That particular British school had been placed in special measures. From the theme of hurting others the story of *Laleelia* was developed. The oppressive behaviour of students appeared to show that they were indifferent to the feelings of the children that they oppressed.

Kohlberg's moral development theory suggests that children who are at stage zero (Kohlberg & Gilligan 1971: 1070) are unable to empathise with the feeling of others. "Young children are unable to put themselves in someone else's shoes, socially or morally, until they are well into elementary school" (Lamme et al 1992: vii). This may also be the case for children who are developmentally challenged and function at a much lower level than their peers. At stage zero a child's judgements are entirely egocentric. They are void of how their victim may feel.

> "The child makes judgments of good on the basis of what he likes and wants or what helps him, and bad on the basis of what he does not like or what hurts him. He has no concept of rules or of obligations to obey or conform independent of his wish" (Kalahar 2005: 25).

A number of the children who were in one section of my teaching responsibility were designated special needs. Although they were aged between 8 and 10 they were exhibiting behaviours and producing work that is generally seen in reception aged children and younger. For instance two children drew people as circles with legs. One of the students, Iman, snatched crayons belonging to another child and when the child protested and tried to get them back, Iman pushed her. Kohlberg's moral theory would suggest that children such as Iman are at stage zero where actions are based on egocentric judgments. Iman could not

speak in English so I had a child translate what I wanted to say. I then watched as the translating child spoke to Iman. I was looking for gestures from Iman that showed gilt and remorse. I listened for her tone of speech to see if it was apologetic. I detected none of these behaviours in Iman. Instead her facial expressions looked indignant and arrogant. The following is a translated transcript of what was said.

> Translator: The teacher said you have to give the crayons back.
> Iman: No. I want them.
> Translator: The teacher said you have to give the crayons back because they don't belong to you.
> Iman: I need the crayons.
> Translator: The teacher says that you are making Fatima cry because you will not give Fatima her crayons.
> Iman: So what if she is crying?

Iman returned the crayons because I instructed her to, however, as she did, she in turn began to cry. Clearly through Iman's failure to place herself in Fatima's position she was indicating that she had not achieved the stage in moral development which embraces empathy. In Piaget's stages of cognitive development she would be classified as being in the preoperational stage. Brain and Mukherji argue:

> "Egocentrism means having oneself as the centre and not being able to take anyone else's point of view ... Piaget claimed that a child in the preoperational stage is egocentric" (Brain & Mukherji 2005: 86

Further in Krathwohl's affective domain it did not appear that she had mastered the first stage of "receiving" which is the "willingness to pay attention." More insight into Iman's developmental stage was evidenced by her drawings. These reflected an early pre-schematic stage where circles and lines are used to represent people. The stage is generally representative in children from age 4 (Kelly 2004: 115; Lowenfield & Brittain 1982). Iman had not yet progressed to adding a trunk and other detail which is seen in children's drawing by age 7 (Kelly 2004: 115; Lowenfield & Brittain 1982).

Further information on Iman was provided by an administrator who said that Iman was very spoiled. I asked why she said that. The administrator related an incident in which Iman's mother came into school. She learned that Iman was the youngest child of a very elderly mother. The mother was very protective about Iman and would accompany the family's chauffeur with the child. This was regarded as very unusual. Moreover, the administrator complained that the mother would give the child whatever she asked for. The mother's

actions appeared to impede Iman's ability to improve her social skills. When there is a deficit of opportunity in which parents can provide situations that encourage children to engage in moral reasoning then the child's moral development is impeded. Ashford et al. (2001) explain how parents can activate higher levels of moral choice through engaging their children with discussion and reason on incidents that happened at school (2001: 436).

As a way of engaging the moral reasoning of students like Iman I wrote the story of *Laleelia*. According to Lickona, "Children's literature that depicts cruelty and the suffering it causes is a valuable tool for teaching empathy" (2004:184). Using stories to empower children's personal development has also been used by international organisations to teach kindness to children as outlined by Faver:

> "Currently humane literacy programs use age-appropriate books with humane themes to strengthen reading skills, foster empathy, and teach humane values such as respect, kindness, compassion, and responsibility. For example, the Humane Education Ambassador Reader Program [HEAR], sponsored by United Animal Nations, trains volunteers to read aloud and discuss selected books on humane themes with children in classrooms, after school programs, and other settings" (Faver 2010: 367).

Laleelia was the first story that I shared with the pupils. It was evident that the students were shocked with Laleelia's behaviour through their expressions. The students appeared to understand that certain behaviours were reprehensible from their expressions of disbelief, their shock exclamations and their responses. At lunch-time some of the students would stomp on feet, slap faces, pull hair and pinch. The girls needed to understand that these behaviours were oppressive. When these behaviours were linked to a person who was mean spirited it could allow a child to infer that they do not want to be associated with such a person which is reflected in stage 3 on Kohlberg's moral theory (1976:34). The first step of Islamic Critical Theory identifies a problem, the explanatory stage, in this case it was the oppression that occurred during lunch-time. The next step is identifying a solution, the practical stage. This is where actors are identified to make changes i.e. the advisors, the teacher and the students. The normative stage involves achievable goals for transformation. This would mean that bullies would stop oppressing.

Kohlberg's conventional level shows that children who reach stage three want to meet the expectations of others. They are "aware of shared feelings, agreements, and expectations

which take primacy over individual interests" (Kohlberg in Lickona 1976:35). Kohlberg sees children at this stage being able to put themselves in another's shoes (Kohlberg in Lickona 1976:35). I wanted to see if the pupils could understand that the type of bullying the story character Laleelia did, left scars on children's hearts and therefore those who saw it needed to discourage it and those who did it, needed to eliminate it. I had been making notes on incidents where one child had hurt another physically or emotionally. I tried to capture the hurt that the victim experienced in the story. The following is the story of *Laleelia* based on the wrong action and wrong speech I saw and heard. However, I made up the part about chewing gum and shoe laces.

<div align="center">

Laleelia

</div>

This is a story about a girl called Laleelia. Laleelia didn't do things that made Allah happy. It was Sunday morning. Laleelia opened up Sara's bag and took her lunch money.

"Subhan Allah! [Glory to God]Laleelia!" cried Sara, "You took my lunch money!

"How dare you! said Laleelia. "I did no such thing! Just for that I'm going to stomp on your foot!" And she did.

Sara's foot hurt very much. It made her cry very hard. At lunch Sara didn't have anything to eat. It made her very sad.

It was Monday morning. Bubble gum wasn't allowed in school. But Laleelia was chewing four pieces of gum. She chewed and chewed and chewed and when she was finished she waited for Mariam to get off her chair. When Mariam got up to sharpen her pencil, Laleelia stuck the gum on Mariam's chair. The next time Mariam got up, pink bubble gum was stuck to her dress and her chair and her hand.

"Subhan Allah! Laleelia!" cried Mariam, "You put bubble gum on my chair! "

"How dare you! said Laleelia. "I did no such thing! Just for that I'm going to slap your face!" And she did.

Mariam's face hurt very much. It made her cry very hard. The bubble gum had ruined Mariam's dress. It made her very sad.

It was Tuesday morning. The teacher told everyone to draw a picture of their family. Raysa drew the best pictures. Everyone loved Raysa's pictures, everyone except Laleelia. Laleelia waited until Raysa went to the restroom and then she took out a black marker and scribbled all over Raysa's beautiful picture.

"Subhan Allah! Laleelia!" cried Raysa, "You scribbled all over my picture!"

"How dare you! said Laleelia. "I did no such thing! Just for that I'm going to pull your hair!" And she did.

Raysa's head hurt very much. It made her cry very hard. Her picture was ruined. It made her very sad.

It was Wednesday morning. Alif's mommy bought her a new pair of shoes with gold coloured laces. Everyone said, "Alif, I love your shoes!" Everyone except Laleelia. Laleelia pretended to drop her pencil and then she crawled under the table and tied Alif's laces in big, forever knots. When Alif got up and tried to walk she fell straight down!

"Subhan Allah! Laleelia!" cried Alif, "You tied my shoelaces!"

"How dare you! said Laleelia. "I did no such thing! Just for that I'm going to pinch you!" And she did.

Alif's arm hurt very much. It made her cry very hard. Her gold coloured shoelaces couldn't be untied and she had to cut them. It made her very sad.

It was Thursday morning. Sara, Raysa, Mariam and Alif were walking to school. On the way they saw a girl sitting on the ground, crying very hard. When the girls got closer, they were shocked to find it was Laleelia!

"La hawla wa laquwa ta ila bilah!(There is no power greater than God)," said the girls, "Why are you crying, Laleelia?" asked Sara, Raysa, Mariam and Alif.

"A very, scary, big, horrible, girl took my lunch money from me, she put bubble gum on my uniform, she ripped my picture and broke my shoe buckle. When I told her to stop she stomped on my foot, slapped my face, pulled my hair, and pinched me.

Laleelia's foot, face, head and arm hurt very much. It made her cry very hard. When she looked at her empty purse, her ruined uniform, her torn book, and broken shoe, it made her very, very sad.

"Astag firullah![I seek forgiveness in God] O dear!" said the girls. "We know just how you feel!"

Laleelia looked at Sara, Raysa, Mariam and Heen. She looked very sad.

"Come on, Laleelia," said the girls. "We will help you get to school and take you to the nurse."

At school the girls shared their lunch with Laleelia, they helped get the bubble gum off her uniform, they helped her draw a new picture, and they tried to fix her shoe.

184

"Thank you for helping me," said Laleelia, "I'm sorry I did all those terrible things to you. It was wrong of me to be so horrible. I'm so sorry. I hope you can forgive me."

The girls did forgive Laleelia and from that time on, Laleelia was known as Lovely Laleelia because she would share her lunch, help children draw and paint, clean and tidy up, and give thank you gifts to her friends

I ended the story on a forgiveness note so that the children could infer that when they did something wrong they could try and make amends. Islam strongly advocates forgiveness. This is also an item listed by the Department for Education (England) under moral development which states that children should be "able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others" (2011). The story was followed by an activity where the girls had to retell the story. The following day, I rewrote the story into a play so that the girls could get into the characters of the story and understand the pain of the victims through acting.

According to specialists educational drama is a method through which children can develop an "ability to read others and see things from their point of view" (Courtney 1990: 4). Using drama, the girls may have been able to see how it felt being the victim. This is also a strategy that is encouraged by Vygotsky who "saw the experience of talking with adults about familiar everyday experiences as crucial, not only for building up knowledge of language but also for an awareness of particular ways of thinking and interpreting their own experiences. The very naming of particular attributes, he thought, helped concepts to form" (Pound 2006: 38). Furthermore, Winston's *Drama, Narrative and Moral Education* (1998) promotes the idea of drama to instil virtues. He states:

> "I have indicated that , in its emphasis on group cooperation, on listening, sharing and respecting work of others, as well as through the opportunities drama provides for children to fictionally practice virtues, that drama can make an important contribution to the social and moral training of young children" (176).

Using drama was an effective way of projecting the story to the children who were developmentally challenged and struggled with reading, speaking and listening. Using stories that allowed children to discuss not hurting others also drew on Gilligan's Stages of the Ethics of Care (Gilligan 1982). Gillian's preconventional stage, or the first stage of her moral development theory, is based on the notion of individual survival which is underscored by the

pervasive trait of selfishness. Children in the class who were not able to empathise with the pain of others were in the preconventional stage still exhibiting egocentrism. This stage was evident from behaviours where children forcefully took things from each other because they wanted them for themselves. Pushing each other furiously in line again showed they could only see their own need of wanting to be first. When resources were carefully laid on the table to allow efficient use of time, the lesson would be halted because some pupils would snatch all of the items for themselves. So much time would therefore be lost from working on the learning objectives because many of the children were self-centred and unable to think of others. The transition to the second stage which is the conventional stage requires the individual to move from selfishness and to have responsibility towards others. As Chuwa argues:

> "The importance of the need to survive renders them basically selfish. However, as they develop, children learn to pay attention to what happens to others and eventually learn to empathize with them. Empathy challenges them to start equating their needs and their very selves with others. They gradually start moving away from their selfishness as they develop greater concern for others. This concern for others at stage two ... is based on recognition of basic human equality" (2014: 113)

The pupils could see throughout the story that Laleelia was consistently destructive and mean-spirited with the other characters. I had noticed that when there were verbal fights between the children they would exchange very harsh looks and say unkind things to each other. I could not understand everything but I would catch some words. Consistently I would hear the word 'God' invoked as they would shout at each other. Once I had calmed them down, I would ask someone to translate what they had said to each other. It appeared that the girls would invoke God's anger or wrath on the other. This was interesting. Rather than invoke God to forgive, they wanted to invoke God to punish. For the girls forgiveness did not appear to be an immediate solution. It seemed that they wanted the other to suffer for the wrong they had done. This could be explained through the cultural backgrounds of the children who may have come from homes where children were not shown how to forgive.

According to Islam forgiveness is better than retaliation. As the Qur'an states, "let them forgive and overlook, do you not wish that God should forgive you? For God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (24:22). However, forgiveness did not appear to be something the girls (i.e. those who would engage in hitting) wanted to do readily. Bearing that in mind when I wrote the story of *Laleelia*, I had the character of Laleelia become the victim of the same

oppression that she had inflicted on others. In this way I was hoping that the pupils who would hurt others could identify with Laleelia's situation. What would happen if someone hurt them? How would they feel? Would the cry and feel repentant like Laleelia? Would they see the error of their ways?

Bandura's social learning theory showed that children not only learned through being rewarded and punished themselves but also by watching others being rewarded and punished (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1961: 582). Learning by observation involves four processes. The first is attention, which is similar to Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl 2001) of remembering and Krathwohl's (Miller 2014) affective domain stage of receiving. During the attention phase the child must be focused on what is happening by making "critical features of the lesson ... clear ... highlighting important points" (Hoy 2001: 342). As I read the story of *Laleelia* I would stop at certain points to reinforce an idea or ask a question. For instance when I read, "Laleelia opened up Sara's bag and took her lunch money." I changed the tone of my voice and altered my facial expression to show something very wrong had happened. Similarly when I spoke as Laleelia my voice became loud and contemptuous.

The second process is referred to as retention. For the students to be able recognise the actions they need to remember it so they can recall it at a later stage. The third stage is referred to as production, this is when the child physically demonstrates the action. These stages are similar to Dave's psychomotor domain (Huitt 2003) and overlap with Krathwohl's affective domain. Motivation is the final process where the child performs the act when they feel it is appropriate. The act can either be reinforced by praise or motivation or it can be stopped by the lack of incentive or the issue of a consequence (Hoy 2001: 342).

Where possible I tried to make the story reading interactive by asking the children to stand and make body postures to demonstrate how it felt to be hurt or make expressions showing shock or pain or sadness. By encouraging the children to interact with the story I was hoping that the processes of attention and retention could be reinforced. Moreover, the style of the words in the story was deliberately repetitive because "Simple, short stories with repetitive language work best for young EFL learners" (Brown 2004).

According to Parker (2005: 2) "Bibliotherapy, which is the process of reading books with a therapeutic intent, has been applied extensively for students with significant learning and behavior problems." Bibliotherapy works on the assumption that the reader will "identify with the main character in the story." The story should have characters that are of a similar age and the events and behaviours of the characters in the story should be such that the reader is able to relate to them and identify herself in the situation. The behaviours in *Laleelia* were deliberately selected to allow the students to be familiar with the feelings and response of the victims as well as the attitude and actions of the aggressive main character. It is through "involvement" that the reader is able to relate to the characters and "When readers become emotionally involved, literature can have the effect of changing their perceptions of behaviour" (Parker 2005:2). "Insight" is the final stage in the three step process. Here "the

> "realization occurs when readers become aware that the problem they are experiencing, like that of the characters in the story, need not remain static. Insight allows readers the opportunity to analyze the main character and situation and subsequently develop opinions regarding behaviors or actions adopted by the main character in his or her attempts to deal with the problem. Readers also develop problem-solving skills by exploring effective alternative behaviors to replace old inappropriate behaviours" ((Parker 2005:2).

Waghid's (2010) critical Islamic pedagogy implements tadib (good action). In the story, the good action is represented through the aggressor stopping her aggression and reforming her inappropriate ways to desirable ways and the victims forgiving her and reaching out to her. I have defined Islamic Critical Theory as recognising, critiquing and providing prescriptive action on any matter that oppresses the individual or the society through any manner. At the beginning of the story, there is oppression, but through Laleelia's own volition she's changes her ways and the victims do not begrudge her because of her former wrongs but forgive her and accept her. By the end of the story transformation has been achieved. But how much of this transformation transferred to the pupils?

8.10 The Theme of Exclusion

A recurrent theme was exclusion. The practice of exclusion was generally instigated by girls who had a high social standing and were popular. Girls in the classroom knew which families had a popular reputation in the community. This knowledge may have resulted from discussions between elders and others at home. According to Vygotsky's (1978)

sociocultural theory parents transmit information to children which includes values and attitudes.

> "The transmission of particular values, beliefs, and adaptive behaviors for youth often occurs in collaborative dialogue with a model or influential adult. Collaborative dialogue implies active and equal engagement in the relationship. Within these interactions, parents have the ability to promote different types of social rules and behaviors related to morality and also social conventions" (Jeneka 2012: 10).

Ways in which exclusion was enacted in school included not allowing others to play, sending unkind drawings or written messages, not inviting the targeted individual to a party, whispering unkind things about the individual or spreading rumours and gossiping. Connected to this was the exclusion based on prejudice and discrimination. Research has been conducted on ways that children can be guided to stop discrimination and prejudice. Bigler and Lieben argue:

> "developmental intergroup theory will ultimately prove valuable not only for understanding the development of social stereotypes and prejudices in children, but also for guiding social interventions that can ultimately prevent the development of stereotypes and prejudices in individuals and society" (2006: 40).

Although there were many children at the school who were from Indian and Pakistani extraction, none spoke Urdu or Hindi. One pupil's parent identified herself as Indian but asked me to conceal it, "Don't speak to Naima in Urdu. If the girls find out they will pick on her." When I first arrived at the school, I was not aware that there was a negative attitude towards those who spoke Hindi or Urdu. I began a conversation with one of my pupils who I could tell was Indian. The child smiled at me but did not engage in any conversation. I was puzzled. One day whilst visiting a ladies' salon in the city centre I came across a Nepalese attendant. I spoke Hindi with her and she reciprocated but in whispers she said, "Madam does not allow us to speak Hindi. Only Arabic and English." I asked her why. Her response was that Madam did not like it spoken in front of the customers. Although I could not see the rational purpose behind it, nonetheless it allowed me to understand why the school's covert culture was so negative towards Hindi and Urdu. Also my own experience growing up in England helped me to understand why some children felt they had to hide their national and ethnic identity. Jungbluth and Meierkord point out that:

Hiding one's ethnic or national identity could be advantageous and even a life-saving measure ... in recent history, the hiding of ethnic identity saved the lives of many Jews during the Nazi Regime ... in the context of immigration, Japanese Americans and German Canadians, among other groups, hid their original identities and assimilated to the culture of the majority group in response to ethnic stereotyping against their groups" (2007: 12).

When I was a child I pretended not to be able to speak Urdu because some children would tease me and make me feel uncomfortable. I learned to hide the fact that I spoke Urdu just as the Indo-Pak children did at the Middle Eastern school. Although Islam beautifies national and cultural differences as a gift from God, some of the indigenous people did not imbibe this. But it should be pointed out that at another school nearby, Indian children freely spoke Hindi, therefore, discrimination seemed to be in certain schools and certain places.

The first step in changing the oppressive attitude was to ask the girls who had created the differences in people. They acknowledged it was God. The children then described different races and listed different countries. They spoke about the countries that they visited for holidays. These ranged from Thailand, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Germany, England, France, USA, Egypt and Malaysia. They also mentioned that Bilal ibn Rabah, a companion of Muhammad ﷺ was the first muadhdhin (call giver for worship) and acknowledged his skin colour was dark. The children also talked about the different clothes people wear and the different foods. They shared their favourites. The discussion spoke positively about national and cultural differences.

An incident occurred in which one girl was constantly being excluded by one group. Other children through peer pressure were being encouraged to also exclude her. This led to the writing of *Sabah's Happy Heart* which is a story about exclusion (see Appendix). After reading the story and discussion time, it was made into a play. A large red paper heart was used to represent Sabah's happy heart. The girls were put in groups of one, two and three and so on and asked to chant "No, no, no, go away!" and then turn their backs when Sabah asked to play with them. Each group did the same. Every time Sabah was turned away she tore away a part of the heart until there was no heart left. It was all gone.

In order to allow the children to progress through the stages of cognitive development and moral development it was necessary to use techniques that make use of students' learning

styles. Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic applications were evident in the delivery of the story to enhance children's progression as well as allow them to empathise with the victim. The story was used to show how exclusion is damaging, this was further emphasized by the tearing of the paper heart. After the story was completed the girls were asked to write sorry notes on heart shapes to anyone who they had upset and to ask for forgiveness.

The idea of exclusion is problematic on a number of levels. Exclusion can target those who are a minority in terms of nationality and religion, it can also target the poor and needy and those with disabilities. The poor, needy, traveller, orphan and captive are all individuals that the Qur'an instructs should receive help (Qur'an 2:83; 9:60). Exclusion can lead to lifelong suffering as Brynner argues:

> "Children, as members of families, suffer from the social exclusion of their parents. The restriction this places on their development provides the basis of their own exclusion later on in life. This means that the outcomes of their early experiences at home and in the school and through which their positions in adult society are ultimately determined need to be a focus as well" (2001: 287).

8.11 The Theme of Bullying

Although the study was conducted with Year 4 children, the administration asked if two year 5 girls could also participate. The Year 5 girls, however, only attended for one lesson a day in which they listened to the story and completed tasks associated with the story. The girls were included in the sessions because they were bullying a classmate. They had instigated harsh and unrelenting acts of aggression against their victim, Lisha. Lisha was a lower ability student. She complained about the bullies, "They not nice," she said. They would make paper balls and then throw them at her. "They tell me because you are the garbage," said Lisha.

On the day that Lisha told me that she was being bullied I wrote another story based partially on what Lisha experienced and also included elements from the childhood of Rukhsana Khan and Linda Delgado who as children also experienced severe bullying. They found relief by escaping in books. The story I wrote was called *Miss Maysa and Anaya* (see Appendix A). There were three elements that were included in the narrative in the hope that it would appeal to the bullies' sense of care and sense of accountability. Within the story I incorporated the idea that the bullies loved God and God loved those who did good. Another was that their parents were going to be contacted and thirdly there were going to be consequences from the

school. I was hoping that a combination of these three elements might empower the bullies to reach higher levels of morality and care. One day when Lisha arrived early she said that the girls no longer bullied her. She was smiling. "They don't bully you anymore?" I asked. "They leave you alone?"

"No," she said, "they play with me, they are friend for me."
"That's really nice to hear, Lisha," I said.

The themes of hurting others, exclusion and bullying are interrelated. They are all manifestations of psychological and physical oppression. Bullock notes:

> "Bullying refers to repeated, unprovoked, harmful actions by one child or children against another. The acts may be physical or psychological. Physical or direct, bullying includes hitting, kicking, pushing, grabbing toys from other children, and engaging in very rough and intimidating play. Psychological bullying includes name calling, making faces, teasing, taunting, and making threats. Indirect, or less obvious and less visible, bullying includes exclusion and rejection of children from a group" (2012:130).

These types of behaviour were prevalent amongst the children. When a child would make a mean face at another child, it was immediately addressed. It became a teachable moment. The children soon began to label the behaviours around them without prompts. They had taken ownership of their learning environment. They were empowering themselves to speak up when they saw an injustice against others and themselves. For instance when someone would not share or when someone pushed in line, or when someone said shut up, others would call out wrong action or wrong speech. The child who was responsible for behaving inappropriately would apologise. Over time, undesirable behaviours diminished considerably. Positive reinforcement was used and eventually children themselves began to use the terms I used to reinforce positive behaviour. This is important because:

> "positive reinforcement is a method of identifying to children which behaviors are acceptable and appropriate and which are not. More specifically, the use of positive reinforcement is the act of identifying and encouraging a behavior, with the hopes that the desired behavior will increase ... The theory is that any behavior followed by a pleasant stimulus is likely to be repeated" (Sigler & Aamidor 2005: 249).

Every day the pupils would engage in carpet time and discuss observations and experiences to do with right and wrong speech and action. I believe that this persistent, consistent and

routine daily exercise was having an effect on the children. Just as I would go over the daily practice of say skip counting, doing the days or months and high frequency words in order for children to remembering basic facts - in the same way, perpetual reminders on behaviour seemed to have a similar effect. Whilst small grumblings were evident, higher levels of inappropriate behaviour had stopped like hitting, name calling and exclusion. Girls no longer visited the office; things were settled in class before they escalated. The children had created an environment where they were cooperating and collaborating.

At stage 1of Kohlberg's moral development theory children adhere to an "obedience and punishment orientation" where "The child/individual is good in order to avoid being punished. If a person is punished they must have done wrong." At the conventional morality level 2 in stage 3, children are concerned with "good interpersonal relationships" where "The child/individual is good in order to be seen as being a good person by others" (McLeod 2011). It is possible that the children were oscillating between stage 1 and stage 3. Through the labels of right and wrong they were classifying actions as appropriate and inappropriate. Through the daily discussions and moral reasoning they understood that their behaviour was being judged by others. Additionally, through the stories they were being asked to consider selfish behaviour and behaviour that resulted in good deeds towards others. This underscored Wagid's talim (instruction) based on the Qur'anic view to "enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and hasten to good deeds" (3:114).

Gilligan's Ethics of Care demonstrates how the girls could have progressed from the preconventional stage of selfishness to the conventional stage of giving consideration to others. Implementing Waghid's concepts of tarbiyyah (nurturing), talim (instruction) and tadib (good action) discussion was provided on the concept of kindness which embraces Gilligan's notion of self-sacrifice. Girls were asked to share examples of self-sacrifice. Some shared incidents of when they would give their younger siblings toys or candy that they wanted for themselves. Islamic belief states "None of you will believe until you love for your brother what you love for yourself" (Bukhari). One girl shared a hadith about sacrifice. It was about a man who complained about his hunger. The hungry man was given food in the dark whilst the host went hungry. However, even before this story was shared, when girls

complained that they had no food, many girls would simultaneously offer their own food or lunch money to those with none. Sharing food with strangers appeared to be a very strong cultural practice in the region.

8.12 The Theme of Helping: Yasina

Yasina was a petite girl. She was quick to help and a self-starter. She was an extrovert; she had an innovative attitude and lots of energy. She was reliable and very friendly. As the weeks went by her confidence grew and she became loud and animated. When I would tell her that she needed to visit the advisor to calm down she would clasp her hands together and beg earnestly to remain in the classroom. At times she would say things to other girls and then run away laughing. Some girls would come to class after the lunch break and complain about her. Yasina would chatter furiously in Arabic and contort her face and throw her arms and body about. I did not understand what she was saying, but I know she was defending herself passionately.

Every day we started off with a sharing of something the pupils had experienced where they could classify the conducts. There were a number of benefits of the carpet time or circle time when children would have the opportunity to share their experiences. According to Collins, "Circle time could therefore be seen as a 'therapeutic' intervention for the individual child involved in the problem-solving part of circle time" (2011:75). This promotes "good communication", "sharing", "equality" in addition to "inclusiveness and a sense of caring for each other" (Collins 2011 : 79; SPHE Teacher Guidelines 1999). Research in circle time has provided evidence of a number of different benefits by giving children a platform to share their experiences.

> "Circle Time is evidence-based and serves as a framework for developing social emotional literacy, whilst also building and improving relationships ... Circle Time ... has been shown to enhance self awareness, self esteem, resilience, emotional intelligence, anger management and communication skills, a sense of belonging and connectedness, empathy, conflict resolution and problem solving skills and it's fun" (Day 2011: 33).

During carpet time or circle time, the children had to conform to rules of listening, being respectful with each other and speaking one at a time. The children would also start with saying bismillah (in the name of God) which is a common practice amongst adults in a

gathering who are about to say something. The practice of circle time was empowering the children to make changes within themselves and have positive effects on others by making them want to also share their experiences. This was also a time when teachers could explain why certain behaviours were desirable or inappropriate. Lickona (2004) lists a number of benefits that circle time could engage. For instance it "help students learn from mistakes", it encourages "students to take responsibility for stopping peer cruelty", it "celebrate[s] kindness" and "hold[s] students accountable" (Lickona 2004: xvi-xvii).

During one of these circle times Yasina shared an incident that happened at her home to demonstrate her understanding of the conducts: right and wrong action, speech and thought. She told the story in Arabic and then tried to translate it with the help of other girls. When she talked, she talked with zest and intonation. She was very animated. Yasina began her story, "I look down from my window and I see girl hitting, hitting, hitting my friend!"(Her friend was her neighbour -Yasina demonstrated punches on an imaginary person). "She not stop! Not stop! Wrong action!" Yasina paused momentarily with a glimmer in her eye while she watched me. She knew I responded when children correctly matched the conducts to incidents. Diedrich notes:

> "The use of positive reinforcement as an effective, high-impact strategy for improving students' behaviours has been supported by documented research for a variety of school circumstances for both individual students and groups of students" (2010: 12).

"I run, run quickly! Quickly! Run down get bottle. I help my friend! Ehhh right thought! I put hot, hot, hot water in bottle! I hide. I throw water on girl." (At this point Yasina howled with laughter and threw her arms about, she made the girls laugh too). I asked her if she had demonstrated right action or wrong action, she said it was a wrong action. It was important that Yasina understood that throwing hot water was oppressive. She understood this and then followed with some more details about the story. "The girl she come my house. She say, "You throw water?" (Yasina held out her finger and wagged it like the girl did). "I tell her no. She say again, "You throw water?" I tell her, no! She say again, "You throw water?" I tell her, yes! (She turned to look at me). I do right speech!"

Through sharing her account Yasina was projecting positive peer influence. She was showing other children that they could intervene and help someone who was being oppressed. Discussion could ensue on alternative ways that the victim could have been helped without

Yasina committing a wrong act. Children could be collaborating and problem solving both of which are skills for 21st century learning.

> "21st century skills empower children with the skills they need to engage in tomorrow's global world. With these skills, they will be better prepared to address issues of global, social, and environmental concern, work collaboratively with individuals from different cultures and countries, develop and utilize innovative and entrepreneurial skills, and develop civic, critical thinking, and communication literacy" (Global Sleepover 2014).

Yasina's story indicated she had inclinations to help those who were in distress. Her mother had written on her questionnaire that she wanted her daughter to help people. Yasina was not intimidated by bigger or older children and moreover when she saw oppression she took steps to bring transformation. She was able to implement the hadith that advocates intervention by hand (physically helping or stopping a wrong), voice (speaking out) or heart (thinking what you see is unjust and disliking it). Critical Islamic theory looks at situations and asks what is wrong, and who can change it to create life improvement? Critical Islamic pedagogy may call the response to help tadib (good action) "to act on the basis of concern for human freedom" (Kazmi 2011:28). Kazmi calls for the individual to be interactive with the world and not indifferent or detached (2000). Yasina was not detached she was a helper. However, I wondered if she could develop herself to understand that some of the tricks she played on other children did not make them happy and they may have been oppressive.

Figure 7.4: Parent questionnaire

The parent questionnaire shows that Yasina's parents were also influencing her to be normative. They wanted her to help others and align her behaviour with following God's

way. Yasina brought about positive social transformation in that she stopped the beating of the girl. The method of her help, however, needed adjustment. Yasina's baseline questionnaire and final questionnaire can be seen in the Appendix.

In comparing Yasina's initial questionnaire she mostly rated herself as "sometimes" in terms of appropriate behaviour. She selected "I help other children" as "mostly." For "I sit and read quietly when the teacher says" she picked "always". Yasina liked reading and sometimes read in loud whispers (it was called silent reading). At times I would see her crawling along the floor to get to her friends to share something that could not wait and was worth getting into trouble for. Yasina selected "never" for "I take turns." For "I let others do their work and don't disturb them" Yasina selected "rarely". Both of these describe Yasina accurately. For "I am kind to the cleaners" she picked "rarely".

As mentioned earlier one of the most tragic and poignant things noted was the treatment of cleaners, house-keepers and maids. Such workers were normally African, Filipino, Nepalese or Indian. Children would treat them with disrespect because from what I heard adults modelled disrespect. And this appeared to carry over into school life. So when I saw Yasina pick "rarely" for kindness to cleaners, I was not surprised. But I was hopeful that perhaps she could change. I was hopeful that a lot of the children might change. In Wagid's critical Islamic pedagogy he called tadib, good action or social activism and tarbiyyah, responsible action and talim, deliberation and reflection. Through the stories attitudes could be fostered that promoted the pursuit of critical Islamic pedagogy. Moreover, Islamic Critical Theory could itself be applied to this type of oppression.

According to learning theories cognitivism rests on the notion that once a learner has been exposed to a concept, reinforcement must be maintained. It was therefore important to continually remind pupils of the conducts of right and wrong action, speech and thought and apply these across any matter that arose in the playground, in the restroom, on the bus, in Art, PE or in Maths or Science. Once the information is stored and then reinforced it encourages the child apply the conducts to whatever matter is confronted. The stories and talk sessions allowed pupils to question their actions and those of others through reflection.

In the nine latter questions of the questionnaire that dealt with inappropriate behaviour, Yasina generally picked "sometimes." This indicated that she was aware that she was not

following rules and could do better. For the remaining three questions: "I do unkind things to others", "I draw and write unkind things about others" and "I take things from others that do not belong to me" for these she selected "never". Yasina liked practical jokes and sometimes could not see that her interpretation of fun was seen by other girls as insensitive. Yasina needed to develop empathy.

Yasina's mother referred to three things that she wanted improvement in. One was to be successful academically "my child smart," the second was to help others "my child help ather(sic) people", the third was to do her salah (worship) "keep the pray". The parent questionnaire showed that Yasina was always happy at school, always told the truth and did not hit other children. She identified Yasina's weaknesses as keeping things clean and tidy and being kind. Over the course of the stories Yasina, seemed to immerse herself into the characters. She was always ready to share a story about a conduct (right and wrong actions and speech). The sharing of personal stories seemed to reinforce the need to make good judgment when confronted with right and wrong choices. Yasina's behaviour towards the end of the study improved. I believe this was because she would remind herself of the conducts: right action, right speech and right thought. It was almost like a game, vying to be the first to be able to label an operation correctly. These conducts were not just identified during story time but transferred to situations that confronted Yasina at school, home or elsewhere.

In looking at Yasina's final questionnaire, she wrote that before she used to lie and now she does not. Comparing her baseline questionnaire to the final questionnaire, it shows that previously she was rarely kind to cleaners and now she was always kind. Returning to the idea of langue and parole where the observable behaviour of some Muslims does not conform to Qur'anic exhortations, the treatment of other Arab nationals and nationals of other countries was something that needed to be changed. According to Islam, all humans are the children of Adam and Eve and therefore one family. The Qur'an states:

> "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference" (Qur'an 17:70).

As a result there should be no animosity or contempt for any member of another nation. The Qur'an further states,"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may

despise (each other)" (Qur'an 49:13). This verse serves as a springboard for promoting equality, multiculturalism, justice, peace and right action and right speech. The head of the cleaning staff once remarked to me (she spoke in Hindi, the following is a translation),

> "Some of the girls here, they are very rude. They talk to us in a very bad way. In our country the children they treat us with respect because we are their elders. Here they talk to us with contempt. We feel very sad."

The transformation in Yasina cannot be truly appreciated unless one has an understanding of the adult culture that is marshalled against the weak especially maids and cleaners and manual labourers. These groups are currently disempowered and lack rights that have been accorded to them by Islam. Theories that expound on observational learning such as Bandura's (1961) provide insight on why the children behave in such a disrespectful way. They are watching how their parents are treating workers and they are imitating that behaviour. The behaviour of these adults is tantamount to egocentrism. Kazmi notes, "obsession with one's own needs to the exclusion of the needs of others is greed and greed is a form of ego-worship negated by la ilaha illa llah [there is nothing worthy of worship other than God]" (Kazmi 2000: 398). Gilligan's Ethics of Care (Rich 1985: 117) is concerned with the removal of selfishness and the transference of personal needs to the needs of others. This idea is reiterated by Kazmi, "In Islam the road to social justice and personal justice are not two separate roads but a single highway. You cannot achieve one without realizing the other" (2000: 398). Yasina's natural affinity to help the powerless transferred to the cleaners. This was beautiful. Reflecting on Krathwohl's stages in the affective domain, (Miller 2014) the fifth stage is called the characterisation stage which reflects the ability to work independently, cooperate, employ ethical knowledge on problems and modify behaviour based on new understanding. If Yasina was consistently kind to the cleaners it means she would have reached the fifth stage. This is an achievement because it shows that the child is going against the norms that are practiced every day.

8.13 The Theme of Leadership: Sineen

Sineen was a petite child, thin and wiry. From quite early on Sineen showed a strong propensity for taking charge. She was a quick learner. Throughout the year she remained the child who was able to effectively communicate whatever it was that I needed to share. She had a logical and systematic way of thinking. Her favourite words were "Why Miss?"

I walked into the classroom one day when Sineen was the designated pupil-teacher and she had all the children sitting facing the whiteboard. They were not just sitting quietly on the carpet. They were sitting in perfect lines. In the mornings Sineen took the initiative to walk up and down during assembly prompting the girls with her words or her hands to stand in a perfect line. Seerah, who was the second pupil-teacher began to imitate Sineen.

In certain American states, programs have been running for some time and were devised to promote leadership in children such as the *Leader in Me* and *Together We Rock!* Such programs have

> "a deep interest for developing such fundamental skills as: a rigorous study of communication, which stressed reading comprehension, research, writing, speaking and active listening; development of intra- and interpersonal relations skills in teambuilding, group dynamics, conflict resolution, time management and self-assessment; emphasis on creative and critical thinking that involve moral reasoning, problem solving, and decision making" (Bordas, 1996, 21).

What Bordas is discussing is in effect the same as what is currently being called 21st century learning skills. Nevertheless, such programs are seen to empower children to make a difference in the classroom.

On another day when I walked into the classroom, Sineen happened to be the pupil-teacher again and she was talking to the pupils. I did not interrupt with my greeting because she seemed to be in the middle of something quite serious. She sounded very, very cross. She was wagging her finger, swaying around and was making so many facial expressions as she talked. Evidently she was very unhappy with the pupils. The twenty-four girls were sitting in neat rows all obediently looking at her. I do not know what Sineen said, but she came over and whispered, just as a teacher would, why she needed to talk to the pupils. They had been very disruptive in the art lesson and frustrated the teacher greatly.

I just nodded and pretended I had things to do at the back of the room. What I was witnessing was positive peer pressure. I remember the words of the American Islamic school principal in the 1990s who lamented "Why is it that our students are so quick to copy the behaviour of bad children? Some of them, they have been here for years, are so shy, so weak to correct the bad behaviour." Sineen was a student who had asserted herself and had gained the respect of her peers. It was not a common thing. Islamic critical pedagogy states that when an injustice

is recognised then something should be done "about changing, rectifying or modifying a situation – that is, transforming it" (Waghid 2011:29).

When I did the running records for reading, I tested pupils once. Sineen insisted that I allow her to read again so that she could increase her score. She was so determined to get to the next level. "Miss, I study at home, I read and read, and read aaaaaaaall the day!" So I made sure I made time. I let her read to me four times until she was content. She was a good role model, a self-starter and a child who was not afraid to stand up and tell anyone to do the right thing.

The story of *Strong Halima* was based on Sineen (see Appendix). The story was centred on promoting positive peer culture and negating bystander apathy. In each class there were a handful of girls who would instigate chaos. On the days when teachers were absent this group of girls would cause as much disruption as possible. I asked my colleagues to share things that they had seen when teachers were absent or just general behaviour related problems in the class. I listed standing on chairs, tables, eating in class, throwing pencil shavings and other rubbish on the floor, throwing books and other supplies on the floor, constant talking, playing with another's hair braids and ignoring the teacher. I also fashioned the teacher in the story on the character of one of the teachers. The school had recently entered a competition for karate and some of the girls had received awards. I incorporated all these elements and modelled the character of Halima on Sineen who was assertive. According to Kids Health (2014) there are a number of benefits of being assertive. It suggests:

> "People who speak assertively send the message that they believe in themselves. They're not too timid and they're not too pushy. They know that their feelings and ideas matter. They're confident. People who are assertive tend to make friends more easily. They communicate in a way that respects other people's needs as well as their own. They tend to be better at working out conflicts and disagreements" (Kids Health 2014).

All of Sineen's responses on the questionnaire resonated between "always" and "mostly". She picked "rarely" for being shy. And for being silent when the teacher is talking to another adult and feeling safe in the class, school, and school bus she picked "sometimes" (see Appendix for Sineen's questionnaires). When I interviewed Sineen I said to her, "Sineen, you always do the right thing. You help everyone, you're always excellent. I don't think there was any change in you."

She looked at me and smiled, and said, "Miss, I change."

"Really?" I said, "How?" I could not see how she did.

So she explained, "Before I say to the cleaner come here, I shout to the cleaner, I not kind. I say "Come here!" But that was wrong speech. Now I go and put garbage in the bag and I tell them thank you. I smile to them. I do right thought, right speech, right action."

Sineen recognised how she had changed towards the cleaners but she also had other changes that were not directly associated with behaviour. She grew in her assertiveness, confidence and in the level of respect she received from the girls in her class as well as her other six teachers.

8.14 The Theme of Laziness

When I was ten years old, my father sent me to Karachi for a month so that I could develop a sense of empathy and spend time with my grandma who was 85 and my aunt who was 70. My aunt and I visited the doctor to ask him to make a house visit. The young male doctor handed my aunt his medical bag and walked in front of her. I was puzzled for a while. Then I insisted that my aunt hand me the doctor's bag so I could leave it on the ground. She refused and continued to uphold a cultural norm that I immediately considered to be discourteous and disrespectful. It was not until thirty years later that I would witness a similar practice in my Middle Eastern classroom. A few girls would expect others to clean up after them. It was a strange thing to see girls confer privileges on a certain individual. They would reserve a seat for her, clean her mess, carry her bag, keep a spot for her in line. These privileged girls resisted picking up after themselves, they considered it beneath them and they seemed to know others would do it for them using their family's high social standing. They had developed a sense of entitlement. Farmer et al refers to this as network centrality in the classroom which "supports pupils' high social positions" (1999: 254).

The following hadith and supplication includes laziness as a vice, "I take refuge in You [God] from anxiety and sorrow, weakness and laziness, miserliness and cowardice, the burden of debts and from being over powered by men" (Bukhari). In addition accounts from the tradition of Islam shows that Muhammadﷺ would help in household chores like cleaning and cooking. However, the home culture of privileged children was to leave messes for the house maids. I wrote the story of *Neena* to introduce children to the merits of being responsible and

avoid laziness. During my first few weeks at the school I noticed that after classroom responsibilities were given out the girl who was sweeping the floor complained that other girls were calling her a maid. I modelled sweeping to show not only that it was *not* a demeaning act but also to show how to sweep. Attitudes did not change immediately but they did eventually and then girls would argue over the broom.

8.15 The Theme of Ihsan (God-Consciousness)

Once I had covered the day to day problems that came from bullying or unkindness, I moved on to other types of story. One of these stories dealt with Ihsan. Ihsan is an Arabic word which is not easily translated into one word; Siddiqui defines it as "suitable", "beautiful", "proper" or "fitting" (2006:424), whilst Hamdan defines it as "goodness, perfection and excellence" (2009:31). The idea behind ihsan is to conduct one's life as though one can see God. Developing a deep love for God and being ever cognizant of His presence would infer that the person would not commit inappropriate behaviours and make wrong choices. The students had mentioned the term ihsan from Islamic studies and were familiar with the idea of God being ever present. At times when there were disputes they would remind each other that God is watching to encourage the other to tell the truth or stop wrong action or wrong speech.

A child's spiritual development in Islam is geared towards the concept of ihsan. When a child is suffering hardship, if she understands that she can get help from God, it will allow her not to feel dejected but adhere to the Qur'anic exhortation of patience or take consolation in verses like "And whoever remembers God and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (of every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine" (Quran, At-Talaq: 2-3). Bibliotherapy is "the process of reading books with a therapeutic intent" and "an effective means to implement character education" (Parker 2005:1).

By adapting the term bibliotherapy, I coined the term biblioihsan which is concerned with enhancing Islamic spirituality or love for God through books. The story of The *Queen and Her Four Daughters* was written to demonstrate an understanding of ihsan. I found that the repetition in this story allowed the children to join in. When I repeated the story for the second class, I had girls come out and play the parts. When they looked here and looked there, they swayed and placed their hands on their foreheads as though looking out to sea.

Specialists in drama advocate its use to build a child's confidence, "performance activities are introduced in drama class to enhance the students' abilities in all areas of oral expression, including self-advocacy" (Schnapp 2003:212). Drama is considered emancipatory, it enables children to venture into areas of self-expression that may have previously been latent.

> "The creative force of drama often empowers students. As students gain confidence using this medium of expression, they are often able to demonstrate previously unrevealed skills and imaginative ideas" (Schnapp 2003:212).

8.16 The Theme of Contributing to Society

According to a hadith by Bukhari, knowledge is one of the keys to attaining paradise. The hadith states: "Whoever follows a path in the pursuit of knowledge, God will make a path to Paradise easy for him." In another tradition it is said that Angel Gabrielؑ visited Adamؑ with personifications of iman (faith), haya (morality) and aql (reason) and asked Adamؑ to choose one of the three. Adamؑ chose reason whereupon, Gabrielؑ instructed the other two to return to heaven. When faith and morality returned to heaven, God ordered them to accompany reason wherever it went. "This indicates how comprehensive … the notions of intellect and knowledge [are] in Islam, and how deeply related they are to faith and the moral faculty" (Akhtar 1995). Islam underscores the idea of knowledge as one of the most fundamental pursuits of life spring boarding from the first word 'read' uttered by Gabriel in transmitting the Qur'an. Whilst the achievements of the Islamic civilization in its Golden Age are well documented there is very little said about the contribution of Muslim women in particular.

> "While there are numerous works on the role of Muslim women in jurisprudence (fiqh) and literature and there are also studies on Muslim women in education and in medicine ... few sources mention the role of Muslim women in the development of science and technology ... women who had a role in advancing science and who established charitable, educational and religious institutions. ... Zubayda who pioneered a most ambitious project of digging wells and building service stations all along the pilgrimage route from Baghdad to Mecca, Sutayta who was a mathematician ... Dhayfa Khatun who excelled in management and statesmanship, Fatima al-Fehri who founded the Qarawiyin mosque and university in Fez, and the astrolabe maker Al-'Ijliya" (Al-Hassani 2010).

It would have been helpful for the pupils to read books that promoted the contribution of Muslim women to serve as role models and sources of inspiration. That said, one of the important aspects of character education or personal, social and spiritual development is contributing to society in a positive manner. This can be on a rudimentary level such as keeping the environment clean or volunteering in a hospital or animal shelter or on a more advanced and intricate level of serving as a specialist in various career pathways. Children were therefore encouraged to think about what they wanted to be when they grew up. The story of *Hanah and Her Grandfather* linked reading to making a contribution to society. Encouraging children towards choosing a career was something that the culture shared because of the numerous costumes that were available in children's toy stores. There were outfits for doctors, nurses, police women, soldiers, teachers and scientists. The girls listed a number of different career paths that they said they hoped to pursue at university. Amongst their choices were judge, paediatrician, pilot, ballet dancer, chef, doctor, nurse, teacher, architect and vet. The follow on activity from this was for girls to firstly discuss in groups what careers they would like to pursue and why and then draw themselves in the career of their choice with a sentence explaining what they would like to do.
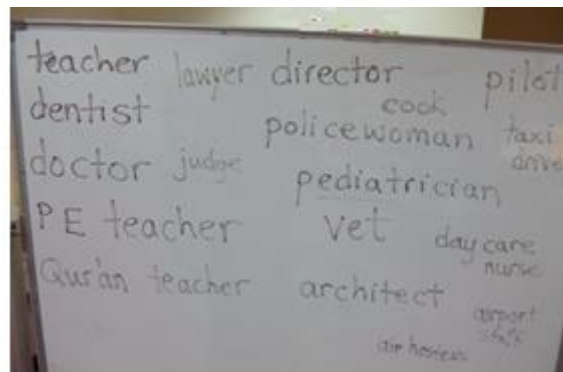
Figure7.5 Careers

The girls were very keen on discussing the topic. At first I was not able to understand some of the occupations they wanted to do, for instance judge and lawyer. But the girls were able to explain through acting what they meant and I would look up the word in an English-Arabic dictionary to ensure I understood. The next day they brought in costumes for a doctor, teacher, and soldier. I did not know they were going to do this, so it was nice to see them taking initiative. They asked if they could talk about their costumes and explain why they

were attracted to their chosen profession. Below are some of the careers the girls chose. From the left is a ballerina, pilot followed by teachers and a dress designer.
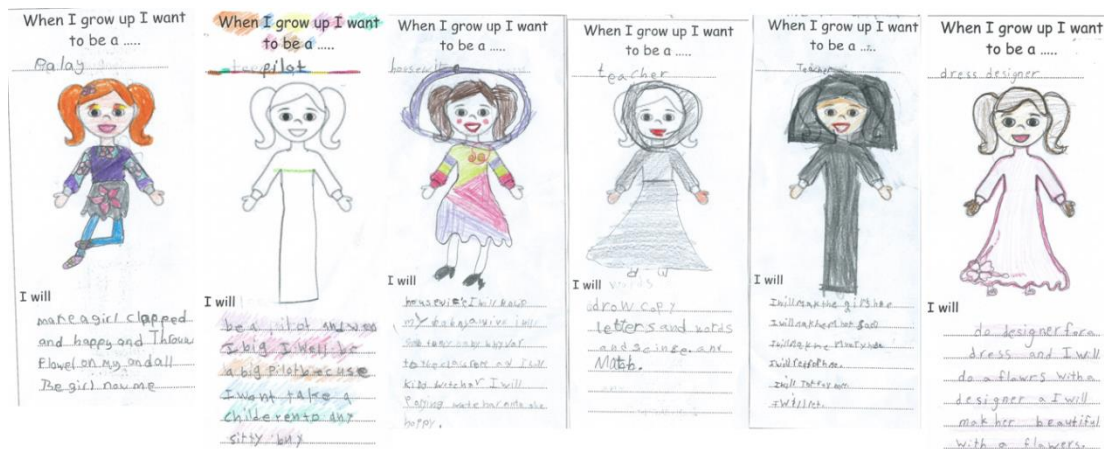
Figure 7.6 Careers activity

8.17 Activities Based on Stories

In this section various samples of the children's work is shown demonstrating how activities were used to reinforce their understanding of the conducts of right thought, right speech and right action. One activity involved the children sharing examples of what words could be said between people. The pupils practiced speaking skills through role plays creating various situations in the school, home or the community to show either right or wrong speech.

Figure 7.7 Right speech activity

The girls firstly worked in groups to come up with scenarios that showed examples of right speech. They then acted them out for others to see. Each child then worked on their own worksheet writing examples of right speech in the speech bubbles.
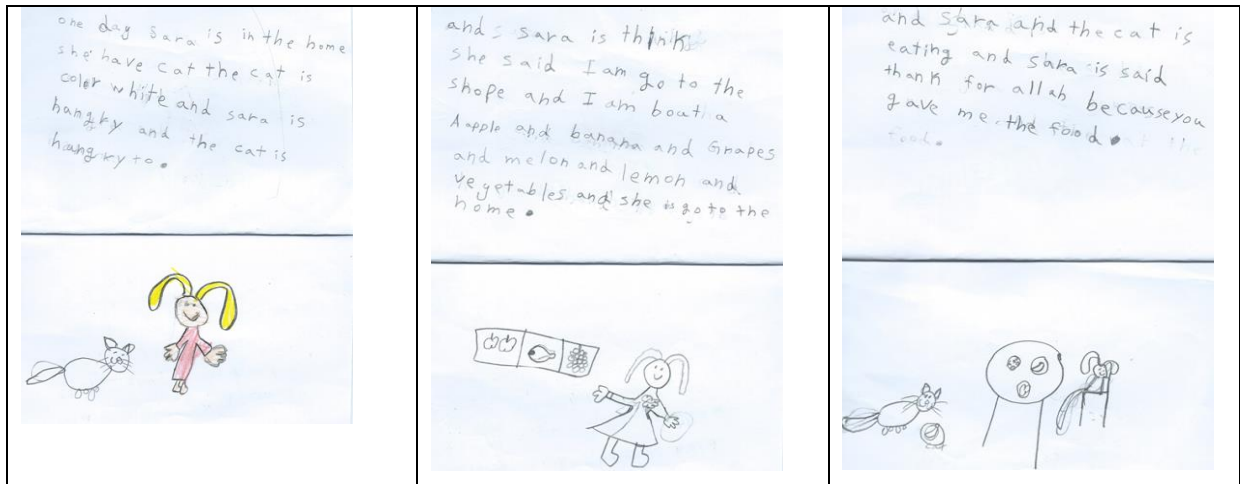
Figure 7.8 Story writing

A favourite activity of some of the girls was writing a story to show all the conducts of thought, speech and action. This was particularly useful in covering curriculum areas for writing. The girls wrote mini-books from folded and stapled paper. Sometimes when they had finished their assignments they would work on a story in class. In one story a student wrote how she purchased food for a cat and then she thanked God for giving her the food to give to the cat.

Figure 7.9 Story books

One story was about Safa and her grandfather who was in hospital. The child wrote about how her grandfather was happy that she came to see him. The child talked about how much she loved her grandfather. This was a good example of creative writing and self-visibility. Unfortunately at the time there were no 'mirror books' (Bishop 1990) in English that gave visibility to the children's family, home, community and country.
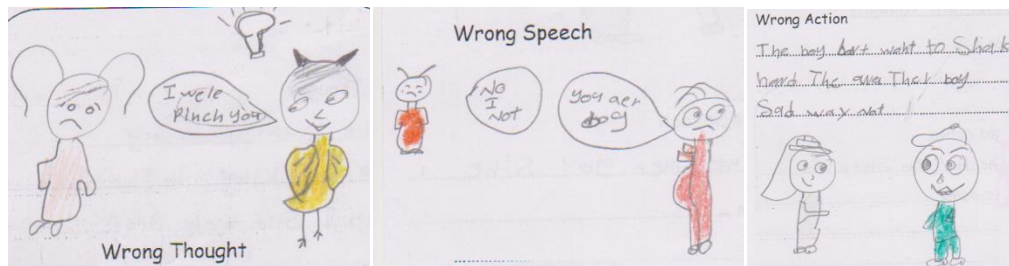
Figure 7.10 Wrong thought, speech and action

In the work above, a child demonstrated their understanding of the conducts. The first drawing on the left shows the wrong thought of pinching someone which will make the other person sad. The next picture shows wrong speech where someone is calling another person a dog. This was one of the most common ways that girls would demean each other. The last picture shows a wrong action through not reciprocating a handshake.

The students also gave examples of what they would do at home. In the following picture and sentence the student shows how she is mindful of her mom working in the kitchen and so thinks about helping her. She identifies this as right thought.
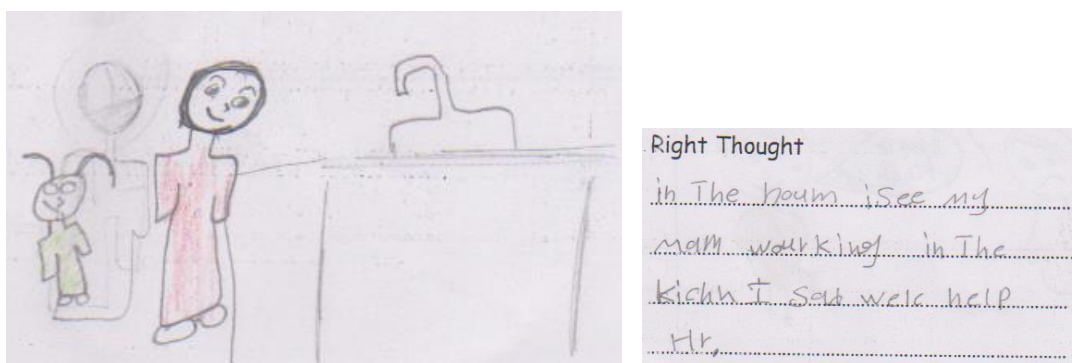
Figure 7.11 Right thought

Some of the ways in which I noticed changes in the students was through things that were observable. For instance the girls had a bad habit of throwing their bags in a pile rather than placing them in an orderly manner.
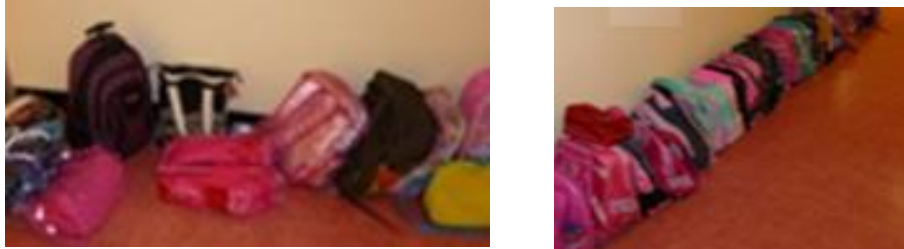
Figure 7.12 Bags

One child was notorious for leaving a mess everywhere. Rarely did Amaya pick up after herself. She was usually surrounded by mess. Students who sat on her table would usually help her clean. One day she approached me with a construction set in which she had painstakingly organised all the parts. It was very impressive and all the girls gathered around her and complimented and applauded her.

Figure 7.13 Organizing kit

Working together was another challenge for some students who were not used to sharing materials. After reading the stories, the children would try and remind each other to cooperate by saying either right or wrong speech or action. It would stop a child who was not following cooperative guidelines.

Figure 7.14 Working together

8.18 Summary

This study investigated whether Islamic children's fiction could empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. In this chapter I have presented and interpreted the data. This was carried out using action research whereby stories were followed up with discussion, activity and relevant reminders throughout the school day. The results have shown that most children were able to develop attitudes whereby their behaviour was transformed. Observations, interview, and documents evidence that most children could be entrusted to self-direct themselves and create non-oppressive environments.

CHAPTER NINE CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION & CONTRIBUTION

9.0 Introduction

This study has investigated whether Islamic children's fiction empowers children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. It has further delineated this into the following three objectives:

a.   What is Islamic children's fiction?

b.   To what extent does current Islamic children's literature contribute to this through understanding the motives and purposes of those who wrote it?

c. What insight can we draw from social/moral/multicultural education?

A theoretical model based on Islamic Critical Theory was developed in order to show how this normative theory can be applied to social problems and concerns. The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions, recommendations and the study's contribution to knowledge.

9.1 Conclusion

This study was concerned with whether Muslim pupils can be empowered through Islamic children's fiction to develop their understanding personally, socially and spiritually in order to bring transformation to oppressive situations. In chapter one I asked whether stories were a viable path to develop a child's social, moral and spiritual understanding. Could stories encourage students to stop the inappropriate behaviour they inflicted on other children when no adults were present? Could stories put a stop to bystander apathy and replace it with bystander active response? Could children transfer a character's success into their own lives? According to some moral theorists such as Bennett, Kilpatrick and Wolfe the "very act of sharing moral stories increase moral literacy" (Schmidt &Pailliotet 2008:146). However, others like Narvaez advise traditionalists to "drop their simplistic understanding about reading moral stories to build character" (Narvaez et al. 2002: 169). This study provides a confident argument for both traditional and contemporary character education professionals in providing useful strategies through which literature-based personal, social and spiritual education can be delivered. The results may be considered tentative since they use action

research "The methodology of action research advocate[s] … tentative conclusions" (Cullen & Evans 2008:146).

The limitations identified in the study include the lack of time with students. Richer results may have resulted from spending one full school year in the field. Additionally the study would have benefited from being conducted in the USA where English was the first language. Bias is considered a criticism of lone researcher action research. However, bias is inevitable in all qualitative data gathering and analysis. Therefore, considerable attention was given to the cultural origins of researcher bias. It is also suggested that action research is not generalisable. These limitations have further been addressed in the recommendations section.

Islamic Critical Theory provided the theoretical underpinnings to this study. Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with identifying social and personal oppression and bringing transformation through a three step process of identification (explanatory), function (practical) and change (normative). Within the study instances of children's behaviour was identified as oppressive. Action research was implemented by the researcher using a cycle of stories to engage children to consider what might be inappropriate behaviour in and outside the classroom and various ideas on how to remedy it. The final step involved transformation through ending oppressive behaviours. The analysis and interpretation of the results showed that most students did indeed enhance their personal, social and spiritual understanding.

However, the stories alone cannot be credited for empowering a child's personal, social and spiritual understanding. The deficiencies of merely reading stories were identified partly in the reconnaissance stage where the stories were published Islamic tales unlike the action research stories which were specifically written based on school incidents. Certainly the stories served as key elements and were indispensable but they relied on the subsidiary terminology which consisted of right and wrong thought, speech and action. In addition the follow up assignments with the inclusion of drama, the eventual student endorsement, the constant teacher encouragement, the morning discussion, the teachable moments from a classroom or playground disturbance, all these together with the stories contributed to empowering the children's personal, social and spiritual development.

This study also sought to understand what insight could be drawn from social / moral / multicultural education. This study has shown that children who are provided with stories that

promote reflective thinking can make positive changes in the world. This was evident in how the children changed their oppressive attitudes towards each other and those around them. A paragon of this change was demonstrated through attitude change towards cleaners and maids. Oppression was replaced with respect and gratitude.

In conclusion this study finds that Islamic children's fiction can be used to develop and empower children's personal, social and spiritual understanding if it is done with the supplementary activities listed above. Although this study has used Islamic children's fiction over other fiction it may be helpful to explain that Islamic children's fiction is a type of literature that focuses on moral development. It may be possible to gather similar results with other literature if that literature is concerned with personal, social and spiritual development.

This study also asked what is Islamic children's fiction? Definitions were discussed in chapter two provided by Linda Delgado and Mohammad Ahmad. Since there has not yet been a specific definition of Islamic children's literature, I provide one drawing on the present definitions and on this study which promotes an emancipatory perspective through Islamic Critical Theory.

I developed Islamic Critical Theory in order to discuss the study using an Islamocentric lens. My understanding of Critical Theory and its mission to empower those who have no voice led me to search for a theory that was aligned to the Islamic world view. When I was unable to find one I developed Islamic Critical Theory using my knowledge on Islam, and Horkheimer's three criteria definition of a critical theory. Typically traditional theories are concerned with interpreting a phenomenon or providing an explanation. Critical theories, however, unlike traditional theories are concerned not only with interpretation and explanation but also social transformation. Generally critical theories share three common characteristics. Firstly they seek to identify the power structures. Secondly they analyse power structures relating to oppression with the intention of bringing emancipation. Thirdly they combine theory with action to bring positive change (Littlejohn & Foss 2008: 48). Critical theories are therefore normative unlike traditional theories which are descriptive. Islamic Critical Theory is therefore a normative theory.

In Chapter Six I have argued that Islamic Critical Theory is an emancipatory theory and discussed its characteristics and tied these to give the theory historic origins dating to the re-

emergence of the Islamic message in the Arabian Peninsula. In doing so I adhered to Duderija's point that Muslim researchers are refusing to accept Western "hegemony" (2013:69). Rather the Qur'an and Sunnah are used to promote the message of peace together with the Qur'anic principle of freewill where coercion towards any ideology including Islam is prohibited. Islamic Critical Theory is concerned with supporting all global residents to live in a harmonious world of acknowledged differences where problems and oppression are identified and transformed to allow for a better life.

In applying Islamic Critical Theory to the study a three stage theoretical model is used. This is where the theory moves from a theoretical model to a practical model. The first stage is to identify a problem. One of the problems with Western Islamic children's fiction was that there was very little of it. The next stage asks for actors to be identified who can change the present conditions. The changes were initiated when writers and editors began to produce more Islamic children's stories. The final stage of Islamic Critical Theory is the normative stage or one in which transformation can be achieved. The transformation was the emergence of Islamic children's fiction and the difference it made with children who were able to access it.

When the model is applied to the main research question of whether Islamic children's fiction can develop the personal, social and spiritual understanding of Muslim children the first stage is identifying the problem. The problem is that some children are oppressive and others are apathetic bystanders. The second stage requires the identification of actors who can change the present conditions. In this case it was the researcher in addition to the students and parents. The third stage is transformation. The study concluded that most children through using Islamic children's fiction and the supplementary activities can develop their personal, social and spiritual understanding and thereby achieve positive transformation.

The conclusions drawn from the life stories of Muslim writers revealed a number of common features and insights into Islamic children's fiction. Generally the writers were struggling and scattered individuals who acted on their own volition. The stories they were producing did not provide financial incentives or rewards and were in fact financially draining. The writers had independently arrived at decisions where they felt they needed to give visibility to Muslim children. All but one of the eight writers had worked in the education sector and of

the seven, six had worked in Islamic school settings. Therefore, the writers were aware of the lack of children's books that gave positive visibility to Muslim children.

A second point made by the writers was the lack of support from Islamic publishing houses. This observation revealed at least three developmental stages in Islamic children's literature. The types of books that Islamic publishers were producing in the 1970s were limited to stories about the prophets ﷺ and companions of Muhammad ﷺ and generally did not include illustrations. These stories represented the first stage. The second stage from the 1980s was marked by the inclusion of inanimate objects and later animate objects but these were restricted to abstract art. The contemporary third stage resulted in a paradigm shift which began in the 1990s, its salient features showed the inclusion of realistic images and the location of stories in a Western setting.

This study has also concluded that the generational change in authorship and editorship as well as the change in national origin was a major reason to cause a move from traditional Islamic stories that were limited to Islamic heroes situated in Arab lands to Islamic fiction situated in the West. The authors in the 1980s wrote from a foreign perspective limiting Islam to Arab lands. They failed to speak in terms that were familiar to the cultural language of the indigenous. This also served to further otherise Islam. The early writers included in the study like Yahya Emerick, Uthman Hutchinson and Ann El-Moslimany were responsible for producing transformational Islamic children's fiction or religious-cultural hybrid Islamic fiction which located Muslims in the West and ultimately gave Muslim children a sense of place in the West.

A transferable idea that emits from this study, in terms of Western writers towards minority Western Muslim children, is that a sense of place, belonging and identity can be reflected in stories to show that colour prejudice is wrong and that national origins should be recognised in line with the Qur'anic verse (49:13) that views nations and tribes as gifts to promote acquaintanceships. The type of prejudice that was evident in the girls was also evident in the early years of my career in the USA from Arab children towards African-American children. Empowering children to rise above prejudice and discrimination is something that writers can address. The story of *Sabah's Happy Heart* dealt with exclusion. A similar type of story can be written that deals with colour prejudice.

Yahya Emerick's and Linda Delgado's comment about the lack of interest shown by Muslim parents and Islamic schools was also insightful. They revealed a persistence in Islamic schools to purchase children's fiction from mainstream publishers rather than Islamic publishers. This failure in Islamic schools to see Islamic children's literature as a worthwhile tool to promote a positive Islamic identity and self-worth continues to be ignored (Gilani-Williams 2014). This is a detrimental point and has been flagged by African-American and Asian-American experts in children's literature (Cai 2002; MacCann & Woodard 1985; Bishop 1990). Children need to be presented with mirror books and window books for personal development. Not just window books (Myers 2014).

The writers were also concerned with countering negativity towards Islam. Most of the writers are indigenous Americans and are actively challenging the stereotypes to show that Islam is part of the Western mosaic. Their efforts may in some way offset what has been described as the overwhelming pejorative portrayal of Muslims in the media (Rane 2006: 3).

Insights have been gained for social/moral/multicultural education in that literature-based character development can have a positive effect on children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. Further this study has also discussed the term bibliotherapy which is concerned with changing oppressive situations and bringing personal transformation through the reading of stories. A new term has introduced which is aligned to bibliotherapy. Biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan is bibliotherapy promoting an Islamic perspective or worldview. Biblioihsan is concerned with enhancing Islamic spirituality or love for God through books. Biblioihsan seeks to centralise God and focus on strengthening an individual's relationship with God. A relationship with God encourages kindness, justice, charity, forgiveness and love. This study has shown that a child's spiritual understanding can be enhanced using Islamic children's fiction through bibliotherapy and biblioihsan.

Similar to the other writers I convey Islam through situating my stories in Western lands in order to give visibility to indigenous Muslim children and those with origins from other lands who are born in the West. As an educator I understand the importance of children having a positive sense of self and a sense of compassion which embraces humanity. My own childhood experiences informed my purpose as a writer. Muslim children who have a strong support system from parents still struggle with identity against the huge onslaught of media negativity and peer pressure. Children who can see their self-worth will be encouraged to

take responsible roles in society. However, if they are perpetually bombarded by media images showing that Muslims are destructive, the child will have a very poor self-image and invariably suffer from an inferiority complex and identity crisis. This underscores the need to develop ways that children can heal. Bibliotherapy and biblioihsan are emancipatory techniques that can aid this healing.

Sociologists explain that labelling theory is one of the reasons why individuals remain in crime (Becker 1963). Once an individual is seen as deviant, they are given a label that deems them aberrant or criminal. This is known as the master status and "takes precedence over all other statuses or characteristics of the individual," the master status is "the status that people react to first when they see or meet a person for the first time" (Regoli, Hewitt &DeLisi 2011: 194). For Muslim children the master status may be an assortment of negative labels that have been reinforced by the media. If the child is not positively visible in the literature she or he reads, that omission also highlights her or his social marginality. Research shows that children need to see themselves reflected positively to develop a secure sense of identity (Black &Jobe 2005). Negative media amplification feeds anti-Islam attitudes and these are the attitudes I seek to correct through my writing. By depicting Western Muslims as constituting the same fundamental social contexts within Western children's literature, like the other writers, I creatively defend and express identities grounded in an Islamic perspective.

In summary Islamic Critical Theory as a theoretical model with practical outcomes showed how social justice and social transformation can be achieved through the application of three stages as outlined by Horkheimer. The study has shown how Islamic children's fiction can develop Muslim children's personal, social and spiritual understanding with supplementary activities. The life stories of the writers have further revealed that the motives and purposes for writing Islamic children's fiction rest heavily on giving Muslim children positive visibility in the West to enable a positive identity and counter anti-Islam. Bibliotherapy and biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan have been identified as a means of support for Muslim children who can improve their sense of self-worth through reading stories. Lastly the onus is on Islamic publishers to invest in children's books that can promote humanitarian responsibilities.

9.2 Recommendations

This study has used stories that were specifically written by the researcher to highlight daily moral and behavioural issues for pupils that inform their social, personal and spiritual understanding. Such stories can inform social/ moral/ multicultural education. A strong recommendation would be for publishers to invest in producing similar stories that promote discussion on issues that develop children's personal, social and spiritual understanding. An increase in fictional stories situated in Western lands would be beneficial for Muslim children to cultivate a sense of multicultural belonging, multicultural acceptance, community spirit, social justice as well as character development. This would address the need for books that employ biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan to develop a greater understanding of religious, social and humanitarian responsibilities in a multicultural and multi-religious world.

Whilst the study was carried out with two classes of children future studies could be conducted involving the whole school. This would be beneficial for the development of the school behaviour policy and allow teachers and administrators to create a literature-based character development programme. Learning theories and moral theories were used in the study however, there is not much known about Islamic moral theories. Future research could investigate Islamic moral theories and compare them to the theories of Piaget and Kohlberg. Muslim researchers could in fact develop their own moral stages of development based on an Islamic worldview.

This study included research on writers of Islamic children's fiction in addition to children's literature-based personal, social and spiritual understanding. Future studies could focus exclusively on writers from specific time periods, for instance from the 1980s or 1990s or 2000s and then compare the similarities and differences between them. An in depth study would serve to illuminate the historic development of Islamic children's literature in the West. A further area of study could focus on just one writer to understand details about personal and public lives as well as a critical analysis of the books written by the author. In fact an investigation of the books alone from various decades could be undertaken to analyse content to show how they may have changed. A study on the development of Islamic publishing houses and their editors could similarly be useful in the history of Islamic children's literature.

Children's Islamic book illustrations is another area that warrants its own examination since the inclusion of animate objects was significant. Illustrations changed from abstract art in the 1980s to representational art in the 1990s. Other than the illustrations being examined, illustrators of Islamic books could be another focus for research which seeks to understand their purpose, reasons, motivations and experiences.

A more thorough investigation understanding the reasons why Islamic schools have not been attentive to Islamic children's literature could also be the subject of another study in which administrators, board members, teachers and parents are interviewed to give their perspectives on Islamic children's fiction. An action research project could follow on from the observations made at the Canadian Islamic school (Gilani-Williams & Bigger 2012). This would involve a cycle of steps to encourage Muslim children to write in a multicultural way that gives themselves, their culture and faith visibility with the inclusion of different faith members that they interact with.

A study that focuses on bibliotherapy and biblioihsan may also be an area that can be explored to see if it has positive effects on children who are experiencing difficulty and hardship. Muslim children could be interviewed in various Western countries to gather information on what kind of issues confront them on a daily basis in the community and the school setting. Researchers may want to write stories that promote multiculturalism and multi-faith groups and investigate whether such stories encourage children to be more accepting of differences to uphold human rights and freewill.

The following recommendations have emerged as a result of the study. Islamic Critical Theory can produce a viable model to improve the present condition of problem areas bringing emancipatory results. The following are recommendations for action:

1. **An increase in Islamic children's fiction within Islamic schools:** Islamic children's fiction can be offered in addition to mainstream literature in Islamic schools. Principals and teachers can source books that reflect Islamic identity in a Western setting along with the presence of characters that are of other faith groups to show a vibrant and harmonious community with acknowledged differences. Currently Islamic schools purchase very few books that give visibility to Muslims. This needs to change.

2. **To introduce the practice of Muslim author visits during World Book Day or National Library Week:** Islamic writing groups can be contacted to source writers

who can visit schools and promote not only children's Islamic literature but also serve as role models for future writers.

3. **Islamic publishers to produce Islamic children's literature that reflects a harmonious multicultural and multifaith community:** Islamic publishers can promote a writers competition which seeks to acknowledge a diverse world and from this select stories that promotes community harmony and visibility for all. Publishers can also source writers who can write such material.

4. **Mainstream publishers to respond to *Books for Keeps*:** The editor of *Books for Keeps* stated "But what about the depiction of Muslims of whatever nationality in the books available to young readers in Britain? When racial violence is so clearly linked to anti-Muslim prejudice, there is a pressing need for books which challenge distorted and negative images" (Stone 2002:2). A recommendation is to respond to this pressing need from mainstream publishers to embrace an interdependent world.

5. **To encourage discussion of Islamic children's literature on an academic level:** Universities can be approached to include curriculum content that focuses on Islamic children's literature. More papers on Islamic children's literature can be published in children's literature journals. Conferences on diversity can include proposals that feature Islamic children's literature.

6. **The establishment and funding of literary agents that support Muslim writers:** There do not appear to be any literary agents that deal with children's Islamic literature. This can only be remedied if Islamic publishers are producing such books. Therefore the third recommendation activates this recommendation.

7. **To encourage ministries of education in Muslim countries to produce Islamic children's literature:** Countries that are including English as a second language specifically from nursery to year 3 can commission their own books in English allowing children to be familiar with their own setting, culture and faith. This will lead to accelerated language skill development because children are relating text to home and real life experience. Currently such countries are purchasing book from Western lands which are difficult to understand due to colloquial terms and other unfamiliar elements that very young children cannot relate to.

8. **Islamic book fairs serving Islamic schools**: Islamic children's publishers can collaborate to participate in national books fairs that schools and parents can access with children. Alternatively they can deliver books to schools in the traditional fashion like Scholastic.

9. **To create a book award for an Islamic children's book:** The Sheikh Zayed Book Award is one of the most prestigious and richest literary awards in the world however, it is not international and does not focus solely on English Islamic children's literature. An Islamic children's book awards similar to the Coretta Scott King Book Award, Newbery Medal and Caldecott Medal could serve to encourage more writers and illustrators of Islamic children's literature and raise the quality of Islamic children's literature.

10. **To create library spine labels for Islamic children's literature:** This recommendation rests on the third recommendation. When more Islamic children's books become available in public libraries this will require the production of a spine label.

11. **To fund the production of Islamic children's literature:** the Canadian government has spent millions of dollars in promoting children's literature that is specifically Canadian in order to instil a positive Canadian identity. A similar but much smaller venture could be funded by Islamic organization in the West such as the Islamic Society of North America.

12. **To select books that promote bibliotherapy and biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan to help troubled Muslim children:** According to the Runnymede Trust a consequence of anti-Islam was "injustice, characterised by social exclusion; a sense of cultural inferiority among young British Muslims; and an increasing likelihood of serious social disorder" (Runnymede 1997: iii). Books can be identified that will empower and inspire Muslim children to overcome their difficulties and hardships.

Islamic Critical Theory provides social criticism. It analyses the way that society functions and the attitudes people hold. It seeks out power structures to identify those who have and those who do not have. It asks questions to try and change the status quo so that oppression can be removed and freedom attained. Stories are one way of introducing in a reader the process of reflection and deep questioning. This results in choice making and can result in attitude development. This may at its most optimum level promote the cause of human rights and create positive transformation and the disintegration of power elites who perpetuate oppression. Islamic Critical Theory invites writers to write thought-provoking books that can potentially cause humankind to enter a "truly human condition" rather than "sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (Adorno & Horkheimer 1997: xi).

Human rights violations across the globe can benefit from many systems of support. Islamic Critical Theory can assist the world to promote justice. It can support all people to retain their inalienable rights. The Qur'anic view on freedom is clear, "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (2:256). Further the following hadith from Bukhari states,

> "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is an oppressed one. People asked, "O God's Messenger! It is all right to help him if he is oppressed, but how should we help him if he is an oppressor?" The Prophet said, "By preventing him from oppressing others."

This study's main focus has been on the character development of Muslim children so that they can lead "a life of purity and sincerity. This total commitment to character-building based on the ideals of Islamic ethics is the highest goal of Islamic education" (Al-Attas 1979:104). Islamic Critical Theory can contribute to a better world by applying it to an assortment of oppressive situations. The recommendation is therefore that more work needs to be done in conjunction to human rights using Islamic Critical Theory.

9.3 Contributions

This study has contributed to improving student critical thinking in terms of transformation in their personal lives and the lives of others. It has helped students develop their social understanding by showing kindness to each other and the adults that supervise them or clean for them. It has enhanced their attitude to keeping their environment tidy by placing litter in bins and knowing that leaving their mess is a form of oppression on others and a further injustice to the environment which needs to be cared for. Students learned the value of responsibility and treating their peers as equals rather than servants. Two students who had waged incessant bullying against one girl transformed themselves and befriended their victim. One student stopped her tyranny of slapping other children by transforming her oppressive behaviour. Many students raised their spiritual understanding by reflecting on their existence and their place on earth and their need to help humanity.

Better relations were developed between the teacher and the pupils because the pupils felt that there was a concerted effort made to ensure classroom harmony and safety. Pupils felt secure in knowing that oppression was addressed and not overlooked. Pupils have been inspired to consider careers that develop their own interests such as nursing, dentistry, ballet, and piloting. This in turn will improve the community and society. This study has also provided administrators and teachers with a strategy that can be used to improve children's personal, social and spiritual understanding.

The study has provided a definition of children's Islamic literature. It is also one of the very few studies that investigates writers of Islamic children's literature and has therefore made a contribution to knowledge in presenting the views of these authors as well as the historic development of Islamic children's literature along with its challenges. It has alluded to a paradigm shift and identified three stages in the development of Western Islamic children's

literature. It has introduced the term biblioihsan or qissa-ihsan coined from bibliotherapy as a tool to help Muslim children navigate their way through anti-Islam and develop a positive self identity.

The *International Journal of Islamic Thought* is a peer reviewed Islamic journal produced by the National University of Malaysia. The article *Islamic Critical Theory* (Gilani-Williams 2014) was based on Chapter Six of this study. Islamic Critical Theory is an Islamic theory which critiques every aspect of life and presents a solution that is in harmony with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. To develop it I used Horkheimer's definition that

> "a critical theory is adequate only if it meets three criteria: it must be explanatory, practical and normative, all at the same time. In other words, it needs to give explanation for what is wrong with current social reality, identify the actors to change it, and provide both clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for social transformation." (Barani&Yahya 2012: 147; see also Bohman 1996:190; Carr 2005 2005: 485; Hartas 2010: 45).

Islamic Critical Theory is therefore a contribution to knowledge in that I provide a definition for it based on Horkheimer's definition. I also show how it can be applied to problematic and oppressive situations to bring about emancipatory results. I also situate the theory within an Islamic historic setting that demonstrates that Islam has an emancipatory proclivity.

In summary this chapter has acquainted the reader with the conclusions of this study, its recommendations for future investigation and the contribution it has made to knowledge. My final words on this study: I believe that children's literature is a powerful and benevolent tool that can bring joy, comfort and peace by sharing ideas that strive towards justice and humanity. The world needs justice and humanity.

APPENDIX

10.0 Student Analysis Following Action Research

Leena

Leena was a high ability pupil and amongst the top three most coherent speakers of English. I would rely on her and the other two girls to translate English to Arabic and Arabic to English. She was athletic and tall. She liked to help if it meant going on an out-of-class-errand. She was always quick to finish her work. She loved to write stories. She was not loud. Although I did not realize it at first, she was very popular. Due to her family's perceived high social standing she was able to compel girls to exclude others.

Leena did not display any behaviour problems in class, indeed she was one of the children that reflected responsible pupil-teacher abilities. She had two other close friends and this was their exclusionary group. Haila who wanted to occasionally join or play with the group was often rejected. Haila had no shortage of friends; she was also a popular child not only very articulate in English, but also bright, eager to help, innovative, caring, and a self starter. Leena and Haila were alike in some ways and this may have created some unhealthy competition. But Haila generally took the centre spot, she was the first to talk on the carpet and always had a story to share. Leena was not quite like that. She was not interested in interested in sharing her stories. Haila had complained about the group. She did not like them leaving her out. It seemed their disagreements went further along in the playground and in Arabic class. By the time they got to my lesson, they were upset and strongly complained about each other. Before the research, I had sent them to the advisor hoping that the girls could settle their differences.

Another altercation occurred later. Leena and Janelle complained that Haila had drawn a nasty picture of Leena. It showed a messy face with scribbles near the nose and it has something written in Arabic which I did not understand. To Haila's displeasure and discomfort, the girls translated it for me. Although Leena had two other close friends it did not seem that they had a problem with Haila as much as Leena did. She was able to manipulate their feelings and encourage them to dislike Haila. Verbal hostilities remained between Haila and Leena. There was some unkindness in the class such as making faces at one another, but later it took another turn. One day as they came from Arabic class Leena

complained that Haila had poked her with a pencil. Haila wore a look of regret and looked like she was going to cry. "They told everyone don't' talk with me!" said Haila in a loud hurt, quivering voice.

"So you got angry?" I said. She nodded.

Leena and Janelle said something in response. I listened. Then I said, "Your parents don't send you here to be hurt. And they don't send you here so you can be all alone." I sent Leena and Haila to the office. This resulted in a verbal admonishment. The incident occurred shortly before the study however, the girls' inability to get along re-emerged during the research. Haila came into class one day complaining that the girls would not let her play and told her to go away. I asked, "Who was the first person to tell you that you couldn't play?"

"Leena," she said.

Figure 7.8: Leena's questionnaire

Leena began to explain that they had a policy that every day they would allow one other person in their group. "Today it was Basima's turn so we let her play," explained Leena. "They don't play Miss. They just sit!" interjected Haila. I looked at Leena, Janelle and Zayna and asked, "Who was the first one to say you can't play?" The girls looked at each other uncomfortably and then Leena said it was Janelle and then Janelle said it was Leena.

So then I asked Janelle and Zayna, "When she does wrong speech, why are you listening to her? Shouldn't you do right speech and say "Leena, we should be kind?" I continued, "Okay so you don't want to play with Haila, for whatever reason, did you say, Haila, we don't want to make you sad, but would it be okay if you find someone else to play with today? Please don't be upset. Did you say something like that?" I asked. "Or did you just say something mean that would break her heart?"

Haila interjected again, this time louder and said, "No, they tell me, go away!"

"Go away?" I asked. I shook my head, "That's wrong speech." I wanted Janelle and Zayna to help Leena by pointing out that she did not need to treat others unkindly. I did not want them to give in to bystander apathy.
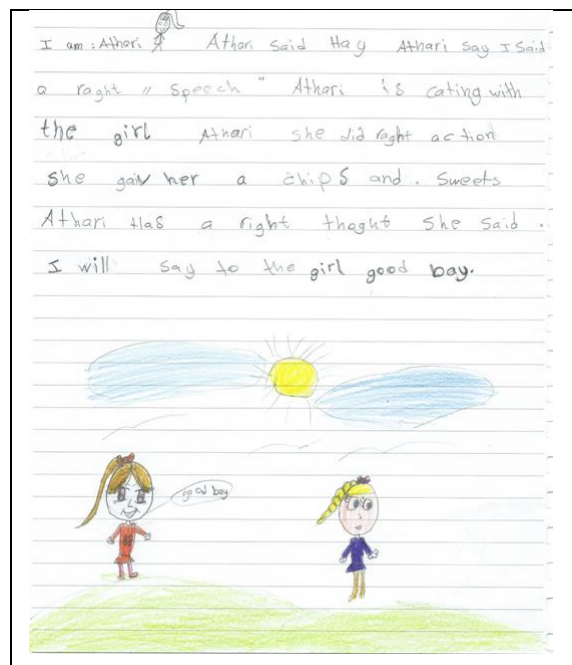
Figure 7.9: Pictures and sentences showing right action and right speech

Leena understood right from wrong and she knew she was being unkind to Haila. The literature suggests that when children refuse to comply there are issues of "control, power and anger" (Keat 2008: 155). Theoretically Leena could be helped to overcome these issues through scenarios that gave opportunities to be placed in dilemmas which had control, power and anger. As Keat points out critical importance should be given to "child play to provide the children with a life laboratory within which to experiment with control, power, goodness, badness, conflict, empathy and forgiveness" (2008:158). That evening I wrote a story based on the incident called *Sabah's Happy Heart*.

In one of the carpet sessions where we shared examples of the conducts, Leena mentioned how she hit her sisters. "It is wrong action," she said.

"So next time you'll stop?" I said.

"No," said Leena, "I will hit them, I will never stop. They make me so angry. They take my things. I will never stop!" I was surprised at Leena's tone. I did not remember Leena looking so angry. I wondered how much of her frustration at home carried over to school in her manner of dealing with Haila. During the end of the study, I openly asked the girls if they felt the stories had empowered them in any way. Farmer et al refer to network centrality in the classroom which "supports pupils' high social positions" (1999: 254). I saw the meaningful glances and smirks that Leena and Janelle exchanged. I was not expecting to hear what I heard. They both raised their hands and with grins said, "Yes it made us more bad."

"Really?" I said, "How? What do you do now that you didn't do before?"

"We pull hair," said Leena smiling and trying not to laugh. I did not recall any incidents in which Leena showed aggressive physical behaviour. That was not her way, she was a well behaved pupil in my class and as far as I could see her only issue was with Haila.

When I asked Leena for her parent questionnaire she complained that her mother was too busy to complete it. I asked her to try and bring it tomorrow. The next day Leena brought me the questionnaire. She said she had left it with a note for her mother and gone to sleep and found it on the table the next day. Leena's mom described Leena positively. She only listed one item in which she wanted Leena to improve and that was in being quiet.

In Leena's baseline, Leena writes that the things she wants to improve about herself are "1. I want do nat (sic) say bad words to my sister. 2. I want do not thro thing on the flour (sic). 3. I dont want to forgaive my frainds(sic)." I think Leena meant to write that she hopes she can forgive her friends. In the section about what Leena wanted to see in other girls she writes, "I howp the girls dont cik (sic). 2. I howp the girls lesnt to the teacher bus (sic). 3. I howp the girls dont bad thing thing about me (sic)." In Leena's final questionnaire, she writes about the top three changes she wants for herself: "1. I want to lesn to the teacher I will lesn to her I will go wher she go (sic)."

Figure 7.10: Leena's parent questionnaire

In looking at Leena's questionnaire for "I get angry and hurt others with my hands/ feet/ objects" she selects "mostly" on the baseline and "mostly" again on the final questionnaire. Although Leena stated that she was physically aggressive, I did not witness this during the time she was scheduled for my lessons. Neither did I hear from other girls that Leena had hit them. When Leena completed the questionnaire, she may have reflected on her behaviour relating to her sisters. The questionnaires show that Leena's behaviour improved in some ways. When I asked Haila if Leena was still unkind to her, she said no, "We are friends, Miss. Now she is nice and I am nice."

The following story is called *Sabah's Broken Heart* and was written after the girls told Haila to go away.

10.1 Sabah's Happy Heart

Sabah was a happy girl. She always had a big, wide, happy smile.

Everyone said, "Sabah you have a happy heart!"

One day her mommy said, "Sabah, today you have to go to school."

"Why do I have to go to school, Mommy?" said Sabah.

"To learn to read and write so you can learn about Allah's beautiful world," said Mommy.

At school Sabah was happy.

There were so many things to do in the classroom.

At lunch time Sabah wanted to play.

But Sabah didn't know anyone.

So she went to one girl and said, "Please can I play with you?"

"No, no go away!" said the girl.

A little part of Sabah's happy heart broke away.

Sabah went to two girls and said, "Please can I play with you?"

"No, no go away!" said the girls.

Another little part of Sabah's happy heart broke away.

Sabah went to three girls and said, "Please can I play with you?"

"No, no go away!" said the girls.

Another little part of Sabah's happy heart broke away.

Sabah went to four girls and said, "Please can I play with you?"

"No, no go away!" said the girls.

Another little part of Sabah's happy heart broke away.

Sabah went to five girls and said, "Please can I play with you?"

"No, no go away!" said the girls.

Now there was nothing left. Sabah's happy heart was all broken.

The bell rang and the children went inside.

Sabah sat on the carpet. Sabah's big, wide, happy smile was missing.

When Sabah went home her mommy said, "Subhan Allah! My little Sabah, where is your big, wide, happy smile? I can't see it!"

Sabah started to cry.

The next day Sabah didn't go to school.

The advisor called Sabah's mommy.

The advisor came to Sabah's class and talked to the girls about Sabah's broken heart.

"We are sorry," said the girls. "We just wanted to play in a group of one and two, and three and four and five. We didn't want anyone else in our group."

"We have to be kind. If we are kind we can grow happy hearts inside ourselves," said the advisor. "It's not kind to tell someone to go away."

The girls felt sad.

They thought for a while and then shouted, "We will fix Sabah's broken heart!"

That day the girls wrote notes in hearts and sent them to Sabah.

As Sabah read each note, a little piece of Sabah's heart began to glow.

After Sabah finished reading all the notes, her happy heart was bigger than ever before!

When Sabah went back to school ... guess what?

Yes, the girls in her class never said "Go away" to Sabah or anyone ever again.

Zayna

Zayna was generally a quiet child and always helpful in the classroom. She was eager to complete her tasks. She was high ability, tall and in the athletics team. Zayna was the third member of Leena and Janelle's group. However, whereas Leena and Janelle had no trouble expressing themselves, Zayna was reserved. There was an incident involving one of my pupils. I was in the staff room catching up with some marking when several of my pupils stormed into the room which is generally off-limits to children. I could tell by the look on their faces that something was very wrong. They were all talking at the same time. Calming them down I asked Yasina to explain what had happened. They had been left without supervision which was not unusual. It turned out a sixth grader had physically assaulted one of my students. Yasina was showing me how Sawm had been beaten. I asked the children where their teacher was. "Not come," chorused the voices.

I asked the children to bring Sawm to me. I took the sobbing and distraught pupil to the advisor's office. I stayed there for a while and spoke to the girl who had repeatedly hit Sawm. As I walked into the classroom my pupils were sitting on the carpet with two pupil-teachers reviewing high frequency words. I was upset about Sawm. I greeted my pupils and then asked who had seen the incident. About half the class raised their hands. I asked, "You saw Sawm getting beaten?" They nodded and affirmed. I asked them "How many of you pulled the girl off Sawm?" They all remained silent. I asked them, "How many of you tried to make the girl stop?" Nobody said anything. Then Zayna raised her hand, "Miss, I tell her stop. She look at me and say, if you say me again stop, when I finish here I start with you!" Zayna raised her hands and shrugged her shoulders. "Then I don't." I looked at Yasina. I did not say anything. She quickly put up her hands in surrender, and said, "I not there! I not there!"

A number of social experiments have been conducted using hidden cameras on how people respond to individuals in distress. Most people feel uncomfortable when seeing a wrong but remain detached and do not get involved. This is what my pupils did when they stood around and watched Sawm's beating, a classmate they had known at least since Kindergarten.

According to critical Islamic pedagogy, tadib, as Waghid describes it, calls for social activism. This means as Kazmi notes that children should be empowered "to act in and on the world for the realisation of social justice" (2006: 519). The problem in this situation, I suspect, was that the children did not know how to react as a group when they saw an injustice. They were not taught how to speak up and how to intervene. They were not equipped with words and phrases. Despite the hadith which encourages all Muslims to help the oppressed when they see an injustice, nothing was done to help. The hadith states, "Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith" (Sahih Muslim). Zayna was the only pupil who tried to help in a limited way. It indicated that Zayna did not like to witness physical oppression. She behaved differently to the others.

During lunch time the pupils at the school would put money in a drinks machine and it would take the money and not dispense a drink. Occassionally I would see girls kicking the machine. After I saw fifth grade girls kicking the machine, I asked my students to decide what kind of an action this was. The students classified it as wrong action. Zayna selected on her baseline that she never kicked the machine but later said that she sometimes did. On Zayna's final questionnaire she selected that she never kicks the machine.

Another problem that beset the school was the unfettered throwing of garbage on the playground floor. The girls ate in the playground and wherever they ate, they left their rubbish. It was one of the most assiduous problems that confounded the school. It was not a simple matter of getting the children to clean. That would have been easy. Evidently this particular administration did not want parents to complain that their children were being made to pick up their own garbage. So it was left to the cleaners to walk from child to child picking up their rubbish that some they would just flippantly toss on the ground.

Figure 7.11: Zayna's questionnaire

Through guided discovery my pupils realised that throwing rubbish on the ground was classed as wrong action and wrong thought. Moreover, my pupils saw the need to pick up their mess in the classroom. They investigated the merits of cleaning and keeping God's world beautiful through the science module on the environment. They understood how landfills were bad for the environment and related this to recycling, reusing and reducing. In Islamic Studies the children learnt the well known hadith (saying or practice of Muhammadﷺ) that "Cleanliness is half of faith." Transferring this to the home, car, school, bus and environment was also necessary. Lemu writes, "A person cannot stay clean if he lives in a dirty environment. Therefore a Muslim should keep his room, his house, his neighbourhood and his environment clean" (Lemu 1999 :10). Most of the students especially Zayna demonstrated an understanding of cleanliness of the environment through her initiatives in keeping the classroom clean. The administration did eventually tell the girls to put their garbage in the bin which was prompted by inspector visits from the education authority. On Zayna's final questionnaire she writes that she says thank you to the bus driver and that she smiles at others. Smiling is classed as a good deed in Islam. Zayna was never a smiley child. I was glad she wanted to smile.

232

Figure 7.12: Zayna's parent questionnaire

Janelle

Janelle was a high ability pupil. In relative terms her English was very good. Janelle was a quick learner and from Vygotsky an excellent More Knowledgeable Other. I relied on Janelle, Leena and Haila to translate English and Arabic. Janelle usually completed work very quickly if she liked what she was doing.

Figure 7.13: Janelle's parent questionnaire

Janelle was self admittedly lazy in some ways. She was a member of Leena's club. She had a kind nature but in the last two months had allowed herself to get caught up in spitefulness.

The three improvements that her mom wanted to see were to listen to her, tidy up and not to hit her siblings. Janelle was a group leader but very rarely cleaned up and recognised this as a fault.

For the statement about listening to the teacher, Janelle selected "sometimes" in the baseline but for the final questionnaire she selected "rarely". In my judgment however, Janelle mostly listened first time but usually expressed her dissatisfaction if she felt she had to do a lot of writing. Janelle was a group leader, so she was mostly responsible.

In the baseline Janelle wrote the following points about the things she would most like to change about herself. "1. I like if I change and not het (sic) any body. 2. I like if I change and not drow (sic) some things bad. 3. I like if I change and not said bad words." In the final questionnaire Janelle wrote "I love if I be note engry and het (sic). I love if I don't push in line. I love if I lessen to the teacher ferst time (sic)."

Figure 7.14: Janelle's questionnaire

Janelle and two other girls would expect others to clean up after them. Other priveleges were also conferred on Janelle like reserving a seat, carrying her bag and keeping a spot for her in line. I wrote the story of Neena to introduce children to the merits of being responsible.

10.2 Neena

Neena never did anything at home.

That's because her mommy would do everything for her.

Nina never did anything at school.

That's because her friends would do everything for her.

Neena never put her reading books away.

That's because Aisha always put her reading books away for her.

Neena never picked up her math papers.

That's because Rayna always picked up her math papers for her.

Neena never returned her counters.

That's because Shay always returned her counters for her.

Neena never put her pencil case away.

That's because Barah always put her pencil case away for her.

Neena never did anything because Aisha, Rayna, Shay and Barah would always do everything for her.

One day Aisha, Rayna, Shay and Barah were absent. They had to go to another town for a two day sport's competition.

That day there was a big mess all around Neena.

Neena waited.

"Excuse me, can you put my books away?" said Neena to Abeela.

"Subhan Allah! Goodness me!" said Abeela. "Neena, you need to be responsible. You need to put your books away."

Neena waited.

"Excuse me, can you put my counters away?" said Neena to Shamsa.

"Subhan Allah! Goodness me!" said Shamsa. "Neena, you need to be responsible. You need to put your counters away."

Neena waited.

"Excuse me, can you put my maths paper away," said Neena to Lara.

"Subhan Allah! Goodness me!" said Lara. "Neena, you need to be responsible. You need to put your math paper away."

Neena waited.

"Excuse me can you put my pencil case away?" said Neena to Deedee.

Deedee's mouth fell wide open. "Subhan Allah! Goodness me!" said Deedee. "You need to be responsible. You need to put your pencil case away."

That day the teacher gave everyone a letter. "Please ask Mommy to sign the letter so you can go to the fun picnic in the park tomorrow," said the teacher.

Neena didn't put the letter in her bag. She left it in the mess on her table. The next day when the teacher asked for the signed papers Neena didn't have her paper.

"O dear!" said the teacher. "The advisors will not let you go."

That day everyone in Neena's class went to the fun picnic, everyone, that is, except Neena. Neena had to spend the whole day with Grade 5. Neena was very, very, very upset.

The next day Neena put her reading books away.

She picked up her math papers.

She returned the counters.

She put her pencil case away.

"Neena!" said the teacher, "You are amazing! Thank you for being responsible!"

From that day on, Neena was always responsible and she always remembered to get her letters signed!

After I read the story a pupil came to me just before the lunch bell and whispered, "Miss, Latel is same like Neena!" I started paying attention to Latel and sure enough, other girls carried her books to her bag. It was shortly after that, that Latel began to put her own things away. But it was not because of the story. I just told her bluntly, "Put your own things away, please."

10.3 Strong Halima and the New School

The following story was written in connection to the theme of leadership (see Section 8.13). It was written based on the character of Sineen.

Strong Halima and the New School

Halima had to go to a new school because her dad had moved to a new town for a new job. Halima was very sad, she was going to miss her friends and teachers very much. Halima loved her school. The girls were so kind and helpful. At Halima's old school the girls listened to the teacher first time so everyone could be safe. The girls did their assignments, their jobs and kept the classroom neat and tidy. Everyone shared and everyone cooperated. It was a fun and happy school and the only time girls didn't smile was when they had a tummy ache.

It was Sunday and Halima's mom took her to her new school. Halima smiled and kissed her mom. Inshallah, she would quickly make new friends. Maybe her new school would be better than her old school thought Halima. The advisor was very kind. She took Halima to her class. Most of the children were sitting on the carpet. Two girls were playing with someone's hair, one girl had her back to the teacher, another girl was hiding behind another girl eating chocolate. Two girls were sitting on chairs and one girl was jumping up and down. When Halima looked around the room she saw that the bookshelves were messy, the tables were messy and even the floor was messy. There were pencils on the floor, paper on the floor, crayons on the floor and even books. Someone had sharpened a pencil and let the shavings make a mess everywhere.
"Welcome to Grade Four," said the teacher. "My name is Miss Alley. We're just about to listen to a story."

Halima sat on the carpet, a girl tried to play with her hair. Halima turned and looked at her and said. "No thank you, please keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself."
The teacher started to read a story. But some of the girls were talking. The story was called Little Red Riding Hood. Halima liked the story and tried to listen. The teacher kept on stopping to ask some girls to listen. This made Halima very upset. Halima raised her hand, The teacher looked at Halima and said, "Yes?"
"Can I say something to the girls please?" asked Halima.
"Yes," said the teacher.

Halima stood up and looked at the girls. "Asalaamu alaikum," she said, "This is an interesting story so you need to do what I'm doing. You need to listen." The girls who were talking stopped. The girls playing with hair stopped playing with hair. The teacher smiled and then finished the story. Halima clapped her hands. Then the girls clapped their hands.

When Miss Ally told the girls to do their work, one girl was standing on a table, another was dancing around the classroom. One girl was writing on the table and another left the classroom without permissible. The teacher tried and tried and tried and tried to make the girls follow directions. But the girls would not listen.

The teacher held her head, "O my goodness!" said the teacher.

Then teacher said she would give stickers if the girls followed the rules. But the girls did not listen.

Then teacher said she would give candy if the girls followed the rules. But the girls did not listen.

Then the teacher said she would give gifts from the treasure box, only some girls listened.

Halima looked around the room, and counted all the girls that were not listening. "One, two, three, four five ... six. Hmmmm." said Halima.

Halima was sitting next to Kamee. "The girls do not listen to Miss Ally," whispered Kamee. "They are not kind to Miss Ally."

Halima nodded her head. "Yes," she said.

When the teacher asked the girls to clean up, five of the girls were playing, running and shouting. One was combing her hair, one was playing with the board marker. Halima shook her head. Halima was very sad. "Subhan Allah!" said Halima.

When school was over, Miss Ally said, "Halima I hope you had a nice day. I'm feeling ill today and the girls were not good listeners. Maybe tomorrow will be a better day."

"Inshallah," said Halima.

The next day Miss Ally was absent. Ms. Batriya came to sit with the girls. The girls were all quiet. They did not talk. They did not jump. They did not play with hair. They did not eat. They did not stand on tables.

"Hmmmm," said Halima.

The next day Miss Ally was back.

"Asalaamu alaikum, Miss Ally," said Halima. "How are you?"

"Wa alaikum salaam. Much better thank you," said Miss Ally.

When the girls came in they started being noisy and talking on the carpet. When Miss Ally called the register, they were playing with hair, eating and not listening.

"Hmmmm," said Halima.

Miss Ally was called to the office and so had to leave the classroom. When she did, two of the girls got very loud and started running in the classroom. Kamee put her fingers in her ears and made a very sad face.

Suddenly Halima stood up and then switched the light on and off. All the girls looked at Halima. All the girls were quiet. Halima spoke to them in Arabic. She said,

"From today you will follow rules. You will sit on the carpet quietly. You will raise your hand to talk. You will not stand on tables. You will not eat in class. You will do your work and if you need to talk you will use your indoor voice to be considerate of others who are working."

"Why should we listen to you!" shouted Imlee, one of the girls who had been running and shouting.

Very slowly Halima said, "You are not listening to me. You are following the rules of the school that you agreed to follow when you came here. The same rules that you follow very well for Ms. Batriya."

Imlee made an angry face. She walked over to Halima and swung her hand to hit Halima. But Halima caught Imlee's hand and turned it down. The girls gasped. Then Imlee raised her leg and kicked Halima as hard as she could. Halima grabbed Imlee's foot and pushed it away. As Imlee fell, Halima slid her leg under Imlee so she did not hit the floor and get hurt. Imlee looked shaken.

"I'm a karate champion," said Halima. "Please don't try to hurt me and please … follow the rules."

Just then Miss Ally came back. The girls were all quiet.

Halima did not like her class for the first few weeks but soon the girls learned to cooperate and be kind to each other. Pretty soon Halima liked her class better than her old school and guess who her best friend was? It was Imlee.

Seerah

There was a lot of changing of girls from one class to another in the first week of school. The office was trying to balance out the numbers as new girls arrived. Two days later I secretly wished that Seerah was one of the girls that was transferred to another class. She reminded me of Mary Lennox from the *Secret Garden*. When Seerah was upset with anyone she would abruptly slap them across the face, really, really hard. I could hear the slap. It was horrible. In all my years of teaching I do not think I ever met a child who had such a terrible temper. And when I corrected Seerah, she would cry a storm of tears. When I asked her to go to the advisors' office, she would cry harder. She was a stubborn and pouty child and I had only

known her for two days and I really did not want to know her for any more. I remember the advisor had to come to my room because Seerah refused to leave. The advisor shouted at Seerah. I did not know what she was saying but her expressions and tone were uncomfortably harsh. It was not just that Seerah would hit. After hitting she would refuse to apologise.

I realised after the first few assessments in reading, writing and maths that Seerah was exceptionally bright. But her inability to control her temper was a huge problem. When I called the advisor to the class, Seerah would be reprimanded but then I lost her for the whole rest of the day. She clung to her grudges like gum on a shoe. One day she had pushed and slapped so many children that I had to come up with a coping mechanism. I told my pupils that it did not seem likely that Seerah was going to change her angry ways in a hurry. I told them that sending her to the advisor was not helping. I showed them her book. There was very little work in it. Then I gave my pupils a self-preservation strategy. I advised them not to upset Seerah. I made it very clear that if they upset her, then they should expect a slap, a push, a kick or a pinch. I told them if they upset Seerah then they needed to run.

Figure7.17: Seerah's questionnaire

At first Seerah disliked me. She would scowl at me. That was understandable I did not overlook anything that Seerah did. But I began to give her a lot of positive reinforcement for

her academic work. She worked to a very high standard. She liked my smiles and positive remarks. She began to smile back. Incidences involving Seerah's temper reduced dramatically, but they did not go away. At the parents' meeting, I discussed the problem with Seerah's mom. She sighed and shook her head. She told me that Seerah would slap her sisters and she even slapped the housemaid. "Subhan Allah (Glory to God)!" I said, "She slaps the maid?" Her mother nodded sadly. Seerah was standing right there smiling sheepishly.

Soon the pupils were drilled and put into a routine. I was able to rotate pupil-teachers. At first I selected pupils from the high ability group. Seerah was a good teacher because she understood everything that needed to be done. I only ever had to explain once. But the problem was that pupils did not always listen first time and Seerah did not have any patience for that. At one point I told Seerah that she could not have the privilege of being a teacher because she could not control herself. Moreover, I would remind her of the rules that she as a pupil-teacher had to uphold. She would beg for another chance. I would give it to her but not on the day of the offense. Seerah's class had a large number of low ability pupils so most things were a challenge.

Figure 7.18: Seerah's parent questionnaire

The class next door would sometimes make a huge noise. On those days we knew the teacher was absent. That was always the way: shrieking, screaming, yelling, banging and running. It was chaos. This was disruptive not only because of the noise trespass but also because it would take time away from my pupils because I would have to go next door to calm the

pupils. One day when Seerah and Sineen were scheduled as the pupil-teachers, my colleague was absent so the girls next door were noisy. I had gone in the class and removed some pupils, and then gone again and removed another two. There was a third occasion. Then on the fourth occasion, I decided I was not going to get up again and disrupt the guided reading I was doing. I asked the pupil-teachers to go instead. I did that sometimes. Seerah and Sineen went in. I heard Seerah yell something in Arabic (there was a connecting door, that I had propped open) and then she came back out. I thought that was the end of it, but it so happened that when Seerah went in, a girl refused to cooperate and so Seerah slapped her. I was not expecting that.

I told Seerah to go back into the classroom and apologise. Seerah started crying. When she did not make an apology I told her she needed to go to the advisor. Seerah just cried harder. It had been a mistake to send Seerah in there. Then I wished that the office would send a cover teacher to un-complicate things. It took until the next day for Seerah to apologise. But I was glad she did. She had never apologised before so that was a change. Seerah had taken a great liking to Sineen and wanted Sineen to like her too. One time Seerah was crying quite hard. I asked her what was wrong. "I want Sineen to be my friend but she doesn't love me," sobbed Seerah. I looked at Sineen and Sineen gave an embarrassed grin.
"Sineen?" I said. Sineen lost her grin and complained that Seerah did not let her do her work. I told Seerah to go and wash her face. While she was gone, I asked Sineen if she could be kind to Seerah. "Think of it as helping someone," I said. Sineen sighed, smiled and agreed.

There had been a field trip, and somehow the conversation got onto the girls being bussed to school. Someone complained that Seerah had shouted at the bus monitor. The bus monitor was an adult who is responsible for ensuing all the girls get on the school bus and get off where they should.
"Seerah," I said, "you did not shout at an adult."
Ayah was quick to burst out, "She always do!" She was equally quick to classify it as wrong speech. Seerah looked uncomfortable. "Goodness Seerah," I said, "I don't ever want to hear anything like that again. That's the last time you shout at an adult. Is that clear?"

In looking at Seerah's baseline questionnaire, she selected everything as "always" and "mostly" from the twenty two questions which meant that she felt that she generally followed rules. She selected "never" for being shy and for letting others do their work. She selected

"sometimes" saying she worked well in groups. For the nine latter questions, Seerah erased her initial selections of "sometimes" and changed them to "never". All her responses were never, except for throwing garbage. For this she selected "sometimes." When I asked Sineen if there had been any changes in Seerah, she said, "Yes, Seerah not hit anyone now." I knew there had not been any incidences in class but I was not sure about the playground. I asked Seerah if she still hit children she answered, "Only in the home." Still for Seerah to stop slapping in school was a major achievement. I thought back to the September when I wished Seerah would be placed in another class. It was wrong thought.

Basima

I had four Basimas in my classes. In the middle of September I received a call from the advisor' office. Basima's father wanted to see me. I immediately thought there was a problem and the parent was upset. Fathers very seldom come to school to meet teachers in an all-girls school. To make matters worse, I did not know which Basima's father wanted to see me and for a while I was trying to picture what all of the Basimas looked like. I taught more than fifty girls and I was still learning names in the second week. It turned out it was Basima Z's dad. Basima had settled well into school and from her father I learned that she also had a tutor. Many of the girls did. Basima's father said, "I want you to treat her like your daughter." He wanted a brief report on how his daughter was adjusting. His English was excellent. He asked to be informed of any matter relating to Basima's education or behaviour.

Basima was a tiny girl. She had an excessively high pitched voice. So I would often have to tell her to calm down. She always wore a big smile. That was how I could always tell when something was wrong. One day there was something very wrong. I noticed it at registration Basima was not smiling, her little shoulders were drooped. When the pupil-teachers had finished, I turned to Basima and asked what was wrong. Basima looked even sadder but did not say a word. Another pupil spoke for Basima, "One girl he …" I interrupted "she".
"One girl she hit Basima face." The pupil demonstrated with a swing of her hand to show me that it was slap. I looked at Basima, and asked, "And why did she slap you?" It seemed that Basima was sitting in the seat that the girl wanted to sit in and Basima refused to move. It did not surprise me. Although she was tiny, Basima could not be intimidated. She was very confident. "Are you going on the bus today?" I asked. Basima nodded, "Well, make sure I go with you." At the end of the day Basima came to my class and smiled. "Ms. Fawzia, you take me?" she said. I laughed, "Ha! So you remembered. I thought you'd forget!" I took her

hand and her huge trolley-school-bag and walked her to the bus. I climbed in first, the bus driver was seated and the bus monitor was there too. I greeted them, and then I asked the girls to look at me. "Who slapped Basima?" I asked. Nobody spoke. Then I said, "Slapping faces is wrong. No, no, no." The bus driver and the bus monitor fussed a little at the girls saying it was wrong to hit. I left. The next day Basima found her smile again and her loud squeaky voice. It was an unfortunate thing that many of the pupils got pushed or hit during lunch time or in the bus. Complaining to the advisors did not seem to solve the problem. When Sawm had taken a beating from the older girl I was concerned about the lack of consequences. I was asked to attend a meeting and informed that the student would only receive a verbal warning because there was no previous offence and no weapon and there was no blood.

Figure 7.19: Basima's questionnaire

My interpretation was that if my pupils were beaten black and blue, scratched and mauled and their hair uprooted there may only be a verbal reprimand because there was no weapon and no blood. There was one more incident where one of my pupils was slapped by an older girl. She did not know who it was. So I took the child from class to class to identify her

244

assailant. During this time teachers accommodated us to look around the room. When finally the girl was pointed out I told the girl to go to the advisor. The girl started to cry. After that incident my pupils did not really experience any bullying from older girls.

In looking at Basima's baseline assessment she selected "never" for being shy, and "never" for not letting others do their work. She left a blank for listening to the teacher first time. Basima was a character, she was funny and loved to tell stories. When she shared a story about the conducts it was usually wrong action or wrong speech. Moreover, Basima was generally not a good listener. Basima's parent questionnaire showed that she "sometimes" listened, that she "mostly" told the truth. That she was "always" kind. That she "sometimes" cleaned and "always" felt safe at school. Her parent wanted her "to not hit her sister" and "to clean". In Basima's final questionnaire the only improvement she wrote was "I will lisn (sic) to the teacher." When I asked her if she thought she had made any changes, she said, "I hit less." I asked her who she hit and why. "I hit my sister because my sister do for me la la la Dad will not buy for you sweet!" Basima mimicked her sister. "I angry. I hit her!" said Basima. I told Basima that if her sister was doing wrong speech, it did not mean she herself should do wrong action.

Figure 7.20 Baima's parent questionnaire

One of the big changes in Basima was that she began to listen to the bus monitors, something she was not very good at. One day she said, "I tell for the bus driver, thank you! Right speech!"

Ayah

Ayah was tiny but whenever she did mistakes she did big ones. She was part of a small group that was sent to the advisor on a regular basis. Rasha, Ayah, and Mona had problems with being considerate of those around them. They totally disregarded their own safety and the safety of others. Mona and Ayah were usually running around. Rasha on the other hand seemed to always be in an argument with someone. But there was a reason why these pupils had behaviour problems. The previous year Ayah and Mona went through countless supply teachers. On some days the children were left unattended for the whole day. It is hard to think what happens in a classroom of twenty-five seven to eight year olds who have no adult supervision.

One could assume that Mona and Ayah's habits had been developed throughout the year and whenever there were no adults they immediately reverted to their old ways. Unfortunately this year was no different, their Arabic teacher was on sick leave and adult presence was mostly absent during those lessons. On these days I would go to their class and find chaos. Guaranteed Ayah would be breaking a classroom safety rule. Initially it was standing on tables or chairs, running around the classroom shouting and screaming, throwing objects and tearing books. Even though I sent Ayah to the advisor, it did not seem as though it had any effect. One day the bus monitor was sitting in the classroom to supervise. I could not understand the monitors heated, loud words but she was pointing an accusing finger at Ayah, Mona, Rasha and two other pupils. I would then take all the pupils who were disruptive and put them in my room where at least I could be sure that they were not a danger to themselves or others.

This kind of behaviour persisted for a few weeks. But having a system where pupils were designated as teachers was an effective way to trying to encourage the children to help each other to improve their behaviour. When Ayah was the teacher, I noticed that she saw the need to follow the rules. She immersed herself into the role. Her demeanour, expression, attitude, was very surprising. She was beginning to change. I made sure I referred to her as Miss Ayah. I could tell she really liked that. I really liked her effort. It was a big difference from

see her running around a classroom screaming with flaying arms. But it did not always stay that way. Ayah would relapse more than occasionally. One time I told her, she could not be teacher because she was not following rules. "To be a teacher you have to teach the rules and show your pupils that you know how to follow them too." Ayah cried. But her enthusiasm to be a pupil-teacher drove her to improve her behaviour.

In Ayah's baseline questionnaire she only selected options from "always", "mostly", and "sometimes." I do not think Ayah understood the change in selections for the latter nine. Ayah struggled with English and did not always understand directions. That said she liked to share examples of the conducts. She indignantly revealed Seerah's fault in not listening to the bus monitors although there was a time that Ayah was guilty of the same misbehaviour. Ayah's mom listed two things that she wanted to see changed in her daughter. One was tidiness and the other was not to hit.

Figure 7.21: Ayah's questionnaire

Parent Questionnaire of Child's Behaviour

Asalaamu alaikum Parents, please complete the following questionnaire about your child.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ، ولي الأمر المحترم ،، يرجى استكمال الاستبيان التالي عن طفلك

			0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
1	My child listen to me	تستمع طفلتي إلي	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
2	My child tells the truth	طفلي تقول الحقيقة	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
3	My child is kind	طفلتي طيبة	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
4	My child keeps things clean and tidy تبقي طفلتي الأشياء مرتبة ونظيفة		never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
5	My child hits others	تضرب طفلتي الآخرين	never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always
6	My child feels safe and happy at school تشعر طفلتي بالأمان والسعادة في المدرسة		never	rarely	sometimes	mostly	always

يرجى كتابة 1 أو 2 أو 3 تصرفات تريد أن تراها في طفلك

Please write 1, 2 or 3 behaviours that you would like to see improved in your child.

1. I want my girl to be tidy. أن تكون طفلتي منظمة

2. I want my girl not to hit. ألا تضرب طفلتي الآخرين

3. ....

Figure 7.22 Ayah's parent questionnaire

One day Ayah had had her lunch taken from her lunch box which was outside the classroom. She was very upset and cried. Girls would sometimes complain about either money being taken or food. The following story was written to show children the inappropriateness of stealing. The story also touched on bystander apathy. It opened a window into discussing what a person could do if they saw wrong action.

10.4 Ayah and Kowah

Ayah always worked hard. She was kind and polite and always followed the rules. She sat quietly and listened on the carpet. She never shouted out. When the teacher gave directions she always listened carefully.

One day a new girl came to the school. Her name was Kowah. The teacher asked Ayah to help Kowah. Kowah didn't know where the restroom was, she didn't know where the PE hall was, she didn't know where to eat, so Ayah was a big help.
"Thank you Ayah," said Kowah. "You are a good friend."
The next day Kowah brought Ayah a beautiful gift. It was a small doll.

Soon Ayah and Kowah became very good friends, they did everything together. They even went to each other's house to finish school work. They played together, read together and went to the mall together.

One morning Ayah and Kowah were walking in the hallway passing some bags, Kowah looked both ways and when she knew no one was looking, she opened a pink bag and took out ten riyals.

Ayah looked at Kowah. "Kowah, that's not your bag and that's not your money" Kowah looked at Ayah, "Well it's my money now!" she said. Kowah quickly got up and ran back to the classroom. Ayah was very upset.

In the classroom Ayah wasn't smiling. She wasn't happy. When the teacher was talking she wasn't listening. All Ayah could think about was how Kowah had stolen the money from another girl's bag.

When the girls were doing their math, Ayah whispered, "Kowah, go and put that money back!"
Kowah looked at Ayah, "What money?" I don't know what you are talking about!"
"The money that I saw you steal from the pink bag!" said Ayah.
Ayah tried three more times to make Kowah put the money back. But Kowah would not.

Ayah felt very angry and then very worried and then very sad. Ayah felt very bad inside when she began to think how the girl would feel at lunch time. Maybe that was her lunch money.

Ayah thought and thought and thought. Then she asked her teacher if she could get something from her bag. Ayah went outside and took ten riyals from her bag and put it in the pink bag. Her mom had given her ten riyals for lunch.

When it was lunch Ayah didn't have anything to eat. But Ayah didn't mind. Kowah came to sit next to Ayah. "Here Ayah," said Kowah, I didn't see you eat yet, you can have this sandwich and drink. I bought them from the cafeteria."
"No, thank you," said Ayah. "Maybe you used the stolen money to buy the food. I'm not putting food from stolen money in my tummy. It would make me sick, very, very sick!" Ayah got up and walked away. Ayah didn't talk to Kowah the whole day. When she got home she told her mom how upset she was with Kowah.

"Maybe you can remind Kowah that Allah sees what she does all the time," said her mom. "Remind her that the angels write her deeds. Maybe, inshallah, she will correct her mistake. And if she doesn't say to her you will tell the teacher."

"Do I have to tell the teacher?" said Ayah.
"Allah asks us to love each other and care for each other. Kowah needs help and she needs to know what she did makes Allah very sad and it hurts the people who have had something belonging to them taken away. The teachers will help her by making her correct what she did wrong."
"Jazak Allahu khairan (May God reward you with good), Mama," said Ayah.
"Wa eyakum (and you)," said her mom.

The next day Ayah told Kowah that Allah sees everything she does. "If you don't ask for forgiveness from the people that you hurt and tell God you are sorry, then you will put yourself in a lot of trouble."
Kowah thought about what Ayah said. Kowah gave ten riyals to Ayah then she prayed and told Allah she was very sorry. Kowah wrote Ayah a letter of apology and never did steal again, never, ever, ever!

Write sentences about the behaviours. Use speech marks.

"I will take the many" said Kowh.
"Dont take the many said" Shmmah.

Write sentences about the behaviours. Use speech marks.

I don't like Kowah when he, talk a ...
money for the girl's pink bag. lo
I like 'shama when he toll Kowah pat
a mary back.

Figure 7.23: Story sequence and sentences

Rasha

Rasha had major issues with conforming to rules. She would argue in Arabic because her English was weak. Every teacher she had seemed to complain about her defiance. Children who exhibit these traits are said to have issues with control, power and anger. Rasha was an angry child. She did things her way and she did not really care what anyone else thought. Her parent questionnaire was the only questionnaire out of fifty that sought four improvements rather than three.

Figure 7.24: Rasha's parent questionnaire

I was having a conversation with my colleagues and at some point Rasha's name came up. "Oh my goodness!" said my colleague, "You don't have Rasha Naim do you? I had her last year. She gave me fits. That child is impossible!" Rasha was usually grumpy and difficult. When someone wronged her it was the end of the world. When I asked the person to apologise to her she would toss her head and refuse the apology. With searing eyes she would say long stretched out sentences in Arabic. But she would not forgive. Rasha needed to be on an anger management programme. She would often cry with frustration. She did not really volunteer stories about right or wrong about herself. Her examples were usually about what others had done. Never-the-less she keenly listened to the stories and completed the assignments. Rasha's baseline choices were generally two extremes either "never" or "always". In her final questionnaire, however, she did select "sometimes".

I asked Rasha if she felt she changed in any way. She said she still got a little angry but that she did now forgive those who wronged her.

Figure 7.25: Rasha's questionnaire

Mona

Mona's English was weak but she liked to study. Her behaviour improved like Ayah but she was a little less receptive. Whereas Ayah liked to be a pupil-teacher, Mona did not show any enthusiasm.

Figure 7.26: Mona's picture and sentences of right action

She was a little shy and not as confident as Ayah. Mona liked to share examples of the conducts. Although she did not talk English confidently she was able to understand directions. One of the things that impacted Mona was the writing of stories. There were a few children who began writing mini books about right and wrong action, Mona was one of them. Mona did not just write one mini-book, she wrote many. In fact she wrote one every evening and brought it to school the next day. Although she would make mistakes in the story and I sometimes could not tell what she had written or meant I would read them with a flow looking at the pictures to give me cues.

Mona stopped running around and became a lot more responsible. When teachers were absent, the pupil-teachers would take responsibility and the girls would read or do some other quiet activity. If a child lapsed into inappropriate behaviour they would be sent to my room by the pupil-teacher. Unlike before Mona was not one of the children who had to visit me.

Mona's parent questionnaire showed a concern for hitting other children. When I asked Mona if she felt she had improved in anyway she said she did not lie as much as she used to and she said she was better behaved.

Figure 8.27: Mona's parents questionnaire

Figure 7.28: Mona's questionnaire

Lisha

Lisha was not one of my pupils but her teacher had asked that two bullies in her class be allowed to attend my lessons for the action research project. Lisha was their victim. Lisha would always come to school early. I usually arrived at 6:30 so Lisha would knock on the staff-room door and ask if I needed any help. I usually kept something for her to do so she would not feel bored. One morning she told me about the two girls in her class that attended my lesson. "They not nice," she said. I asked Lisha what kinds of things the girls did that

were not nice. Lisha poured her heart out. She was bullied every day by the girls who would make others in the class follow them in being cruel to her. They would make paper balls and then throw them at her.

"Why?" I asked "Why are they throwing paper balls at you?"

"They tell me because you are the garbage," said Lisha.

"Why hasn't your mom come to talk to the office?" I asked.

"She do, she do!" insisted Lisha.

"And? What happened?" I asked.

"Nothing," said Lisha throwing up her arms.

"So you come every day to school to be bullied, and no one can stop it?" I remarked.

"My mom say I go other school," said Lisha.

"I'm sorry to hear that," I said.

I asked Lisha to run through all the acts of cruelty that the two girls inflicted on her. As she spoke I listed them on a paper. That evening I wrote another story based partially on Lisha's list and partially made up. The story is called *Miss Maysa and Anaya*.

10.5 Miss Maysa and Anaya

Miss Maysa was a new teacher. She was very kind and she always smiled. When she spoke she had a very soft voice. Miss Maysa was so happy when she got her first class of children. Miss Maysa spent Friday and Saturday at school making her class look beautiful for her children. She wanted everything to be just right. She bought a big, huge treasure chest that she filled with gifts for the children. She did lots and lots and lots of work. After that she did even more work. Miss Maysa was very, very tired but she was also very, very happy,

Miss Maysa's classroom looked super, fantastic wonderful! Miss Maysa clapped her hands and smiled bigger than she normally did. Everyone who saw her said, Miss Maysa you have a big, big smile!

"That's because I'm so excited about meeting my new students!" said Miss Maysa.

On the first day of school Miss Maysa greeted her students. She shook everyone by the hand and said, "Asalaamu alaikum. Welcome to Grade 4! I'm so happy to be your teacher."

The girls all smiled back. Some said, "Wa alaikum salaam. Miss Maysa, I'm happy to be your student!"

Miss Maysa spent the first week doing tests and telling and showing the children rules and routines and giving out duties. The children in Miss Maysa's class seemed very happy.

Then one day Miss Maysa was about to enter her room when she heard voices in the classroom.

"Goodness," said Miss Maysa, "No one should be in the classroom." Then she saw two students throwing paper balls at another student.

Miss Maysa didn't understand Arabic so she didn't understand what the girls were doing. Maybe they were playing.

The two girls, Hind and Hala who threw the paper said, "Asalaamu alaikum Miss Maysa, we were looking for something and didn't find it. We will go now."

The girls left quickly. The other girl Anaya looked sad but she left before Miss Maysa could say anything.

The next day Hind and Hala were not listening to the teacher. They were making a lot of noise. It made Miss Maysa upset. Then Hind and Hala started laughing loudly, and didn't let the other students do their work, Miss Maysa said, "Shaikha, please take Hind and Hala to the advisors."

When Hind and Hala left, the class was quiet. Miss Maysa was happy and grade 4 was happy. Most of all Anaya was very happy!

The next day Miss Maysa found some of her gifts missing from the treasure box. The children said Hala and Hind had stolen the gifts.

"Did you see them?" asked Miss Maysa.

"Yes," said the girls.

When Hind and Hala came to the classroom Miss Maysa asked them if they had opened the treasure box.

"No!" said Hind.

"No!" said Hala.

"Hmmm," said Miss Maysa.

The next day Anaya was crying. "What's wrong?" said Miss Maysa. But Anaya didn't say anything. During the end of the day, Amna went to Miss Maysa and whispered in her ear.

"Anaya is hungry. Anaya didn't eat anything because Hind and Hala took her lunch and money."

When the teacher asked Hind and Hala if they took Anaya's food, they said, "No we did not!"

The next day Miss Maysa forgot something in her classroom at lunch time. When she went to her desk she found Anaya hiding under her desk. Anaya was reading a book.

"Anaya why are you reading a book under the table?" asked Miss Maysa.

At first Anaya didn't say anything. Then Anaya cried and told Miss Maysa why she was so upset.

"Every day I come to school. Every day Hind and Hala throw paper at me. When I ask them why are you throwing paper at me they say because you are garbage. Then they take my lunch. Every day I go hungry. In the class if they look at me, they make faces. If they pass me they say horrible things to me. When they are absent, it is so nice. When they are at school, I come and hide here so they don't hit me in the playground. I read and read and read. I read about Allah, I read about the angels. I read about princesses and kings. I read about how I can be strong. I always feel happy when I read."

Miss Maysa listened to Anaya and felt very, very, very sad. "I'm so sorry, Anaya," said Miss Maysa. "I know Hala and Hind make a lot of noise and are not nice to the teacher or the children but I didn't know they were hurting you."

Miss Maysa felt very bad. She took Anaya to the advisor and the principal. The advisor and the principal were very upset.

Hind and Hala's parents were called to school.

The next day Hind and Hala had to write lots of "I am sorry" letters to all the girls and teachers. Hind and Hala were told that Allah loves good behavior. Hind and Hala loved Allah very much so they tried very hard to be good. This made everyone very happy. But the happiest person in the whole wide school was Anaya!

10.6 The Queen and her Four Daughters

The following story was written for the theme of ihsan see (8.15).

Once upon a time there lived a good and beautiful queen. The queen loved Allah very much. She always did her salah (worship), she always gave sadaqah, (charity), she always said kind words and she was always honest. She had four daughters called Arah, Barah, Darah and Farah. Arah always did her salah, Barah always gave sadaqah and Darah always said kind words. But Farah always did salah, always gave sadaqah, always said kind words and was always honest.

The queen wanted to test her daughters so one day she called them to her.

"Arah, Barah, Darah and Farah, please come here at once," said the queen.

The queen's daughters loved chocolate cake more than anything else in the world. The queen gave each of her daughters a large piece of delicious, yummy, chocolate cake.
"I want you to go and eat you delicious chocolate cake somewhere, where no one can see you," said the queen. "If you can eat it where no one can see you I will give you three special gifts."
The daughters were very excited.
"Alhamdulilah!(Praise God)" said the four princesses.
Arah went into the palace dungeon. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there.
"Goody, goody, goody! Yum, yum, yum! No one can see me," said Arah and saying bismillah she quickly ate her delicious, yummy, chocolate cake!

Barah went into the palace garden. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there.
"Goody, goody, goody! Yum, yum, yum! No one can see me," said Barah and saying bismillah she quickly ate her delicious, yummy, chocolate cake!

Darah went into the palace tower. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there.
"Goody, goody, goody! Yum, yum, yum! No one can see me," said Darah and saying bismillah she quickly ate her delicious, yummy, chocolate cake!

Farah went into the palace dungeon. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there. Then Farah said, "Someone's watching me!"
Farah went into the palace garden. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there. Then Farah said, "Someone's watching me!"
Farah went into the palace tower. She looked all around. She looked here and she looked there. She looked here and she looked there. Then Farah said, "Someone's watching me!"
Farah went everywhere, into the kitchen, into the throne room, into the bedrooms, she went under tables and inside chests. Poor Farah, she couldn't find any place to eat her delicious, yummy, chocolate cake!

The queen called all her daughters to her. "Well," she said, "who has eaten their delicious, yummy, chocolate cake?"

"I did," said Arah with a big smile.

"I did," said Barah with a bigger smile.

"I did," said Darah with the biggest smile.

"I didn't," said Arah with a very sad face.

All the girls looked at Farah. "Subhan Allah! (Glory to God)," they said.

"Why my dear?" said the Queen. "Why didn't you eat your delicious, yummy, chocolate cake?"

"Because everywhere I went someone was watching me," said Farah.

"Who was watching you?" asked the Queen and the girls.

"Allah was watching me," said Farah.

The queen smiled.

"Yes!" said the Queen. "Allah can see everything we do."

Then the queen gave Farah a ring, a bracelet, a necklace and a big, huge, delicious, yummy, chocolate cake.

Farah didn't want her sisters to be sad so she gave them the ring, bracelet and necklace but she kept the chocolate cake for herself!

10.7 Hanah and Her Grandfather

This story was written for theme of contributing to society (see 8.16).

Hanah loved her grandfather very, very, very much! She would always tell him, "You are the best grandfather in the whole, wide, very big, huge world!" Hanah's grandfather would touch her nose and say, "And you are the best granddaughter in the whole, wide, very big, huge world!"

Hanah's grandfather would tell her wonderful stories. He would tell her about Nuh^{عليه السلام} [Noah] and the animals. He would tell her about Yunus^{عليه السلام} [Jonah] and the fish. He would tell her about Yusuf^{عليه السلام} [Joseph] and the well. He would tell her so many stories. Hanah loved them all. When Hanah was old enough to go to school her grandfather said, "Listen to the teacher and learn to read, learn quickly not slowly."

Hanah nodded. "Inshallah, I will learn to read. Grandfather, I will learn quickly not slowly," she said.

At school Hanah listened to the teacher. Hanah learned to read in a very short time. "Good girl, Hanah," said her teacher, "You are excellent! You can read!"

Hanah loved to read books to her grandfather.

When she would finish her book, her grandfather would say, "You are the best granddaughter in the whole, wide, very big, huge world!" And Hanah would say, "And you are the best grandfather in the whole, wide, very big, huge world!"

One day Hanah's grandfather said, "Now that you can read well, seek knowledge, my child, seek knowledge."

The first time Hanah heard Grandfather say that she said, "Dear Grandfather, what does that mean? Seek knowledge?"

"Ahhh, yes!" her grandfather said, "Yes, my child, let me tell you what that means."

Grandfather took Hanah's hand. "Now that you can read," he said, "you can learn about Allah's world using books and using your eyes, using your ears, using your hands. You can learn what is right action. You can learn what is right speech. You can learn what is right thought. You can learn about science, you can learn about numbers, you can learn about words. You can learn lots and lots and lots of things. It will help you follow Allah's way."

Grandfather smiled. "Shall I tell you what Allah's way is my child?" said Grandfather.

Hanah nodded, "Yes please, Grandfather," said Hanah.

"It is when your actions and speech don't hurt others. Do you understand?"

Hanah nodded and smiled, "Thank you Grandfather," said Hanah.

Every day at school Hanah would try hard to say right speech and do right actions so that she did not hurt others.

Every day Hanah would read and read and read.

Because Hanah could read so well, she understood science and she understood how to do maths. When Hanah had a problem, or didn't understand something, she would open a book and the book would make her understand or give her ideas.

When Hanah grew up she made lots of inventions. She made special shoes that would help old people walk properly. She made a special wrist communicator that helped children and parents communicate while they were at school. All over the world teachers loved Hanah. Sometimes teachers would buy these as special gifts for some of their students.

Because Hanah learned to read, she was able to do many wonderful things. People in different countries wanted Hanah to visit them so she could talk about her inventions. When

Hanah visited schools, the first thing Hanah would say was "Learn to read quickly not slowly so you can seek knowledge."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adorno, T. W. & Horkheimer, T.W. (1997). *Dialectic of enlightenment*. New York: Verso Classics.

Ahmad, T. (24 Dec 2014) Ofsted on Muslim faith schools: Islamophobia? Ignorant? Or both? *The Muslim News*

Akhtar, S. (1995). The Islamic concept of knowledge. Accessed from: http://www.al-islam.org/printpdf/book/export/html/22999

ALA (1996). *About ALA*. Chicago. ALA. Accessed: http://www.ala.org/aboutala/

Al-Attas, M. N. & Jāmi'at al-Malik 'Abd al-'Azīz. (1979). *Aims and objectives of Islamic education*. Sevenoaks. Eng.: Hodder and Stoughton.

Afsaruddin, A. (2008). *The first Muslims: History and memory*. Oxford: Oneworld.

Ahmed, A. S. (1999). *Islam today: A short introduction to the Muslim world*. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers.

Al-Hassani, S. (2010). Women's contribution to classical Islamic civilization: Science, medicine and politics. *Muslim Heritage.* Accessed from: http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/womens-contribution-classical-islamic-civilisation-science-medicine-and-politics

Allen, K. N., & Friedman, B. (2010). Affective learning: A taxonomy for teaching social work values. Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics, 7. Accessed from: http://www.jswvearchives.com/fall2010/f10neuman.pdf

Ameli, S. R., Merali, A., & Islamic Human Rights Commission (Great Britain). (2006). *Hijab, meaning, identity, otherization and politics: British Muslim women*. Wembley: Islamic Human Rights Commission.

Amer, K. (1999). Bibliotherapy: Using fiction to help children in two populations discuss feelings. *Pediatric Nursing. 25*(1), 91-102.

Anderson, L. W. & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.

Andrews, S. V. (1994). *Teaching kids to care: Exploring values through literature and inquiry*. Bloomington, Ind: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication.

Armstrong, F., & Moore, M. (2004). *Action research for inclusive education: Changing places, changing practice, changing minds*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Aroian, K. J. (2012). Discrimination against Muslim American adolescents. *The Journal of School Nursing : the Official Publication of the National Association of School Nurses, 28,* 3, 206-13.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Razavieh, A. (1972). *Introduction to research in education*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Ashford, J. B., LeCroy, C. W., & Lortie, K. L. (2001). *Human behavior in the social environment: A multidimensional perspective*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole/Thomson Learning.

Ashliman, D. L (2006) *Cinderella*. Retrieved from: http://www.pitt.edu/~dash /grimm021.html

Atkinson, R. (1998). *The life story interview*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Atkinson, R. (2002). The life story interview. In Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2002). *Handbook of interview research: Context & method*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Axtmann, R. (2003). *Understanding democratic politics: An introduction*. London: SAGE.

Bacon, B. (1988). *How much truth do we tell the children? The politics of children's literature*. Minneapolis: MEP Publications.

Bahi, R. A. (2008). *Networking for power and change: Muslim women activism and the transformation of Muslim public sphere*. Doctoral dissertation, Northeastern University, Boston.

Bainbridge, J., Oberg, D. & Carbonaro, M.(20005). No text is innocent: Canadian children's books in the classroom. *The Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 3, 2, 2.

Baker, M. J. (2003). Data Collection -- Questionnaire Design. *Marketing Review*, *3*(3), 343-370.

Ball, L. (2011). Analysing interview data for clusters and themes. University of Melbourne. 1-9. Accessed from: http://www.merga.net.au/documents/RP_BALL_MERGA34-AAMT.pdf

Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1961). Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models. *In Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 63,* 3, 575-582.

Barani, F., & Yahya, W. R. W. (2012). Critical theories and polyphony: Towards a great global dialogue. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 6,* 8, 143-150.

Barth, R. S., & Guest, L. S. (1990). *Improving schools from within: Teachers, parents, and principals can make the difference*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bastable, S. B. (1997). *Nurse as educator: Principles of teaching and learning*. Sudbury, Mass: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

Battistich,V. (2005).*Character Education, Prevention, and Positive Youth Development.* Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.

Becker, H. S. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe, a division of the Macmillian Company.

Bednar, A. & Levie, H. (1993). Attitude-change principles. In W.H. Levie & M.L. Fleming *Instructional message design: Principles from the behavioral and cognitive sciences*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Educational Technology Publications.

Beland, K., Tolman, J., & Davidson, M. L. (2009). *Eleven principles sourcebook: How to achieve quality character education in K-12 schools : guides to the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education*. Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership.

Bendassolli, P. (2013). *Theory building in qualitative research : reconsidering the problem of induction*. DEU. Accessed from:
http://www.qualitative research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1851/3497

Bennett, W. J. (1995). *The moral compass: Stories for a life's journey*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Bercaw, L. & Stooksberry, L. (2004) Teacher education, critical pedagogy, and standards: An exploration of theory and practice. Retrieved from: http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol122004/bercaw.pdf.

Berger, H. A., & Ezzy, D. (2009). Mass media and religious identity: A case study of young witches. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 48,* 3, 501-514.

Berkowitz, M. (2012) *Navigating the semantic minefield of promoting moral development*. Retrieved from: http://amenetwork.org/oped/.

Berkowitz, M. (2012) Navigating the semantic minefield of promoting moral development. Retrieved from: < http://amenetwork.org/oped/>.

Berkowitz, M. (2002). The science of character education. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Bringing in a new era in character education* (pp. 43-63). Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

Berkowitz, M. and Bier, M. (2005). *What works in character education: A research-driven guide for educators.* Retrieved from: http://www.rucharacter.org/file/practitioners_518.pdf.

Bernburg, J., Krohn, M. & Rivera, J. (2006). Official labelling, Criminal Embeddedness, and subsequent delinquency: A longitudinal test of labelling theory. Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 43:1 (pp 67-88). Retrieved from: http://www.uk.sagepub.com/tibbettsess/study/articles/10/Bernburg.pdf

Berns, R. (2004). *Child, family, school, community: Socialization and support*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Beshir, H. (2005). *Once upon a time--: Parenting through storytelling*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications.

Bigger, S., & Brown, E. (1999). *Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education: Exploring values in the curriculum*. London: D. Fulton Publishers.

Bigger, S. (1999). *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education: Exploring values in the curriculum*. London: D. Fulton.

Bigler, R. S., & Liben, L. S. (January 01, 2006). A Developmental Intergroup Theory of Social Stereotypes and Prejudice. *Advances in Child Development and Behavior, 34,* 40-90.

Binder, P.-M., & Smith, K. (2013). *The language phenomenon: Human communication from milliseconds to millennia*. Berlin: Springer.

Bischalaney, J. (2009). *Literature and character development*. Master's dissertation. Retrieved from: http://www.sandiego.edu/soles/documents/Character_Development.pdf.

Bishop, R. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. Perspectives: Choosng and Using Books in the Classroom. 6 (3), ix – xi.

Black, J. (2006). *The age of total war, 1860-1945*. Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International.

Black, M. Jobe, R. (2005). Are children gaining a sense of place from Canadian historical picture books? *The Looking Glass: New Perspectives on Children,* 9, 3.Retrieved from: http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/ojs/index.php/tlg/article/view/35/40.

Bohman, J. (1996). Critical theory and democracy. In D.M. Rasmussen (Ed.), *The handbook of critical theory*, Oxford, Blackwell, 190-215.

Bollano, O. (1987). United States cultural influence on Belize Television and education as "vehicles of import". *Caribbean Quarterly, 33,* 60-74.

Boog, B. (2003). The emancipatory character of action research, its history and the present state of the art. *Journal Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 13(6), 426-438.

Bookbird (1997). *Children's Literature of the Islamic World*. IBBY.

Bordas, J. (1996). The John F. Kennedy Leadership Training Institute: A Case Study. In Learning Leadership: A Curriculum Guide for a New Generation Grades K-12. College Park, Maryland: Center for Political Leadership & Participation.

Bottigheimer, R. B. (1986). *Fairy tales and society: Illusion, allusion, and paradigm*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bown, E. (February 2004). Using children's literature with young learners. The Internet TESL Journal. (10) 2.

Brain, C., & Mukherji, P. (2005). *Understanding child psychology*. Cheltenham, U.K: Nelson Thornes.

Bray, M. A., & Kehle, T. J. (2011). *The Oxford handbook of school psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brenner, M. (2006) Interviewing in Educational Research. In Green, J. Camilli, G, Elmore, P, *Handbook of complementary methods in education research,* pp 357-370. American Educational Research Association.

Breuing, M. (2011). Problematizing critical pedagogy. *The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy,* 3, 3, 2-23.

Brinkman, A. (January 01, 2012). Getting involved--from apathy to integration. *Nursing New Zealand (wellington, N.z. : 1995), 18,* 6.)

Brown, J. (2011). Even if it's not true it's true: Using unreliable hadīths in Sunni Islam. *Islamic Law and Society, 18,* 1, 1-52.
Byram, M., & Hu, A. (2013). *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

Bouroubi, K. (1996). *A caring neighbour.* Leicestershire: Islamic Foundation.

Brewster, L. (2008). Medicine for the soul: Bibliotherapy. *Aplis* 21(3): 115 – 119.

Brinkman, A. (January 01, 2012). Getting involved--from apathy to integration. *Nursing New Zealand (wellington, N.z. : 1995), 18,* 6.)

Bynner, J. (November 01, 2001). Childhood risks and protective factors in social exclusion. *Children & Society, 15,* 5, 285-301.

Buck-Morss, S. (January 01, 1975). Socio-Economic Bias in Piaget's Theory and Its Implications for Cross-Culture Studies. *Human Development, 18,* 35-49.

Bullock, J. R. (June 06, 2002). Bullying among Children. *Childhood Education, 78,* 3, 130-33.

Burns, A. (2009). *Action research in second language teacher education.* In A. Burns & J.C. Richards (Eds.), The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education. New York: Cambridge.

Cai, M. (2002). *Multicultural literature for children and young adults: Reflections on critical issues*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

Cameron, D. (2011). PM's speech on the fightback after the riots. Retrieved from: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-the-fightback-after-the-riots.

Canadian Children's Book Centre (2013). Retrieved at: http://www.bookcentre.ca/about.

Cannella, G., and Lincoln, Y. (2009). Deploying qualitative methods for critical social purposes. In N. Denzin and M. Giardina (eds.) (2009) *Qualitative Inquiry and Social Justice: Towards a Politics of Hope* Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Cardwell, M., & Flanagan, C. (2002). *A2 psychology*. London: HarperCollins.

Carr, J. F., Herman, N. & Harris, D. E. (2005). *Creating dynamic schools through mentoring, coaching, and collaboration*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. VA: ASCD.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research.* Oxon, Routledge.

Chacko, E. (March 01, 2004). Positionality and Praxis: Fieldwork Experiences in Rural India. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography, 25,* 1, 51-63.

Chance, P. (1979). *Learning and behavior*. Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth Pub. Co.

Chancellor, D. (2002). *Holiday! Celebration days around the world*. New York: Dorling Kindersley.

Character Education Partnership (no date). *11 Effective principles of effective character education* Retrieved from: http://www.character.org/more-resources/publications/11-principles/.

Chaitin, J. (2003). I wish he hadn't told me that: Methodological and ethical issues in social trauma and conflict research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13, 8, 1145-1154.

Chengappa, S. (2003). Speeh versus language disorders: A critical evaluation. Language in India, 2, 12. Retrieved from: http://www.languageinindia.com/dec2003/langueparole.html.

CLPEF (not dated). Retrieved from: http://www.momomedia.com/CLPEF/history.html.

Clyde, A. (1981). *Cheng ho's voyage*. Illinois: American Trust Publications.
Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education.* (4th ed.) London: Routledge.

Coles, M. I. (2010). *Islam, citizenship and education: When hope and history rhyme, Retrieved from:* http://www.theiceproject.sdsa.net/uploaded/files/Conceptual%20overview%20-%20When%20Hope%20and%20History%20Rhyme.pdf.

Collins, B. (2011). Empowering children through circle time; An illumination of practice. National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Unpublished dissertation. Accessed from: http://eprints.maynoothuniversity.ie/3728/1/BernieCollinsthesis2011.pdf

Coloroso, B. (2011). Bully, bullied, bystander...and beyond. *Teaching Tolerance, 39,* 39, 50-53.

Connelly, F., & Clandinin, D. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19* (5), 2-1.

Conover, S., & Crane, F. (2004). *Ayat jamilah: Beautiful signs*. Spokane: EMU Press.

Coradetti, C. (2011). *The Frankfurt school and critical theory*. Available from: http://www.iep.utm.edu/frankfur/.

Cordell, A. (2013). The climate for Muslims after the Boston bombings. Retrieved from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anya-cordell/the-climate-for-muslims-after-the-boston-bombings_b_3125727.html.

Courtney, R. (1990). *Drama and intelligence: A cognitive theory*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Cowell, J. M. (2011). Ethical treatment of school children in research: assuring informed consent. *The Journal of School Nursing : the Official Publication of the National Association of School Nurses, 27,* 4, 247-8.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oakes: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* London: Sage.

Crusoe, K. (2001). *A phenomenological study of collaboration between a community college and selected social service agencies.* Unpublished Dissertation from Oregon State University, USA.

Cullen, J. E., & Evans, N. J. (2008). *"Some friends and I started talking...": A participatory action research project to deconstruct white privilege among student affairs practitioners*.

Daniels, H. (2005). *An introduction to Vygotsky*. London: Routledge.

Dave, R. (1970). Psychomotor levels. In R. J. Armstrong (Ed.). *Developing and Writing Behavioral Objectives.* Tucson, AZ: Educational Innovators Press.

Davies, I. and Gorard, S. and McGuinn. (2005). Citizenship education and character education: Similarities and contrasts. *British Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 53, No.3, September 2005, pp 341–358.

Delgado, L. (2003). *Islamic rose: The visitors*. Arizona: Muslim Writers Publishing.

Delgado, Linda. (2011). *My life story*. Phoenix: Unpublished.

Delgado, L. (2005) *Islamic fiction: Defining Islamic fiction*. Retrieved from:
http://www.islamicwritersalliance.net/islamicfictionbooks.html.

Denac, O. (2004). *The importance of the affective aspects in the planning of the goals of aesthetic education*.
(ECER 2004.) Accessed http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00003852.htm
Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.) (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, California:
Sage.
Department for Education (2011). *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*. Retrieved from
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a00199700/spiritual-and-moral.

Department of Justice, Canada (2012). *Canadian charter of rights.* Retrieved from: http://laws-
lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/charter/page-1.html Canadian Charter of Rights.

Derr, V. (2002). Children's sense of place in northern New Mexico. *Journal of Environmental Psychology. (*22)
125-137 Accessed from:
ftp://ftp.itc.nl/pub/pgis/PGIS%20Articles/Mapping%20with%20children/Childrens%20sense%20of%20place-
Derr%202002-JoEP.pdf

Dettmer, P. (2006). New Blooms in established fields: Four domains of learning and doing. *Roeper Review*,
28(2), 70-78.

Detzner, D.(1992). Life histories: Conflict in Southeast Asian refugee families. In J. F.
Gilgun, D. And Handel, G. (Eds.). *Qualitative methods in family research* (85-102).
Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Diedrich, J. L., State University of New York College at Brockport., & Digital Commons Brockport. (2010).
Motivating students using positive reinforcement.

Dillon, E. M. (2004). *The gender of freedom: Fictions of liberalism and the literary public sphere*. Stanford,
Calif: Stanford University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed
methodologies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Down, S., Garrety, K., & Badham, R. (January 01, 2006). Fear and Loathing in the Field: Emotional Dissonance
and Identity Work in Ethnographic Research. *Management, 9,* 3, 95-115.

Du Bois, W.E.B. (1994). The souls of Black folk. Chicago: Dover Thrift Editions.

Duderija, A. (2013). Critical-progressive Muslim thoughts: Reflections on its political ramifications, *The Review
of Faith & International Affairs* 11, 3, 69 – 79.

Duffy, M,. & Chenail, R. (2008). Values in quantitative and qualitative research. *Journal of Counselling and
Values,* 53, 22 – 38.

Duncan-Andrade, J. and Morrell, E. (2008). *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: The Promise of Moving from Theory
to Practice in Urban Schools*. New York: Peter Lang.

Edgington, W.D. (2002). To promote character education, use literature for children and adolescents. *The Social
Studies*, *93*(3), 113-116.

Edelman, C. & mandle, L. (2014). *Health promotion throughout the life span*. St. Louis, Mo: Elsevier.

Elliot, J. (1991). Action research for educational change. Buckingham: Open University Press.

El-Shamy, H. (2005). A motif index of Alf Laylah wa Laylah: Its relevance to the study of culture, society, the
individual, and character transmutation. *Journal Of Arabic Literature*, *36*, 3, 235-268.

Emerick, Y. (1992). *The seafaring beggar and other tales.* New York, IBTS.

Emerick, Y. (1993). *Ahmed Deen and the jinn at Sholin.* New York, IBTS.

Emerick, Y. (1993). *Layla Deen and the popularity contest.* New York, IBTS.

Emerick, Y. (2007). Islamic fiction: a worthwhile struggle. Retrieved from:
http://www.ifna.net/articles/fiction.htm

Etherington, K. (2009). Life story research: A relevant methodology for counsellors and psychotherapists.
Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 9, 4, 225-233.

Ezzidine, O. & Moes, M. (2004). Acquiring and retaining good staff for Islamic schools, paper presented at the
ISNA 5th annual Education Forum, 9–11 April, Chicago.

Fass, P. S. (2013). *The Routledge history of childhood in the western world*. London: Routledge.

Faver, C. A. (March 01, 2010). School-based humane education as a strategy to prevent violence: Review and
recommendations. *Children and Youth Services Review, 48,* 3, 365.

Fawcett, L. M., & Garton, A. F. (June 01, 2005). The effect of peer collaboration on children's problem-solving
ability. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 75,* 2, 157-169.

Feldman, M. S. (1995). *Strategies for interpreting qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Fenske, C. (2008). *Muggles, monsters and magicians: A literary analysis of the Harry Potter series*. Frankfurt
am Main: Peter Lang.

Feroze, M. R. (1976). Abu Bakr: The first caliph. Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Ferrance, E. (2000). *Action Research*. Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory At Brown
University, Providence, RI, Retrieved from
http://www.brown.edu/academics/educationalliance/sites/brown.edu.academics.education
alliance/files/publications/act_research.pdf.

Fielding, M. (1996). Why and how learning styles matter: Valuing difference in
teachers and learners. In S. Hart (Ed.), *Differentiation and the secondary
curriculum: Debates and dilemmas* (pp. 81-103). London: Routledge.

Fish, L. J. (2006). *Capitalizing on the Teachable Moment: Improving self-help smoking cessation interventions*.

Forgan, J. (2002). Bibliotherapy to teach problem solving. *Intervention in School and Clinic* 38, 2, 75-83.

Freeman, M. (1992).Rewriting the self: Development as moral practice. In M. Tappan & M. Packer (Eds.),
Narrative and storytelling: Implications for understanding moral development (83-101). Special Issue of *New
Directions for Child Development*, 54. Editor-in-Chief: William Damon. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Freire, P. (1968). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press

Fryling, Mitch J, Johnston, Cristin, & Hayes, Linda J. (2011). *Understanding Observational Learning: An
Interbehavioral Approach*. The Society for the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, Inc.

Garrod, A. (1993). *Approaches to moral development: new research and emerging themes*. New York, Teachers
College Press.

Garcia, S.M., Weaver, K., Darley, J., & Spence, B.T. (2009). Dual effects of implicit bystanders: Diffusing vs.
facilitating helping behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 19, 215-224.

Gargiulo, T. L. (2006). *Stories at work: Using stories to improve communication and build relationships*.
Westport, Conn: Praeger Publishers.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays.* New York: Cultures Basic Books Inc. Retrieved from:
http://monoskop.org/images/5/54/Geertz_Clifford_The_Interpretation_of_Cultures_Selected_Essays.pdf.

Gilani, F. (2002). The adventures of Musab. London: Taha Publishers.

Gilani, F. (2003). *The jinn who stole Eid*. Unpublished manuscript.
Gilani, F. (2010). *Cinderella an Islamic tale.* Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.

Gilani, F. (2013). *Snow White an Islamic tale.* Leicester: The Islamic Foundation

Gilani, F. (2016). *Sleeping Beauty an Islamic tale.* Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.
Gilani, F. (2007). *The lost ring.* Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.

Gilani, F. (2002). The purpose of an Islamic school and the role of an Islamic school teacher. *Renaissance A Monthly Islamic Journal*, 12, 10.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2000). An ethnography of an American Islamic school. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of Birmingham, UK.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2007). Say the word again? Eid: An author and teacher strives to raise awareness about the Islamic holidays. *School Library Journal, 53,* 12, 26-27.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2007). Eid literature for children. Ohio Library Council. Retrieved from:
http://www.google.ae/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.olc.org%2Fdiversity%2FEid_bibliography.doc&ei=zEODU8zHH-Sr0gWlp4HgDQ&usg=AFQjCNFlPkvHZXuOOPj_afwQ9-Ry3GxndQ.

Gilani-Williams, F. and Bigger, S. (2010). Children's fiction, personal understanding and Muslim pupils. *Almas International Research Journal*, 12, 1-9.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2012). Islamic Values and the Adaptation of Cinderella. Paper delivered at conference for Cinderella as a Text of Culture. Sapienza University, Rome Italy.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2014). Islamic critical theory. *The International Journal of Islamic Thought*, 3.

Gilani-Williams, F. (2014). Muslims write back. *Islamic Horizons, 3.*

Gilbert, T. (2003). Managing passive-aggressive behavior of children and youth at school and home: The angry smile. *Education & Treatment of Children.* 26, 3, 305.

Giroux, H. (1983) *Critical theory and educational practice*. Geelong: Deakin University Press

Giroux, H. (1992). *Border crossings: Cultural workers and the politics of education.* New York: Routledge.

Giroux, H. (1981). Toward a new sociology of curriculum. In H. Giroux, A. Penna, & W. Pinar (Eds.), *Curriculum and instruction: Alternatives in education* (pp. 98-108). Berkley, CA: McCutchan.

Giroux, H. A. (1996). *Counternarratives: Cultural studies and critical pedagogies in postmodern spaces*. New York: Routledge.

Giroux, H. (1997). *Pedagogy and the politics of hope: Theory, culture, and schooling.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Giroux, H. A., & McLaren, P. (1986). Teacher education and the politics of engagement: The case for democratic schooling. *Harvard Educational Review, 56,* 3, 213-38.

Glass, J. E. (2005). Visceral verstehen. *Electronic Journal of Sociology.* Retrieved from http://www.sociology.org/content/2005/
tier3/__Visceral%20Verstehen.pdf

Global Slepover. (2014). Sleepover in Antartica: A teacher's guide to using and reading *Sleepover in Antartica.* Accessed from: http://globalsleepover.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Sleepover-in-Antarctica-Teachers-Guide-May-2014.pdf
Goddard, A. (2011). Children's books for use in bibliotherapy. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care* 25, 11, 57-61.

Goodnough, K. (2011). *Taking action in science classrooms through collaborative action research: A guide for educators*. Rotterdam: SensePublishers.

Greitemeyer, T., & Mügge, D. (December 01, 2013). Rational bystanders. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 52,* 4, 773-780.

Grissinger, Matthew. (n.d.). *Actively Caring for the Safety of Patients: Overcoming Bystander Apathy*. MediMedia USA, Inc.

Gubrium, J. F. & Holstein, J. A. (eds.) (2001): *Handbook of interview research: Context and methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gubrium, J. F. & Holstein, J. A. (2001): From the Individual Interview to the Interview Society. In: J.F. Gubrium & J.A. Holstein eds. *Handbook of interview research,* 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 3-32.

Gubrium, J. F., and Holstein, J. A. (2001). *Handbook of Interview Research Context and Method.* New York: New York: Oxford University Press.

Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action*. Massachusetts: Beacon Press.

Haddad, Y. Y., Senzai, F. & Smith, J. I. (2009). *Educating the Muslims of America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hamdan, A. (2009). *Nurturing eeman in children*. Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House.

Hamid , A. (1995). The fountain of life, knowledge and belief. Retrieved from: http://www.fountainmagazine.com/Issue/detail/Jafar-Ibn-Abi-Talib.

Hansen, K. (2009). Strategies for developing effective teaching skills in the affective domain. Strategies. A Journal for Sport and Physical Educators, 22, 7.

Harmon, D. A., & Jones, T. S. (2005). *Elementary education: A reference handbook*. Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO.

Harrow, A. J. (1972). *A taxonomy of the psychomotor domain: A guide for developing behavioral objectives*. New York: D. McKay Co.

Hartas, D. (ed.). (2010). *Educational research and inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*, London: Continuum.

Heldke, L. M., & O'Connor, P. (2004). *Oppression, privilege, and resistance: Theoretical perspectives on racism, sexism, and heterosexism*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Henning, E., Van, R. W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hergenhahn, B. R. (1982). *An introduction to theories of learning*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.

Hesse-Biber, S., & Leavy, P. (2006). *Emergent methods in social research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Hilgard, E.R., Atkinson, R.C. and Atkinson, R.L. (1983). *Introduction to psychology* (8th ed.). New York: Harcourt.

Holzer, H. (2010). *Behavior problems in the classroom: Can character education improve it?* Retrieved from: http: earlyactionresearch.wikispaces.com/file/view/thesis+ppt+final.ppt.

Hopkins, D. (1985). A teacher's guide to classroom research. Philadelphia: Open University Press. Retrieved from: http://www.physics.nau.edu/~danmac.

Hopkins, D. (1993). *A teacher's guide to classroom research*, 2nd edition. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. W. (1972). *Dialectic of enlightenment*. London: Verso.

Hourihan, M. (1997). *Deconstructing the hero: Literary theory and children's literature*. London: Routledge.

How, A. (2003). *Critical theory*. Wales: Palgrave Macmillan.

Howes, C. & Ritchie, S. (2002). *A matter of trust: Connecting teachers and learners in the early childhood classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hoy, A. W. (2001). *Educational psychology*.Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Humphrey, M. (2005). *Living the hero's quest*. Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Hutchinson, U. and Hutchinson, A. (1992). *Invincible Abdullah*. Illinois: American Trust Publications

Howson, B. & Edwards, K. (2009). *Ontario library investment project: marketing Canadian books for Canadian children*. Ontario: Ontario Media Development Corporation. Retrieved from: http://www.omdc.on.ca/ Assets/Research/Research+Reports/ Ontario+Library+ Investment+Project+Cover/ACP+Library+Study.pdf.

Huitt, W. (2003). *The affective system. Educational psychology interactive*. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University. Retrieved from http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topics/affect/affsys.html.

Hussein, S. (2006). *Towards the Islamisation of critical pedagogy: A Malaysian Case Study*. Sheffield: School of Education, University of Sheffield. Doctoral dissertation.

Hussein, S. (2007). Critical pedagogy, Islamisation of knowledge and Muslim education. *Intellectual discourse, 15*, 1, 85-104. Retrieved from: http://www.iium.edu.my/intdiscourse/index.php/islam/article/viewFile/62/57.

Huttunen, R. (2011). *Habermas, Honneth and education*. Retrieved from: http://www.academia.edu/3362251/Habermas_Honneth_and_Education.
Huttunen, J. (2011). Derrida's deconstruction contra Habermas's communicative reason and the fate of education. Retrieved from: http://eepat.net/doku.php?id=derrida_s_deconstruction_contra_habermas_communicative_reason

Iaquinta, A. & Hipsky, S. (2006). Practical bibliotherapy strategies for the inclusive elementary classroom. *Early Childhood Education Journal,* 34 (3) 209-213.Retrieved from: https://fu-ctge-5245.wikispaces.com/file/view/Iaquinta+and+Hipsky.pdf

Imtiaz, R. (1997). *A caring neighbour.* Leicestershire: Islamic Foundation.

Institute for Curriculum Resources. (2012). The history of Jews in America. Accessed from: http://www.icsresources.org/content/curricula/HistoryOfJewsInAmerica.pdf

Inter-Islam (2001). *Islam and moral conduct.* Retrieved from: http://www.inter-islam.org/RightsDuties/moral.html

Islamic Fiction Books. (2012). Retrieved from: http://www.islamicfictionbooks.com/historicalbackground.html

Jack, S. J., & Ronan, K. R. (2008). Bibliotherapy: Practice and research. *School Psychology International.* 29, 161-182.

Janson, T. (2003). *Your cradle is green: The Islamic foundation and the call to Islam in children's literature.* Lund, Sweden: Centre for Theology and Religious Studies.

Janson, T. (2012). Imaging Islamic identity: Negotiated norms of representation in British-Muslim picture books. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 32, 2, 324 – 338.

Jenkins, D. (1999). Rukhsana Khan profile. *Canadian Review of Materials Online.* Retrieved from: http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/cm/profiles/khan.html.

Jessop, S. (2012). Critical theory and education. Retrieved from: http://www.philosophy-of-education.org/uploads/papers2012/Jessop_S.pdf.

Johnson, A. (2007). *A short guide to action research,* 3rd edition. Boston: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

Johnson, R., Onwuegbuzie, A, & Turner, L. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1,* 2, 112–133.

Johnson, R., & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jonassen, D. H., (1994). Thinking Technology: Toward a constructivist design model. *Educational Technology*, 34(3), 34-37.
Joyce, J. (2012) *Parent sociocultural characteristics and parent-child relationships influencing early adolescent ethnic identity, religiosity, and distal academic-related outcomes.* (Parent Sociocultural Characteristics and Parent-Child Relationships Influencing Early Adolescent Ethnic Identity, Religiosity, and Distal Academic-Related Outcomes.) University of Oregon

Jungbluth, K., & Meierkord, C. (2007). *Identities in migration contexts.* Tübingen: Narr.

Kayani, M. S. (1981). The brave boy. Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Kalahar, D. (2005). *Blind perceptions: Sociopolitical psychology and its impact on civilization.* New York: iUniverse.

Kazmi, Y. (2000). Historical consciousness and the notion of the authentic self in the Qur'ān: Towards an Islamic critical theory. *Islamic Studies*, 39 (3) 375-398.

Kazmi, Y. (2006). Instructional Technology and Islamic Education: Intimation of Islamic Critical Pedagogy. *Islamic Studies, 45,* 4, 519.

Keat, J. (2008). Decreasing child defiance: Is inquiry indispensable? *Early Childhood Education*, 36, 155-160.

Kellner, D. (No Date). Marxian perspectives on educational philosophy: From classical Marxism to critical pedagogy. Retrieved from: http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/)
Kelly, D. D. (2004). *Uncovering the history of children's drawing and art.* Westport, Conn: Praeger.

Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of behavioral research* (4th ed.). Holt, NY: Harcourt College Publishers.

Khan, A. (2013). *Islamic science fiction coming to light.* Retrieved from: http://www.onislam.net/english/health-and-science/faith-and-the-sciences/426249-islamic-science-fiction-coming-into-light.html

Khan, C. and Chovanec, D. (2010). Is participatory action research relevant in the Canadian workplace? *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education* 5 (1).

Khan, M. (1987). *The Translation of the meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari*. Medina: Kitab Bhavan.

Khan, R. (1998). *The roses in my carpets*. Toronto: Stoddart Kids.

Khan, R. (2006). Muslims in children's books. Retrieved from *http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6367083.html&* and http://permalink.gmane.org/gmane.culture.india.sarai.reader/22079

Khan, R. (2002). *Muslim child: Understanding Islam through stories and poems*. Morton Grove: Albert Whitman & Co.

 Khan, R. (2008). Freedom of speech vs cultural sensitivity: Balancing the right to create freely vs the need of people to be respected. Paper presented at IBBY World Congress 2008. Copenhagen. Denmark. Retrieved from: http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/articles/Freedom%20of%20Speech.pdf]

Khan, R. (2005). Rukhsana Khan Home Page. Retrieved from: http://www.rukhsanakhan.com.

Kids Health (2014). Accessed from : http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?lic=62&dn=LiveAndWorkWell&article_set=87955&cat_id=20948.

Kilpatrick, W. (1992). *Why Johnny can't tell right from wrong*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Kilpatrick, W., Wolfe, G., & Wolfe, S. M. (1994). *Books that build character: a guide to teaching your child moral values through stories*. New York, Simon & Schuster.

Kincheloe, J.L. (2008). *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy*. New York: Springer.

Kincheloe, J., & McLaren, P. (2005). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.). *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 303-343). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kincheloe, J. (2007) *Critical pedagogy: Where are we now?* New York: Peter Lang Publishing

Kincheloe, J. L. (2004). *Critical pedagogy primer*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing

Kirkup, J. And Whitehead, T. & Gilligan, A. (2011). *UK riots: David Cameron confronts Britain's 'moral collapse'. Retrieved from:* http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8701371/UK-riots-David-Cameron-confronts-Britains-moral-collapse.html

Klecker, B. M. (2003). Formative classroom assessment using cooperative groups: Vygotsky and random assignment. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, *30*(3), 216-219.

Kohlberg, L. & Gilligan, C. (1971). The adolescent as a philosopher: The discovery of the self in a post-conventional world. *Daedalus, 100*(4), 1054-1087.

Kohn, A. (1994). *The risks of rewards*. Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois. Retrieved from: www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/pdf/The%20Risks%20of%20Rewards.pdf

Kohn, A. (1993). *Punished by rewards: The trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Koshy, V. (2005). Action research for improving practice. A practical guide. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2008). *Cultural globalization and language education*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Leal, D. J. (1999). Engaging students' minds and hearts: Authentic student assessment of character traits and literature. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 43,* 3, 240-248.

Leming, J. (2000). Tell me a story: An evaluation of a literature-based character education programme. *Journal of Moral Education* 29,4, 413-427.

Leming, J. S. (1993). In search of effective character education. *Educational Leadership*, *51*, 3, 63.

Lemu, A. (1999). *Islamic tahdhib and akhlaq: Theory and practice*. Chicago: Iqra

Lichtman, M. (2006). *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Lickona, T. (1971). *The acceleration of children's judgment about responsibility: An experimental test of Piaget's hypothesis about the coauses of moral judgment change*. Unpublished dissertation. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Lickona, T. (1991). *Educating for character: How schools can teach respect and responsibility,* New York: Bantam Books, 6-22.

Lickona, T. (2004). *Character matters: How to help our children develop good judgment, integrity, and other essential virtues*. New York: Simon & Schuster

Lickona, T. (2014). My 45 year journey as a moral and character educator. University of Birmingham. Accessed from http://www2.cortland.edu/dotAsset/03dcdba1-2787-4166-83e6-5fb1ae8ba855.pdf.

Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Lindy, E. (2000). *Using fairy tales to debate ethics*. Retrieved from: http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr295.shtml

Lingard, L., Albert, A. and Levinson, W. (2008). *Grounded theory, mixed methods and action research*. Retrieved from: http://www.cfd.med.utoronto.ca/resources/Lingard-Grounded_Theory.pdf

Lummis, T. (1988). *Listening to history: The authenticity of oral evidence*. Totowa, N.J: Barnes & Noble Books.

Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2008). *Theories of human communication*. Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.

Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2006). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lourenço, O. (December 01, 2012). Piaget and Vygotsky: Many resemblances, and a crucial difference. *New Ideas in Psychology, 30,* 3, 281-295.

Low, J. (2013). *Why hasn't the number of multicultural books increased in eighteen years*? Accessed from: http://blog.leeandlow.com/2013/06/17/why-hasnt-the-number-of-multicultural-books-increased-in-eighteen-years/

Lowenfeld, V., & Brittain, W. L. (1982). *Creative and mental growth*. New York: Macmillan.

MacCann, D. and Woodard, G. (1985). *The Black American in books for children: Readings in racism*. NJ/London: Scarecrow Press.

Mack, L. (2010). *The philosophical underpinnings of educational research*. Polyglossia. 19, 5-11.

MacNaughton, G., & Hughes, P. (2009). *Doing action research in early childhood studies: A step by step guide*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Manuel, C. & Derrick, P.(2003). *Nor shall diamond die: American studies in honour of Javier Coy*. Valencia: Universitat de València.

Martin, B.L. & Briggs, L.J. (1986). The cognitive and affective domains: Integration for instruction and research. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.

Masood, E. (2006). *British Muslims media guide*. Retrieved from: http://www.britishcouncil.org/scotland-enews-june-2006-british-muslims-book-mailing.pdf

Mattingly, C. (2005). Toward a vulnerable ethics of research practice. *Health, 9,* 4, 453-71.

Maughan, S. (2003). Gauging the gap. *The Publishers Weekly* 250 (36): 35-37.

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R.(1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: Falmer Press.

Maxwell, J. A. (1996). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

McAdams, D.P. (1995). *The life story interview*. Retrieved from: www.sesp.northwestern.edu/docs/Interviewrevised95.pdf

McAdams, D. (1995). What do we know when we know a person? *Journal of Personality*, 63, 365–396.

McClellan, B. E. (1999). *Moral education in America: Schools and the shaping of character from Colonial times to the present, reflective history series*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1999.

McCoy Library (no date). *The research interview*. Retrieved from: *mccoy.lib.siu.edu/projects/psyc/schmeck/v1.ppt*

Murphy, B. C., & Dillon, C. (2008). *Interviewing in action in a multicultural world*. Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole.

McConnachie, A. (2012). *The monarchy and the constitution* Retrieved from: http://www.sovereignty.org.uk/features/articles/moncst.html

McDermont, Y. (1981). *Muslim nursery rhymes*. Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

McGinnis, M. (2004). Hyper kids. *Prevention*, *56*, 1, 91-92.

McLaren, P. (1989). *Life in schools: an introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundations of education*. New York, Longman.

McLaren, P. (2000). Paulo Freire's pedagogy of possibility. In S. Steiner et al. (Eds.*), Freirean pedagogy, praxis and possibilities: Projects for the new millennium* (pp. 1-21). New York: Falmer Press.

McLaren, P. (2003). *Life in schools: An introduction to critical pedagogy in the foundation of education*: Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

McLaren, P. (2005). *Red seminars: Radical excursions into educational theory, cultural politics, and pedagogy*. Cresskill, N.J: Hampton Press.

McLeod, S. A. (2007). *Simply psychology; Vygotsky. Retrieved from:* http://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html
McLeod, S. A. (2009). Jean Piaget. Retrieved from http://www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html

McLeod, S. (2011). Kohlberg. Accessed at http://www.simplypsychology.org/kohlberg.html.

McMonagle, A. (2012) Professional education for early childhood education. Ireland: Donegal County Childhood Committee. Retrieved from: https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/EOCP%20Professional%20Pedagogy%20for%20Early%20Childhood%20Education.pdf

McNeil, S., Smith, D., Stringer, E. & Lin, G. (2002). Effecting Pedagogical Change Through an Action Research Process. In D. Willis et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference 2002* (pp. 1761-1765). Chesapeake, VA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).

McNiff, J. (2002). *Action research: Principles and practice*. London: Routledge.

McPhee, A., & Craig, F. (2009). Disruptive behaviour in the classroom: An ecosystemic view of pupil behaviour. Retrieved from http://dspace.gla.ac.uk:8080/bitstream/1905/805/3/McPhee_Craig.pdf

Memon, N., & Qaiser, A. (2010). The pedagogical divide: Toward an Islamic pedagogy. Retrieved from: http://razieducation.com/resources/2011/11/the-pedagogical-divide-toward-an-islamic-pedagogy/

Memon, Nadeem (2011). What Islamic school teachers want: Toward an Islamic teacher education program. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 33, 3, 285-298.

Memon, Nadeem (2010). Social consciousness in Canadian Islamic schools. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 11, 1, 110-117.

Merry, M., & Driessen, G. (2005). Islamic schools in three western countries: policy and procedure. *Comparative Education, 41,* 4, 411-432.

Merry, M. (2007). *Culture, identity, and Islamic schooling*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Mertens, D. & Ginsberg, P. (2009). *The handbooks of social research ethics*. Caifornia: Sage Publications.

Mertens, D.M. (2005). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches.* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage

Miles, M & Huberman, M. (1983). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Miller, D. (2012). *Positive child guidance*. Cengage Learning: California

Mills, G. E. (2003). *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Milne, S. (2008). *Fiction, children's voices and the moral imagination*. Retrieved from: http://etheses.nottingham.ac.uk/461/1/Final_PhD_Thesis_SMilne_16.4.08.pdf.

Minchew, S. S. (2002). Teaching character through sports literature. *The Clearing House*. 75, 3, 137-141. Retrieved from: *The Clearing House*.

Moad, E. (2007). A path to the oasis: Shar¯ı‘ah and reason in Islamic moral epistemology. *International Journal of Philosophy and Religion* 62:135–148.

Mohidin, F. (2010). Bloom's taxonomy: Mind map of the affective domain. Retrieved from: http://www.mindmaptutor.com/2010/04/blooms-taxonomy-mind-map-of-the-affective-domain/.
Moosavi, L. (2014) The racialization of Muslim converts in Britain and their experiences of Islamophobia. *Critical Sociology.*

Monet, J. (2012). Conceptual model for getting started on action research. *Teachers Professional Development Inland California* Retrieved from: http://www.csuchico.edu/teacher-grants/documents/ar_model.pdf.

Morrow, R.A. & Brown, D.D. (1994). *Critical theory and methodology*. London: Sage Publications.

Mukadam, M. (1998). *Spiritual and moral development of Muslim pupils in state schools Retrieved from:* http://ethos.bl.uk/.

Murad, K (1982) *Stories of the caliphs*. Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Murata, S. & Chittick, W. (2006). *The vision of Islam*. London, Paragon House .

Murdoch, B., & Read, M. K. (2004). *Early Germanic literature and culture*. Rochester, NY: Camden House.

Myers, C. (2014). The apartheid of children's literature. *New York Times.* March 15. Accessed from: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/the-apartheid-of-childrens-literature.html

Myers, W. (2014). Where are the people of color in children's books? New York Times (March 15). Accessed from: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/where-are-the-people-of-color-in-childrens-books.html

Nahim, H. A. (2012). *The division after Prophet Muhammad*. Indiana Xlibris Corporation.

Narvaez, D. (2002). Does reading moral stories build character? *Educational Psychology Review 14,* 2,155-171.

Narvaez, D., & Lapsley, D.K. (Eds.) (2009). *Personality, identity, and character: Explorations in moral psychology.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Narvaez, D., & Lapsley, D. K. (2009). Introduction. In D. Narvaez & D.K. Lapsley (Eds.), *Moral personality, identity and character: An interdisciplinary future* (pp. 1-10). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nawawī, A.(2000). *The complete forty hadith*. London: Ta-Ha.

Neumann, J., & Forsyth, D. (2008). Teaching in the affective domain for institutional values. *Journal Of Continuing Education In Nursing*, *39*, 6, 248-254.

Newburn, T. (2012). Counterblast: Young people and the August 2011 riots. *The Howard Journal*. 51, 3, 331-335.

Niyozov, S., & Memon, N. (2011). Islamic education and Islamization: Evolution of themes, continuities and new directions. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, 31,* 1, 5-30.

Niyozov, S. and Memon, N. (2006).Exploring the educational aspirations of Muslims in Ontario's schools: An education roundtable. *Comparative and International Education Society* Newsletter Number 142.

Nsamenang, A. B., & Tchombé, T. M. (2012). *Handbook of African educational theories and practices: A generative teacher education curriculum*. Bamenda: North West Region.

Nurayn, Q. (2005). *Taqwa and ihsan*. Retrieved from: http:// forums.almaghrib. org/showthread.php?t=24646.

O'Brien, R. (2001). An Overview of the methodological approach of action research. In Roberto Richardson (Ed.), *Theory and practice of action research*. Retrieved at: http://www.web.ca/~robrien/papers/arfinal.html Office of the Press Secretary (2011). *Presidential proclamation – National Character Counts Week. Retrieved from:* http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/10/14/presidential-proclamation-national-character-counts-week-2011-0.

Olsen, J., & Cooper, P. (2001). *Dealing with disruptive students in the classroom*. London: Kogan Page.

Olshansky, E. (2005). The use of community-based participatory research to understand and work with vulnerable populations. Accessed from: http://www.jblearning.com/samples/076371786X/5109X_CH21_dechesnay.pdf

Omar, S. (1992). *New friends new place*. Leicestershire: Islamic Foundation.

Ong, A. D., & Weiss, D. J. (January 01, 2000). The Impact of Anonymity on Responses to Sensitive Questions. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30,* 8, 1691. 1708.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008). *Finding common ground: Character development in Ontario schools, K-12*. Toronto, Ont.: Ministry of Education.

Oskamp, S. (2000). *Reducing prejudice and discrimination*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ots, E. (2011). *Decoding theoryspeak*. New York: Routledge.

Parenti, M. (2002). Monopoly media manipulation. *Mediterranean Quarterly, 13,* 2, 56-66.

Parker, K. (2005). Reading for character: Principles of bibliotherapy applied to children's literature. *College Reading Association Yearbook*. Retrieved from: http://works.bepress.com/karen_parker/1.

Parker, K. and Ackerman, B. (2007) *Character education in literature-based instruction.* Retrieved from: http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/educ_fac_pubs/33.

Paton, G. (25 Jul 2008) Muslim schools fuel segregation say teachers. *The Telegraph.*

Perkins, D. D., & Zimmerman, M. A. (January 01, 1995). Empowerment Theory, Research, and Application. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 23,* 5, 569.

Perrault, C. (2006). *Cinderella; or, The little glass slipper.* Retrieved from: http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/perrault06.html.

Piaget, J. (1997). *The moral judgment of the child*. New York: Free Press Paperbacks.
Pierre, E. & Oughton, J. (2007) The affective domain: Undiscovered country. *The College Quarterly*. Fall 2007 - Volume 10 Number 4 Accessed http://www.collegequarterly.ca/2007-vol10-num04-fall/pierre-oughton.html.

Pillow, W. (March 01, 2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 16,* 2, 175-196.

Plummer, K. (2001). *Documents of life 2: An invitation to a critical humanism*. London: Sage Publications.

Pollard, N., & Sakellariou, D. (2012). *Politics of occupation-centred practice: Reflections on occupational engagement across cultures*. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Pollock, S. I. (2003). *Literary cultures in history: Reconstructions from South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Polkinghorne, D. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Studies in Education 8,* 5-23.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2010). Qualitative research in multicultural psychology: philosophical underpinnings, popular approaches, and ethical considerations. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 16,* 4, 581-9.

Pope, C., Ziebland, S. & Mays, N. (2000). Qualitative research in health care. Analysing qualitative data. *British Medical Journal* 320 (7227): 114-116.

Pound, L. & Hughes, C, (2006). How children learn: From Montessori to Vygotsky - educational theories and approaches made easy. New York: Step Forward Publishing Ltd.

Power, F.C. & Higgins-D'Alessandro (2008). Moral education and the moral atmosphere in schools. In: L.P. Nuccci & D Narvaez (Eds), Handbook of moral and character education. New York: Routledge pp230-247.

Qadri, S.(2009).Concept of forced marriages in Islam. Minhaj-ul-Quran International. Retrieved from: http://www.minhaj.org/english/tid/8584/Concept-of-forced-marriages-in-Islam-article-by-Sahibzada-Hassan-Mohi-ud-Din-Qadri.html

Radhakrishna, R. (2007). Tips for developing and testing questionnaires/instruments. Journal of Extension 45(1). Accessed from: http://www.joe.org/joe/2007february/tt2.php

Rane, H. (2006). Knowing one another: An antidote for mass media Islam. Retrieved from: http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/58315/Rane.pdf.

Ratner, C. (2002). *Subjectivity and objectivity in qualitative methodology.* Retrieved from: http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0203160.

Ray, A. (2010). Reclaiming Islam. Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86ZjutltSYg.

Read, J., & Fine, K. (2005). Using survey methods for design and evaluation in child computer interaction. In Workshop on Child Computer Interaction: Methodological Research at Interact. Accessed from: http://www.chici.org/references/using_survey_methods.pdf

Redmond, B. (2004). *Reflection in action: Developing reflective practice in health and social services*. Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate.

Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2001). *Handbook of action research participative inquiry and practice*. London: Sage.

Rest, J., Narvaez, D., Beebeau, M.J. & Thoma, S. (2000). A neo-Kohlbergian approach to morality. *Research Journal of Moral Education* 29, 4, 381-395.

Rest, J. R. (1979). *Development in judging moral issues*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
 Rich, J. M., & DeVitis, J. L. (1985). *Theories of moral development*. Springfield, Ill., U.S.A: C.C. Thomas.

Riess, J. (2002). *The spiritual traveler: Boston and New England : a guide to sacred sites and peaceful places*. Mahwah, N.J: HiddenSpring.

Riessman, C. (2005). Narrative analysis. *Narrative, Memory & Everyday Life*. University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, pp. 1-7 Retrieved from http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/4920/.

Robbins, S.P., Chatterjee, P., & Canda, E.R. (1998). *Contemporary human behaviour theory*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Robottom, I. &. Norhaidah, S (2005). Western science and Islamic learners : informing constructivism, quality learning and `internationalising the curriculum*, in CoSMEd 2005 : International Conference on Science and Mathematics Education : Bridging the theory-practice gap in science and mathematics education: the challenge to change*, SEAMEO Regional Centre for Education in Science and Mathematics, Penang, Malaysia, pp. 1-8.

Rogozen-Soltar, M. (2012). Managing Muslim visibility: Conversion, immigration, and Spanish imaginaries of Islam. *American Anthropologist*, 114 , 4, 611–623.

Rozalski, M. & Stewart, A. & Miller, J. (2010). Bibliotherapy: Helping children cope with life's challenges, *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 47(1) 33-37 Retrieved from: http://www.tandfonline.com.atlas.worc.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/00228958.2010.10516558

Runnymede Trust.(1997). *Islamophobia, a challenge for us all: Report of the Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia*. London: Runnymede Trust.

Ryan, G. & Bernard, H. (2000). Data management and analysis methods. In Handbook of qualitative research, 2d ed., edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, 769–802. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Ryan, G. & Bernard, H. (February 01, 2003). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods, 15,* 1, 85-109.

Ryan, K., & Lickona, T. (1992). *Character development in schools and beyond*. Washington, D.C: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.

Ryan, N., & McDougall, T. (2009). *Nursing children and young people with ADHD*. London: Routledge.

Sabra, P. (2009). Interview: Linda Delgado Muslim writers publishing. Retrieved from http:/:wwwAmerican MuslimMom.com/interview-linda-delgado-muslim-writers-publishing.

Sabrin, M. (2010).The need for an Islamic pedagogy. *Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations*Paper 2140. Retrieved from: http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4104&context=etd.

Sacirbey, O. (2011). 9/11 bullying: Muslim teens push back. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/07/bullying-muslim-teens-push-back_n_952947.html.

Sadek, K. (2012). *Islamic democracy: The struggle for and the limits of recognition*. (Doctoral dissertation).Available from University of Worcester Interlibrary Loan.

Sadoun, N., Ansari, A., & Yousef, M. (2005). *I love Islam.* Dallas: Islamic Services Foundation.

Salahuddin, P. (2011). *Character education in a Muslim school: A case study of a comprehensive Muslim school's curricular.* Retrieved from: http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1548&context=etd.

Salim,K., Ali, R., Hussain, N. & Haron, H. (2013). An instrument for measuring the learning outcomes of laboratory work. Proceedings of the IETEC'13 Conference, Accessed: http://www.ietecconference.com/ietec13/conferenceproceedings2013/papers/Monday/MP5/MP5.2_submission_41.pdf

Sandywell, B. (2013). *Reflexivity and the crisis of western reason: Logological investigations*. S.l.: Routledge.

Santrock (2003). in Pierre, E., & Oughton, J. (2007). The affective domain: Undiscovered country. *College Quarterly, 10,* 4, 1-7.

Sardar, Z. (1978). Muhammad: Aspects of a biography. Leicester: Islamic Foundation.

Sarkar, D. (August 15, 1995). Outcry over 'cure': Film on a medical experiment on Punjabi women causes a stir. India Today. Accessed from: http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/film-on-medical-experiment-on-punjabi-women-causes-stir/1/289214.html

Sarker, A. (2004). *Understand my Muslim people*. Newberg, Or: Barclay Press.

Schmidt, P. R., & Pailliotet, A. W. (2008). *Exploring values through literature, multimedia, and literacy events: Making connections*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub.

Schnapp, L. (2003). Teaching self-advocating strategies through drama. *Intervention in School and Clinic.* 38 (4), 211-219.

Schunk, D. H. (1987). Peer models and children's behavioral change. *Review of Educational Research*, 57, 149 – 174. Accessed from: http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/D_Schunk_Peer_1987.pdf

Scot, T., Callahan, C., & Urquhart, J. (2009). Paint-by-number teachers and cookie-cutter students: The unintended effects of high-stakes testing on the education of gifted students. *Roeper Review*, 31:40–52.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Seldon, A. (2012). *We need to fix Britains character flaws.* Retrieved from: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/9267396/We-need-to-fix-Britains-character-flaws.html.

Sgourev, S. V. (2011). Leaving in droves: Exit chains in network attrition. *The Sociological Quarterly, 52,* 3.

Shaffer, D. R., & Kipp, K. (2010). *Developmental psychology: Childhood and adolescence*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Shamma, F. (2012). *Treasury of Muslim literature: the golden age* 750 - 1250 CE. Beltsville: Amana Publications.

Sharify-Funk, M. (2003). Overcoming barriers: The role of critical Islam in empowering Muslim women. Presented at the Fourth Annual Conference of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from: http://www.islam-democracy.org/4th_Annual_Conference-Sharify-Funk_paper.asp (Not found). Shelden, R. G. (2006). *Delinquency and juvenile justice in American society*. Long Grove, Ill: Waveland.

Shor, I. (1992) *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change*. Chicago, U of Chicago Press

Shor, I. (1996). *When students have power: Negotiating authority in a critical pedagogy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Shrivastava, P. and Valenzuela, D. (no date) *Interview as a Method for qualitative research* Retrived from: www.public.asu.edu/~kroel/www500/Interview%20Fri.pdf

Siddiqui, A. (1997). Ethics in Islam: Key concepts and contemporary challenges. *Journal of Moral Education, 26,* 4, 423.

Sigler, E., & Aamidor, S. (2005). From Positive Reinforcement to Positive Behaviors: An Everyday Guide for the Practitioner. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *32*(4), 249-253. doi:10.1007/s10643-004-0753-9

Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. London: SAGE.

Silverman, L. K. (1998). The moral sensitivity of gifted children and the evolution of society. *Roeper Review, 17,* 2, 110-16.

Silverman, D. (1993). Interpreting qualitative data: methods for analysing talk, text, and interaction. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Simon, K. G. (2001). *Moral questions in the classroom: how to get kids to think deeply about real life and their schoolwork*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Simpson, E. (1972). *The classification of educational objectives in the psychomotor domain: The psychomotor domain. Vol. 3*. Washington, DC: Gryphon House.

Sipe, L. (no date). *Young children's responses to picture storybooks: Five types of literary understanding. Retrieved from:* http://literatura.gretel.cat/sites/default/files/barcelona_lecture.pdf

Skanfors, L. (2009). Ethics in child research: Children's agency and researches' ethical radar. Childhoods Today 3 (1). Accessed http://www.childhoodstoday.org/download.php?id=40

Smith, M. (2010). *Handbook of program evaluation for social work and health professionals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, M. K. (2007). Action research. Retrieved from: www.infed.org/research/b-actres.htm.

Smith, P. & Ragan, T.J. (1999). *Instructional design.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Sosulski, M. R., Buchanan, N. T., & Donnell, C. M. (2010). Life history and narrative analysis: Feminist methodologies contextualizing Black women's experiences with severe mental illness. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 37,* 3, 29-57.

Spradley, J.P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview.* Fortworth, Florida: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Sperry, L., & Pies, R. (2010). Writing about clients: Ethical considerations and options. *Counseling and Values, 54,* 2, 88-102.

Steinebach, C., Steinebach, U., & Brendtro, L. K. (2013). Positive Youth Psychology: Lessons from Positive Peer Culture. *Reclaiming Children & Youth*, *21*(4), 15-21.

Stephens, J., & Watson K. (1994). *From picture book to literary theory*. Sydney: St. Clair Press.

Stevens, C. (2002). *About critical pedagogy on the web*. Retrieved from: http://mingo.infoscience.uiowa.edu/~stevens/critped/page1.htm.

Stevens, L. P. (2002). Making the road by walking: The transition from content area literacy to adolescent literacy. *Reading Research and Instruction, 41,* 3, 267-78.

Stone, R. *(2002).* Editorial. *Books for Keeps*. London: Big Green Bookshop.

Strauss, J. (no date). *Introduction to philosophy, psychology, sociology of education*. Retrieved from: www.calstatela.edu/faculty/jstraus/Week_9.ppt.

Strauss, J. (2012). Introduction to sociology of education. Retrieved from: www.calstatela.edu/faculty/jstraus/Week_9.pp Accessed 29/09.13.

Sutherland, R. D. (1985). Hidden persuaders: Political ideologies in literature for children. *Children's Literature in Education.* 16, 143-57.

Svirbel, E.A.(2007). Action Research: the description and analysis of the implementation process of a teacher - initiated character education program in an elementary school. Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh. Retrieved from: http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/8348/.

Takizawa, R., Maughan, B., & Arseneault, L. (January 01, 2014). Adult health outcomes of childhood bullying victimization: evidence from a five-decade longitudinal British birth cohort. *The American Journal of Psychiatry, 171,* 7, 777-84.

Taruk, M. (2008). The relevance and implications of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in a secong language classroom. ARECLS. (5) 244-262.

Tauhidi, D. (2001). *The Tarbiyah project: An Overview. Retrieved from:* http://www.myteacherpages.com/webpages/Tarbiyah/files/tarbiyah%20overview%20-%20dawud%20tauhidi.pdf.

The Sacred Profession.(2012). Kohlber's theory of moral development. Retrieved from: http://thesacredprofession.com/2012/08/31/classroom-management-kohlbergs-stages-of-moral-development.

Thomas, R. L. (1996). *Connecting cultures: A guide to multicultural literature for children*. New Providence, N.J: R.R. Bowker.

Thomas, R. M. (1997). *Moral development theories-- secular and religious: a comparative study*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

Thorndike, R. L. & Hagen.E. (1969). *Measurement and evaluation in psychology and education*. New York: Wiley.

Tindongan, C. (2011). Negotiating Muslim youth identity in a post-9/11 world. *The High School Journal*, 95(1) 72-87.

Townsend, E. (1998). *Good intentions overruled: A critique of empowerment in the routine organization of mental health services*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Tripp, D. (2005). Action research: a methodological introduction. *Education and Research*, 31, 3, pages 443 - 466.Retrieved from: http://www.scielo.br/pdf/ep/v31n3/en_a09v31n3.pdf.

Turiel, E. (1983). *The development of social knowledge: Morality and convention*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ulichny, P. (1997). When critical ethnography and action collide. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 139-169.

University of Birmingham (2012). *Multi-million pound award to support first research centre dedicated to understanding the UK's character and values*. Retrieved at: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2012/05/15May-Jubilee-Centre-Press-Release.aspx.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Waghid, Y. (2011). Critical Islamic pedagogy: Possibilities for cultivating democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism in Muslim schools. In W. Weisse; A. Tyaob & I. Niehaus (Eds.) *Muslim schools and education in europe and South Africa*. (pp. 27-38).Münster: Waxmann.

Walker, L. (1984). Sex differences in the development of moral reasoning: A critical review. *Child Development*, 55, 677-691.

Wallace, J. (1994). Life stories. In Gubrium, J. and Sankar, A. (Eds.). *Qualitative methods in aging research* (137-154). Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Wallace, K. A., & Bergeman, C. S. (2002). Spirituality and religiosity in a sample of African American elders: A life story approach. *Journal of Adult Development, 9,* 2, 141-154.

Watel, L. (2014). Q & A: Editors reveal trove of 19th century African-American poetry in "Voices beyond bondage". *Atlanta Arts.* Accessed from: http://www.artsatl.com/2014/10/voices-bondage/.

Waters-Adams, S., & Nias, J. (June 01, 2003). Using action research as a methodological tool: understanding teachers' understanding of science. *Educational Action Research, 11,* 2, 283-300.

Waugh, P. (2006). *Literary theory and criticism: An Oxford guide*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weaver, H. (2010 [1953]) The mainspring of human progress. Talbot Books. Retrieved from: http://mises.org/books/mainspring.pdf.
Winston, J. (1998). *Drama, narrative and moral education: Exploring traditional tales in the primary years*. London: Falmer.

Valiante, W. (2002). The echoes of the past. Retrieved from: http://www.mediamonitors.net/wahidavaliante2.html .

Wood, A. (2009) Self harm in adolescents. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment 15: 434-441* Retrieved from: http://apt.rcpsych.org/content/15/6/434.full.

Wynne, E., & Ryan, K. (1997). *Reclaiming our schools: Teaching character, academics, and discipline*. Upper Saddle River, N.J: Merrill.

Yazigi, R. & Seedhouse, P. (2005). "Sharing time" with young learners. *TESL-EJ,* 9, 3.

Young, I. (2004). The five faces of oppression. In Lisa Heldke and Peg O'Connor's *Oppression, privilege, & resistance.* McGraw Hill: Boston. Accessed from: https://wmbranchout.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/five-faces-of-oppression-iris-young.pdf.

Zgourides, G. D. & Zgourides, C. S. (2000). *Sociology quick review*. Foster City, CA: IDG Books Worldwide.

Zia, R. (2006). *Globalization, modernization, and education in Muslim countries*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

Zine, J. (2007). Safe havens or religious ghettos? Narratives of Islamic schooling in Canada. *Race, Ethnicity and Education.* 10, 71-92.

Zingaro, L. (2009). *Speaking out: Storytelling for social change*. Walnut Creek, Calif: Left Coast Press.

Zink, S., Wertlieb, S., & Kimberly, L. (2005). Informed consent. *Progress in Transplantation 15,* 4, 371-7.

Zuber-Skerritt, O. (1996). *New directions in action research*. London: Falmer Press.