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Interviewees forenames: Razia	Sex: Female
Generation: 1 st generation Bangladeshi	DOB:
Occupation: Housewife (part time student)	
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[0.00]

Thank you for coming today, could you tell me your name, your age, your generation and your ethnicity, please?

I'm Rajeya Begum, I'm 26 years old, I'm 1st generation, and I'm British Bangladeshi.

So, can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Erm, I'm Bengali, I'm married, I have 4 brothers. My dad has passed away, I've got a mum. And I've got 2 children. I'm doing a fashion course at Manchester at the moment. And that's about it about me, in a nutshell basically.

So, where do you do your fashion course?

I'm doing a fashion course at LSCA that's erm, London School of Contemporary Arts. So that's on Portland Street just on, around the corner. Yeah I'm doing a 3 year course. I've nearly just finished my first year, so yeah, I'm enjoying it.

Is it like an NVQ or ...?

It's a HND course.

Okay, and is it a part time course or full time?

It's a full time course.

So how do you manage that with your little ones?

Erm, it's alright because it's only been 3 days so my husband has my children at the time so like today, I'm in in the afternoon so my husband is going to be at home in the afternoon. So we just basically juggle it through, it's only been 3 days but we do the whole date when we come in so the 3 days full. So my husband is looking after the children today.

How you finding it?

It's good. It's interesting. Erm, I actually found out that I'm more creative that I thought. Because I didn't actually finish my school like my GCSEs and stuff so I didn't know that how creative I was until I did this course so I'm finding out that I can actually design. I have designed a few dresses since then. The clothes that I'm wearing actually, I designed. So yeah, but I didn't make it so I'm learning how to sew at the moment as well, so I can make this. I can do hand-stitching but I can't actually sew on the machine. But I can hand-stitch.

So how do you feel about the course?

The course is really good. It's helping me a lot. It guides me. It tells me what I need and everything so I'm really enjoying it at the moment.

That's good. Erm, so you're making some nice dresses and some nice outfits?

Yep [laughs]. For me and my children.

What does it allow you to do?

Erm, it's more independence, I think. Because like, before I was just a housewife. I had to just look after 2 children, you know go out with my husband and that's about it. So now I have more independence in that sense, like I'm out, I have all that time to myself, just me and my thoughts and my art or whatever so, it's nice to have that independence. I didn't know how much I liked it until I had it so I don't know how I'd be now if I had to go back to just being a housewife again, so I don't think I'd like it anymore.

What are you going to do afterwards once you've finished your course?

Definitely go into, obviously designing my own clothes and open my own store. That's what I want, definitely.

Asian clothes or...?

Asian, mostly this type of clothes, what I'm wearing, Jilbaab and stuff like that, but yeah, Asian. Asian clothes. Asian salwar kameez, Asian Churidaar, you know, all the rest of it [laughs] Saaris and everything, yeah.

So you're here to talk to us a little bit about gifts, we asked you to bring a significant gift along with you, so what is your significant gift?

Erm, my gift is actually, erm, it's a photo of my dad, it's actually his passport picture. I keep it with me at all times, it's on my keys, it's actually the last ever picture he took before he went Hajj and before he passed away. So that's the last ever picture I have of him so I keep it on me at all times. Erm, it's on my keys and erm, yeah, I just have it on me and it's really special to me and it's on me and it's been 11 years and I think I'd keep it aswell for the rest of my life, aswell. It's the last ever picture that he took, I don't know, it just reminds me of him and it's nice to know that he's there I guess in some ways. Like that's the last thing, so yeah, that's my special gift and I'll always have it. I'll probably pass it onto my children aswell. And my children do know. They've never met my dad, so erm, they know him through that picture. So, I'd pass it on and I'd like them to pass it on aswell. So, like how I don't know my granddad, but I'd want my children to know their granddad and you know, so on.

So your dad took this picture before he went on Hajj?

You know the passport picture that size and I've just put it on my keys on a thingy.

Did he gift you that picture, or?

Yeah, he did, erm, he took a picture, he ... You know when you take pictures you have like a 4, 5 pictures you know when you take a passport picture, you have 5 pictures. And he left the, we were kids when he went to Hajj so really young, so because we were crying, and we wanted to go with him but he couldn't, because it's Hajj, we were all really really little and my mum was quite ill as well so we had to stay with my mum. And, he gave us a picture saying this is a picture of me, remember me and when I come back, see if I've changed so just to make us happy and that thing and he gave us all a picture and said, "see if I've changed when I come back." And he never did. And I've still got that picture. He never came back. He died there and we never got to see him as well. He passed away there and he was buried there. We never got to see him. And my brothers, they were all little. I was the oldest. He never came back.

[6:38]

So he never came back?

No, he never came back. He passed away sadly, erm, it's quite hauntingly surreal what happened because my brother, well my cousin brother he was actually looking after us at that time because we were really young. My mum was ill so my dad left us with our cousin brother who actually to date looks after us. Still even though, I'm 26 now. So he looks after us. Erm, yeah he left us with our cousin brother. And, we were actually on the phone to the people who were with my dad at the time he was passing away and it was, in our religion, like I might get a bit upset, but like in our religion, the day he passed away was really good, we know it to be a good death because after Hajj we believe that all our sins are washed away, so my dad just completed his Hajj, it was the day after Eid that he passed away. So, erm, he, on Eid he phoned us all. He talked to us all individually, all my brothers, me, my mum, my cousin brother. But on that day, he never said anything to us, but he told my cousin brother that he wasn't feeling well. So naturally the next day my cousin brother phoned him and at that time, my dad wasn't coming to the phone so he was like "Why is my Uncle not coming to the phone?" To the person who was with my dad at the time and coincidentally, that was people that we know from back home as well because they were living there at that time in Saudi Arabia. So, he wasn't coming to the phone, and my brother was insisting that my dad came to the phone or for them to tell us what's going on. Why can't we talk, you know, why he can't talk to his uncle. And they were there saying like, at the moment, if you want us to tell you that your uncle is taking his last breaths and my brother just, chucked the phone on the floor and he was just screaming and they didn't know what was going on, I just, as soon as I saw what my cousin brother was doing, I was screaming as well. I sort of had the feeling that something has happened and my mum was in the kitchen and my brothers, they just saw me crying, I don't think I can And I was screaming, and then my brothers saw me, so they were crying and they were asking what's happening, why are you crying? Why are you crying like that for? You're scaring us. And the younger one after Sattar, he's a bit, from a very young age, he was very clever, and he knew it was something to do with dad and he was like, that's it, we're never going to see dad again. And then I was like, I couldn't say anything to him. I just hugged him and all of them. My mum's got brain tumour so erm, she doesn't really know what's going on and at that time, it was even worse. Now she's getting better. But at that time, I used to look after them. So they all came next to me and they were, they were all sitting next to me and I was trying to hug them, well I was trying to comfort them but I couldn't really comfort myself at the time because dad was everything for us. My mum, basically, our dad was our mum and our dad. So, we'd lost everything at that time and then mum was crying as well. The youngest one went to mum more, Jabbar. He went to mum and the rest of them they were like next to me. My oldest, erm, the one younger than me, but older than Sattar, he was in Bangladesh at the time. So he wasn't even with us. He was in Bangladesh. He didn't even know what was happening and later on we informed him. And then, he's Hafeez, so he's he was okay, but erm, he understands that, he's more educated in Islamic ways so he was okay with it to an extent. But like, we, we were crying more and we were more upset and because like dad, he promised us that he was going to come back and we was really upset like we didn't know what to do and we were kids. And we'd lost everything in our lives at that time. That's what it felt like. We didn't know where to turn to and that cousin brother, he became our dad, naturally. But, and afterwards when the people came back from my dad, they were saying that the way my father died, it was so lucky for him, for us, for them to witness as well because they said to us, actually it does give us a lot of comfort in the long run, they were saying before when my dad came to the room, after he went to do his pilgrimage and everything, after he met the people, after he went back to the room, he said to me, to that person, that please can you just, I'm going to have a shower now, can you just wait there for me? And then he had a shower, he had a proper shower, he cleaned himself properly and then when he came out, he said to them, I think I'm going to pass away now, can you please just read the 4 Kalimah's to me? And he was reciting them as well and then he, and then he passed away. This was like, when it happened, it was so, he, I don't know, I don't know if it's from God, I don't know what it was, but, that's what happened, that's what they told us what happened. Like he read the 4 Kalimahs, and he had a shower, and then he laid down and then he passed away and we were on the other side of the phone. Like, it's the best way that anybody could ever go from this world, I think. And we can't say that we weren't there because we was there on the other side of the planet, but we was on the phone like we could actually hear what was going on, even though my brother didn't let us listen to what was happening because

obviously they were reading Kalimah's really loudly, we'd get scared, so he was on the phone listening to all of that so he was reading that as well. And but, yeah, we were there at the time even though we were half way around the world in England and he was in Saudi Arabia. So, that's how my dad passed away and that's the story of my little gift that I've got. And I still have it with me.

Do you know what happened at the funeral?

He was buried In Saudi Arabia, they bury everybody like together, and then after a while they bury, so you have seven layers, in one, in one thingy, grave. So we know where he is but we don't know how deep or maybe on top, we don't know where he is but we know where his grave is, but we don't know which one it is because there's so many thousands of graves out there.

Did he die in Mecca or ...?

He died in Mecca, erm, he's buried in Mecca. My brother, the oldest one, he's been there, he's done, he's been to see the grave and everything but we haven't been. Inshallah we will go. My husband is planning on going Hajj as well or Umrah so we're going to go and see that so that's there. Before it was like, before it was like the end of the world, we were lost, we were completely lost, he was our only, he was our backbone too in the sense that my mum was really ill, she had a brain tumour, she had an operation on her brain. And afterwards, she wasn't quite right. She, it's like, if you talk to her, she'll talk to you, but you know that urge, your child needs something, your child needs feeding, she wouldn't come and give you food unless you came and asked for food. So my dad took care of everything. He washed us, he fed us, he cleans, he took us to school. Everything, top to bottom. My dad was our mum. So, after we lost him, it took us a long long time to get us over that shock. I have to give it to my cousin brother, he when, he actually halved the sadness because he was there 3 o'clock in the morning, we'd get scared because there was like mum and us, we'd get scared, we'd phone him, I don't know, I couldn't put the phone down, he was in our house, he just lived around the corner, but I couldn't put the phone down, he was in our house at 3 o'clock in the morning, so he did lessen it a lot. But now, I don't know, I'm older, I'm wiser, and the way in which my dad passed away, understanding Islam, you couldn't ask for anything better. And we all know that we're only here for a certain amount of time and we have to go, and if we could all go in the same way that my dad did, it is in my opinion, lucky. So, I'm happy now. We're happy the way he passed away.

So what does his gift mean to you?

It's one of the most important and precious things in my life. I would never keep it away from me. I would never, if I'd lost it, I don't know what I'd do. I had £5, it was in his pocket, he left it in his coat pocket and he left that jacket and I used to miss my dad so much and you know when, in our culture, after they pass away, you have to get rid of all their clothes, and that jacket it was hidden in my clothes somehow, I don't know how but it got into my clothes, somehow. And we got rid of all dad's clothes and this is 2 years down the line, and I'm missing my dad and I'm thinking about my, you know when something happens in your life, it triggers it, doesn't it? So something happened in my life and it triggered me wanting my dad. And I missed my dad so much. This is after I got married. I came back to this country after I got married. I got married in Bangladesh, I came back to this country, I was just going through my clothes and I saw my dad's jacket there and inside it, I found the £5 note and I was like, I was so happy to find that £5 note. I thought I'd lost that £5 note, I told my little brothers that look dad's given me a present, even from the grave, he doesn't like you. You know when you're a child. I was like he doesn't like you, he likes me. I lost it. And when I lost that, I looked for it, I completely took the whole house apart but I couldn't find it. I lost it and that got to me. And if I lost this picture, I'll probably go mad. It's really really special to me, this picture. So was that £5 but I lost it, I don't know where I lost it. Probably spent it, you know when I put it in my purse. I don't know, I couldn't find it. But yeah, it's very special to me.

So, did you ever give any gifts to your dad?

No actually, I didn't. It never actually came across that you know you're never going to see your dad again. So, and in our religion, erm, we don't really celebrate birthdays, we're not allowed to celebrate birthdays. Even the Prophet's birthday, we don't celebrate. So, erm, we don't really give birthday gifts so in the English tradition, that's the most important thing that you'd get a gift on your birthday. But as my brothers are from this country, they used to cry for gifts and stuff. But my dad, no, never. I've never given him a gift. I used to buy him clothes now and then. Used to buy him clothes whenever, I used to go out. If I used to go out with him I used to say that dad that is nice just buy it. Then he used to buy it, but I never gave him a gift. [20:05]

What about your mum?

Erm, with my mum, I get her a gift every Eid, not birthdays. Every Eid, I get her a gift, a saree, some money. My husband would give her some money and I would get her a saree. And, erm, as I said before, we don't celebrate birthdays

Why would you buy her a saree?

On Eid, we all wear sarees, we dress up. We wear sarees, we wear Churidaar, you know the younger people wear salwar kameezes. So my mum wears a saree so I just give her a saree.

Does she wear any Western clothes?

No. No Western Clothes like you wouldn't find her, you couldn't kill her to, you wouldn't get her into Western clothes. It's just traditional Bengali sarees.

Why?

I don't know. She's from back home, Bangladesh and even me, I've never worn Western clothes. No.

Why?

I don't know. It's just my dad. He wouldn't like it. He'd never let us wear English clothes and go out. Erm, so it was just traditional. My mum wore a saree, I wore salwar kameez and now I'm wearing a Jilbaab.
Have you never wanted to wear Western clothes?

Just my school uniform. Just school uniform, that's it. Never. Anything else. Just my uniform.

How do you feel about that?

I like it. I like my, erm, I like my Jilbaab covering my body, I don't like my body, coming out. I don't like people looking at me in that way. I find, this is my, I find, I'm comfortable in my attire. I like wearing my Jilbaab. This is me.

Your Jilbaab, is that something you wear because you're British Bengali or is it to do with religion?

It's religion isn't it [laughs] To cover your body. In Islam you have to, men aren't supposed to see the curves of your body so you have to wear a Jilbaab to cover your body so, from an Islamic and obviously in our culture, as well when girls go out we need to wear a Jilbaab so yeah, both, but more Islamic like, because it's God's will, you have to do it.

Is that important to you?

Very. Religion is important to me. It's just the way that my dad and my mum brought us up. We're a very Islamic family. Erm, yeah.

So how do you manifest Islam in your everyday life?

Well, just the basic things like Ramadhan is coming up so we'll be fasting the whole month. Erm, namaz, try to read all my prayers. Zakat, like all the 5 pillars of Islam like Hajj which I'm going to do Inshallah. That only becomes farz, like a necessity in our religion when you can afford it so I'm not up to that stage yet so when it does I'm definitely planning on going Hajj. Zakat you have to give, people do that. We try and pray, we do our fasting as well. And the last one is our Kalimah so yeah, we do all our basics so we try, I try and be a good Muslim anyway. It's very important to me, my religion. For my brothers as well. 2 of my brothers, they are Hafeezes in our religion, that means memorizing the Quran and now they're becoming Alim's so that's understanding the meaning of the Qu'ran so 2 of my brothers are doing that at the moment. So yeah, religion is very important in our family.

You said you gift to your mum on Eid. What about mother's Day?

Erm, no not really. To be honest, after I had a daughter, after I had a daughter, I became more aware of Mothers' Day because she gives me gifts on Mothers' Day but before that I was like not aware of it that much so I used to know Mothers' Day but I never used to celebrate it that much. I don't know why.

Do you give your mum gifts now on mother's Day?

No, not really.

When you give your mum a saree gift on Eid, do you give a card with it, or just a saree?

No, no, no card. Just a saree. And a hug, and a kiss [laughs]. Just that. Just tradition. No cards. Just a saree and that's it.

Okay. Erm, so you've got 4 brothers. Do you give them presents?

Yes, they, make, they force me to give them presents on their birthdays [laughs]. They force me to give them birthday presents.

How do you feel about giving them birthday presents on their birthdays?

I love it. I love giving gifts. It's not that I don't like giving gifts. I love giving gifts. It makes me happy, it makes them happy which makes me happy. And, erm, it's just in our religion, we don't we're not really supposed to celebrate birthdays and that's why I stopped them from doing it, but come on, giving a gift is always nice, isn't it? I love it. I love giving my brothers gifts.

Even though, in your, in Islam, you say that birthdays, you're not supposed to celebrate them, you're still happy to do that?

I have, I wouldn't give it on that day, I'd give them what they tell me, a month in advance, "Oh I want this, I want this" So I just give it them. I don't say it's your birthday present, do you get it? I just give it them. So it's like that.

So what would you buy them?

Erm, whatever really. If they want a watch, I'll get them a watch. I think, erm, my youngest brother, we got him a phone, the latest phone that was out at the time, Samsung Galaxy S3. Erm, whatever they want.

And do you give them Bengali gifts?

No, they never ask for Bengali gifts [laughs]. They never ask for Bengali gifts.

What are the gifts that they ask for?

Erm, phones. Expensive stuff like Gucci Watch, oh that watch is nice [laughs].

So expensive stuff?

Yeah, they love their stuff yeah. And they know their stuff. I'm really bad with my like Guccis. I know my Gucci and my Prada's and things like that but they say other things like I just say that you take the money and get it, I don't even know what you're talking about. So I just prefer giving them the money.

So do you give them the money or do you give them the presents?

If I know what it is I'll get them the present. If I don't know what it is, I'll just give them the money and say, here, take it and go get whatever it is that you need to get.

So which presents do you normally not know about?

Well my brother once asked about, what's it called? It was this top that he wanted. It was a name that I've never heard of. This is Rahim. Erm, I don't know. This brand that I've never heard of. And he goes "How come you've never heard of it? Like it's so famous like David Beckham is always wearing it." I just be like I don't know just go get it. Here. This is how much it is, just take the money and go and get it [laughs] It's yeah, it's things like that.

Erm, what about your husband? What do you buy him?

Erm, clothes mainly, you know I bought him, he doesn't really like perfume. With them you can get away with just giving them perfume and scents and stuff like that. With my husband he doesn't wear anything like, he doesn't wear perfumes so you have to get him clothes. And I got him a watch once and yeah, just clothes. Because he wouldn't go and buy anything for himself, I'd have to do that.

Is he, is your husband first generation as well?

Yes.

He's from?

Bangladesh.

And your children, what do you normally buy them as presents?

Everything and anything they want [laughs].

And on what occasions do you buy them presents?

Erm, birthdays, Eid, everyday.

Do you buy them presents on Christmas?

No, we don't celebrate Christmas and my daughter, because she's in school now so everybody is like giving gifts and things like that so she asks for them like, you know advent calendars that come out with chocolates inside them and you have to open one you know up until Christmas so, so she asks for that, and that is what we get here. She doesn't ask for anything else, so we just leave it at that. We're not supposed to celebrate Christmas and she doesn't understand that yet. Like in our religion, you can give children gifts, like birthdays and stuff, until they understand what a birthday is and that we're not supposed to do it in our religion, up until that age you can give it to children so with our children I give them presents to make them happy I give them Christmas calendar things.

Do you have any traditions related to gift giving in your family?

Erm, traditional? Erm, not really.

So do your gifts get wrapped or do you have to give cards with them, or ...

To my daughter, she prefers cards. She likes us to write a card and a short message or something. Erm, she makes all my brothers cards too on their birthdays.

She physically makes them?

Yeah, she physically makes them. You know, just gets a piece of paper, folds it in half, writes a message and love hearts. She loves her uncles to bits. Erm, same with them. They're crazy about her. She was born in, I was living with my mum at that time so she was brought up by them as well, so yeah, she gives cards and everything she loves that. And I have to give her a card. With them though, they chuck it in the bin the second I'm away from them so I just give them the presents. No card [laughs].
[29:57]

Do you wrap them up?

Erm, sometimes, if I have the time. After looking after the children and everything. If I have the time.
Do you have any rules about giving gifts in your family?

Rules? Erm, no. Not really.

If you gift a gift, do you have to get one back, is that how it works?

I always demand a gift [laughs] I always demand a gift. Even though I don't get it for them all the time, I demand one [laughs] So yeah, they'd have to get, I'd get really upset if I don't get a gift [laughs] I know it's double standards, but... [laughs].

Why do you do that?

I don't know, erm, I don't know, erm, just maybe because I'm the only sister and they always have given me a gift probably thought of it in that way, I'm their only sister so they should give me a gift [laughs].

Okay, erm, so how do they feel about that?

You're going to have to ask them, but I think they like it [laughs].

Okay, erm, so you said you lived in Bangladesh?

Yeah.

How long have you lived in Bangladesh before you came to England?

Oh, not long, erm, 5 months that was, when I came to this country.

And did you go back to Bangladesh?

Yeah, I went back, erm after about maybe when I was about 10 or 11 I went back home, I stayed for about a year and at that time, my second brother was there with me. Yeah, for about a year, I stayed. Then I came back to this country and then I went back to get married and then I stayed for about 3 months and then I came back.

Whilst you lived there I know it was quite long periods of time. Did you give gifts to anybody there?

Yeah, to my nephews, erm, you know from my cousin brother, my nephews, I used to give them birthday presents. And like on Eid I used to give it to my mother in law, I used to get a saree for my mother in law. For my sister in law I used to get sarees.

And did you used to spend the same amount as you do on your family here as you did in Bangladesh?

Yeah absolutely. Yeah.

Were there any specific gifts that you'd give to them?

Erm, specific as I'd get sarees for my sister in law and my mother in law. And I'd get toys and stuff for my nephews, and balls and footballs that they're into.

Why would you buy the sarees for your sister in law and your mother in law?

Because they wouldn't wear anything else and they wouldn't play with toys or anything so like the sarees they would make use out of them afterwards, so after wearing it on Eid, they would wear it later on as well, so yeah, that's the only thing appropriate, I thought, for them.

When you came to the UK after you lived there with you're in laws and your family there, did your gift giving behaviour change with them?

No.

So do you still ...?

Erm, because like erm, I can't physically buy them a saree now but we send money over to my mother in law, erm and my sister in law so that they can buy Eid clothes. So, it's the physicality part of it has changed, like the principle of it so ... the principle is still there sorry. We send money over for them to buy Eid, erm, sarees and stuff.

Why do you still do Eid with them even though you're not there?

Erm, well, erm, I don't know, it's just, it's like, it's just like a tradition in our family because everybody in this country, we're buying, we're enjoying ourselves, so we send it to them, so it's just a little tradition in our family.

That you have to give a present on ...

On Eid, yeah.

Did you receive any memorable gifts while you were in Bangladesh or anywhere?

Any memorable, hmm, erm yeah, this, erm, Sterling Silver jewellery set which, erm, about a week after my wedding, a friend of his gave to me and it's absolutely gorgeous. Really expensive. From a friend that he doesn't even know that well and I was quite shocked and I've still got that. It's Sterling Silver and I've still got it. It's really nice.

What do you like about it?

The design of it. It's gorgeous. And it's just, it's, it's sort of touched me in a way like he doesn't know me, he doesn't, he's not that close to my husband and he's given me a really expensive present and I just appreciated it, I guess.

And did you give any really memorable like a gift to somebody that you really remember?

Erm, a memorable gift that I gave? Erm, yeah I think, erm, I used to love these earrings that I had and after I went to Bangladesh, my sister in law, she said, she didn't know that I loved them that much, but she said to me "Oh, I really love earrings. You're so lucky." I felt sort of bad inside so I gave it to her and so she's still got them. She still talks about it.

Why did you give them to her?

I don't know, I just thought she's more important than the earrings. I could always get another pair here anytime I want, but she couldn't. She's not in this country. And, yeah I just gave it to her.

How did you feel when you gave it to her?

She was really happy so that made me really happy. I was happy that I gave it and I didn't become selfish and kept it. I just gave it and I felt good.

How long was you married when you did that?

Maybe about 2 years after I went. Yeah 2 years when I went with my daughter, that's when she asked for it. *And, erm, how does it make you feel now a long time afterwards to think that you gave that to her?*

Erm, I still feel happy that she's enjoying it. Still, she still wears them, earrings and it's gold, erm, she still wears it and it makes me happy that she's still, erm, getting joy from them, I guess.

You're first generation so you've experienced life in Bangladesh and you've experienced life here in the UK.

Do you think there are any differences in the way you're giving gifts there and here?

No, no. Honestly, no. Because it's the same thing You, if you want to gift, give a gift to someone, it's the same experience as in like if it's in Bangladesh or if it's in this country, it doesn't make a difference but I've noticed personally that people in Bangladesh they actually appreciate it more because it's a poor country when you give them something expensive they like, they appreciate it a lot more from the people in this country because expensive things are a daily thing with some people these days [laughs] so they're like, they're happy, but I think that Bangladeshi people, they get more, they appreciate it more as well.

Do you think gifts mean more to them?

Yeah I think so, yeah.

Why do you think that is?

I don't know. That's how I feel, that's what I think, yeah.

Erm, when you lived in Bangladesh what were the occasions that you gifted someone?

Eid, and for the children, birthdays.

And those are the only two?

Those are the only two, yeah. And in general if I go out, I just buy a, you know, I just buy something for everyone but I don't know if it's, if it's a gift or like, I just buy it for them.

Okay, and there's similar occasions in the UK which you ...

Yeah, yeah, similar occasions.

So do you think that your children will continue this practice of Eid and just birthdays or do you think they'll do more?

Erm, I can't tell at the moment, but my daughter, like I said before, she does give me Mothers' Day cards but I don't know I think it, she'd grow out of it as in like our family is quite religiously, erm, quite strict so I think she'd gradually become like us. But, I don't know, you can't tell because she does like she does talk about Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day as well. She gives her dad a card as well. So ... I don't know. I wouldn't mind, I don't know. Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day I don't think that, in our religion erm, what's wrong in our religion is just making one day for your mum and your dad. In our religion, mum and dad are very important, so every day is supposed to be like Mothers' Day. You have to treat your mum with respect and always gift her in our religion anyway, so that's what our religion is trying to say. Why just one day especially for your mother? It's supposed to be every single day. So, Mothers' Day you can celebrate it, but ... every day. So, if she does that, I don't think I'll be that offended if she celebrated Mother's Day but I don't know, yeah it's just going to be Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day and then birthdays and then just Eid. Later, I think she'd just grow out of, birthdays as well as she goes older and understands more about the religion and everything.

Erm, do you celebrate Easter?

Erm, that's quite tricky like because like we don't celebrate Easter in the traditional way, but then again Easter does have a lot of, lot to do with Islam as in like Easter is about Jesus and in our religion it's *Isa* so we do believe in the Prophet and his birthday and how he was born, miraculous birth and everything like that. So we do remember him. But we don't give gifts, we don't have Easter parties and stuff like that. But we

do remember the way he was born and we do remember him as *Isa*, Jesus on that day or we'd celebrate it. We wouldn't celebrate it, we'd pray for him. We'd pray for him and yeah ...

[40:18]

Okay so, I'm going to ask you about similarities about your generation and the next generation. Do you think there are any similarities between you as a first generation and erm, your children who will be second generation, in the way that they give gifts?

Erm, I don't know. Probably, maybe, I'm not sure. But tradition ... I don't know, maybe. Maybe they'll be the same as in like, like I said, the birthdays and the Eids and stuff, I think it's all going to be the same. But maybe ... The only difference that I can think of is like the gifts would be more different, more expensive, more elaborate and like, I don't know, that sort of thing maybe, I'm not sure.

And do you see any similarities between you and your mum, you're both first generation, in giving gifts?
A lot because my mum, she doesn't have a clue about birthdays and erm, anything else. Like in Bangladesh there is no, totally no birthdays like my mum's generation, like they don't celebrate it at all. They only celebrate Eid. And whereas when you're in this country, you're more aware of Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Easter, Christmas, Birthdays, everything, you're more aware of it so my mum is completely different than me. So yeah there's a lot of differences between my mum's generation and my generation, I think.

Give me an example.

Like, I said, she wouldn't have a clue about birthdays, like you'd give a gift on birthdays, she wouldn't know anything about that. But I did. I do know about birthdays and I remember birthdays.

So you're both first generation so what do you think is the difference?

It's the age. It's the age, definitely the age because my mum's, even though we are first generation, I was brought up in England, and my mum was brought up in Bangladesh. Erm, I was 5 months when I came here so I've, even though I'm first generation from back home, but I was brought up in this country so I've got this country's, some of their values and stuff whereas my mum, she was brought up in and born in Bangladesh so they don't, their birthdays, it didn't exist in their time.

You know when Do you give gifts to your friends?

Close friends, yes. Just birthdays [laughs]. Because they make you! Not by choice [laughs].

And are those ... Do you have British White friends as well as British Asian friends?

Yeah I have, in college I have British Black friends as well, British African and British White friends, I have all mixed friends.

Do you give the British White, the British Black and the British Asian presents or ...

I've not, this course has only been a year so I've not come across anyone's birthday yet. Erm, so I haven't actually given anyone a gift but if it was a birthday I would have given them a gift because they celebrate it.

Erm, okay, and ... Is there any gifts that are forbidden and that you would never give to anybody that you think are unacceptable gifts?

Unacceptable gifts? Erm, I don't know, I can't think of any at the moment. Maybe there is?

Are there any gifts that you would not consider giving to the same ethnic group as you?

Erm no, I don't think so.

From a different ethnic group?

The gifts would be different to a different ethnic group because like, it, I could give, say to you, erm I could give you a Jilbaab whereas a white friend, if I had a white friend, she wouldn't appreciate that, so yeah, I think that's the difference in gift giving to them and to the same ethnicity.

Okay, do you celebrate Valentine's Day?

[laughs] Yeah [laughs] Even though we're not supposed to! [laughs] Even though we're not supposed to. My husband just recently become more strict but I do want to celebrate Valentine's day it's the same thing as Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day, you're supposed to love your husband or wife every day, it's not just one specific day erm, that you love them on, but yeah I demand a gift on that day [laughs] from my husband. I demand a gift.

Why is that?

I think like, okay, every day they can give us a gift but like I don't know, maybe it's that in English cultural thing that in my head, maybe I'm not sure.

Like what do you mean, English culture?

Like they celebrate, erm, like British culture and stuff, they celebrate Valentine's Day and you've been brought up noticing and seeing that and I don't know because he's from back home he's not celebrated Valentine's Day in Bangladesh before and he's in this country and he's a bit lost. But it's been like 10 years now so he's come, he's just recently become like a strict Muslim, before he wasn't as bad. Like before he used to get me gifts and things like that but last year I didn't get one because he's become very strict [laughs] And he's like "No, it's not allowed I can give you a gift any other day." And I go "No I want it please." [laughs] But so, last year I didn't get one, but the year before that I did. I demanded one off him.

How did you feel when you didn't get one?

I understood it because like it's not allowed in our religion at all to celebrate Valentine's Day but erm like, if he wants, if my husband wants to give me a gift that's no problem he can give me a gift any day of the year, he can give me a gift every day of the year, that's not a problem, but you know, you're not supposed to celebrate Valentine's Day but I ...

Do you celebrate anniversaries? Wedding anniversaries?

It's the same thing! Erm [laughs] We're not supposed to but I do [laughs]. But that's with my husband so it's allowed. I can go to Alaan and say he's my husband [laughs]. I'm allowed [laughs].

Okay and why do you think you're allowed to do that with your husband?

Erm, because in your religion, husbands like, like, you're allowed, it's Haraam, it's Halaal to erm, do anything with your husband so why not anniversaries and Valentine's Day whereas you're not allowed to have a boyfriend. You have to be married.

Say that again.

Like in our religion, you're not allowed to have a boyfriend or ... It's your husband, how bad could it be really? Come on [laughs] I could go and say he's my husband [laughs].

Okay, right.

Please forgive me God.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Erm, nope [laughs] I think I've done enough sinning for one day.

Okay, thank you very much for that, erm, if we need to do a follow up interview, I'll let you know. I'll contact you again, but thank you so much for your time.

You're welcome.

[47:37]