

Asians prefer melting pot neighbourhoods

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Asian families prefer to live in cosmopolitan neighbourhoods rather than in segregated communities – according to a report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

A team from The University of Manchester compared the experience of second generation Bangladeshi and Pakistani women living in three English cities with that of their white counterparts.

The researchers found that British Asian households had similar aspirations for themselves and their families to the white British households.

They also had more in common with white women of their own age than with their mother's generation.

“There was an almost universal desire amongst respondents across ethnic groups to live in mixed neighbourhoods mainly because they were seen as better places to live,” said lead researcher Liz Richardson.

“However, we did find that some of the women were torn between inner city neighbourhoods with a strong sense of community and good facilities, and moving to a ‘soulless’ but less deprived suburb.

“On balance they often chose suburbs as safer places to raise children, but would prefer to live in 'urban villages' that have the benefits of both.”

She added: "This study indicates that the Asian community is now well established in the UK and many of the needs of second generation families are no different from the rest of society.

"This is something that bodies including developers, local authorities and housing associations should pay close attention to."

The authors argue that local authority 'BME' housing strategies now need to be updated to reflect the changing aspirations of different generations of Asian families.

The team of researchers at the University's Institute for Political and Economic Governance worked with women in Birmingham Bradford and Tower Hamlets.

They spoke to 94 20-to 45-year-olds, mostly mothers.

Researcher Bethan Harries said: "The study provides a strong illustration of the generational differences of all families – irrespective of whether they are Asian or not.

"The Asian women we interviewed told us they have the same hopes and aspirations of the white women we talked to - good schools, low crime and decent areas to live."

She added: "Many live in 'nuclear' not extended families - though its fair to say that some may spend time with an extended family during the first year or so of their marriage.

"The white women similarly lived with their parents as a mechanism to save money before buying their own home."

Provided by University of Manchester

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