Thesis Title –

Beyond the Possible

Punjabi, Pashtun and Bangladeshi parents' possible selves for their daughter's education and careers

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Abstract

Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming. (Markus and Nurius, 1986, p. 954)

The importance of significant others in possible selves' research has been well documented however there has not been an attempt to directly understand the hopes, expectations and fears of significant others. This thesis argues that when considering South Asian groups' education and career choices the narrative is incomplete without focusing on parents' hopes, expectations and fears. The focus on this particular group is because the literature shows how community/family norms can be particularly strong in comparison with some other groups. Therefore, this thesis explores the possible selves that Punjabi, Pashtun and Bangladeshi parents have for their daughters to become and the ones they are afraid of their daughters becoming.

Furthermore, the thesis aimed to understand how parents influence their daughters' possible selves. Daughters are significant within literature on identity, education and employment within the South Asian Muslim context; particularly in how they negotiate their gender identities as they navigate their social contexts (Knott and Khoker, 1993; Basit, 1997; Haw, 1998; Mohammad, 2005; Dwyer, 2000; Kay, 2007; Brown, 2006; Afshar, 2008; Bowlby and Lloyd-Evans, 2009; Phillips, 2009).

Previous research (Haw, 1998; Basit, 1997; Bhatti, 1999; Parker-Jenkins et al., 1997; Shain, 2003) conducted on British South Asians in terms of careers and education has been largely treated this group as homogenous. This thesis separated the broad label of Pakistani into Punjabi and Pashtun as well as looking at Bangladeshi groups to understand whether these distinct groups hold heterogeneous views on careers and education for their daughters in terms of their hopes, expectations and fears. The research was situated in two northern

mill towns in the north west of England; which have a large south Asian Muslim population.

The data involved in-depth online focus group interviews with parents of daughters in secondary school. The overall findings suggest that Punjabi. Pashtun and Bangladeshi parents hold diverse views about their daughters' possible selves in terms of education and careers. This said there are some evident patterns within each group, as well as some similarities between them. They suggest differing degrees of freedom of choice in the three ethnic groups based on socio economic, gender, religious and cultural factors. The findings further suggest that the relationship between the hoped-for possible selves of the three ethnic groups and the role of agency is much more nuanced than current research suggests.

There is a complex understanding of the decision making process across all three ethnic groups with a clear structural approach to decision making within the Pashtun and Bengali groups and although this was much looser in the Punjabi focus groups there was a clear belief across all three groups that parents had a right to shape the decision making process with their daughters within their cultural context. The findings also suggest a clear intersectional aspect to the differences which exist between the influences that parents from these three groups have on their daughters hoped for and feared possible selves.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late father. Without his love and fierce dedication to his children, I would not be able to write these words. (May your status be elevated)

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Firstly, I would like to praise and thank Allah (most gracious, most merciful) and send salutations upon the final messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr Richard Budd for his time, patience, and understanding. Thank you for your unwavering support and insightful critiques throughout my research journey. Our conversations were a source of influence, motivation and intrigue and I am truly thankful for your guidance.

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To my father and mother (in law), you welcomed me into your home and have loved and supported me unconditionally, the daily prayers have carried me through the toughest of times.

I must also express my deepest appreciation for my family on both sides, you stepped in not only with emotional reassurance and prayers, but also critical support. Your unconditional love and sacrifice have been the foundation of my resilience and success. I am truly blessed to have you all in my life you are all truly amazing people.

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To everyone at Olive High girls and Boys school; you have been my inspiration for this and I hope that our community and school can benefit from this for generations to come.

Finally, I would like to express my immense gratitude to my husband, Inaamullah, and my beautiful children Khadijah and Muhammad, this is all for you. Without your love, motivation and constant support, I would not be where I am today. Thank you for being there for me at the end of those long days. Thank you for your patience through the struggle of getting this done. You have performed both the role of a mother and father to our children in order for me to reach this point. I can only express my sincere gratitude through prayer. May the Almighty grant you health, happiness and keep you under his shade, you are incredible and it is an honour to be your wife and a mother to our children.

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Signature: M.Hanif

Word count 46,518

1. Introduction and Background

Within the literature, South Asian communities have not been treated as a heterogeneous group until recently (Bagguley and Hussain 2016: Bokhari 2015). Although studies have found differences and similarities between Pakistani, Bengali, and Indian communities there has not been a concerted effort made to look within these complex and rich communities.

There has been a keen interest in looking at British Muslim south Asian women. Studies have examined multiple aspects of identity and educational attainment particularly at Higher Education level (HE). The current study is placed in the context of literature and empirical research that has examined different aspects of identity in the context of minority groups living in the UK (Archer :2001, 2007; Basit:1997: Dwyer, 2000: Dwyer, Shah, and Sanghera, 2008: Haque and Bell, 2001: Ramji, 2007: Shah, Dwyer, and Modood: 2010). However, whilst the research has focused on educational aspirations of this 'group', distinctions beyond Pakistani and Bangladeshi are hard to come by (Bagguley and Hussain 2016: Haque and Bell; 2001).

This study looks at three ethnically distinct groups who all come under the broader umbrella term 'South Asian Muslim' Punjabi, Pashtun and Bangladeshi. These groups encompass a vast array of populace who although share some traditions, languages and cultures also may have very distinct features such as religious beliefs. The three ethnic groups in this study are predominantly Muslim. This is an important aspect of what this study aims to find. Previously these groups have been homogenised or categorised as BAME, South Asian, Muslim, without considering the impact of these labels on the heterogeneity of each group. These labels also assume that these groups therefore experience and think about life in a similar way without exploring the nuances which exist in their practice of these identities (Ahmad, 2001; Bhopal, 1997; Dale et al, 2002).

This study proposes that when considering South Asian groups' education and career choices the narrative is incomplete without focusing on parents' hopes,

expectations and fears. This is not to say that South Asian children do not possess agency (Archer: 2007) or the capabilities to think about their own career choices. However, the study is appreciative of the interconnectedness and joint thinking that takes place within such cultures and this must be appreciated and explored rather than reduced to simplistic arguments around agency or, a lack of and familial habitus[1].(Archer, 2001, 2002; Basit, 1997; Dwyer, 2000; Dwyer, Shah, & Sanghera, 2008; Haque & Bell, 2001; Ramji, 2007; Shah, Dwyer and Modood, 2010).

The way in which education pathways, choices and careers are deliberated. The hopes, expectations and fears drawn from these; and how these are then relayed to daughters should be an important aspect of literature on South Asian Muslim education and career choices. Thus, the current study uses possible selves to dig deeper to explore the dynamics of the creation of possible selves and how they are imagined and translated into influence. By focusing on the heterogeneity between the three ethnic groups this study therefore explores the shared and heterogeneous possible selves that parents in these three groups imagine and fear for their daughters.

1.1. Parental influence

Parental influence on career and education choices of South Asian children has been well documented (Basit, 1997, Ali, 2003; Caballero, Haynes and Tickly, 2007; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Kutty,2014: Modood, 2015: Bagguely and Hussain 2016).These studies have largely focused on familial habitus and other social capital concepts to explain the low uptake of careers and education within South Asian groups. Among the main factors for inconsistent representation are the varied nature of their ethnic origins, the family patterns, religious practices and cultural values (Modood, 2015). Bangladeshi women had been consistently underrepresented in higher education (HE) in Britain followed by Pakistani women. The current study aims to understand parental influence in

[1] Familial Habitus-refers to the set of values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that are transmitted from one generation to the next within a family. (Archer et al., 2012)

the form of a transition from the imaginary to a more palpable sense of what their role includes and the influence that they have in the creation of the possible selves for their daughters.

1.2. Towards a problem

The topic of South Asian women's education came into notice in 1980s research, when it was found that Muslim women from Pakistan and Bangladesh experience major influences by their parents and families in the process of choosing, HE. In British Muslim culture, choosing HE was dependent upon young women's position within the familial and cultural structures (Basit, 1997). Within these studies, though, these ethnic groups have fallen victim to homogenisation of their identity, educational achievements/ or lack of.

British Bangladeshis have until recently been the most underrepresented group in Higher Education (HE). Although in recent years much has been said about the increase in British Bangladeshi participation in higher education, however according to Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran (2014); the group was over represented in less prestigious post 1992 institutions as well as having lower retention rates then other ethnic groups. Furthermore Miller (2016) states 'problematic' label attributed to the Bangladeshi community within policy. This he suggests maybe the influence of patriarchal, cultural and religious norms.

Like British Bangladeshis, Pakistanis have also been labelled as a problem within education. The focus on the schooling, academic achievements and outcomes of 'Pakistani' migrant children has featured in policy and research (Cheung and Heath, 2007). Although, the focus beyond this has been an attempt to seek out the heterogeneity of this ethnic group (Ahmad, 2001; Longhi, Nicoletti, and Platt, 2013) this attempt has been based on looking at generational differences and inequalities rather than broader heterogeneity. There has also been an attempt made by the literature to explain children's educational mobility and the choices they make (Modood, 1993; Strand, 2014; Zuccotti, 2015).

Although there has been a keen focus on Pakistani and Bangladeshi achievements or lack of and problems around representation in education, the problem still remains; the group 'Pakistani' is not homogenous. In England, there is a large migrant population consisting of many other groups, one of which is the NWFP Pashtuns[2]. When educational data are collected under the classification 'Pakistani', there is a danger that the realities of distinct 'Pakistani' communities like Punjabi, Kashmiri and NWP Pashtun can be masked (Bokhari:2015). Although, some research has been done with Punjabi and Kashmiri communities and their education (e.g. Abbas 2004, Joly, 1986) there is an absence of research on the NWFP Pashtun population and educational attainment and choice. Pakistanis are a heterogeneous group of people and need to be recognised as that, beyond the 'shared' ethnicity apparent to outsiders (Colic- Peisker, 2004).

The lack of understanding around the complexities that arise from the intersectional identities of the three groups laid the foundation for this study. Currently, the broader picture of Muslim South Asians in Britain is one which is bleak. Although there are hints of improvements at higher education level, largely the Muslim South Asian populace has been static in terms of education, housing, and occupational mobility (ONS 2021). The ethnic groups in this study can thus be described as being deprived; one by virtue of their South Asian ethnicity and two their Muslim identity (Bokhari: 2015, Mohee:2011). Academic research, census data, and other social reports all suggest that South Asian Muslim groups live in areas with the highest deprivation levels, have low levels of attainment and highest rates of unemployment (Dobbs, 2006; (Massey & Tatla, 2012; Morgan & Poynting, 2012; ONS 2021).

However, one thing that the data and research do not show is the heterogeneity of these groups. Although the Bangladeshi group can be described as homogenous in terms of language and customs there are differences between

[2] NWFP Pashtuns- The Pashtuns of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) in Pakistan.They are known for their unique cultural code, Pashtunwali, and their historical role in the region's political landscape.

Sylheti[3] Bangladeshis and Dakhan;[4] although this is not a focus of this study. The study aims to focus on the heterogeneity between and within the Bangladeshi, Punjabi and Pashtun groups. All three groups are currently somewhat homogenised in the literature.

The Pashtun have been called the largest Muslim tribal society in the world, they live primarily in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Spread over a vast geographical area and driven by socio-economic, political, tribal and linguistic differences. Pashtuns nevertheless share a unique sense of common identity. Pashtun identity is based on four elements: Heritage; Islam; the Pashtunwali Code of Honour.

The UK is home to one the highest number of Pashtuns outside of their traditional homeland. The number of Pashtuns in the UK is estimated at one hundred thousand (Maclean:2009), forming the largest community of Pashtuns in the West, and the majority of Afghan Muslims in the UK are of Pashtun origin, however most British Pashtuns are of Pakistani Pashtun heritage. At the centre of Pashtun culture is the *Pashtunwali* [5]which is a moral code based on honour, hospitability, chivalry and protection (Bokhari:2015)

The aim of this research is therefore to look at how these three very ethnically distinct groups think and influence their daughters' possible selves in terms of education and careers. The study therefore aims to understand the hopes, fears and expectations that these groups have in terms of their daughters' education and careers and how they seek to influence these.

[3] Sylhet-**Sylhet** is a metropolitan city in the north eastern region of Bangladesh
[4] Dhaka- Dhaka formerly known as Dacca, **is the capital and largest city of Bangladesh**
[5] Pashtunwali -The Pashtuns have a unique and defining tribal code called Pashtunwali or the 'way of the Pashtun' that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups. It is an unwritten set of values, customs and cultural codes that governs routine life.

1.3. Personal and professional interests

Although a plethora of literature exists on Muslim Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and their education choices in England (Knott and Khoker, 1993; Basit, 1997; Haw, 1998; Mohammad, 2005; Dwyer, 2000; Kay, 2007; Brown, 2006; Afshar, 2008; Bowlby and Lloyd-Evans, 2009; Phillips, 2009; Bagguley and Hussain,2016). the focus of the majority of these studies has been the barriers to education for Muslim women or successes and failures of these group. As a Headteacher of a Muslim Girls' and a Boys' secondary school, I use literature to inform not just pedagogical practices in the school but also to look for relevant studies on the ethnic groups/ community that the school serves. What I found eventually led me to focus my research on the subject of this thesis.

I became aware very early on in my literature search that the heterogeneity of ethnic minorities was not acknowledged as much as I thought it might be (Brah 1996; Rajiva 2013). I found when exploring the education of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in England, that literature spoke of the population in mostly general terms, with little or some acknowledgement of the communities comprising that population of 1.6 million (ONS: Census, 2021). Furthermore, the school serves a large Pashtun community one which is almost an invisible ethnic group within education literature as well as policy.

The largest three ethnic groups in the school are Punjabi, Pashtun and Bangladeshi, I have come to realise that my conversation with significant others as well as the students have often resulted in me navigating complex routes to manage parental expectations across all three groups and educational opportunity and equity for all three groups. I often turn to literature and current research to give me a sense of how I might navigate these complex identities however I stumbled when I was faced with two options either South Asian research or studies on Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, and these were mostly focused at HE level.

1.4. Possible selves

Needing a way to conceptualise the educational experiences and aspirations of this group, and in this case, parents and their daughters. This eventually led me to the possible selves' concept (Markus and Nurius:1986, Oyserman and Fryberg 2006) and I began to see how the two could work together to consider these groups in a way that the research currently does not do. My own identity as a British, Punjabi, Muslim, woman and Headteacher of a Muslim girls' school, I had some ideas and expectations about what was going on, and what I might find.

The possible selves' concept (Markus and Nurius; 1986), which was first used in social psychology research focuses on how peoples' behaviour in the short term is influenced by how individuals imagine their futures. The sense of the imagined is central to the possible selves' theory as individuals personalise their imagined future selves enacting the futures they hope for, expect or fear.

Much of the existing research using the possible selves' concept in education focuses on the connection between imagined future and present motivation (Khajavy and Ghonsooly, 2017; Oyserman, Bybee and Terry, 2006) these have mainly situated in the USA and focused on East Asian, Caucasian and Latino groups. The use of possible selves to consider education and career choices of South Asian groups is currently vacant within the literature.

Possible selves theory also considers the importance of significant others as key to the imagined selves, however currently significant others have not been the focus of studies that have used possible selves. Current research has focused on the idealistic personalised aspect of possible selves with an acceptance that the process is influenced by significant others.

This research study goes that one step further in putting the significant others in focus to look at how they conceptualise their daughters' possible selves in terms of education and careers; and furthermore, how they then seek to influence their daughters to realise and imagine these future selves. The place occupied by daughters in South Asian families is crucial for understanding the complexities of gender roles, family dynamics, and educational expectations within these communities (Basit 1997; Ahmad 2001; Bell and Rajan 2017; Ramji 2007). By researching this particular group and through considering the heterogeneity of daughters across different south Asian ethnicities research can elucidate the unique positioning of daughters, particularly in the context traditional gender norms.

Why not just ask the daughters themselves? This is a question that I grappled with at the very beginning of my interest in possible selves, and this could maybe have been a less convoluted path to knowing what their possible selves were in terms of careers and education. However, bringing the personal in to this consideration was important, why is it important to understand the possible selves that South Asian parents have of their daughters?

1. Parental influence on daughters' possible selves was central to any conversation I was having both with students and parents around future aspirations.

2. Parents from the three ethnic groups suggest differing understanding of further/higher education and its importance in their daughters' lives.

3. Much has been said in the literature on parental influence on the educational choices of South Asian Muslim girls but the 'what' this influence looks like and 'How' parents seek to deploy this influence on daughters is missing.

The need to have greater understanding of the 'self' as an integral part of significant others was overwhelmingly important in the context of the three

ethnic groups in this study. In order to truly be able to work in my role as Headteacher and promote social justice through my service to these ethnic groups it is important that through this research; I focus on those who seek to influence the next generation of female Punjabi, Pashtun, Bangladeshi Muslim women. In this case it is clear that these influential others are parents and by using the possible selves' framework to understand what the hopes, expectations and fears of parents across these ethnic groups are for their daughters and how they seek to influence these this study aims to;

1. Make an original contribution to the conceptualisation of possible selves as a theory only used previously on individuals looking at the 'self'. By extending the application of this theory this study aims to suggest that in specific socio ethnic groups the concept of the 'self' maybe understood differently than how it is currently understood in the possible selves' framework.

2. Extend the scarcity of literature on heterogeneity within South Asian groups by affording the much-documented influence of parents on daughters' educational choices some individuality and distinct understanding by applying the concept of possible selves to their hope's expectations and fears for daughters' future selves.

In light of the above the aim of this study is to explore the following research question. The question is aimed at exploring a particular community in a particular location therefore does not seek to make generalisations about any of the ethnic groups within this study.

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

In order to explore the overall question, sub questions were formulated to generate deep discussions that covered the overall research question in-depth.

Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves?

Sub question 2; How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education in terms of agency and intersectionality?

Sub question 3; What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimensions?

1.5. Structure of thesis

Chapter two presents an in-depth literature review on a range of concepts that are embedded and weaved all the way through from the introduction to the conclusion. The chapter ends with a revisit of the research question and the sub questions.

Chapter 3 is a presentation and exploration of the methodological grounding of this study. This chapter seeks to explore the paradigm, methodology, research design and aspects of positionality that underpin this study.

Chapter 4 is dichotomous in its structure, firstly it presents the findings that were developed from the data using the reflexive thematic analysis steps formulated by Braun and Clarke (2006). The aim is to present the data into core themes and sub themes that were construed through the data. Next the findings are then discussed by using current literature and research in the second part of the chapter and the implications for further research are considered.

Chapter 5 Considers the second findings section aim to present the findings and discussion for the following two sub question. This chapter again is dichotomous in its presentation, first the findings are presented in terms of themes and sub themes next these are considered and discussed later on in

the chapter within the current literature and implications of the potential findings are discussed in terms of future direction.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, returning to the research questions to show how these have been addressed. The chapter summarises the development and application of the conceptual framework of possible selves when considering parents formulation of daughter's selves according to education and careers in terms of their hopes, expectations and fears across all three ethnic groups as well as their heterogeneous nature. Key contributions from the study are set out in detail in the final section of this chapter, which closes the thesis by considering the overall implications of the project in the light of these findings.

1.5.1. Next chapter

The next chapter presents an in-depth literature review on a range of concepts that are embedded and weaved all the way through from the introduction to the conclusion. The concept of possible selves is considered in terms of its broader use in social psychology research, narrowing it down to its use in education research. As well as key concepts such as intersectionality, agency and parental influence.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will present an in-depth literature review on a range of concepts that are embedded and weaved all the way through from the introduction to the conclusion. The chapter begins by exploring the context of this study and concepts that underpin the participants in this study, and the realities in which they exist. By focusing on intersectionality at the beginning this chapter then looks at literature on ethnicity, religion and gender within the South Asian context. Next, it moves on to explore the education within this group, focusing on the relationship between aspects of identity and education. Parental influence is the considered with a specific focus on agency and Izzat and how these underpin parents influence on their daughters. The chapter finally considers the different aspects of context, identity, education and parents influence within the conceptual framework of possible selves.

2.2. Context

The starting point of this this literature review is to focus on the interconnectedness of multiple identities of the three groups in this study. In order to do this, it is important to consider how these multiple identities are considered by parents when formulating possible selves of their daughters.

There has been little attempt to look at how the multiple identities between significant ethnic groups impact the way that they imagine their futures. These groups although are from the ‘South Asian’ community usually speak different languages, have different cuisine and may also follow different interpretations of the same religion. These attempts tend to group women as a homogenous group, and lack sufficient heterogeneous considerations of women.

2.3. Intersectionality

2.3.1. Identity; ethnicity and religion

Ethnicity has been understood as a social political construct, it is defined as a sharing of a common culture, including shared beginnings, characteristics attitudes, language religion and cultural traditions (Sheldon and Parker 1992; Chaturedi and McKeigue 1994; LaVeist 1994; Senior and Bhopal 1994; Butler et al. 1996; Freeman 1998). Ethnicity is further described as a fluid concept which may change over time. Over the last half a century ethnicity has been used as a cornerstone of identity when researching different groups of people. Existing literature on ethnicity, religion and education is focused around access to education, mainly higher education, barriers, opportunities, attainment gaps, and performance (Rana et al :2022). Fenton (1999) refers to ethnicity as being a sense amongst a group of people, of a shared culture and descent, a shared ancestry linked with a national or regional origin. Walters (2012) asserts that when we speak of ethnic groups, we are talking of how a people's sense of a shared descent, belonging, culture, language, religion, clothing and shared customs makes them feel a member of, or places them within, a group of people. This collective belonging and identity have implications for what is un-/acceptable.

Intersectionality has been defined as an interconnection of different social identities such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage" (2023 Oxford English Dictionary.). Studies using an intersectional approach highlight the importance of using such an approach to our understanding of people as it aids us in appreciating and acknowledging individuals/groups unique experiences of discrimination (Kelly et al:2021; King et al :2019).

Studies looking at multiple identities have often employed the Intersectionality theory, pioneered by the Black African-American feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, which argues that gender, class, race, and other social identities intersect, overlap, and impact an individual's life. Intersectionality has been defined as the point at which multiple identities such as race, class, gender overlap and

interconnect. It is aalso important to note here that intersectionality is, about societal structures that marginalise, it is not primarily an individual thing.

The interconnectedness of identity is central to the present study. How the three ethnic groups mediate aspects of their complex identities is crucial to our understanding of them. The diagram below visualises the multifaceted identities of Bangladeshi, Pashtun and Punjabi Muslim women. According to Alexander and Kim , South Asians in the UK make imaginative cultural links to their heritage as well as reimagine Britishness within a complex multicultural context (2013), often creating an inclusive identity which recognises their complex, hybridised identities (Karlsen and Nazroo (2015) Bagguley and Hussain 2007). Furthermore, Karlsen and Nazroo (2015) discovered that the overwhelming majority of British South Asian ethnoreligious minority groups felt a part of Britain.

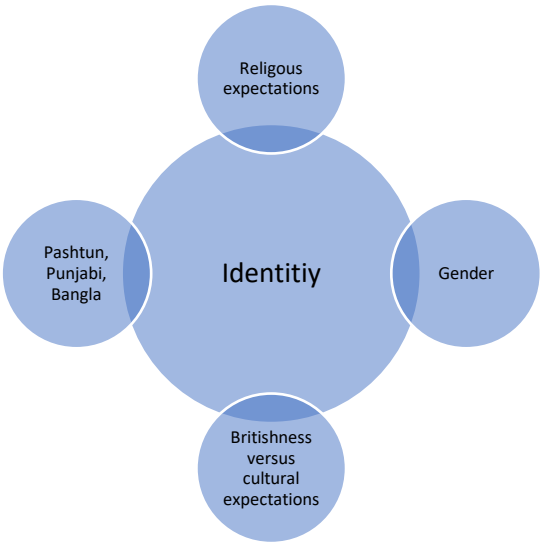


Fig 1.1 Interconnectedness of identities

Despite studies that have considered an intersectional approach to understanding South Asian women's experiences in employment (Kamenou and Fearful 2006; Littrell and Nkomo 2005; Paludi 2013; Syed and Murray 2009; Verbeek and Groenveld 2012), understanding around education and the challenges facing ethnic minority females seems to be limited (Cornelious 2002; Shen et al. 2009.

An intersectional lens is helpful to highlight the importance of "various socially created categories interact in intersecting systems of oppression" (Turner 2011, p. 345). Furthermore It aids our understanding of how gender, race, and class intersect with one another, creating varied experiences for women from different race and classes (Chow et al. 2011; Shields 2008).

According to Brah (1994) and Koopmans (2015) Considering an intersectional approach becomes even more imperative when considering South Asian women. Although much of this work looks at South Asian women in the workplace; the fact that identities are socially constructed and in view of the concurrent rise of Islamic radicalism and Islamophobia in the west: it is likely that Muslim women are subjected to complex challenges related to their gender, ethnicity, religion, and other individual dimensions of identity, such as family status and qualification(s) (Tariq and Syed:2017) . They further suggest that a focus on one category alone does not offer a holistic and realistic picture of the challenges which may impede Muslim women's careers and aspirations for leadership. Muslim women are likely to face far more challenges and discrimination based on their intersectionality than are women from majority and other ethnic backgrounds (Wallis and Robb, 2013)

2.3.2. Intersectionality and possible selves

Intersectionality acknowledges that identity is understood and experienced within a myriad of contexts, including family background, socio-cultural conditions, current experiences, career decisions, and life planning. This context plays a role in the fluidity and salience of identity to the core sense of self (Abes et al., 2007; Jones & McEwen, 2000). In other words, the core sense of self (personal attributes, characteristics, and identity) is surrounded by dimensions of identification such as race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and religion (Jones & McEwen, 2000). Later theorists of intersectionality also introduced the concept of a meaning-making filter. An individual with a more complex, "foundational" meaning-making filter is less influenced by contextual influences, such as peers, family, norms, and stereotypes, than an individual with less complex "transitional" or "formulaic" meaning-making

capacity (Abes et al., 2007). Intersectionality allows us to better examine the complex and varied experiences of our participants within our institutional context and how these experiences influence their choices.

Possible Selves are choices one makes are also based on options that the individual perceives are available or possible (Kao, 2000; Oyserman, 2015). Markus and Nurius (1986) defined possible selves as those that one hopes for, fears, and expects; they are part of an individual's self-concept that is oriented toward the future. Possible selves are both supported by and influence a sense of self in the moment or current self-concept. The selves one can potentially envision are infinite (Markus & Nurius, 1986). However, researchers investigating possible selves have explored the degree to which they are porous to the perceived possibilities within a given environment (e.g., Frazier, 2012; Kao, 2000; Oyseman & Fryberg, 2006). This environment encompasses the social roles we take on and the social identities with which we align ourselves (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006).

Researchers exploring the academic impact of possible selves for students of colour suggest that viewing themselves as academically successful is a prerequisite for possible academic selves, serving a self-regulatory function (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2006; Oyserman, Johnson, & James, 2011). Self-regulation in this framework develops in the context of both a hoped-for self and a feared self (Oyserman & Fryberg, 2006). For example, a person is more likely to study if he or she is emotionally invested in both a hoped-for self that passes a vital course and a feared self that fails the important course. Further, possible selves are congruent with social identity (Oyserman & James, 2009), and students must implement plausible strategies that can lead them on a path to their future goals (Oyserman et al., 2011).

If we consider possible selves intersectionally, then what is imagined by the three ethnic groups in this study is socially influenced and therefore by focusing on intersectional dimensions of the self, aids our understanding of how the community that the participants belong to looks to have influence on what they (want to) see their daughters' futures being.

2.4. British south Asian Muslim women

In the UK the term South Asian usually refers to people from the Indian subcontinent. South Asian minority groups include Indians 1.9 million (2.3 per cent), Pakistanis 1.6 million (1.9 per cent), Bangladeshis 451,500 (0.7 per cent) and other Asians (Minority Rights Group:2024).

The participants in this study belong to ethnic groups who the literature describes as 'disadvantaged' according to most socio-economic measures (Modood:2006). Amongst this vastly heterogeneous group of people British Asian Muslims are amongst the most disadvantaged of the ethnic minorities (ibid). Statistics show that over 60% of British Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are in poverty, compared to 20% of whites – and have the highest proportions of school leavers without any qualifications (Malik 2018). Although there has been a well-documented increase in British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis accessing, HE, they are most likely to be in less prestigious institutions (Malik 2018). Modood (2006) asserts, though, that there is a determination by these communities to achieve social mobility through HE.

2.4.1. Gender

The literature to date has been cautious in differentiating between south Asian communities and women from the Indian sub-continent have been largely homogenised in such studies. Variations between these communities has been largely divided into Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi. Although this has been beneficial in looking for general variations, it does little to explain variations in education and career choices between and within groups (Modood 1997, Basit 2001).

Butler (1990: 3) states that it is important to recognise that gender intersects with 'racial, class, ethnic, sexual and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities' to produce women's diverse social realities. As such, gender is 'produced'

and ‘maintained’ within specific political and cultural structures within which agency is exercised. Furthermore, feminist literature utilises the concept of ‘difference’ to suggest that women should not be homogenised. Post–colonial feminists argue the need to embrace the diversity of women’s experiences and gender identities (Amos and Parmar 1984).

A study conducted by the Department for Business, Innovation, and skills (BIS: 2014) found that more boys than girls reported having been encouraged to think about engineering as a career with girls being encouraged to pursue medicine, midwifery, and pharmacy, particularly by parents. Furthermore, the Institute of Employment studies found that, parents were the significant others in young people’s lives who hold strong views on STEM occupations, especially towards engineering (Newton et al 2012). The evidence shows the importance of parents in the decision-making process of family members and validates the point, that gendered attitudes have become counterproductive towards achieving gender equality in engineering.

2.4.2. Religion

Another aspect of identity in this study is religion, all participants in this study identified as Muslim. The term ‘Muslim’ can arguably be applied to those for whom Islam is considered to have significance in their daily lives and where Islam plays the role of a guide and moral checkpoint (Nielsen, 1987). Modood (2006) suggests that a majority of students from a Pakistani or Bangladeshi background may associate with a Muslim religious identity. The three ethnic groups in this study, although sharing the same religious identity in a broad sense, have varied understandings of aspects of religion and these are manifested in practice of Islam in their daily life. Although, all three groups adhere to Sunni Islam they can be categorised even further into Deobandi and Barelwi. The two largest Muslim communities in the UK are known as the Deobandi and the Barelwi, with the groups combined controlling 68 per cent of mosques in the country (Yusuf and Oliver 2017).

The Pashtun and Bangladeshi participants follow Deobandi principals of Islam (Yusuf and Oliver 2017). The sect began as a reaction to British colonialism in South Asia when a group of scholars identified the western influence on the region as a corrupting force against Islamic teachings. Adherents of this sect advocate a more observant form of Islam; women are more likely to observe purdah[6] (veiling). Whereas the Punjabi participants largely adhered to the Barelwi movement which has been described as a 'mystical' form of Islam with less emphasis on the more conservative aspects of Islam

At the turn of the century Muslims were increasingly put under the spotlight, they found themselves at the margin of British society due to a rise in Islamophobia, world politics, and the rise of far-right movements (Tariq and Syed 2017). Statistics collated by the anti-hate crime organisation Tell-Mama indicate that Muslim hate crime in Britain has risen by 70% since 2014. Furthermore it stipulates that 60% of these attacks are directed at Muslim women due to the reason that at least some of them are easily identifiable due to their hijab or other traditional Islamic clothing; Sanghani (2015). Seta (2016) similarly suggests that British Muslim women in particular are perceived to have a 'triple penalty' in terms of being female, BAME and Muslim (ibid): indeed, 65% of economically inactive Muslims are women (ibid)

The current literature, although overwhelmingly concerned with religion as a 'barrier' for Muslim South Asians participation in education gives space to arguments presenting Islam as a religion that encourages and promotes education and thus acts as a motivating factor. A study by Modood (2006) considered that Islam's encouragement of education can be considered as Islamic capital. The current literature points towards a reimaging of Islam as an important issue of diversity in the UK (Modood and Calhoun 2015). They also suggest a widespread acceptance and promotion of Islam as a British religion in order to include British Muslim students and encourage their ambitions - as with any other minority grouping in the UK.

[6] Purdah- Purdah is an Indian word which is sometimes translated as "seclusion". It refers to the practice of some Muslim women of staying at home so as to avoid mixing with men, other than the husband, family members and close friends. It also refers to covering the face with a veil.

2.4.3. Patriarchal norms and gendered constraints

Patriarchy is broadly defined as the systemic dominance of women by men (Pease, 2000, p. 20). It reflects a set of values and beliefs that legitimise male authority while opposing equal power structures across both public and private domains. In public life, power tends to be concentrated among men, while in private settings, authority typically rests with the senior male figure, who holds influence over all family members including younger men and boys (Haj-Yahia & Schiff, 2007). Within patriarchal cultures, the husband is commonly regarded as the head of the household and is expected to be consulted on all major family decisions.

Traditionally patriarchy in Muslim South Asian communities has been understood to be a set of religious rules that restrict access to education and other socio-economic rights. However according to Contractor (2012) The patriarchy that Muslim women challenge is not religious but is derived from the culture of Muslim communities. This cultural patriarchy can deny women access to education, careers and social authority, which ironically are rights Islam assures them.

The ethnic groups in this study have all been associated with patriarchal practices according to Nainer (2013:1) ‘In south Asian communities’ patriarchy is particularly manifested in relations and modes of production, state regulated and monitored laws and polices, control of sexuality, and monopoly in religion and culture’. Studies have consistently shown that patriarchal norms prioritise male education over female education in Muslim South Asian contexts (Jangir, 2024; Asadullah & Wahhaj, 2018). Families may perceive education for girls as unnecessary or even counterproductive, especially when early marriage and domestic roles are prioritised. This often results in constraints on girls' mobility, autonomy, and choices, with strict regulation of their public presence and behaviour (Ali, 2013).

The strict adherence to the Pashtunwali suggests that patriarchy for the Pashtun group is deeply embedded from a moral standpoint. Pashtunwali, the traditional code

of conduct among Pashtuns, plays a significant role in sustaining patriarchal values. This code emphasises honour (nang), hospitality (melmastia), revenge (badal), and most notably, male authority and control over women (Ahmed, 1980; Lindholm, 1982). The literature suggests that women are often seen as carriers of family honour, which is closely tied to their obedience, modesty, and seclusion. As a result, practices such as purdah (female seclusion), arranged marriages, and restrictions on mobility are widely observed and socially reinforced (Kandiyoti, 1988; Ali, 2001). The current notion of patriarchy across the south Asian sub-continent is largely dismissive of the role that women play in their own lives and suggests that futures are static.

Islamic teachings around acquiring of knowledge suggests a more egalitarian view. Contractor (2012) argues that when considering the lives of women during the life of the Prophet (pbuh) it is important to note that women in authoritative roles existed (Nadwi 2007; Bewley 2004). She further suggests that the amalgamation of religion and culture due to the spread of Islam gave understandings of women's roles religiously nuanced understandings in order to uphold cultural practices.

The three ethnic groups in this study are all adherents of Islam and thus the idea of patriarchy and the cultural and religious role is important to consider as a factor that could be present when thinking about the possible selves of their daughters

Material factors such as poverty, rural location, poor transport infrastructure, and lack of female teachers contribute to educational exclusion, particularly in tribal or remote areas (Khan & Bano, 2023). Even when schools are available, conservative community norms and economic pressures often lead families to invest in boys' education while discouraging girls from attending, especially beyond primary levels. A recent case study in tribal Balochistan, Pakistan, revealed how "patriarchal capital" the privileging of male authority and status manifests in educational access, with systemic exclusion of girls from schools due to entrenched tribal and gender hierarchies (Kakar et al., 2025).

Overall, the literature around intersectional approaches to South Asian Muslim women suggests that Identity matters; it is the foundation on which groups build their futures and imagine them. It gives us insight into who people are and the choices they make according to this.

2.4.4. Muslim south Asian women and education

Existing research on education of ethnic minorities has taken an intersectional approach and shown that gender, ethnicity, and social class all influence what careers are perceived as desirable among particular groups (Crenshaw 1989; Simien 2007; Collins and Bilge 2016). Gendered attitudes towards education and careers continue to hinder women's progression in studying a broad spectrum of subjects. For example, evidence shows that engineering related education and careers are still perceived as masculine, Atkins (2013) found that even women who work in the sector believe that engineering is viewed as a 'male career'. On the other hand, Atkins found that medicine, and pharmacy which require similar A Levels as engineering are seen as more desirable choices for women, due to an emphasis on care and nurturing. The General Medical Council (2013) states that women now outnumber men as qualified doctors.

The literature has considered the impact of marginalisation on Muslim South Asian women (Wilson, 1978; Basit, 1997a; Dwyer, 1999; Bagguley & Hussain, 2007; Bhopal & Preston, 2012), the focus of such studies has been around how marginalisation impacts experiences of schooling/education and wider societal labelling (Brah & Minhas, 1985; Abbas, 2002b; Crozier & Davies, 2008; Hamilton & Riordan, 2016). However, what has not been explored in depth is the heterogeneity of this group. The literature and official statistics often lump these very different groups of women together under the broad category of 'Asian' or 'Muslim', yet the educational outcomes are very different for each group. This link between ethnicity and attainment has been identified in a number of studies impacting on attainment is

echoed throughout the literature (Tomlinson, 1983; Singh Raud, 1997a; Haque, 2000; Mirza, 2006; Richardson, 2008; Singh, 2011).

2.5. Agency, identity and education

Within the literature on Muslim South Asian women agency has played a prominent role in explaining how this group of women navigate their experiences of education especially around choice of subject and careers. Agency is defined by Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, and Paloniemi (2013) as “having an influence on one’s own life situation” (p46).

Hawson (2010) has conceptualised agency into three specific strands;

- Individual- located within a person
- Proxy- on behalf of the individual
- Collective- Acting together

Markus and Kitayama (2003) further, suggest two models of agency that are theoretically different. They consider agency in two traditions of eastern and western. It is important to note here however that the terms Eastern and Western can themselves be homogenising, but it points to a spectrum of different cultural traditions within which agency operates. They propose that in the western tradition agency can be classed as disjointed in that its main aim is to reach autonomy and independence. On the other hand, conjoint agency is connected with interpersonal connections and mainly took place in the context of human interaction.

Despite various motives, the goal of expressing agency stays the same as it is directed ability to impact the development of actions in different situations by making decisions. Jahan argues these women use agency tactically, within set parameters, rather than simply contravening them. This understanding of agency is based on Bhabha (1994) theory of “migrant agency’”, which is a space between marginalised migrant cultures and colonisers. Educational decision making has often stipulated a

proxy style of agency upheld by social and cultural norms enshrined within a patriarchal structure (Gunasinghe et al: 2019).

However, Jahan (2011) states that despite being bound by religion and culture to the label and influence of gender, South Asian women, and particularly Bangladeshi heritage women, should be seen as agents who have worked to change oppressive social norms, whilst at the same time conforming to them. By this, Brah (1997) is suggesting that culture is not a fixed notion but actually a process, and it is through this process that both meaning and understanding is drawn. This explains how South Asian women continuously occupy numerous positions from which they then navigate and ultimately articulate their identity.

Recent research has moved away from using social capital theory as an explanation for the influence of cultural norms, and expectations on educational choices made by south Asian women; as it neglects agency to some extent. Archer (2007:48) proposed that in their consideration of the opportunities of higher education south Asian women 'reflexively select, suppress and supplement' aspects of their parental cultures and religion. Archer's study using communicative reflexivity which is the internal conversations a person may have to reaffirm what they believe, suggest that 'a person's deliberations and significant actions requires the confirmation of others who are close to them and who they trust. It thus tends to result in actions congruent with the norms and interests of others close to that person' (Archer, 2007: 159).

Furthermore, Archer found no clear cases of autonomous reflexivity in which south Asian women were engaged in self-contained internal conversations without reference to others that led directly to action (ibid). This suggests that when considering educational decision making amongst south Asian women it is important to acknowledge the influence of external factors which contribute to their decision making. Agency within studies of South Asian Muslims educational choices thus suggests no one-size-fits-all consideration. Although research into agency has rightfully dispelled some stereotypes surrounding British south Asian women's social and economic situations, it has not addressed the key issues of what choices these women are making, and if this increased agency is different to the values and beliefs

of the communities and families they belong to (Archer: 2007, Bagguley & Hussain: 2016) . Furthermore, the majority of studies have focused on south Asian women in Higher Education (Bagguley & Hussain: 2016), no significant studies around secondary school age South Asian students have been carried out. The broad term South Asian has been applied very loosely and doesn't help us to understand the differences that exist between this diverse group.

2.6. Parental influence

Parent-child relationship has been identified as important in both career (Whiston and Keller, 2004) and identity development during adolescence. Although family negotiations of educational choice between parents and female family members, have been documented within studies of south Asian female educational participation (Crozier and Davies, 2006; Modood, 2004; Thapar-Bjorkert and Sanghera, 2010) , there has been limited research carried out into what advice is given by parents and the perceived strengths and weaknesses of parental influence around education and employment.

As Bagguley and Hussain (2007:3) state 'for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women going to university is not considered a natural progression by parents. Bagguley and Hussain (2007) they further convey that Bangladeshi Indian and Pakistani heritage women's participation in HE varies depending on where the parents originate, and the social class and also the educational background of the parents. They also assert that participation in "HE from women in these three groups has increased much faster than that of white women since the early 1990s" (p2).

However, no explanation is given to as to why this is, or the possible role of parents within this. There has been an attempt in the literature to suggest that parental influence on education decision making comes in the form of extensive discussions and negotiations within the family; within this process according to Khambhaita (2014) "Asian students often articulated familial, cultural and social rules in relation to their educational decisions" (p1019).

Studies which have analysed patterns of south Asian female participation in education elucidate that their limited access to education is due to parental and community attitudes (Ahmad 2001; Abbas: 2003). '[A] young woman working away from home unchaperoned is understood as providing fertile ground for malicious gossip' (Brah 1993:143). If the girl behaved in a way that damaged the family honour, for example by being seen in public drinking, or out with a boy, her family would suffer in the community and she would no longer be seen as a desired marriage partner (Afshar, 1994).

However, no similar restrictions were mentioned for boys (Dale et al 2002). They found that education contributes to women's status within the community. According to Dale it increases their 'value' as members of the community and has positive implications for their family reputation within the community. He further suggests that community influence in south Asian families should be recognised as a major factor by researchers. Therefore, previous literature suggests that education matters, it holds value but it should not compromise the boundaries set by these communities.

When theorising parental influence and involvement in education decision making theories have utilised capital and habitus (Bourdieu: 1997) as well as models of control and support. According to Dumas (2009) parental influence and involvement in education decision making suggest two levels of involvement;

- Academic control
- Academic support

Applying parent's involvement to an academic situation, two levels of involvement become apparent. A parent can exert academic support, or academic control at varying levels (Dumas, Loose, & Regner, 2009). The extent to which parents have an effect on children's academics becomes clear when distinguishing between these two types of contributions.Parental support is defined by Ratelle (2005) as the affirmation of the child as a unique, active, and volitional being evidenced in behaviours such as acknowledging the child's perspective, encouraging independent thinking, and providing opportunities to make choices. On the contrary, parental

control is defined as pressure exerted by a parent for a child to conform to certain expectations (Duchense & Ratelle, 2010).

Theories of social/cultural capital (Bourdieu: 1997) have influenced discourse around general south Asian participation in H.E. Shah et al (2010) suggests that research in this area has focused on ethnicity as a form of social capital, which presents an image of parents socialising children in the importance of education and ensuring that children act in ways consistent with these beliefs. However there has been no meaningful explanation of the limits of such socialisation, for example social capital research has failed to suggest why some H.E courses are preferred to others for female children in south Asian families, if parental socialisation merely gives south Asian children an appreciation of education. There has also been no real attempt to look at the difference in socialisation of female children and male children if such a difference exists.

Attempts have been made in some social capital research to explain why the decision-making process is greatly influenced by parents or elders in south Asian families. For example, Basit (1997) notes that Asian parents' protection of their daughters in terms of decision making on their behalf can be misrepresented by the wider community as oppressive. He suggests that this can be seen by young south Asian females as a reasonable cultural response to the restrictions placed on them by the West.

As such, although schools are thought of a space to encourage and increase the social mobility of South Asian girls they could also 'threaten their pubescent daughters' (Basit, 1997b, p. 426; see also Afshar, 1989; Basit, 1997a). Similarly, young South Asian women are increasingly being allowed to seek employment after education; however, parents want to ensure that it does not 'corrupt' them in any way. Parents wanting to educate their daughters, and although not directly influenced by the wider community structure in which they live, are careful to avoid any potential embarrassment or shame (Basit, 1997). These studies suggest the difficult route used by both parents and daughters to navigate in order to manage community expectations and individual hopes.

2.6.1. Izzat and influence

It can be argued that the idea of the family ‘Izzat’ (translated in English meaning ‘respect’) is still a major influence on decisions taken for or by south Asian female students. This idea of upholding family honour and respect has been dominant in discourse on south Asian populations within Britain (Takhar, 2005, p. 187). The focus is usually however on the role it plays in decisions on marriage, dress code, and the regulation of general behaviour within the south Asian community. There has been mention of the link between ‘Izzat’ and the educational choices made by British south Asian females and their families in studies on South Asian women, but what this looks like when imagining the future has not been fully explored (Gilbert, Gilbert & Sanghera: 2004 Thakar: 2005).

The notion of “Izzat” is important because it is a means of conferring status on individuals and their families leading to the notion of ‘standing’ within the community (Werbner, 1990; Ballard 1994; Shaw 2000). Izzat within the south Asian community has an array of meanings including respect, honour, reputation, and pride. This notion of Izzat has been highlighted by research carried out on British south Asian women in the 1990s. Kassam (1997) collected personal stories of young Asian women that highlighted the power of influence and the constraints placed on them by the fear of what others might think, say or do.

Within the south Asian community “Izzat” is central as it is a phenomenon, which elevates individuals and their families, and sustain a family’s good name, standing and reputation. Families can be considered ‘respectful’ through approved conduct, and earned through acts that are considered by the community to be meritorious. The complexities faced by British south Asian women in ensuring that the family name remains intact suggests that it should be considered in any meaningful research on low levels of south Asian female participation across education.

2.7. The concept of Possible Selves

After considering the literature around key aspects of this study such as identity, intersectionality, agency, education and parental influence; How? and why? does this study apply the theory of possible selves to these heterogeneous ethnic groups.

This literature review has reached the point where the following can be stated;

This study is important because;

- Identity matters
- Education matters
- Parental consideration and influence on both these aspects exists and must be further explored.

The aim of the following section of this literature review is to now see how this can be conceptualized within the possible selves' framework.

2.7.1. Hopes expectations and fears

Markus & Nurius (1986) propose that by considering their possible selves a person imagines ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become and what they are afraid to become. Despite the assumed importance of present, past, and future selves on understandings of the self-concept, future selves were not the focus of research until the mid-1980s when Markus and Nurius (1986) refocused attention on future or possible selves. At the same time, other social and personality psychologists interested in personal strivings and personal projects and life tasks (e.g. Cantor 1990; Kennon and Emmons, 1995), elucidated the future-oriented elements of the self-concept and to the modern perspective that these future selves are critical to motivation. Since then, a considerable body of studies have looked at the consequences of possible selves in adolescence, the links between possible

selves and self-esteem, and the influence of possible selves on the self-regulation of behaviour.

In the literature on possible selves these three categories have largely been named hoped for self, expected self, and feared self (Markus and Nurius 1986). Possible selves thus are key in the cognitive meaning of what these hopes, expectations and fears maybe. Possible selves are important, first, because they function as incentives for future behaviour and second, because they provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of self (Schnare et al:2011).

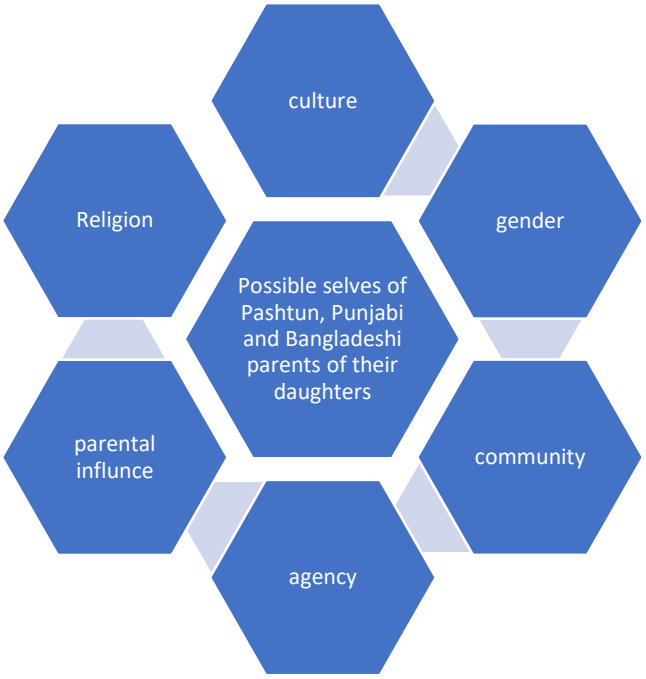
2.7.2. Balance

According to Schnare et al (2011) overlap between hoped for and feared selves can be understood as balance. Research conducted by Pathak and Karshiing (2023) found that those who have balance between hopes and fears are most likely going to achieve their possible selves. Hallam (2002) further suggested that a balance between success and failure enhances one's ego. According to him, social approval, especially of the ones we admire and respect, is a key motivator in thinking about future goals and possibilities and it influences behaviour, ideals, and goals.

A recent study by Pathak and Karshiing (2023) considered the hopes and fears of Indian musician they found that the balance between the expected or hoped-for possible selves and feared possible selves to be the boost in motivation. For instance, the study showed that the presence of a hoped-for possible self that is the opposite of a particular feared possible self might be the reason to prevent the realisation of the latter. They found that similarities and differences are quite visible between hoped-for selves and feared selves. Moreover, the expected-selves category overlaps with the other two categories. Thus, there is a link between the three aspects of possible selves.

The diagram below represents what this study proposes to focus on in order to answer the overall research question. Although, possible selves as a concept has been placed at the centre of this study, this study proposes that when considering the possible selves of the three ethnic groups in this study one must first understand the complexities of these three distinct identities to be able to locate aspects of the

possible self. Hopes, fears and expectations maybe much more nuanced then just placing the different aspects of an individual's identity into three neatly defined categories



.Fig 1.2 Multiple identities of Punjabi, Pashtun, and Bangladeshi participants

2.7.3. Possible selves as social constructs

In order to situate the current study within the possible selves' framework it is important to consider how possible selves are formed. This is doubly important to this study because it is not the 'self' that is the focus of this study it is the daughter's possible selves that parents imagine. Therefore, it is important to consider the impact of the social on possible selves.

Research (Fiske, 1990; Oyserman, 1993; Shweder, 1991) suggests that possible selves are not independent and self-controlled. These studies also assert that possible selves are guided by how much other people validate, affirm and help realise them, or instead threaten and ignore them. Additionally, significant others and

those who an individual seeks validity from usually play an active role in the creation of possible selves and are central to how we imagine our futures. Thus, possible selves have been characterised as sites of both individual agency and of social determination (Markus and Nurius :1986).

Examples of significant others include parents, role models, and celebrities/media influencers these individuals help to shape, validate and create possible selves. Similarly, an individual's social and cultural identity is central to the creation of possible selves (ibid) thus, possible selves are tightly connected to racial, ethnic, gender and cultural identities, and perceived in-group norms. For example, in a series of interviews urban high school students reported common stereotypes of Asians and Latinos, with Latinos linked to manual labour and Asians linked to doing well in school (Kao, 2002).

Early models of the self were termed as asocial, (D. M. Taylor & Dube, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell, 1987). These studies placed the individual free from any boundaries and independent of social and cultural restrictions. Autonomy was key to the understanding of these studies and as such studies were categorised as 'western' and white middle-class, cultural assumptions (Fiske, 1990; Oyserman, 1993; Shweder, 1991) Such views have been criticised for simplifying the idea of the self without understanding the complexities of identities as social and cultural constructs.

A significant criticism of the asocial view is that it relegates understandings of identities as social constructs. (Trew and Bensen, in press:Turner, Oakes, Haslam, and McGarty, 1994). Later understandings of the self-have placed social context and relationships with significant others as paramount to the construction of the self. According to later studies identities are negotiated within an individual (Oyserman:1993). According to such studies social identities are constructed from the scaffolding of one's social contexts and are realised in relationships with others. Thus, a central concept within possible selves' research considers ways in which future selves are constructed through social and cultural interactions and identities.

Therefore, individuals use experiences and context to individualise goals and aspirations.

Dunkel and Kerpelman (2005) argue that possible selves can play a key role in motivating an individual's action and to check the current self from anything that may come in the way of imagining goals and aspirations. It must be noted however that the interaction between possible selves and class race and ethnicity and national origins is limited. Although possible selves have been conceptualised as socially constructed little work has been done to explore different aspects of the 'social apart from the importance of significant others. Cantor & Zirkel, 1990; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Oyserman & Markus, 1993, have found that socially constructed selves rely heavily on the backing of important others. Furthermore, a small number of studies have found that the education attainment of teenagers is attached to an increasingly shaped by experiences of attainments and resources available in one's sociocultural context (Anderson, 1991; Crane, 1991; Oyserman & Markus, 1990b).

Previous studies have considered ethnicity as a construct of possible selves in young black males increased risk for school failure and dropout. Jackson, 1991, found that inner city youths must seek out and sustain a sense of positive possibilities for the self within a stark social context of ever-shrinking employment opportunities. In the case of these youths Markus and Nurius (1986) conclude that African American adolescents are limited by their social contexts; in which it is hard for them to imagine possible selves that link school success to occupational success. They suggest that the imagining of possible selves within particular social contexts need to take into account problems and barriers in envisioning what is possible for them. The possible selves concept suggests the importance of considering the influence of significant others, possible selves has been described as social constructs suggesting that to consider them through an intersectional understanding of the three ethnic groups in this study is impactful.

2.8. Possible selves in education research

Possible selves' theory, developed by Hazel Markus and Paula Nurius, proposes that our self-concept includes not only our current self but also various potential future selves (both positive and negative) that we imagine. These possible selves act as motivators, shaping our goals and behaviours navigating and individual to strive to achieve a desired future self or avoid undesired ones.

Educational outcomes have featured across a number of research studies concerned with possible selves. Studies have particularly considered academic development, school persistence, career expectations, self-esteem, delinquency (Hock, Deshler and Schumaker, 2006; Oyserman, Bybee and Terry, 2006; Strahan and Wilson, 2006; Pizzolato, 2007). Some of this research has considered identity in terms of gender and ethnicity focusing mainly on Caucasian, American. There has also been attention given to some ethnic minorities (African American, Latino and Mexican) outside of the U SA, studies have focused on samples in Greece, UK, Japan, France, Canada, Italy and Korea.

Research in the USA has found a clear relationship between academic possible selves and enhancing student motivation to improve academic performance. This research was mainly centred around secondary school children and found clear connections between imagined academic possible self and motivation to study (Hock, Deshler and Schumaker, 2006; Oyserman, Bybee and Terry, 2006; Strahan and Wilson, 2006; Pizzolato, 2007). Other educational research, in both US and UK contexts, has also explored the ways in which student motivation towards positive academic possible selves differs according to racialised (Oyserman, Gant and Ager, 1995; Stevenson, 2012) and gendered identities (Knox, 2006). One such study considered the joint construction of possible selves between parents and children of careers over an eight-month period the findings suggested joint steps, associated with the construction of possible selves: exploring options and trying on the potential image (Marshall, Young and Domene 2006). These sets of processes were linked to the content of the possible selves.

Possible selves concepts has also been used in research looking at HE (Henderson, Bathmaker and Stevenson, 2018). These studies have taken a sociologically oriented use of the concept by looking and behaviour and motivation, such studies have elucidated structural inequalities in access to both imagined futures and the possibility of imagining and achieving them. One example of this is Stevenson and Clegg's (2013) study of mature students in HE which highlighted how possible selves research risks minimising past experiences and their effects on an individual's educational possibilities. Similarly, Stevenson (2012) uses the concept to show how White and Black and Minority ethnic students have access to different concepts of the future as successful university students.

Similarly, possible selves research has also considered how unequal access to HE presents differing experiences limit or enhance imagined future selves (Papafilippou and Bentley (2017) and Papafilippou and Bathmaker (2018). Henderson (2018) has further conceptualised the possible selves theory using a sociological lens in a study of the relationship between temporality of higher education and the imagined futures of learners. Henderson argues that when using the concept of possible selves, it is important that sociological tools be developed in order to explore structural constraints that work to enable some students' futures and limit others.

Research carried out by Oyserman and Hock (2002) focused on understanding possible interventions that may help to scaffold an individual's hopes, fears and expectations when considering the possible self (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2001; Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002). These interventions have been successful in enhancing student motivation and are associated with staying in school, improved academic performance and higher rates of graduation. Thus, it can be said that educationally, possible selves offer a useful and viable approach to helping young adults learn ways to understand and work toward attainable future goals in sphere of academic and employment.

Thus, Possible selves can be considered as social. When possible, selves are imagined through considering both past successes and failures coupled with norms and expectations they can be considered as social constructs (Oyserman, 2002).

According to Oyserman (2002) when possible selves are based on one ‘s own values, beliefs and goals, they are social because they are also importantly shaped by social contexts. For example, aspirations are importantly shaped by shared understandings about what people can become. Thus, as social contexts shift, so too may possible selves. This study focuses on these important others to try and understand how they form a possible self for their daughters.

It should be noted however that although past experiences in terms of success and failure have been found to be important in formulating future possible selves, future selves are not exclusively bound by this. One large scale study conducted by Curry (1994) in Northern Ireland; found that girls who were academically orientated were less likely to imagine future selves based on careers rather they constructed possible selves around raising children and being homemakers. Curry concluded that linking prior attainment to future success was much too simplistic and in order to consider how possible selves are formulated one must consider gender and cultural context and how these identities shape possible selves. Curry’s study has relevance to the current research as gender context and culture is relevant to south Asian Muslim women and their possible selves. Especially when focusing on significant others such as parent a simplistic link between past academic success and failures would not be inclusive of diverse views on education and careers steeped in an understanding of daughters within particular social religious and cultural domains.

There has also been research conducted on the relevance of parental support and approval in pursuing and succeeding in a science related career. Buday et al (2011) conducted a study that explored pursuing a science career, and perceptions and choices of a career in science in the United States. The findings indicated that social support contributed directly to men’s and women’s ability to imagine themselves in a future science career. Similarly, Larose et al (2008) followed women and men studying science and technology through their college years and noted different pathways of persistence for men and women. For example, they found that women’s persistence in a science career may be more related to social factors such as people’s perception of women in science related careers from parents and teachers, and appropriate role models.

2.9. Implication for the current study

The exploration of the literature in this section has elucidated the following aspects which are all relevant to the use of possible selves when considering Muslim, Pashtun, Punjabi and Bangladeshi women in this study;

Possible selves are importantly social constructs which are given meaning through understanding socio cultural contexts (Oyserman 2006). Although there have been some studies conducted across different ethnic groups these have been few and mostly concentrate in America (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2001; Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002). The current study will apply the theory of possible selves as a social construct across three ethnic groups and consider whether gender cultural religious and social context matters and how these identities shape possible selves. That parents have of their daughters.

As well as the literature highlighting the social importance of possible selves it also suggests the centrality of Important others and their influence to how individuals construct their possible selves. Whilst these have been explored through looking at Black American males and Latino adolescents (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2001; Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002) the current study is using it to look at three different ethnic groups who have been well researched in terms of the influence of parents on the decision making process (Bagguely and Hussain 2007: 2016) . Furthermore, within the literature there has been a consideration of the joint construction of possible selves (Marshall, Young and Domene 2006). Which, within the context of the current study is important as it suggests that possible selves are not exclusively imagined by the individual. The role of significant others in imagining possible selves has been extended within this study as the research is focusing on how parents imagine their daughters' possible selves and thus extends current understandings of joint construction of possible selves to focus on the perception of significant others.

Questions will be based around the possible selves that parents have for their daughters and how parents seek to influence their daughters to achieve their hoped-

for selves and avoid the parents feared selves. Like Henderson (2018) my research will also use the possible self-concept within a sociological lens. By looking at how the relationship between gender, ethnicity, religion and class interplay in imagining future possible selves. Furthermore, how do parents support children in shaping the future possible selves that parents want them to have.

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

In order to explore the overall question, sub questions were formulated to generate deep discussions that covered the overall research question in-depth.

Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves.

Sub question 2; How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education in terms of agency and intersectionality?

Sub question 3; What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimensions?

Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the literature on a range of concepts that are embedded and weaved all the way through from the introduction to the conclusion. the concept of Possible selves was considered in terms of its broader use in social psychology research, narrowing it down to its use in education research. Next research on South Asian women and education was presented arguing the gap which this study seeks to address within current literature. The role of intersectionality and agency was considered next as well as 'Izzat' what it means within current literature and the importance of this concept in the current study. Next parental influence was

presented as a key aspect of research on South Asian communities and its application to the current study. The next chapter seeks to explore the paradigm, methodology, research design and aspects of positionality that underpin this study

3. Methodological Approach

3.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to explore the paradigm, methodology, research design and aspects of positionality that underpin this study. There is a vast amount of methodological debate within research in education and ethnicity. Although very little research exits currently on the Pashtun community in England there is however a considerable body of literature about Pakistani and Bangladeshi diasporas in England (Basit 1997; Modood 2001; Kibria, 2009; Anand 2022, Rajina 2024). Debate exists within the qualitative paradigm on social constructivist research as well as the positionality of the researcher as outsider with insider knowledge.

The chapter discusses the debates surrounding the constructivist paradigm. A consideration of the ethical protocols that were adhered to is also included. Furthermore, the chapter also considers the epistemological and methodological choices that were made during the course of this study. The influences of social constructivist theory on this research is discussed in-depth. Positionality and reflexivity as well as the sampling process and how data was collected is then outlined.

Finally, the chapter considered the two-step data analysis process which was used to firstly sort themes into broader themes and subthemes using thematic analysis and then secondly, place themes into the possible selves' framework to understand the nuanced understanding of hopes, expectations and fears of parents hoped for selves for their daughters.

3.2. Positionality / Reflexivity

I begin this chapter by considering my own positionality within the research Next the chapter considers the epistemological and methodological choices I made during the

course of this study. The influences of social constructivist theory on this research will be discussed in-depth. Next, I consider positionality and reflexivity and I then move on to discuss the sampling process and how data was collected and analysed. (Holmes:2020)

According to Holmes (2020) Positionality is dual in nature, as it describes an individual's world view and the position, they adopt about a research task and its social and political context (Foote & Bartell 2011, Savin-Baden & Major, 2013 and Rowe, 2014). The individual's view of the world and their identity suggests ontological, epistemological and assumptions about human nature and agency (Sikes, 2004, Bahari, 2010, Scotland, 2012, Ormston, et al. 2014, Marsh, et al. 2018 and Grix, 2019).

My role as researcher is unique in the sense that I have a personal and professional interest in this study. According to Rowe (2014) The researcher's position influences what they choose to investigate, how research is conducted, and the results. The researcher's understanding of her connectedness to the experiences of the research subject through partial identification is labelled 'conscious partiality' by Mies (1983, p. 123) and becomes for her, a way to replace what she calls 'spectator knowledge', which emphasises neutrality and indifference towards subject's lives. I share my heritage with one of the ethnic groups in the study but in my role as an educator I teach girls from all three ethnic groups and therefore through my interactions with them and their parents I have a level of familiarity and understanding of ethnic/ cultural norms.

Some studies have found that the colour of the interviewer does have an impact on the data collected. Black people have been found to express more radical opinions about their lives when interviewed by a black interviewer, than when interviewed by a white one (May, 1993). Reflexivity necessarily requires sensitivity by the researcher to their cultural, political, and social context (Bryman, 2016) because the individual's ethics, personal integrity, and social values, as well as their competency, influence the research process (Greenbank, 2003, Bourke, 2014). In a sense I am constantly

surrounded by my research project as I am constantly mediating and navigating through the ethnic groups included in this study.

Furthermore, the implications /findings if any? of this study are of personal and professional interest to me from multiple perspectives. Firstly, as an academic with an interest in questions of education and social justice across marginalised groups. Secondly, as a Headteacher wanting to better understand the educational/career choices made by all three ethnic groups, and also from a group member wanting to gauge a deeper understanding of 'my people' and their/our 'worldview' on education for their daughters. Very little research in the social or educational field is or can be value-free (Carr, 2000). Various characteristics, including gender, race, personal experiences, and values and beliefs, shape the researchers' positionality (Bradbury-Jones 2007, Padgett 2008, Hamzeh and Oliver 2010), which then informs their assumptions, access to and interaction with participants, the questions they ask, and interpretation of the data (Patton 2015)

3.3. The research paradigm

The research study is firmly grounded in the constructivist paradigm; therefore, the research questions were concerned with the construction of possible selves of daughters by parents and how parents hoped, feared and expected selves are formulated and how then do parents seek to influence these possible selves. Occupying a constructivist paradigm requires an appropriate research method to be chosen which aimed to maximise the understanding of parent's perceptions, and the reasons why these perceptions exist; and how they are manifested by each ethnic group to imagine their daughters' possible selves.

Constructivists assume reality is socially constructed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Schwandt, 1994). People's ways of knowing come from their own mental derivations due to their particular experiences and contexts, and, as a result, acknowledging multiple realities is essential in the interaction between the researcher and participants (Baxter and Magolda, 2001). Using a constructivist approach gave the

research subjectivity and enabled to delve into the participants lived experiences and how they use these to influence the possible selves of their daughters. Further to this Lester (1991:1) states that 'epistemologically, phenomenological approaches are based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity. They emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation'.

By design, constructivist focus groups allow participants and researchers to co-create knowledge together within the specific focus group context rather than uncover the one singular Truth about a research question. As such, the decision was made to carry out focus group research, a design that would allow the researcher to understand subjective experience across all three ethnic groups and to gain greater insights into 'how and why' parents construct and seek to influence their daughters' possible selves. Furthermore, being a constructivist imposed a particular kind of robustness suitable for qualitative research, and how in terms of credibility and trustworthiness.

3.4. Sampling

A purposive sampling method was used to attract possible participants from the three ethnic groups. Purposive sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In addition to knowledge and experience, Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979) note the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

The key criteria used in the sampling process was to ensure participants had to be Muslim and from one of the ethnic groups researched in the study, have a daughter currently studying at the school.

Purposive sampling was very time/cost effective it was simple to conduct and made the recruitment process more accessible especially with all the complexities of the pandemic as the research was conducted between December 202
1- February 2022. I do recognise that recruitment in this study was considerably simpler than many other research projects as I had access to over 250 potential participants from my role as Headteacher. Katyal and King (2014) observe that a shared cultural identity may be more helpful in gaining access to a community than a professional identity, as when the researcher and the researched come from different social-cultural backgrounds, cross-cultural communication issues may arise due to communication nuances and cultural factors (Yip:2023)

3.4.1. Ethics

The ethics procedure and framework for this research was approved in advance through the Lancaster University ethics process. Approval was also obtained through the researched school where the parents were recruited from. Atkins and Duckworth (2019) argue that social justice research must clearly show that social justice is at the heart of the intended purpose and the proposed process of the study. During recruitment, the participants signed consent forms (see Appendix 3) The forms, included details of the nature and purpose of the study, the benefits, potential risks, and explained how anonymity is secured. informed consent documents (see Appendix 1) provided participants with information on how the interview data will be collated and used, who will have access to the data, and whom they may contact for questions. To ensure that all guidelines were met precautions were taken regarding the focus-group interviews. Interviewees should not be deceived and must be protected from any form of mental, physical, or emotional injury (Hancock and Algozzine, 2016). All focus groups were conducted online via zoom due to lock down restrictions. Participants were identified before admitting into the focus group and pseudonyms were given to confirm to confidentiality. The meetings were recorded using audio only, which preserves the identity of the participants while still allowing for acceptable data collection for qualitative analyses.

Ethical considerations of my position in the research are also important. My position in this study is rather unorthodox as I am surrounded by my research from both a professional and academic perspective (Yip:2023). I am often mediating between the groups I am researching in this study and have both a personal and academic interest in the study. Nevertheless, I have ensured that in order to maintain quality I have adhered to the ethical guidelines relevant to human participation in research as stipulated by the BERA. All participants were asked to read through the participant information sheet (see Appendix 2) which gave potential participants information about the context of the research and the purpose of the research. Participants who were interested were then asked to return the consent form which outlined the very important element of confidentiality.

In this study positionality is especially important in terms of my relationship to the participants. The literature suggests that each researcher's positionality affects the research process, and their outputs as well as their interpretation of other's research. Creswell (2013) advises qualitative researchers to disclose the 'cultural, social, gender, class, and personal politics' (p215) they bring to a study, to discuss their 'experiences with the phenomenon being explored' (p216). Furthermore Smith (1999) suggests that positionality cannot be separated from the findings of a study.

As the research focused on parents' possible selves of their daughters the participants had to be from the current parent community of the school. Participants were recruited through an information sheet sent from my personal email as to not to use the school network to recruit participants as I wanted to make it clear that the research was not a school-based data collection activity but rather a research project through Lancaster University (see appendices).

3.5. Data collection methods

3.5.1. Focus groups

Research methods are defined as ‘the technique or procedures used to gather or analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis (Crotty, 1998:3). A focus group method was used to gather data from participants, this method gave the opportunity to gather in depth information which could be interpreted to answer the research questions. The constructivist paradigm was appropriate to this research question in order to gather ‘deep’ information through inductive qualitative methods. Michell (1999) suggests focus groups can facilitate the exploration of mutual experiences and identities. In order to achieve this a research method which in general principle is ‘minimal in structure and provides maximum depth’ (Plummer: 1983:67) would have to be selected. In order to gain this ‘maximum depth’ semi structured focus groups were used and questions were prepared for the participants to engage with and discuss.

Focus groups are flexible in their structure and are not tied to any particular epistemology, they allow for collective sense making through the social interactions of participants. According to Morgan (1997:2) the ‘Hallmark’ of focus groups is that there is an explicit use of interactions to produce data that would be less accessible without the interactions found in a group.

Wilkinson (1998) suggests that participants should be drawn from relatively homogenous groups in relation to their occupation/ class/religion/ethnicity. In the present study I carried out eleven focus group discussions across the three ethnic groups. four Punjabi focus groups, four Bengali focus groups and three Pashtun. Due to the ethnic makeup of each focus group participants were able to relate to each other’s experiences through discussion and thus there was no fear of formality. A focus group is an informal discussion among selected individuals about a specific topic (Beck et al: 1986:73).

A number of participants in each focus group were familiar with each other due to living in the same small knit community. However according to Merton (1987) even if

participants are unfamiliar with each other the interactive nature of focus groups means that participants ask questions of, disagree with, and challenge each other thus ‘serving to elicit the elaboration of responses’ (Merton:1987:555). As I knew many of the participants from my role as Headteacher I was careful in organising participants into focus groups where largely the participants were unfamiliar with each other this alleviated any possibility of collusion or collaboration of participants however it must be stated that this cannot be totally controlled.

Wilkinson (1998) states that group dynamics are important in focus groups as participants may try to silence or intimidate other participants or create a silence around a particular topic. Kitzinger (1994) states that if group dynamics work via facilitation a ‘synergy’ between participants emerges whereby all those present contribute in some way to the discussion. This said; focus groups rarely generate consensus over the course of the focus group participants may shift their positions on certain subjects, change their mind or express alternative views.

In-depth individual interviews were also considered as a possible research method, however the method had to be one which generated opportunities for discussion about the experience of south Asian female students and this was not possible using the interview technique. Using a focus group also aided in the creation of a mechanism for helping the participants to generate and share their ideas. This gave participants an opportunity to relay their own experiences.

3.5.2. Limitations of focus groups

Although there are some limitations of using focus groups such as ‘bias and manipulation, false consensus, and management of the group’ (Litosseliti: 2007:47) focus groups can be a good method to use in exploratory research, providing researchers with a greater insight into people’s perceptions and interpretations of social phenomenon (Ritchie: 2013:56) Furthermore Whisker (2001:43) states that focus groups can be a good way to capture the responses of a small group of people.

The current literature regarding focus groups is attentive to new techniques and strategies for specific populations of participants including the value of focus groups with the following: lower socio-economic class Latina women (Madriz, 1998), the Bangladeshi community (Fallon & Brown, 2002), shy women (Minister, 1991), children (Morgan, Gibbs, Maxwell, & Britten, 2002), the poor (Farnsworth & Boon, 2010), those with physical disabilities (Balch & Mertens, 1999; Woodring, Foley, Rodo, Brown, & Hamner, 2006). Similarly, in a study of the Bangladeshi community, Fallon and Brown (2002) concluded that creating focus groups with participants who share a common culture "can be highly advantageous…especially where ethnic minority groups are concerned" (p. 206).

Participants in the study felt especially comfortable engaging in the focus groups, because facilitators shared participants' culture and experiences. A shared experience and identity with the focus group facilitator can provide additional opportunity for authentic sharing among focus group participants. According to Fallon & Brown (2002) culturally responsive research practice will enhance work with a wide range of populations but is particularly important when facilitating groups with persons who have been traditionally marginalised. One of the first questions asked by participants in all three focus groups was whether there would be arrangements for segregated focus groups. This is something that I was familiar with as an 'insider' and was aware of the social expectations of all three ethnic groups, I was also aware that in some of the ethnic groups there is very limited social interaction between men and women who are not related by birth or marriage.

The female Pashtun groups and some Bengali participants were conscious of other males in the study not being their 'mahram'[7] (close male relative whom marriage is prohibited to) and therefore not being comfortable openly speaking in front of them as this was contrary to religious understandings of Purdah[8] (veiling of the voice) (Haque:2008). For the Punjabi participants this was not a requirement, due to the perceived importance of spiritual connection to Islam rather than extrinsic symbols.

[7] Mahram- In Islamic context, a mahram is a close relative with whom marriage is permanently prohibited. This prohibition stems from blood ties, breastfeeding, or marriage relationships

[8] Purdah- purdah is a religious and social practice of sex segregation prevalent among some Muslims. It also refers to a garment that covers the full body including the face.

The advantage of having the segregated groups was that it allowed the women who wear the face veil for religious purposes to remove this and partake in the discussions without having to worry about any male intrusion, it also improved the informality and candidness of group dynamics.

In order for the research process to be inclusive of all three ethnic groups it was important for me to ensure that I catered for any sensitivities. Participants in the segregated groups were verbally appreciative of the consideration shown to them The table below outlines how many participants from each ethnic group took part in this study. Three focus groups per ethnic group were conducted with four participants in each group, this allowed for better management of the group and data generated to be separated and synthesised (Morgan:1996).

The Punjabi participants were in three mixed focused group (by gender) whereas the Bengali participants requested one female only group, one male only group and one mixed group. The Pashtun participants requested all their focus group be segregated by gender. This was due to the majority of Pashtun women in this research observing the niqab (veil). They expressed that in order for them to be able to participate wholeheartedly they would prefer a woman only focus group so they could remove their veil.

Ethnicity	Gender	Pseudonyms	Mixed/Single sex
Punjabi 1	Male Male Female Female	Moeen Waqar Amina Saleyha	Mixed
Punjabi 2	Male Male Female Female	Vora Safdar Ruqayyah Zubaida	Mixed
Punjabi 3	Male Female Female Female	Zulfikar Huriyah Zainab Rashida	Mixed
Bangladeshi 1	Male Male Female Female	Miah Rohail Qudsia Ruha	Mixed
Bangladeshi 2	Male Male Male Male	Abrar Sheikh Dilawar Kamal	Male only
Bangladeshi 2	Female Female Female Female	Rozina Mariam Rania Shelly	Female only
Pashtun 1	Male Male Male Male	Faisal Abdul Khan Gafoor	Male only
Pashtun2	Female Female Female Female	Hajrah Fatimah Juwariah Noreen	Female only
Pahstun 3	Female Female Female Female	Saif Tasnim Bibi Hafsah	Female only

Table 1.1 Ethnic and Gender make up of focus groups

3.5.3. The Insider-Outsider Positionality

The insider outsider debate has become increasingly important because researchers frequently come from different backgrounds to those where they engage in research and to those who they engage in research with (Manohoe et al. 2017). As stated previously, in this study I share my heritage with one of the ethnic groups being researched, in this sense I am very much an insider as I speak two of the languages spoken by the different groups and live 'in the community' and I dress in a 'culturally' accepted way.

The participants largely view me as 'one of their own' and are able to converse with me about their daughter's education and behaviour when they see me at non-school events for example local fairs/weddings/funerals. However, within a school setting I have found that I am looked at as an outsider by some parents and this maybe due to the power dynamics of the role of Headteacher. Bhopal (1997) in her research with South Asian women in East London found that her status as a potential intruder was lower as her physical identity immediately created a sense of empathy and belonging with the women she was interviewing, Bhopal further states that she did not believe white researchers would be able to do this. 'My sense of familiarity with the group also created a sense of knowing about the group' (Bhopal:2010).

3.5.4. Online focus groups

The focus groups took place during the second national lockdown this meant that social distancing was enforced and indoor meetings where discouraged, due to this the ability to conduct in-person focus groups has been questioned. 'Protocols for recruiting, consenting and working with participants, for example, have all been previously based on assumed in-person interactions'(Surg:2021:918) however these had to be adapted for this study.

The uncertainty of the duration of the lockdown and the requirements of safety of all forced a decision to adapt the process of data collection to this new environment or to cease all research activities. The widespread use of online platforms and the excessive reliance of them during the pandemic meant that the opportunity to still go ahead and conduct the focus groups was very much still a possibility. According to

Surg (2021) an opportunity now exists to widen the boundaries for conducting qualitative research including with focus groups.

Although I explored numerous online platforms, I decided to use Zoom (Zoom Video Communications, San Jose, CA). There was a number of reasons for doing this, firstly I was familiar with the functionality of Zoom, secondly, its widespread use since the beginning of the pandemic by the local mosques in the area for online prayers/gatherings/courses meant that the majority participants were also familiar with this. Based on its broad appeal, I believed it likely that many participants would be familiar with this tool. Additionally, the user-friendly design of the platform, meant that first time users could also be easily instructed to use the program. In order to adhere to the principals of confidentiality, all meetings were password protected and a unique invitation was sent to participants individually.

As participants joined the meeting, they were all put into the waiting room and once the identity of the participants was confirmed they were admitted to join. The meeting was locked once all attendees were admitted into the meeting. All participants were asked to join with their cameras on to create the familiarity and group dynamics in conventional focus groups. They were also given headphones and asked to use them in order to protect the confidentiality of the group discussion.

The majority of participants in the male and female focus groups across all ethnicities were familiar with Zoom however training had to be given to two women and one man one from the Bengali and one from the Pashtun and one from the Punjabi focus group. Most participants were already familiar with Zoom. Many understood how to log on to Zoom, but some participants, especially those who were not employed and had little access to online platforms, required support with entering their names and activating audio. At least 10-15 minutes were put aside at the beginning of each focus group to aid participants to troubleshoot any issues.

3.5.5. Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to ensure the robustness of the research questions and overall design. This allowed for necessary adjustments to both the questions and the structure of the focus groups. The pilot was particularly informative, as it provided an

opportunity to test the online focus group format and address any initial issues. For example, participants unfamiliar with Zoom were given time to familiarise themselves with the platform, which helped ensure that the actual focus groups ran smoothly and without setbacks. Pilot studies are instrumental in testing the feasibility of the research design, particularly in terms of recruitment, timing, and logistics (Ingham-Broomfield, 2014). For example, in online qualitative studies, a pilot can reveal challenges participants may face with digital platforms, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, and provide an opportunity for them to become familiar with the technology prior to the main sessions (Janghorban et al., 2014).

Pilot studies play a crucial role in qualitative research by enhancing the methodological rigour, feasibility, and overall quality of the main study. Defined as small-scale preliminary investigations, pilot studies help researchers test and refine various aspects of the research design, including data collection tools, recruitment strategies, and logistical arrangements (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014). This preparatory phase allows researchers to identify and resolve potential issues before conducting the full study, ultimately contributing to more credible and reliable findings.

One of the primary benefits of a pilot study is the opportunity to refine the research instruments, such as interview guides or focus group protocols. Questions that may be ambiguous, too broad, or fail to elicit meaningful responses can be revised or replaced based on feedback from the pilot (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). This ensures that the data collected in the main study will be rich, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives. For this particular study the pilot study provided a good opportunity to have discussions around understanding of the possible selves concept and this in turn made the focus group discussions more relevant and gave participants the confidence to participate.

While pilot studies require additional time and resources, their long-term benefits often outweigh these initial costs. By preventing avoidable errors, enhancing instrument quality, and ensuring the practical viability of the research design, pilot studies increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of qualitative inquiry (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

3.5.6. Reflections

I was initially concerned about the transition to online focus groups I felt that this would not produce the intended effect of a focus group and would affect the quality of discussions and moderator observation of the group dynamics (Gencer: 2019). The interactivity of online focus groups poses challenges for both moderators and participants, as they defy conventions of conversational turn-taking and are characterised by simultaneous, overlapping responses (or 'threading') (Matt and Stewart: 2000). While I did not explicitly compare the quality of virtual focus group discussions to face to face focus group discussions, I did not perceive that any less information was shared in the virtual format when compared to my prior experiences.

Furthermore, I felt that my experience of being a moderator in facilitating face to face focus group discussions was similar to facilitating the virtual focus groups. Essentially, I felt that similar to face to face focus groups It was me as moderator who was setting the context, manoeuvring the discussion and engaging the participants in an interactive conversation. Furthermore, contrary to initial fears I was also able to create the tone of the discussion, enabling all the participants to feel comfortable and involved.

3.5.7. Advantages of online focus group

Many advantages exist with virtual focus groups. First, individuals may be more likely to participate because virtual focus groups are flexible and participants are able to join from the comfort of their home without commuting. Additionally, an increasing percentage of the population now work from home and with alternative working hours. The advantage for this study was that sessions could be scheduled later in the evenings once children, elderly dependents had been fed and put to sleep. Many participants live in multi-generational families and therefore with schools/ child care facilities closed they had to ensure that the timing of the discussions suited their commitments when all participants were free from other commitments. This was particularly advantageous for arranging suitable times in the female only focus groups. Second, my observations were that participants were more relaxed in their own homes, and thus are more involved in the focus group discussions, they were more forthright in their opinions and less inclined to hold back. Joinson (2005) and

Hine (2005) that participants may feel less vulnerable and exposed when meeting virtually.

3.5.8. Disadvantages of online focus group

Apart from the apparent advantages there were also several hurdles that exist with virtual focus groups. First, some participants were not technologically experienced and were not used to regularly checking links and messages delivered electronically (e.g., email). For example, as communication and consent processes were moved to electronic format, participants who were not technologically literate required extra attention from me which meant additional phone calls and reminders. The lack of human interaction also has implications for the role of moderators. Moore et al (2015) suggest that while online focus groups may lead to empowered participants led interaction a lot is dependent on the personalities of those who are participating and how confident they are using technology.

Second, I was pessimistic about the turnout of participants as I felt that virtual focus groups put a new burden on participants many of whom were battling pandemic related issues. However according to Moore et al (2015: 26) online methodologies capitalise on increasing societal use of the internet as a powerful medium for communication and group interaction. Furthermore, there was a consistent delay to the start of each focus group and may have also contributed to the loss of some potential study participants. Third, while researchers typically aim for 6–8 participants for in-person groups, I decided to limit the target size of the virtual groups to 4–5.

3.6. Data analysis

In this research study, data was analysed using a two-step approach, the diagram below outlines what these steps consisted of. A thematic analysis which was infused with the possible selves' framework was used to identify the key themes as mentioned previously the analysis was a two-step process.
Although possible selves could have been used as it informed the lines of questioning from the onset however; had the Possible selves' framework been applied without the thematic analysis and familiarisation of the data within the

context of each group it would have meant understanding the themes after placing them in the three possible selves' categories and then understanding the nuances between and within each team across all three groups. By undertaking the possible selves infused thematic analysis beforehand, it was easier to apply the framework to the data.

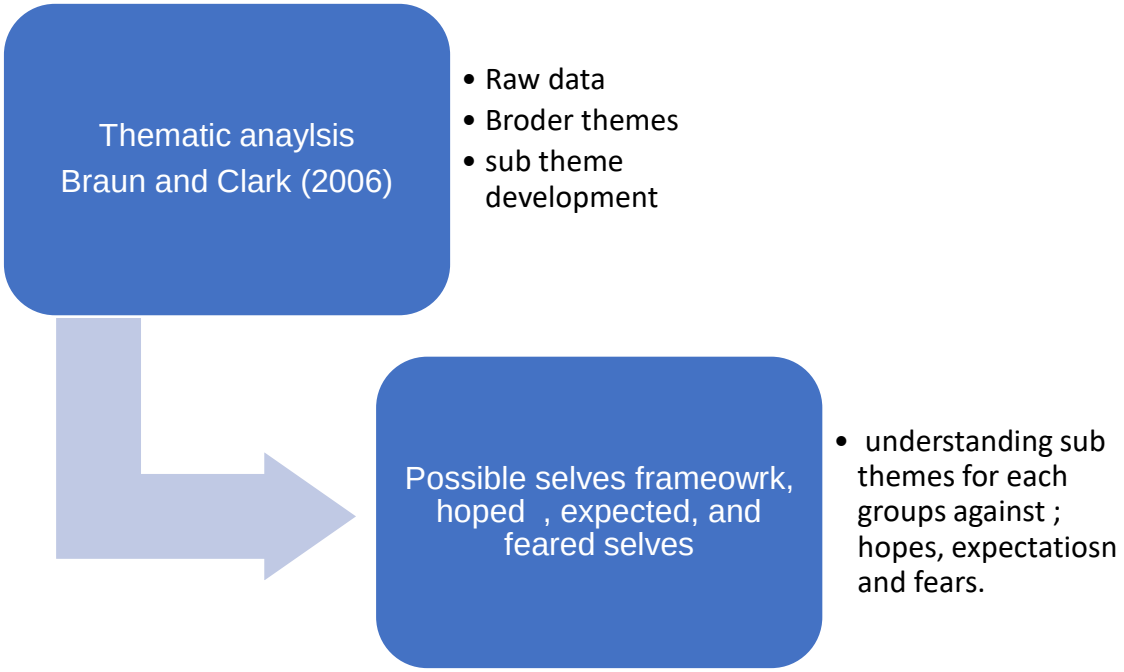


Fig 1.3 Two-step data analysis process

Braun and Clarke's approach supported the systematic build-up of the research from raw data to presenting findings in the thematic form. This was incredibly useful in working through the substantial amount of raw data and gradually making sense of it within a clearly defined approach. Thematic analysis allows researchers to identify and interpret patterns, trends and tensions within a data set; It may provide new insights and understanding (Boyatzis, 1998; Elliott, 2018; Thomas, 2006).

A systematic reflexive thematic analysis was used based on Braun and Clarkes six steps of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke's, 2006). The reflexive thematic analysis is an easily accessible and theoretically flexible interpretative approach to qualitative data analysis that facilitates the identification and analysis of patterns or themes in a given data set (Braun and Clarke 2012).

Each step of the analysis scaffolded the next creating a strong and holistic understanding of the data produced. This approach allowed for a method which was well structured from which consistency and connections could be identified between the data, interpretations and discussion and final conclusions. This systematic structured approach ensures thoroughness and limits potential bias. Thematic analysis allows researchers to identify and interpret patterns, trends and tensions within a data set; It may provide new insights and understanding (Boyatzis, 1998; Elliott, 2018; Thomas, 2006). The interference of a researchers own preconceptions and world view in how data is interpreted could be a potential limitation of this approach and this is something that must be avoided when identifying key themes (Morse & Mitcham, 2002; Patton, 2015). However, being transparent and systematic in my approach helped to mediate such concerns.

All of the main themes were identified inductively from the data (Dawson, 2009; Clarke, Braun and Hayfield, 2015) as the participants verbalised these terms with some repetition throughout their narratives. This resulted in the names of the initial sub themes and numerous main themes being altered. The final main themes which "describe the essence of the collected stories" (Sanders and Wilkins, 2010, p. 215).

These themes go beyond merely being recurring elements because they encompass transcendent meanings that link the research questions and data. Reflexive thematic analysis is considered a reflection of the researcher's interpretive analysis of the data conducted between three aspects: According to Braun and Clarke these are the raw data, the theoretical assumptions of the analysis, and the analytical skills/resources of the researcher (Braun and Clarke 2019). Reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) is about "the researcher's reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process" (Braun and Clarke 2019, p. 594).

The second step was to use the possible selves' framework of hoped, expected, and feared selves used as categories in which the broader themes were placed into. The reasoning behind this was due to the need to familiarise myself with themes which were nuanced in the sense that for one group that same theme was a feared self for

daughters and for another it was a hoped-for self for daughters. Thematic analysis is fantastic for empirical humanitarian and scientific experimenters who want to explore highly subjective topics of interest. You might use thematic analysis to study ‘intangibles’ such as people’s experiences, perceptions, and nuanced opinions (Maguire and Delahunt:2017).

Possible selves allow a framework through which we can examine one’s future study and career aspirations. By applying the framework to South Asian Muslim parents, we are able to conceptualise the complex negotiations parents make in order to navigate their daughters through decision making for careers and education choices.

3.6.1. Themes and sub themes

The NVivo 12 platform was used to understand and organise the data into codes that were clearly developing from the data. ‘Codes should be brief, but offer sufficient detail to be able to stand alone and inform of the underlying commonality among constituent data items in relation to the subject of the research’ (Braun and Clarke 2012; Braun et al. 2016). Using NVivo allowed me to identify recurring patterns, terms, and attach the keywords to these. These keywords encapsulated the participants’ experiences and perceptions according to the overall research question and sub questions and are directly derived from the data.

The keywords that were identified at this stage across the three ethnic groups were success, failure, respect, honour, good choice, bad choices, Islam, parents rights, duty, right path, disappointment, The conversational style of the focus group discussions allowed me to use the notes and memos feature within NVivo to organise the content by theme.

The diagram below is a visual example of how codes were captured and the content that was attached to each code. The codes capture the essence of the content, and they allowed themes to be generated This systematically led to the next step of analysis.

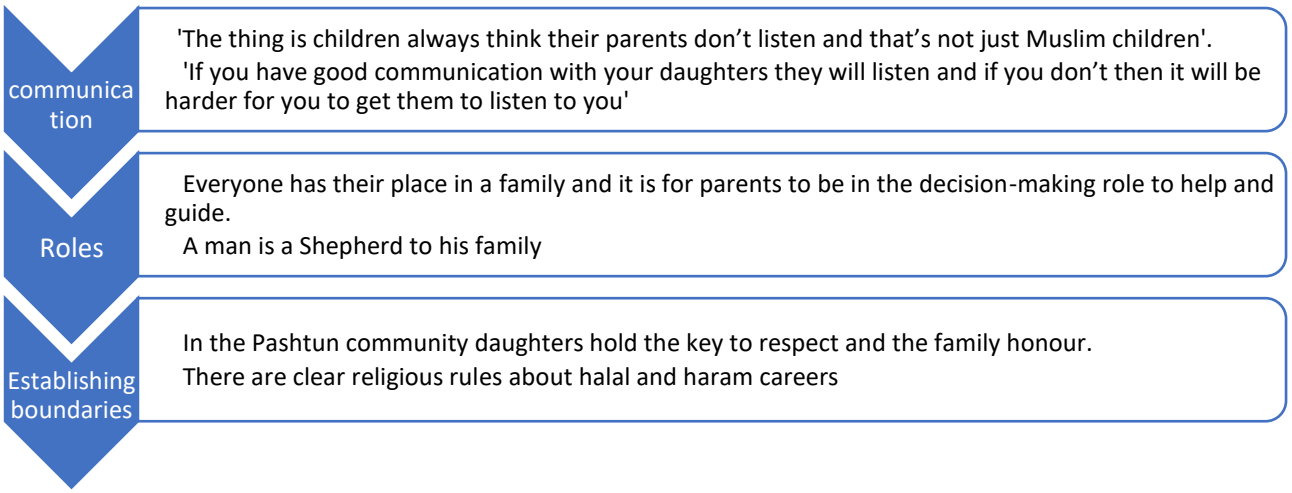


Figure 1.3 visual example of how codes were captured and the content that was attached to each code

The analysis suggested a range of sub themes across all three ethnic groups which were discussed and articulates in diverse ways. Using the reflexive thematic analysis, a distinction was made between sub themes and overarching themes. This took some exploration of the data to deduce what a certain sub theme meant for the different groups, at this stage codes were reconfigured to suggest that similar codes could be used for a 'range of sub themes but could be interpreted in different ways.

For example, the sub theme of Respect' featured in discussions across all three ethnic groups and across a range of topics, it was clearly important to all three groups but the interpretation of it differed across the groups. As such, instead of using it as a core theme it was used as a sub theme under the broader core theme of 'Regulatory conditions. as there was a clear overarching pre requisite condition attached to possible selves in terms of education for daughters however what respect meant for each group varied.

The final step that was carried out in the thematic analysis of the data was the applications of the findings on the development of the possible selves' model and how the themes present a unique dimension to what we understand by possible selves and their implications for further study. Although this phase is attributed at the end of analysis process it is in fact interwoven within the overall process of analysis (Braun and Clarke2012). At this stage it was important to organise the themes in a

well-connected and logical manner which was built around the possible selves' framework of hoped for, expected and feared selves of parents for their daughters in terms of their education and careers.

Conclusion

This aim of this chapter was to explore the research paradigm, research design and methods of data analysis that underpin this study. The chapter discussed the debates surrounding the constructivist paradigm. A consideration of the ethical protocols that were adhered to was also included. Furthermore, the chapter also considered the epistemological and methodological choices that were made during the course of this study. The influences of social constructivist theory on this research was discussed in-depth. Positionality and reflexivity as well as the sampling process and how data was collected was then outlined. Finally, the chapter considered the two-step data analysis process which was used to firstly sort themes into broader themes and subthemes using thematic analysis and then secondly, place themes into the possible selves' framework to understand the nuanced understanding of hopes, expectations and fears of parents hoped for selves for their daughters.

The next chapter considers the research process and findings for sub question one in detail.

4. Findings Section 1

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings that were developed from the data using the reflexive thematic analysis steps formulated by Braun and Clarke (2006). At this point a reminder of the overall research questions and the sub questions helps to focus the findings which follow.

The overall research question seeks to explore the following research question;

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

In order to explore the overall question, sub questions were formulated to generate deep discussions that covered the overall research question in-depth. The findings in this section pertain to answering sub question one which is as follows;

Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves?

This sub question aimed to explore the narratives that existed around education and career preferences amongst parents for their daughters. At the stage of data familiarisation there were noticeable tensions as well as patterns within and across the three ethnic groups.

4.1.1. Presentation of findings

The data is presented in this findings section firstly, by taking a step by step approach using a reflexive thematic analysis approach (Braun and Clarke 2006). By using this approach, I was able to deep dive into my data and derive meaning from it across the three ethnic groups by focusing on the depth of the data set. According to Sanders and Wilkins (2010) the objective of thematic analysis is "to offer a rich description and/or interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation… the

researcher is looking for ‘meaning’ rather than try to prove or disprove a hypothesis” (p. 214).

Next, the findings are presented according to the three categories which make up the possible selves’ framework; Hoped for selves, feared selves and expected selves. Although thematic analysis was used to identify the key themes as mentioned previously the analysis was a two-step process. The second step was to use the possible selves’ framework of hoped, expected, and feared selves used as categories in which the broader themes were placed into. The reasoning behind this was due to the need to familiarise myself with themes which were dual in nature in the sense that for one group that same theme was a feared self for daughters and for another it was a hoped-for self for daughters. For example, for the Punjabi group acquiring education was seen as a hoped-for self as it bought with its increased family respect and status.

However, on the contrary, for the Pashtun groups gaining education for daughters was a feared self because it came with other cultural and religious barriers and fears. Had the Possible selves’ framework been applied without the thematic analysis and familiarisation of the data within the context of each group it would have meant understanding the themes after placing them in the three possible selves’ categories and then changing them. By undertaking the thematic analysis beforehand, it was easier to apply the framework to the data. By undertaking the possible selves infused thematic analysis beforehand, each theme was afforded a nuanced understanding to whether it was a hope, expectation, fear, or if it fit across more than one of these categories (Pathak and Kasiing :2023)

Possible selves allow a framework through which we can examine one’s future study and career aspirations. By applying the framework to South Asian Muslim parents, we are able to conceptualise the complex negotiations parents make in order to help navigate their daughters through decision making for careers and education choices. As discussed in the literature chapter possible selves are social, although the literature chapter highlighted key research related to possible selves, careers and education; much of it focused on the self and the thinking of students and the negotiations which they go through to make their educational choices (see

Henderson, Stevenson, Bathmaker 2019). The findings in this study are able to extend what has previously been discussed in possible selves' research and shed some light on the thinking and negotiations which significant others may go through to make educational choices for their daughters.

After the findings have been presented this chapter then engages in a discussion of them, using relevant current literature.

4.2. Patterns and tensions

The findings suggest differences in how the three ethnic groups in this study perceive their daughters hoped for, feared, and expected possible selves. This places the findings in a unique position of elucidating the diverse nature of these ethnic groups as current literature on educational choices in the South Asian community little has been done to differentiate the diverse ethnic groups that make up the South Asian community as noted in chapter 2. 'In the Western world, people from South Asia; India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have been treated as one monolithic people' (Hussain, 2017). By being able to show that each group has distinct hopes fears and expectations of daughters in terms of education and careers research into Muslim South Asian career and education choices can become much richer than just a simple agency versus no agency debate, whilst also recognising that these groups in themselves are not entirely homogenous.

The findings section therefore attempts to look at the patterns and tensions that exist amongst and within three distinct South Asian Muslim groups within two towns in the North West of England :Pashtun, Punjabi, and Bengali who although may have 'integrated' into their British identity, have kept a close relationship with their traditional, religious and cultural norms. According to Alexander and Kim , South Asians forge imaginative cultural links to their heritage as well as reimagine Britishness within a complex multicultural context (2013), often wielding British national identity in an inclusive way to accommodate multiple, hybridised identities (Karlsen and Nazroo (2015) Bagguley and Hussain 2007). Indeed, Karlsen and

Nazroo (2015) have found that the overwhelming majority of British South Asian ethnoreligious minority groups felt a part of Britain.

This idea of 'pluralism' has been widely researched by South Asian and Western researchers who have found that immigrants participate in societal institutions, such as education and employment, at the same time retaining their structural and cultural identities (Anwar, 1985- cited in Basit, 2017).By applying the possible selves' framework to these three diverse groups the findings aim to focus closely on the preferred possible selves which parents have for their daughters and the cultural, religious ,and social influences that may affect these choices.

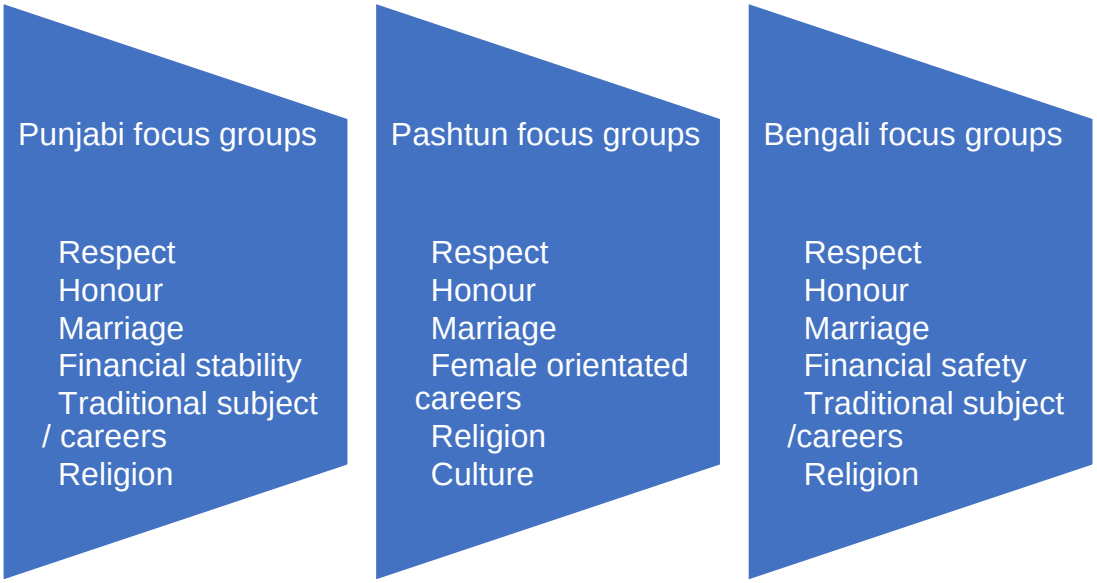


Figure 1.5 A selection of sub themes across all three groups

The diagram above suggests that there was commonality between the sub themes captured through the data analysis, it is only once they are grouped under broader core themes that we can begin to unpick the variations within these subthemes and how they manifest for each ethnic group in this study.

A first look at the table above suggests homogenisation of sub themes across all three ethnic groups. At this stage of analysis there was a realisation that although these sub themes were apparent across all three ethnic groups the application and understanding of these sub themes differed and although there were patterns in the actual sub theme tensions existed in the interpretation of these sub themes across

the three ethnic groups. These sub themes were revisited again to understand the diversity of narratives which existed within the data across the three ethnic groups. In order to understand these sub themes in a more interpretive dimension they were grouped under overarching broader themes which allowed them to be treated as multifaceted subthemes. One example of this was the sub theme of Respect although this featured in all three focus groups the understanding of this across the groups appeared to align with group's norms in that the main similarities were within groups and the distinctions were chiefly evident between the groups.

This meant that by assigning an overarching theme of 'regulatory conditions' allowed the subthemes to be applied in a more nuanced sense and explored across each ethnic group in a much more complex sense. Regulatory conditions was the name given to the theme that encompassed parents guiding ideals behind the formulation of their hopes, expectations and fears for their daughters. For example, these were the concepts that guided parent's formulation of their daughters' possible selves. Respect, honour and social standing featured heavily across all three groups as regulatory conditions that underpinned all other aspects of their daughters' possible selves. By assigning subthemes and themes it was useful in bringing information across all three groups together to make much more meaningful narratives of what I was seeing. In the next step of analysis this was further refined.

Themes that participants discussed in terms of what they hoped for their daughters, what they feared and what they expect in terms of their daughters' possible selves the achievable short-term goals. Some sub themes such as marriage, respect, religion and culture, traditional subjects and careers were prevalent across all focus groups. However, the description of these themes and how they were understood differed across the three ethnic groups. Other sub themes such as safety, financial security, and status were common amongst the Punjabi and Bengali focus groups but not in the Pashtun groups.

The table below is a further visual representation of the differentiation between core themes, sub themes and the codes which were attached to these. This is anthropomorphic; maybe this allows us to identify the patterns and tensions which

exist between and across the three ethnic groups in relation to sub question 1. The themes have been arranged in order to understand the thought process of parents across the three ethnic groups when they are conceptualising different subjects and careers in relations to their daughters' possible selves. Parents, explore a journey from a cognitive ideal to a more tangible process of how this will manifest. According to Markus and Nurius (1968) 'An individual's repertoire of possible selves can be viewed as the cognitive manifestation of enduring goals, aspirations, motives, fears, and threats. Possible selves provide the specific self-relevant form, meaning, organization, and direction to these dynamics. As such, they provide the essential link between the self-concept and motivation.

Key Themes	Sub Themes	Codes
Regulatory conditions; Parameters/ concepts that guided parents thinking when formulation possible selves for their daughters	Respect, Honour, Social standing	Izzat, family name, fathers respect, society, culture, values, judged, rules, parents, immediate/extended family Pashtunwali, Islam, control, rejected, deep, fear, changing, rejection, life time, harm, psychological, governed, the west, shameful, breached, men, consequences, Pride
What does success look like? Measures of success	Marriage, acceptability, financial safety, financial stability,	Educated spouse, marriage prospects, power couple, financial success, Freedom, protection, no worries, divorce, support, strength, vulnerable,

What's in a degree? Importance/value of education	University education, BTEC work from home,	Good Choices, bad choices proper education, Islam, boundaries, social influencers, role models, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, optometry, bad choices, wage, respect, Institution, distance, travelling, duration of education
Good versus Bad education Thinking around subject choices, and incentives around education.	Money, time, distance. Economic status v religious status, respect science versus arts and humanities	Low Izzat, low pay, long hours, far from home, pride, shame, disrespect, detached houses, identity, Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, optometry
A compact dream How are possible selves constructed?	Social mobility, familial success, detached house,	Material gains, spiritual gains, character building, stability, Location, religious security, nice car, sacrifice
Stamp of approval Have all the regulatory conditions been met?	Religion, cultural expectations, protection, success,	Izzat, honour, modesty, religion, attributes, ability, good actions,

Table 1.2 visual representation of the differentiation between core themes, sub themes and the codes which were attached to these.

The broader themes and sub themes generated through the initial stage of thematic analysis showed clear hopes, expectations and fears specific to each ethnic group in this study. The table above presents the initial process of thematic analysis which were then understood within the context of each ethnic group and applied to the

possible selves' conceptual framework of hopes, expectations and fears of daughter's possible selves.

The Regulatory conditions theme has been placed at the beginning because it was felt from the data and observations of the discussions that these were the initial pre requisite conditions which regulate parents thinking about their daughters' possible selves in terms of careers and education. Once these conditions have been entrenched then came the second theme what does success in terms of education and careers look like for daughters? this was again the bigger picture that parents formulated for the eventual end goal of a good education and career.

Next came a more formalised stage of what a good versus bad choice look like, this is where parents explore certain subjects and careers over others material/ spiritual gains from certain careers. After this comes the more tangible stage of decision making on the route to take in order to manifest these 'good choices' to success. A traditional route of GCSEs, A levels, Degree or were there other options.
The theme of 'complete package' came next participants discussed a range of sub themes material gain, end gains, pride and self-worth. Attributes, abilities, and actions of the self are not evaluated in isolation. Their interpretation depends on the surrounding context of possibility (Markus and Nurius:1986).

The final theme under this sub question was 'stamp of approval' this was the extrinsic aspect of daughters' possible selves in terms of careers and education, what will others think? Sub themes under this explored religion, cultural expectations, social standing, protection, and success. Some possible selves stand as symbols of hope, whereas others are reminders of bleak, sad, or tragic futures that are to be avoided. Yet all of these ideas about what is possible for us to be, to think, to feel, or to experience provide a direction and impetus for action, change, and development. Possible selves give specific cognitive form to our desires for mastery, power, or affiliation, and to our diffuse fears of failure and incompetence (Markus and Nurius:1986).

4.3. Parents' hoped, feared and expected selves of their daughter's education and careers

The table below presents the second stage of analysis by applying the themes taken from the initial thematic analysis and applying them to the possible selves' framework. The themes and sub themes were understood within the context of each ethnic group and conceptualised these into the patterns and tensions between the hoped, feared and expected selves each group had for their daughters. The themes were picked according to their importance to the different ethnic groups, the depth with which they were discussed by participants.

The frequency of their occurrence was not a pre requisite for picking themes as there was no indication that this was an important aspect in helping to access the research question. Braun and Clarke state: A theme might be given considerable space in some data items, and little or none in others, or it might appear in relatively little of the data set. So, researcher judgement is necessary to determine what a theme is... you need to retain some flexibility, and rigid rules really do not work. (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

Next, they were placed in the category based on whether participants used them in a positive or negative connotation to express their daughters' possible selves. The themes within the hoped-for possible selves' category were those that participants in all three groups hoped their daughters would achieve in the feared category were the things which the participants were afraid of their daughters becoming finally the expected category summed up the overarching achievable possible selves that parents had for their daughters.

4.3.1. Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves

Possible selves' framework	Punjabi	Bengali	Pashtun
Daughters Hoped to be self	Professional vocational degree holders within the medical field preferably doctors, dentist, pharmacist, optician. A 'normal' educational route GCSEs, A levels, University. Well paid, close to home, respectful, safe. Stable. Good marriage prospects, detached house, BMW or Mercedes	Professional vocational degree holders within the medical field preferably doctors, dentist, pharmacist, optician. University education BTec or A levels Local universities preferred Respect, stable, well paid, good marriage prospects	Female friendly careers, nursery nurse, teacher, Quran teacher, home business (baker) University education if University is local (male participants) Traditional role of mothers and homemakers Respect, uphold Pakhtunwali, safe. Close to home.
Daughters Feared self	No education No job prospects Working in 'low paid jobs'.	No education Losing identity, religion/culture	Too much education Bringing shame

	Lack of social mobility	Low marriage prospects	Losing identity rejection of religion and culture Low marriage prospects
Daughters Expected self	Well educated highly paid educated daughters who are able to afford a stable and safe future and are able to buy property and cars and go on holidays. Money seen as linked to having respect and enjoying better marriage prospects.	Educated, well paid , with an awareness of cultural and religious identity upholding the values of their community. A good education and career should naturally lead to better marriage prospects within their own community.	Daughters need to ensure that they know the boundaries of religion and culture and that careers and education do not impede on these. Religious and cultural role of women exceeds the desire to earn money, women have no obligation on them to earn and provide. Ensure daughters uphold the respect of their family and community.

Table 1.3 participants views of different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves in terms of hopes, fears and expectations

4.3.2. Hoped for possible selves

The hoped-for possible selves that each group had for their daughters will be explored separately before combining these in the discussions section.

Within the Punjabi focus group there was a very decisive plan of the hoped-for possible selves' participants had for their daughters. Educating daughters was seen as a priority amongst all participants who viewed female education as essential to move the community forward and afford social mobility for families. Participants discussed the perfect outcome for their daughters based on a 'Punjabi parents dream'.

For these participants financial stability was key to their hoped-for selves for their daughters, choosing a career that would allow daughters to buy the *'Punjabi parents dream of a detached house with a drive and garden, a BMW, and go on two holidays a year' (Waqar; Male)*. This was viewed by participants as metrics used by the Punjabi community to measure the success of an individual and their parents. The hoped-for possible career was one that held value, such as those in the medical field a doctor, dentist, optician or pharmacist which were the four most popular hoped for career options.

A good education was also seen as following a particular pathway to ensure it meant the hoped for possible self-criteria, GCSE, A levels, Degree, Profession. that held value made up a key part of a daughters hoped for possible self '*I want to be able to tell people that my daughter did her two years of A levels at college and then went straight to Uni it shows that she's clever and successful'* (Amina; Female). There is a real sense of the community here 'people' suggests the knowledge of a daughter gaining a good education goes beyond the confines of the family.

Discussions around this also explored what a 'bad education' entailed, for the majority of Punjabi parents there was a preference for a traditional academic route into education rather then what one parent termed as 'short cuts'. Academia was seen as prestigious and offered a different dimension of respect to both the parents and the daughter. If daughters decided not to go to university then participants discussed *'office jobs'* and administrative roles that *'looked professional' (Moeen: male).* The idea of wanting daughters to look professional even if they were not

studying for a degree was interesting, and suggests that these parents were very much concerned about the 'look' how the community perceives their children. Furthermore, the idea of success as connected to middle class norms; a sense of dress and particular environments to work in is fascinating. An 'office' was seen as a professional space.

The idea of safety was another aspect of Punjabi parents hoped for selves for their daughters, a safe choice that would bring a good salary, with no relocation and the least amount of struggle. Safety for their daughters was not physical but financial/economic, furthermore there was a marked difference between participants' belief in financial safety and financial stability. Financial safety was described similarly to a social and cultural safety net which provided daughters with a tool for ensuring that they could *'stand on their own two feet'* and being able to *'withstand all hardships and ill fortune that may come their way'* (Rohail; Male). Stability for the Punjabi groups was linked primarily to the monetary value of the career.

Another aspect of Hoped for careers and education for the participants in this group were those that led to better marriage prospects. These participants felt that good marriage proposals would only come if daughters were well educated and had financial assets. *'No one wants a shy home maker anymore, if you are educated you want someone with a similar mindset. The pattern seems to be if you are not educated go back home (Pakistan) and get married and if you are educated you want someone on your level doesn't matter who they are' (Huriyah: Female).*

Daughters needed to stand out and be in a career that was lucrative and attractive to potential spouses. *Saleyha,* a female participant summed up the idea of marriage being like a marketplace and highly competitive *'If you are doctor you are going to want a doctor, it' life, you want someone on your level and not someone from the same village as you back home.* The idea of the village and back home perhaps is somehow a place that this community have risen above, or need to be seen to have risen above in order to show progression. '*I know I need to make sure my daughters are highly educated or else I know it's going to be hard to find them a good hardworking person. It's not just about having a degree, it's more about what job you have, is it well paid, is it close to home, is it a proper career rather than just a call*

centre job'. The idea of a 'proper' career featured prominently across this group. Participants agreed that there was a distinction between what was perceived as a 'proper' or acceptable career and a 'standard' one.

There was a clear hoped-for self that the Pashtun participants wanted for their daughters and unlike the Punjabi groups this hoped-for self was more strongly underpinned by a particular cultural and religious identity. Similar to the Punjabi groups, Pashtun participants hoped for a safe career for their daughters. However, this safety felt much more physical rather than financial safety that the Punjabi participants discussed. In the Pashtun groups participants hoped for careers and education that kept their religious and cultural identity safe. Secondly, safety was discussed in terms of how physically safe a career would be for a girl, one example discussed under these criteria was whether the ratio of men to women was high or low, and whether work had to be carried out during anti-social hours. Safety was further attributed to careers based on whether the career afforded a good work life balance, and allowed daughters to fulfil their role as a wife and mother at home and within the community.

'I've discussed careers with all my daughter, I said to them they need to understand that as women our first loyalty and role is to our religion and family and if a certain career gets in the way of that then it is not safe and not the one which Allah would be pleased with, I think they understand they know what their values are. I said you can't expect to be in careers working all hours of the day and not able to pray, give time to family, cook, and just relax that's not a career then it takes over your life and you will not have any happiness in your life neglecting your nature and purpose like that.' (Fatimah: female)

'Nature' and 'purpose' are important considerations across the Bengali and Pashtun groups there was a double understanding of daughters possible selves being aligned to 'nature' in a biological sense and a social determinist understanding of the biological sex linked to their purpose as Muslim South Asian girls, defined by cultural norms and social expectations.

Another aspect of hoped for selves in the Pashtun groups was the ability to earn halal money. These participants strongly believed that earning money the 'right way' would give a person the highest respect in society because in Gods eyes a person who earns *'halal money, even if it's a couple of pounds an hour is richer then someone who earns their money through social media influencing, hair dressers and make up artists'(Faisal: male).*

The discussions around halal earning suggested that the source of income and its permissibility was a key factor in what careers and education daughters pursued. The permissibility of careers was enshrined in religious rulings for the Pashtun groups. Halal careers were those that offered an income which was not made by selling or being involved in the sale of alcohol, pork, interest, mortgages, banking, as well as make-up artists, hairdressers and singers. These were all considered to bring in haram income. The discussions around what was considered a halal career were very clear cut across all Pashtun groups, the stigma and fear attached to daughters choosing a career that was considered haram was greater than all fears that this group had. Discussions were centred around this representing a failure by parents to of parents to raise their children 'properly', and the stigma this would carry as well as the implications for the parents in both this world and the hereafter.

The term Halal in the context of the Pashtun focus group moved beyond just money. 'Halal conditions' encompassed a wide range of conditions that a career should meet for it to be viewed as halal for daughters. The example discussed at length by the women only focus group was that of a beauty *technician ' If my daughter turns around and says she wants to be a beautician and shape eyebrows and all that false eyelash stuff I wouldn't say it's a bad choice I'd be very straight up about the fact that in Islam to do that is haram, as a parent you need to be straight up about the black and white stuff with children not just daughters I'd tell my son also some things are just wrong' (Juwariah: female)*

The Bengali group discussions presented two overlapping models of possible selves for their daughters. Although the regulatory conditions were the same in both models such as stable careers, respected career and Halal; the Bengali group were more flexible in the choice of careers that were negotiated. Although careers in the

medical profession were preferred hoped for possible selves were flexible if daughters were not academic, for the less academic a home business such as a baker, Quran teacher, or a childminder were accepted.

The diagram below illustrates that although for Bengali participants the unchanging regulatory conditions could be reached through different routes, thus suggesting that the possible selves that the Bengali participants had for their daughters were more variable then the other two groups in terms of the routes that daughters could take.

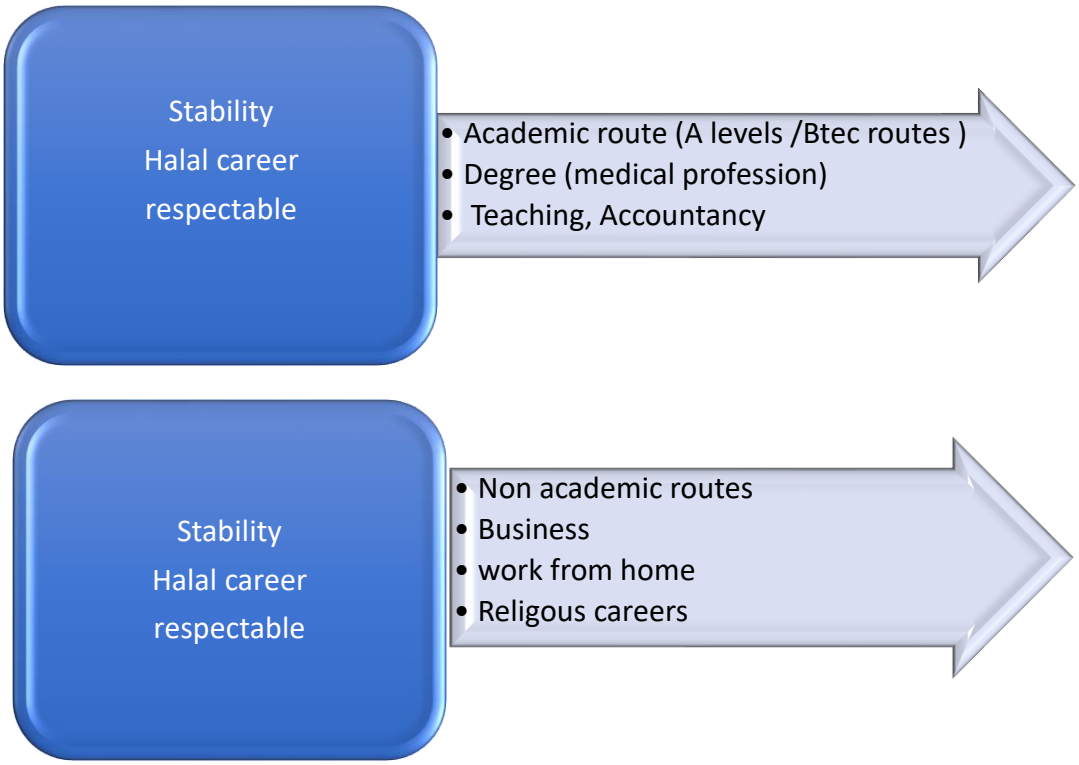


Fig 1.5 Two routes to success

Unlike the Punjabi groups In the Bengali groups there was not the same sense of a 'dream' rather stability was seen as a longer term *'safety net'* for daughters as one participant stated careers had to be stable for daughters to *'be free from worrying about money whatever hardship they may face' (Abrar: male)*. Unlike the Punjabi groups who had a clear set of ideals for their hoped-for selves of their daughters this was less clear cut within the Bengali groups. Again 'safety' is an interesting term that suggests the idea of possible selves as future selves that were protected and safe.

Participants felt quite strongly about daughters pursuing careers that provided financial security for them. There was a gendered sense of preferred careers and subjects within the Bengali groups that led to financial security and were seen as *'safe and sensible' (Dilawar;male)* for daughters as they would not struggle whatever their personal circumstances and would not have to relocate to find a better paid job, something which was not considered a norm in the Bengali community.

One participant's view shared by the majority of participants across the Bengali focus groups showed a gendered sense of preferred careers. *'A job that gives you a decent income and is close to home is ideal for a girl. It allows daughters to stay within their community and within the fold of their family, girls are not made to struggle they shouldn't have to feel like they need to work harder to have a better salary or move away, boys can cope with that but girls are not wired that way' (Qudsia; female).*

Again, the discussions drew a strong sense of gendered perspectives of daughters' possible selves and. 'wired that way' suggests the understanding of daughters' possible selves linked to the biological differences between men and women and this having implications for the understanding of their roles and expectations within the family and community. There was a marked difference between a practical and intrinsic sense of stability the Bengali groups discussed for their daughters in relation to their careers and educational choices as opposed to the Punjabi groups.

The hoped-for selves were flexible in terms of the route that they took into higher education, participants discussed the value of BTEC[9] qualifications as an easier, lower pressure route into some medical related careers. One participant view reflected the majority view that BTEC was now being viewed as a realistic route into a medical related career, *'you can't beat the good old Bio, Chem, Maths A Levels and straight on to medicine no messing around, I know that's what I want for my daughter. Realistically though it's so competitive that I've started looking at Btec*

[9] BTEC- **BTEC** Nationals are career-based qualifications designed to give students the skills they need to move on to higher education or go straight into employment.

applied science and see what careers you can on to with that it seems to be simpler and less pressure (Rania: female).

Similar to the Pashtun groups participants hoped for selves of daughters focused on the permissibility of certain careers for their daughters as opposed to others in terms of religious rulings. The following quote summaries the overarching idea of halal careers discussed within this group. *'The thing that really matters when we decide what career our daughter is going to go into is it is halal? Because that's all that matters, if something isn't right in Allah's eyes then how can you want it for your precious children, and this is whether we are talking about daughters or sons' (Abdul: male).*

Although there weren't any specific examples of permissibility there was an undertone of the distinction between halal [10]and haram [11]careers, but not as strong as the Pashtun groups but nevertheless it was there.

4.3.3. Feared Possible selves

Punjabi participants presented clear feared selves that they had for their daughters. The biggest fear for this group was their daughters not studying until degree level and working in a low paid job. For many parents this would be seen as a personal failure and show no generational progress. Another feared self was if daughters pursued a career that was deemed disrespectful and was not socially acceptable such as a cleaner, dancer, and musician. Participants listed socially acceptable careers as vocational careers such as *'doctor, teacher, engineer'* as well any career that required you to wear a '*suit and tie'*, *'a nine to five weekday job', 'an office job' (Vora).*

Although most participants accepted jobs such as Makeup Artists and hairdressers, there were some participants who feared such career choices for their daughters. These careers were seen as lower in respect, community recognition, and the value

[10] Halal-Halal, meaning "lawful" in Islamic teachings,
[11] Haram-Haram, meaning "unlawful" in Islamic teachings,

of a person in term of marriage prospects. *'I think my daughter would get a better chance of getting married to a professional if she herself was a professional and not one of these makeup type girls. No family wants to say their daughter in-law is a hairdresser, they'd rather say she is a pharmacist or a teacher' (Zainab: female).*

This was interesting because unlike the Pashtun and Bengali groups who discouraged such careers due to their perceived impermissibility Islamically. For Punjabi parents they were discouraged because of the lack of respect and status they held in the community. For participants in the Bengali focus groups daughters feared selves were based around choosing a career that would bring shame and dishonour on the family. Participants feared daughters pursuing certain careers that would impact their religious, cultural and community identity.

Careers that were seen as unlawful in the Bengali focus groups and therefore disrespectful were makeup artists, singers. The biggest fear for these parents was daughters losing respect for their family and affecting their 'fathers' honour. Participants were opposed to such careers as not being impermissible islamically and also had an honour dimension attached for some participants. *'If I told my mum that my daughter was becoming a hairdresser, she would not be happy it doesn't go well with our family status in Bangladesh' (Mariam; female)*. For some Bengali participants however, these jobs were discouraged purely due to the Islamic impermissibility.

There were interesting discussions about the loss of family honour and respect being a feared possible self for daughters. Thus, the feared selves that both Bengali and Pashtun parents had for their daughters were similar in that they were based around the loss of key regulatory conditions as opposed to Punjabi groups where daughters not achieving a particular 'dream' of a respected career, a status which afforded a particular standard of living such as a detached house and a luxury car were fears.

Another feared self that this group had for their daughters was the fear of them not pursuing education and therefore not being able to attract good marriage proposals. Participants discussed the increase in inter marriage between Bengali males and girls from other south Asian backgrounds and the negative impact this was having on

girls in the Bengali community in terms of marriage. *'A good marriage is essential for girls to feel valued and loved, and no one wants to marry back home now everyone wants someone with a degree a good job good money and good Bengali and Muslim values. A lot of boys from our community have started marrying into other Asian groups like Pakistanis and Indians just to find this so it's important our own girls can offer this so we are not struggling to find good proposals for them, gone are the days when everyone wanted a housewife to cook them a curry' (Fariah: female).* Parents in this group feared that their daughters would be left without a good Bengali spouse if they were not educated.

The idea of 'value' here is interesting whereas in the Punjabi focus groups value was seen as how valuable a career is in terms of the monetary sense for the Bengali groups value was multi-dimensional. A valued possible self was linked to a good marriage and securing a good marriage was being able to attract a respectable Bengali family. Feared possible selves for their daughters was based around the daughters not being able to attract a good Bengali spouse, cultural, social aspect to feared self. For Pashtun participants there was a clear feared self that parents had of their daughters; this was a self that was distant from their Islamic values, opposed to cultural norms of the Pashtunwali and distant from their community.

'Once you start to think you are 'successful' in terms of career you lose your identity and who you really are. I don't want my daughters to start thinking they don't need us or their community'

Parents feared that too much education would spur such changes and therefore for the Pashtun group the feared self was one that had acquired too much education which then led to become independent in terms of rejecting religious, cultural and family values, and leaving the community.

'its so important for me as a parent to find the right balance, okay we live in England there is a need to some extent to work to survive but should that work make you so arrogant that you forget what truly matters and the real reason for why we were created. For me I'd rather my children have less education and a meaningful life guided by religion morals and good values'.

These participants suggested that daughters required intervention to ‘guide’ and ‘educate ‘on what was right and wrong in terms of careers and education. Participants felt that the single biggest intervention and support parents could have in their daughter’s life was to help them pick a future that was safe for their health, religion, and family respect. The Pashtun groups also feared that women were increasingly being commodified by the ‘west’ Participants felt that the education system and schools were prioritising subjects and careers based on getting girls into careers that they were not ‘made for’. This was confusing for girls and giving them unrealistic expectations for their possible futures rather than making things easy for them to reach ‘realistic paths’ in life.

The agendas pushed in the state system in the UK, were viewed as contrary to the codes and values of the Pashtun community which participants felt made life for women easy and comfortable without the need to go and earn a significant income, these ‘pressures’ were not for women to worry about or burden themselves with. *‘the luxu*ry *of the home and the natural comfort women feel within that space* was compared to the *pressures of high-end jobs, and our daughters are being drawn into these careers that are soulless and demeaning just for a bit of independence’(Tasnim).*

There was a clear similarity between the views of Bengali and Pashtun participants in regards to the idea of a women’s ‘nature’ possible selves that were determined by the biological nature of women. Unlike the Punjabi groups the Pashtun participants’ felt strongly about the infringement of careers on the ‘nature’ of women. Possible selves that would lead to the degeneration of a women’s ‘true nature and purpose’ were feared by these participants. Furthermore, unlike the Punjabi parents who view careers and education as a fulfilling and uplifting accolade for the Pashtun participants it could be something that could lead to a loss of nature and purpose for daughters and become ‘soulless’. There was a clear distinction between daughters’ advantages within the domestic sphere as opposed to the disadvantages of occupying the public sphere.

In terms of education and career pathways participants discussed the fear of daughters going to university and the discouragement of going to a university far from home. Parents were cautiously sending their daughters to local universities where they were able to commute to ensure they didn't feel the 'full effect' of university life such as *'partying, relationships, losing their faith, questioning religious and cultural norms' (Gafoor: male).*

Participants of this view agreed that schools were pushing a typically non female career agenda on females but they felt that parents have the choice to advise their daughters against this and guide them into more traditional female friendly careers. These participants were ensuring that they advised their daughters on the importance of an education which was 'easy'. The ultimate feared self for daughters was one which had lost respect in the pursuit of education and careers. Respect in the Pashtun focus groups was discussed as the bedrock of the Pashtun community. Participants agreed that daughters' possible selves should be enshrouded in the ideal of respect and honour. Daughters were seen as upholders of honour for families, participants discussed the intense pressure on daughters to uphold the moral tribal code of Pashtunwali. The idea of upholding the Pashtunwali which in itself is seen as a patriarchal moral code supports Contractor's (2012) suggestion that the patriarchy that Muslim women challenge is not religious but is derived from the culture of Muslim communities. This cultural patriarchy can deny women access to education, careers and social authority, which ironically are rights Islam assures them

As such participants discussed the fear of daughters becoming 'westernised'. Any education or career choice that compromised this moral code was unacceptable and unforgiveable for the overwhelming number of participants. However, there was also an overall acceptance that by *'Living in the west we've all had to change I think obviously women working outside the home isn't really what Pathans were used to and even now I think a lot of our community are not comfortable with it' (Khan: male).*

The discussions showed a clear gendered difference between the women only group to that of the male group. Contrary to existing literature (Bokhari:2015) on Pashtun women albeit being limited there was a sense that the women only group had a

stronger sense of the feared selves for their daughters. They were strong advocates of daughters not losing their identity which was strong in the male group but there were also divergent voices in the male groups which were more accepting of women's role in the workplace. This was interesting to see as previous literature has identified Pashtun women being critical of the restraints placed upon them by their communities (Bokhari:2015).

4.3.4. Expected selves

Expected selves are the ones which can be achieved in the immediacy. The realistic components an individual expects to achieve (positive or negative) are covered in the expected self. For participants within the Punjabi group there was a realistic understanding that not everyone can become a doctor however the next best career then needs to be pursued. The overall expected selves for daughters included the following broad short-term achievable goals, studying A levels in science fields, studying for a degree in a medical related career, finding a job in the first six months after finishing university. This pattern was agreed upon across all Punjabi focus group; participants felt that this is realistic if daughters had the correct support from family and school. Careers that participants agreed were 'acceptable' after medicine and dentistry were optician, pharmacist, nurse, midwife, radiologist.

One participant in the Punjabi focus group stated that *'unless you have a big four career you are going to be seen as just having a degree but with less respect then a doctor' (Aliyah: female)*. The expected self was overall one which was well educated, highly paid daughters who are able to afford a stable and safe future and are able to buy property and cars and go on holidays. Money was seen as linked to having respect and enjoying better marriage prospects. There was a sense of a good career adding value to a daughter's marriage profile and her being a *'high profile marriage within the community'(Safdar: male)* within the Punjabi community.

For the Bengali groups the expected self for daughters was one which was degree educated, well paid, with a strong awareness of cultural and religious identity upholding the values of their community. A good education and A halal earning

career should naturally lead to better marriage prospects within their own community.

Traditional careers were another prominent theme of the expected self. Traditional careers would be the first choice they made for their daughters' expected selves as these were the most prestigious and well recognised professions and subjects. Although participants viewed science-based A levels and University degrees such as medicine, dentistry, bio medical science and other medical related careers as overwhelmingly the first choice for their daughters, discussions around traditional careers also explored the changing nature of education and the different routes available to get on to 'traditional careers'.

Being a doctor, teacher, midwife nurse, and Alimah[12] (Muslim female scholar) were seen as aspirational careers that were religiously rewarding. *'The careers that matter the most are the ones that are beneficial to others, everyone can make money, but the reward in having a career as a doctor, teacher, Alimah that's just a different level of service to humanity and loved by Allah. It would be ideal for girls to go into these careers it keeps them on the straight path and puts blessings in their earnings'*. Participants recognised that not everyone is academic and therefore alternative careers were discussed participants were divided on the acceptability of careers such as makeup artists, hairdressers but agreed that they are lucrative careers but questioned the financial stability they afforded. *'I mean the idea of being a makeup artist or hairdresser is glamourous and owning your own salon seems exciting but it's all really seasonal work and there is so much competitions plus the overheads it's not worth it' (Ruqqayah:female)*.

For the Pashtun participants the expected selves that they imagined for their daughters in terms of careers and education were more closely shrouded in the ideals of respect and honour. A degree was a not a necessity, well paid jobs were also not a priority, rather a respectful, the least stressful occupations such as a baker from home, childcare practitioner or Quran teacher were envisaged for daughters.

[12] Alimah- female Islamic scholar who has acquired extensive knowledge in various Islamic sciences. An Alimah possesses knowledge of the Quran and Hadith, as well as other disciplines like Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Aqeedah (theology), and the Arabic language.

There was a gendered aspect to the expected self, the female all focus groups agreed that the above occupations were enough for daughters. *'The best careers really are the ones that are all female, it's important that my daughter is able to work without having her respect compromised working in jobs like teaching or in a nursery are good jobs because you not going to be around men. I know my daughter would hate that she is not used to mixing with men' (Noreen*: *female).*

There was a slight difference in the male focus groups who agreed that if daughters had the capability the expected self could be one which pursues a female friendly career such as midwife, nurse, teacher at a local university. Expected selves would be ones which knew the boundaries of religion and culture and that careers and education do not impede on these.

We would always encourage as parents and work hard for our daughters to find a career that's within the boundaries of Islam and has higher religious value then money. What is success if it isn't linked to your true purpose as a good Muslim, a good human.' The term 'Boundaries' was used within the Pashtun groups in terms of the scope of careers and education within the regulatory conditions of respect, honour and religion. Participants agreed that the religious and cultural role of women exceeds the desire to earn money, women have no obligation on them to earn and provide. Ensure daughters uphold the respect of their family and community.

Within the Pashtun groups there was no overall preferences for different routes into further and higher education or careers. Within the female only focus group there was an acceptance of a lack of interest and understanding in the different routes. In the male group there was much more of an understanding of options to education and careers however there wasn't an overall preference the easiest, least time consuming and less burdensome routes were discussed as the best options for daughters.

5. Discussion section 1

5.1. Possible selves research and significant others: implications from the current findings

This chapter will discuss the findings from sub question 1 using relevant literature and current research, as well as considering possible lines of research for future studies on possible selves.

The possible selves' theory states that individuals hold future cognitive representations (hopes, fears, and expectations) of themselves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), and move towards hoped possible selves and away from feared ones. Previous research using possible selves continues to focus on the individuals' hopes, fears and expectations for their possible selves. The current study however proposes that the hopes, fears and expectations of significant others such as parents are important in understanding similarities and variations within and across the South Asian groups interviewed in this study. It exemplifies what this looks like in practice and within a certain religious, socio cultural domain.

The findings suggest

- Possible selves of daughters are constructed by parents from all three groups based around a consideration of a cross section of identity.
- The construction of possible selves across these groups suggests parents have hopes, expectations and fears when imagining their daughters' possible selves.
- Parents are central in all three groups in imagining daughters' possible selves, and are not passive.

Previous research (Oyserman: 1993, Wetheral:1987) highlighted the importance of significant others on the possible selves of the individual but have stopped short of exploring what the hopes, fears, and expected selves of significant others maybe and how these are reflected onto the individual's possible selves. The Institute of

Public Policy Research (IPPR: 2013) acknowledges the importance of family influence in decision making, and suggest that in order to increase female participation in engineering, family knowledge and encouragement of engineering as a rewarding educational and employment pathway, is important in shaping aspirations. Thus, the findings may have implications for further research using the possible selves' framework when considering initiatives to increase female participation in regards to certain educational choices and careers.

Furthermore, previous research (Hock, Deshler and Schumaker: 2006, Oyserman, Bybee and Terry:2006) has often focused on cross-cultural, between-country comparative studies. The current study proposes that within-country variation of sub-cultural groups is also worthy of investigation, and assumes that ethnicity does not represent a homogenous group membership but rather a sub-cultural group membership. Research (Basit:2001, Bagguely and Hussain:2007, Dale:2002,) on Muslim British South Asians women have focused on fixed groups, Pakistani, Bengali, Indian, by differentiating within the ethnicities we are able to draw a much more realistic picture of parent's motivations, fears and expectations of their daughter's education and careers. Culture is "the way of life, including knowledge, customs, norms, laws and beliefs, which characterizes a particular society or social group" (Giddens and Sutton, 2014, p. 135). The reality is we live in multicultural, multiracial, multifaith and pluralist societies, which naturally fluctuate as "societies are never static, homogenous or united" (Haralambos and Holborn, 2013, p. 19).

The current findings suggest that parents across all three ethnic groups in this study play an active role in shaping their daughters' possible selves whether these are hoped for, expected or feared. Although parental involvement and encouragement for daughters education of 'Pakistani' and Bengali parents has been documented in the literature there has been a focus on the limitations placed on daughters education by parents Abbas (2010) Research uncovered that Bangladeshi and Pakistani parents valued education and wanted their daughters to succeed; however, they were afraid that their daughters would become 'Westernised' and lose their religious-cultural background.

Furthermore, the findings also suggest some intra group differences. These were seen across all three groups. There was some difference found between the Pashtun male and female focus groups around the feared selves. The female groups were more vocal, had much stronger views and a stronger sense of fear about daughters losing their identity. Although there was also a strong sense of this in the male only group there was also complex discussions about acceptance that living in Britain meant an altered identity. The Punjabi groups were also different in the sense that there was a weaker sense of religious strictness and more financially orientated hope. To date, no research has focused on the gender of significant others and formulation of possible selves.

This finding extends the current literature on Pashtun women, Bokhari (2015) who found in her study of Pashtun parents perspectives of their children's education that female participants took the stance that the introduction of increasingly strict cultural and religious customs and ideologies created even more obstacles for them in terms of education, which they found restrictive, inhibiting and detrimental to the furtherance of the NWFP Pashtun population.

In this study this seems to be in stark contrast to the female Pashtuns in this study and there is an opportunity to explore this in future research to understand Pashtun women's – especially those who are mothers – stance on their daughter's education. The current findings seem to suggest that the possibility of the feared self being manifested through a 'western education' was a driving factor in such strong views on loss of identity and need for protection. Feminist historians (Knott & Taylor, 2005:922) agree that motherhood is not fundamentally a' biological function but is primordially a cultural practice that is continuously being shaped in response to social and economic changes. As a cultural construction, its meanings vary over time and place; there is no essential or universal experience of motherhood'.

The findings further connect to literature on diasporic studies on Puerto Rican mothers in the USA (Dow:2010). Although these mothers negotiate class and race dynamics in seeking educational opportunities; they were also interested in nurturing their children Puerto Rican identity. Such studies take feminist perspectives, and

suggest that mothers navigate their roles in their children's education, considering both the challenges and opportunities presented by societal norms and expectations. Reay (1998) found that mothers experience a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative when involved in the schooling of their children.

The gendered dimension to this was also interesting and it almost inverses the idea of the patriarchal nature of Pashtun traditions being driven purely by men (Jamal: 2016). There seems to be an undertone of fathers being more cautiously accepting of small changes. Again, this is an interesting enough finding to pursue in further research on this group to see if such findings can be generalised or were only specific to this study. Whilst there have been a number of studies focused on gender and concepts around development and empowerment (Zulfacar, 2006; Mann, 2005; Moghadam, 1992; Chavis, 2001; Akbar, 1983; Agarwal, 1998; Khattak, 2004; Daulatzai, 2006), there has been a limited amount of research on fathers‘ perceptions of women‘s roles in community and girls‘ education.

The current findings cannot be generalised but suggest a separation between parents’ understanding of religious acceptability and educational success, particularly for the Punjabi participants who did not seem to want to mix the two aspects of identity. Ijaz and Abbas (2010) acknowledged that, “They wanted their daughters to have the best of both worlds: receive Western education and yet maintain their conventional religio-cultural values” (p316) This resonates with what the data suggested across the Bangladeshi groups, there was a mixed sense of having both a good education and a strong sense of religious and cultural identity.

The findings seem to however extend our understanding of literature on Pashtun parent’s involvement in daughters’ education. Current literature, although limited, suggests a level of apathy towards daughter’s education (Bokhari: 2015) the findings indicates that this supposed ‘apathy’ and lack of ‘cultural capital’ maybe too reductionist in its understanding of the role that Pashtun parents play within the manifestation of their daughters’ education. There seems to be a much more thought out reasoned decision-making process enshrined in the principals of religion and culture that all influence a certain possible self these parents have for their

daughters. Therefore, a possible selves lens suggests parents, hopes, fears and expectations maybe a deeper understanding.

5.1.1. Finding a balance between hoped for and feared selves

As the literature review stipulated, the balance between hopes and fears is important when understanding motivation. The presence of balance can be understood by instances of overlap between hoped-for and feared selves (Schnare et al., 2012). Throughout the coding process, various such overlaps were found in the present case. Feared possible selves across all three groups were made of daughters not realising their hoped-for selves and diverging from these. For example, within the Punjabi groups one of the facets of daughters hoped for possible selves was having a well-paid job that could afford them to live the ‘Punjabi’ dream (detached house, luxury car, and holidays). Simultaneously their biggest fears were made up of daughters not being able to achieve this dream.

The balance or lack thereof between hope and fear is therefore important to understand the motivation of parents across all three ethnic groups (Pizzolato, 2007). This also requires a constant negotiation of meaning on the part of the individuals in which the desired and the acceptable or the familiar and the new are being presented to them (Tateo, 2018).

Across the three ethnic groups there were differences on perceived capability of accomplishing hoped for or preventing feared possible selves. There were some gender differences within the Pashtun groups with the female only group having the most imbalance between their daughters hoped for and feared possible selves. Within this group a higher number of feared selves for their daughters were found regarding self-perceived likelihood of accomplishing positive or avoiding negative possible selves. A feared self is a possible self that one does not want to become, yet fears becoming.

According to previous research on Pashtun women studies have found that women felt being a girl in the NWP Pashtun population was hard and life was unfair both in this country and in the homeland, they felt affected their lives personally and ultimately educationally (Bokhari:2015). However, the current findings suggest a different picture one which suggests that Pashtun women uphold the religious and cultural norms when thinking about their daughters' possible selves. The fear of daughters bringing shame and dishonour was manifested more pertinently in the women only focus groups over the male only groups. Therefore, there was a profound imbalance between these participants hoped for and feared selves of their daughters. According to Shephard and Marshall (1999). The feared self plays an important role in the self-concept by acting as a motivator so that concrete actions are taken to avoid that future possible self. The findings show this idea of 'concrete narratives' being discussed around daughter's feared selves, there may be potential future research to be done in this area focusing on the role of feared possible selves.

The findings suggest that the Pashtun groups had low levels of hope overall in terms of education and careers for their daughters and were unable to articulate pathways for their daughters to pursue qualifications and careers. This does not mean they are apathetic towards daughters receiving an education and a career however do not place the same value or 'hope' on secular education bringing ultimate success for their daughters compared to the other two ethnic groups. According to Pervin 'Low-hope people, showed decreased agency and identified fewer pathways for their goals' (1989). The current findings suggest that additional research using the possible selves' theory may prove substantive in further understanding the relationship between culture, gender, ethnicity, and education/career choices.

In addition, the Punjabi and Bengali participants generated more hoped-for possible selves than the Pashtun groups. This correlates with Lynch (1974) who defined hope as "a sense of the possible" the findings suggested that Punjabi and Bengali participants were most motivated in their hoped for and expected possible selves of their daughters and this translated in their responses to their daughters expected possible selves. They had a clear plan in the short term of how they would help their daughters to achieve their hoped possible selves. These findings are similar to the a recent study conducted which looked at hopes and fears of Indian musicians (Thakar

and Karsihiing :2023) found that overlaps between hope and fears led the musicians to motivate themselves in not failing thus increasing motivation, According to Lynch high hoped for selves have an action-orientation, and this implies that hope is related to motivation or agency.

In this study the Punjabi parents were the most motivated and decisive in how they would translate their hoped-for possible selves for their daughters into the expected possible self. Contrastingly the Pashtun participants were the least bothered about a career orientated possible self for their daughter as career and earnings were not prioritised in the same way that a women's 'natural purpose, and 'social purpose' were. The research suggests that Punjabi families having very specific options and pathways of getting there, plus something in their economic base that enables this, while in the Pashtun group they are more working class, and have different sets of aspirations that are not only religious? This manifested in the imbalance between the feared and hoped for selves in terms of their education and careers.

This research found variations between the emphasis on maintaining standard of living placed on daughters between the three ethnicities. In the Pashtun groups stability was seen as the remit of males and not something that parents thought daughters need to be worried about or want from a career or education. Both male and female focus groups accepted that within the Pakhtunwali it was part of male chivalry to be the provider and not burden the women folk with providing economic security to the family. Aspects of my findings align with Bokhari (2015) who found that the Pakhtunwali was central to the structure of Pashtun families.

It was a daughter's duty to uphold these principles and it was the duty of male members of the community to worry about the finances *'and keeping a roof over their heads, money and jobs leave all that to the men' (Dawood: male).* This is contradictory to previous studies which have stipulated that regardless of the gender, social class, ethnic and religious affiliation of the parent, grandparent and the young person, education was viewed as equally valuable for boys and girls (cf. Basit, 1997; Ahmad, 2001; Ijaz & Abbas, 2010). Although these studies did not include Pashtuns as a separate ethnic group they were included under the broader label of Pakistani.

Again, this research study adds a different perspective to researching different South Asian groups, such findings cannot be generalised

The findings here suggest a tense relationship between women's education and careers and male chivalry stipulated by the Pakhtunwali. Future research could explore this tension further to gain a deeper understanding between the two and the implication for Pashtun women's education and career aspirations.
The hoped-for selves that Punjabi participants imagined had a very linear progressive structure with clear materialistic driven goals. Although the importance of social mobility has been documented in previous research studies on ethnic minority families (Afshar, 1989; Basit, 1997, 2009; Bhatti, 1999; Crozier, 2000; Ahmad, 2001; Mirza, 2006; Ijaz & Abbas, 2010), for the Punjabi participants the value of education was linked closely to social mobility. The Idea of the 'Punjabi' parents dream drew parallels with the American dream in the 1920s of material possession and British middle-class expectations. This supports previous work which found that this was also the case in Pakistani participants in an intergenerational study who felt that 'education was seen as capital and a route to upward social mobility, with a tacit belief that it will undoubtedly lead to an affluent life' (Basit: 729:2013).

However, the same cannot be said for the Pashtun participants in this study who also identify as Pakistani which creates tensions with previous understandings of these ethnic groups. The findings suggest tensions in how previous research has grouped together different ethnicities and suggests generalising ethnicities that are inherently religiously and culturally different. The findings thus suggest that the higher the value placed on education and careers the stronger the link between the hopes and expected self and the weaker the hoped to be self in terms of careers and education the weaker the relationship to the expected self.

The literature review suggested that Izzat is central to parental influence across 'south Asian' cultures. However, the literature fell short of providing differences in the understanding of Izzat across this diverse group. The findings in this study suggest a strong nuanced understanding and application of Izzat used by parents when forming daughters' possible selves. Izzat featured within the theme of regulatory conditions that underpinned all other aspects of the possible selves all three groups

had for their daughters. It is also related to the halal/haram aspect and as an overall binding logic around possible selves in these three communities. According to Soni (2012) “Izzat”, is usually translated as personal or family honour and pride by those who have researched Asian communities, both on the Indian sub-continent and in Britain. Werbner (1990) Ballard (1994) Shaw (2000) state that “Izzat” is important because it is a means of conferring status on individuals and their families leading to the notion of ‘standing’ within the community. The findings show a strong sense of “Izzat” underpinning and regulating daughters’ possible selves.

The Findings suggests that parents feared possible selves for their daughters across all three ethnic groups were closely linked to the concept of respect and Izzat (honour). However, the findings suggest a difference between parents hoped for careers and Izzat between the three groups. The findings confirm the multi-layered and nuanced nature of “Izzat” documented in previous research on South Asian communities (Soni: 2012). Hunjan’s (2003), found family honour may be unique to the South Asian culture or amplified by cultural factors linked to patriarchal beliefs. All of these findings had parallels with my data regarding limited female autonomy due to patriarchal and cultural notions of honour and shame.

For Punjabi parents’ careers and education were carriers of Izzat they led to a greater sense of Izzat and respect. Whereas for Bengali and Pashtun participants, daughters were the carriers of Izzat and any education and career choices would have to fit into this without infringing on this. The findings here suggest a heterogeneous view of Izzat is between the three ethnic groups. This is in contrast with current literature on Izzat and honour which illustrates a significant number of South Asian women experienced patriarchal families and were subjected to patriarchal cultural expectations (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling, 2014). Bannerji (1994) argued while some women developed at length in education, their bodies and clothing remained in a patriarchal hold as “they are held in place by “shame” in the matter of their body, sensuality, and sexuality” (p. 191).

This certainly does not resound with the Punjabi groups in this study, where a good education was not conditional to clothing, sexuality, or patriarchal holds. Although gender roles were not discussed in considerable detail, there was some discussion

around the importance of education and careers in shaping daughters possible selves rather than the traditional approach view of daughters relying on male family members.

These findings suggest a shift away from previous research by Ghuman (2005) on Asian girls in the West which found “many Asian parents feel strongly that their daughters carry the Izzat (honour) and traditions of the family and that they need protection and ‘extra care’ in their schooling and socialisation”. Furthermore, within existing literature for persons of Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani heritage, honour and shame constructs were interrelated with patriarchal rules which women were expected to uphold (Werbner, 2002; Qadeer, 2006; Wilson, 2006). Although this was true for both the Pashtun and to a lesser extent Bengali groups the same could not be said for the Punjabi participants. Perhaps future research could explore a possible change between Izzat and education within the Pakistani Punjabi and Bengali community to explore a possible shift in what encompasses Izzat for this group.

For Punjabi and Bengali participants, a good career afforded daughters with a higher status within their communities, families and increased Izzat and in turn better marriage prospects. A loss of Izzat especially for Punjabi parents was closely aligned with not having a recognisable career such as a doctor or dentist and made up the feared selves they had for their daughters. For these participants their feared selves were dependent on education and careers bringing Izzat. However for the Pashtun and Bengali participants Izzat was a pre requisite of a daughters possible self and was not dependent on education and careers.

These findings invoke the notion of ‘reflected status’, a feature of Asian communities, which was initially identified as being significant by Wilson (1979). However, whereas Wilson asserted that women carried the burden of the reflected status of their men folk, through notions of the “male ego” (34-35),these findings suggest that within the Punjabi and Pashtun ethnic groups the ‘reflected status’ was not exclusive to males and in fact in the female Pashtun groups the participants suggested that a daughters Izzat was a clear reflection of a mothers Izzat. *‘If you want to see how the daughter is look at the mother and grandmother’ (Husna: female).*

However, Wilson's conceptualisation the reflected self was seen in discussions in the Bengali groups Participants focus agreed that careers which were discussed as increasing family Izzat were ones which were defined as *'of service to others'*, such as teacher, doctor, dentist as one participant stated these would add *'value to a father and in turn our daughters' (Rahman: male).*

Another aspect of Izzat in terms of careers and education was the idea of physical proximity of education institutions in maintaining Izzat for both the Pashtun and Bengali groups whereas for the Punjabi groups' daughters going to prestigious universities no matter what the distance added to their Izzat as a source of pride for parents. Participants in both the Pashtun and Bengali focus groups discussed the relief of a University Centre being opened locally which meant that degrees such as pharmacy, teaching, nursing could be studied within walking distance. The Punjabi consideration here reflects legitimising white middle class practices (Wallace:2018) Theorisation of the racialisation of class can thus help us understand, in part, class and its 'second existence' within and beyond 'White World' (Meghji, 2016).

These findings suggest a possible extension of the research on the notion of Izzat and how it is understood in the implications that careers and education have on this concept in the British South Asian community. Modesty was discussed as an important aspect of daughter's career and education choices. Previous studies on modesty in Islam have found that, modesty is equally applicable to both genders (Hofmann, 2001; Esposito,2011; Minault, 2011, Mahmood, 2013).

However, current literature located within the honour and shame complex, indicated the importance of modesty was linked to females rather than equalitarian requirements for males and females. Immodesty within women appeared utterly reprehensible (Manzoor:2017).The feared selves for each ethnic group also included those careers that were seen as 'low' 'dishonourable' and 'shameful' For all three groups social media influencers, actors, musicians were the most dishonourable careers and would bring shame for the Bengali and Punjabi groups makeup artists /hairdressers were acceptable but only as the last resort, however Pashtun participants unanimously agreed that such careers were anti Pashtun and unislamic.

In the Pashtun focus groups, there was a clear-cut understanding of respect and Izzat being gendered in terms of who had the overall responsibility of upholding these. In both the Punjabi and Bengali groups there wasn't the same sense of exclusive responsibility of these ideals placed just on daughters in terms of the careers and education pathways they chose.

Previous research has found a link between specific careers and Izzat but the current findings suggest the complex nature of Izzat as a fear as well as a hope in parents conceptualising their daughters' possible selves. It also suggests that there is a difference between how Izzat is prioritised in terms of careers and education it is not as simple as previously documented in literature on British South Asian communities (Dahya 1963; Wilson 1979; Ballard 1994, Carter 2012; Hundal 2012; Khan 2012).

The findings suggest that Izzat is multifaceted and is intertwined into the decision making on careers and education in different ways. For the Punjabi participants it is a direct result of a good career and education whereas for the Bengali and Pashtun groups it was much more deeply entrenched into other identities. Izzat as a concept remains central to all three ethnic groups but the findings suggest that it now hold varied meaning across all three groups;

- Punjabi- Izzat is a measure of financial success and education and status within society.
- Bangladeshi- Izzat is a coupling of education within religious and cultural expectations of daughters.
- Pashtun- Izzat firmly lies within religious and cultural expectations of a daughter and is not attached specifically to education.

Themes within the category of hoped for selves that parents had for daughters included careers and education which were safe, traditional in terms of job roles preferred jobs for the Punjabi and Bengali ethnic groups were overwhelmingly

medical careers, respectful, stable, and ones which would lead to better marriage prospects.

Punjabi and Bengali groups were focused more on creating the hoped-for possible selves for their daughters whereas the Pashtun groups had a stronger sense of feared selves for their daughters ensuring that they could stop daughters from their feared possible selves. Daughters were encouraged to pursue largely female only careers such as Qurans teachers, midwifes, and work from home business. There was a real sense of fear amongst especially the female Pashtun groups of daughters bringing dishonour to the family.

This finding supports the previous limited studies on Pashtun groups which have found that gendered segregation/ veiling 'Purdah' has limited daughters being encouraged and supported to pursue further education'(Bokhari:2015). Participants in the Punjabi and Bengali focus groups were more hopeful in their visions of their daughters' possible selves themselves than the Pashtun groups who's fears in terms of Izzat drove them to discourage education and careers for daughters, (Cross & Markus, 1991).

5.1.2. Nature and purpose

Discussions around nature and purpose featured prominently across the Bengali and Pashtun groups. Although there was some discussion around the changing role of women in the community within the Punjabi group it was not as strong. The findings suggest that possible selves for daughters in terms of education and careers were imagined around daughters' 'natural' roles. Participants across these two groups hoped for and expected possible selves for their daughters which were within the domain of 'their true purpose'. For the Pashtun groups the nature of women was 'soft', 'nurturing', 'gentle' and this meant that the possible selves that these parents had for their daughters must fit that criteria. Any roles which were contradictory to these were feared by parents. Similarly, for the Bengali groups hoped and expected possible selves for daughters must be aligned to their natural role and purpose as Bengali Muslim women.

The findings here suggest a relationship with Social determinism understandings of behaviours attributed to biological sex. Theories of cultural and social determinism have been challenged by Mead (1938) found that gender roles are shaped significantly by cultural norms and expectations. The current findings concur with such understandings of biological predispositions. In the current findings there was a 'natural purpose' to being a Pashtun woman and similarly to being Bengali women. Although the essence of the 'nature' was similar across both ethnic groups there were also some noticeable differences. For the Pashtun groups daughters' possible selves were based around them having a greater space in the domestic sphere and their true purpose as mothers, not having the same 'pressures' as men (Dale et. al. 2002; Hussain and Bagguley, 2007; Shaw, 2000). For the Bengali groups there was less of a strong chivalrous understanding of daughter's domestic purpose. Rather, nature and purpose was interpreted as having a stable respectable job, being modest, and religiously orientated in order to attract a good marriage proposal and to be valued. Again, the findings suggest that biological predispositions maybe influenced, reinterpreted and amplified by cultural norms.

The gendered understanding of possible selves is an important consideration and contribution to the ongoing development of possible selves' research. Such discussions did not however feature within the Punjabi groups, although social expectations and cultural norms were discussed there was no link between these and biological predispositions of possible selves for their daughters.

There is an important consideration here, what is the link between gender in the biological understanding of it compared to the social understanding of gender norms. Which one dictates the possible selves that the participants have for their daughters. There was a sense that for the Pashtun and Bangladeshi groups gender in the biological sense dictated what possible selves for daughters looked like in terms of education. However. For the Punjabi groups neither biological or social sense of gender was important when thinking about careers.

5.1.3. Importance of religion and culture

However, for the Participants in the Pashtun groups the emphasis was ensuring that education and careers were synonymous with the religious and cultural expectations of daughters. There was a clear difference between the effort of each group in hoping for and fearing certain possible selves in terms of their daughters' career and education. This suggests a difference in balance between the hoped for and feared selves across the three ethnic groups. There was a clear imbalance between the Pashtun groups hoped for and feared selves compared to those of the Punjabi and Bengali. Contractor (2012) notes British Muslim women differentiated authentic Islam (gave women rights) and culture (imposed patriarchal interpretations of Islam which could deny women their rights). Contractor (2012) argues that when considering the lives of women during the life of the Prophet (pbuh) it is important to note that women in authoritative roles existed (Nadwi 2007; Bewley 2004). She further suggests that the amalgamation of religion and culture due to the spread of Islam gave understandings of women's roles religiously nuanced understandings in order to uphold cultural practices. According to Oyserman & Markus, (1990) this imbalance indicates that people act without considering the probable negative consequences for their future possible selves.

This finding is important in conducting future research on the effect of the imbalance in career and education hopes and fears on Pashtun girls education and career aspirations and extends previous research by Bukhari who found that Purdah and gender boundaries limited Pashtun daughters and mothers being encouraged and supported to pursue further education (Bokhari:2015).

The findings suggest that the higher the fears the higher chance of Pashtun daughters not being encouraged to pursue education and careers and thus are stuck within the same cycle as their mothers. Oyserman & Fryberg, (2006) suggest that feared possible selves can be vital to motivate an individual to sustain in a particular domain for the Pashtun participants this domain seems to be the moral codes of the Pashtunwali. Women who wore the hijab were offered an increased level of respect than those who did not. These findings were in correspondence with Werbner's

(2007) that veiling in South Asian Muslim societies was “perceived as external symbols of female modesty and family honour” (p. 162).

5.2. Chapter overview

‘How do participants view education and careers in relation to their daughters’ possible selves’.

Overall the findings suggest that although importance was placed on the hopes related to daughters’ possible careers and education it was most important for the Punjabi and Bengali participants whereas for the Pashtun groups maintaining the feared possible selves was the priority because it seemed to be a deterrent for daughters to strictly focus on their hopes. This came out especially through the women only Pashtun focus groups there was a strong sense of ensuring daughters were aware of their status as upholders of Izzat, respect and honour .

Overall the findings under sub question 1 suggest;

- Parents across all three groups are active and not passive in formulating possible selves of their daughters.
- Education provides hope for Punjabi and Bangladeshi groups
- For Pashtun groups ‘too much’ education invokes fear of losing identity

This chapter aimed to presents the findings that were developed from the data using the reflexive thematic analysis steps formulated by Braun and Clarke (2006).
The overall research questions the findings seek to explore is;

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter’s possible selves?

In order to answer this question, the following sub question was explored in this chapter.

5.3. Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves.

The findings suggest differing degrees of freedom of choice in the three ethnic groups. The findings suggest that the Punjabis overwhelmingly offer their daughters freedom as long as it fits a good financial model, while for the Bengali parents the routes and options to freedom are more flexible with a more balanced view of financial oriented selves synonymous with Islamically influenced possible selves?

The Pashtuns on the other hand feel the most socially bound to both Islam and the codes of the Pashtunwali with a clearer distinction between hoped for and feared selves for daughters with clear differentiation based on religious, and cultural constraints.

The findings further suggest that the Punjabis are less explicitly influenced by Islam, there is an understanding of religion and its importance that came out strongly through the focus group discussions but at the same time there was a separation between secular education and religious boundaries. Religion was viewed as something individualistic and intrinsic outward shows of piety did not shape their daughters' possible selves. For example, a success Muslim Punjabi female did not necessarily have to wear a hijab whereas this was something which came through quite strongly and clearly from both the Pashtun and Bengali groups. There was a sense that all three ethnic groups were shaped by their community's sense of Izzat even though Izzat for all three groups defined a distinct set of ideas.

In the next chapter the findings for sub question 2 and 3 will be presented focusing on how parents seek to influence their daughters' possible selves the role that agency plays in that and the intersectional dimension of parent's possible selves for their daughters focusing on gender, ethnicity, religion and community.

6. Findings section 2

This chapter will present the findings that were developed from the data using the possible selves' framework to inform the reflexive thematic analysis steps formulated by Braun and Clarke (2006).

The overall research questions the findings seek to explore is;

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

The aim of this research study is to look at how three very ethnically distinct groups think and influence their daughters' possible selves in terms of education and careers. The study therefore aims to understand the hopes, fears and expectations that these groups have in terms of their daughters' education and careers and how they seek to influence these.

The second findings section therefore aims to present the findings and discussion for the following two sub question.

Sub 2 How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education.
Sub 3: What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimension?

They have been grouped together as there was considerable overlap between the responses given by participants for both questions.

In order to understand the overall research question, it was important to understand how parents influence daughters. The literature on possible selves is clear that possible selves are socially constructed and significance others play a key role in shaping future imagined selves. However how they seek to do this has not been given as much thought in the literature. What the findings from sub question 2 and 3 seek to do is to understand how significant others in this study parents seek to influence their daughters specifically in relation to education and if any variations exist within the three ethnic groups about the way this influence is manifested and used.

6.1. Parents as guides

Parents across all three ethnic groups discussed the ideas around leading and guiding daughters to achieving the hoped-for selves that parents have for them and staying away from the feared selves. Words that featured prominently across all three groups were ‘guiding’, ‘showing the way’. ‘directing’ . ‘shepherds.

The Punjabi participants discussed playing a very active role in the decision-making process and influencing daughters to make the correct choices that would affect the rest of their life. Punjabi participants also discussed investing considerably into their daughters hoped for selves. Playing an active role for Punjabi participants was based on negotiations between parents and daughters to create a perfect hoped to be possible self.

‘The agreement between me and my daughters is based on what they want to do and what I think they should do; we try to come to an agreement and find the best outcome. It is difficult because my daughter is very interested in history but now is happy to become a radiologist, I didn’t force her to she just listened to the positive and negatives and made her own decisions’ (Zubaida: female).

Participants in the Punjabi group also discussed what incentives they used to influence their daughters. Promises of a better future, a big house, two holidays a year and an ideal life were used to influence daughters hoped for possible selves.

Examples of girls who followed their 'temporary desires; not being focused, having intimate relationships, wasting time with friends, were all used as deterrents to ensure daughters did not pursue parents feared selves for them.

'You have to be realistic and honest with them in my opinion, you can't just be wishy washy and say work hard and you will succeed. You've got to give them real life examples of girls who have messed up and those who are successful. ' (Azhar:male).

In the Bengali groups the idea of guiding daughters also came through strongly and participants were keen to share the 'tactics' they used in order to ensure that there was open dialogue between them and their daughters. Similarly, to the Punjabi groups these parents also thought it was important to have an ideal 'model' of a hoped-for possible self and a feared possible self and use this as a guide to ensuring daughters were working hard, choosing the correct courses and careers.

'My daughters know how important it is to be that type of girl who the whole community love and respect. The type of girl who everyone wants their son to marry. The ideal self would be one that has a successful respectable career, wears a hijab and is modest and is also fully aware of her culture and her community' (Rosina: female)

'There are many good examples of successful Bengali girls 'dentist, hijabi, good mother, Good daughter in law and wife, then you get the bad one no qualifications, no sense of shame, no hijab, and zero respect in the community' (Dilawar:male)

There were many examples of powerful images of hope and feared selves used by parents across the Bengali focus groups. What came across strongly from the discussions around this was the acceptance of education and careers being important for the Bengali participant. An 'educated Bengali Muslim women' was the hoped-for self rather than just a Bengali women or Muslim women. The importance of these multiple identities was interesting and suggested that education has become an important facet within the Bengali community in this study.

'Back in the days as a community we were very fixed on the idea that daughters were model daughters if they just wore a hijab, or married back home, settled down with kids at a young age. I think now though for a lot of our community daughters being educated Muslim Bengali women is just as important'(Ruha: female).
There was a sense of religion featuring more in the Bengali role models or ideal types than for the Punjabi groups, Islam seems to be a little more present for the Bengali groups.

Pashtun participants like the Punjabi groups and Bengali groups also played an active role in influencing daughters to the hoped-for possible self that they wished for their daughters to have. Participants again used power images and articulated what a hoped-for self would look like opposed to a feared self. However there was a marked difference in what the hoped for and feared self-looked like for Pashtun parents as opposed to both the Bengali and Punjabi participants. For Pashtun participants a hoped for possible self for their daughter was 'modest', 'respectful of religion and the Paakhtunwali' 'Alimah' (religious teacher) 'good wife and mother'. Secular education was notably missing from the hoped for self across the Pashtun group. Feared selves were ones which were immodest, disrespectful, and bought shame of the family.

As parents you guide them the best way that you can the best way our religion teaches us. If you create your daughters' futures around Islam and its teachings success will follow her wherever she goes. I can't say to my daughters go off and be these doctors and scientists knowing that along the way they may lose a sense of their true meaning as Muslims, I will be questioned for that' (Khan:male)

There was a marked difference in the Pashtun groups approach to guiding daughters and the reasoning given to daughters for what was right for them. The Pashtun participants discussed taking a greater role in guiding daughters towards what was best for them in terms of what '*Allah has ordained' (Saif:male).*
The term 'guide' and 'shepherd was used interchangeably across group discussions.

We came to this country with peanuts nothing but a £5 note and now we have two to three houses on rent, enough money to send back home to relatives and the poor. Which degrees did we have? None, but we were guided by our parents in the correct way and we listened to them and look how much Allah (swt) has given us'

Religion occupied the highest place in relation to any other marker of success and hoped for selves for daughters. The idea of parents as guides was a feature across all three groups but the blueprint of success differed between the ethnic groups.

6.1.1. Agency and parental influence

Participants on all three ethnic groups in this study suggested a conjoint model of agency. The model below is a visualisation of what this type of agency looked like for the three groups.

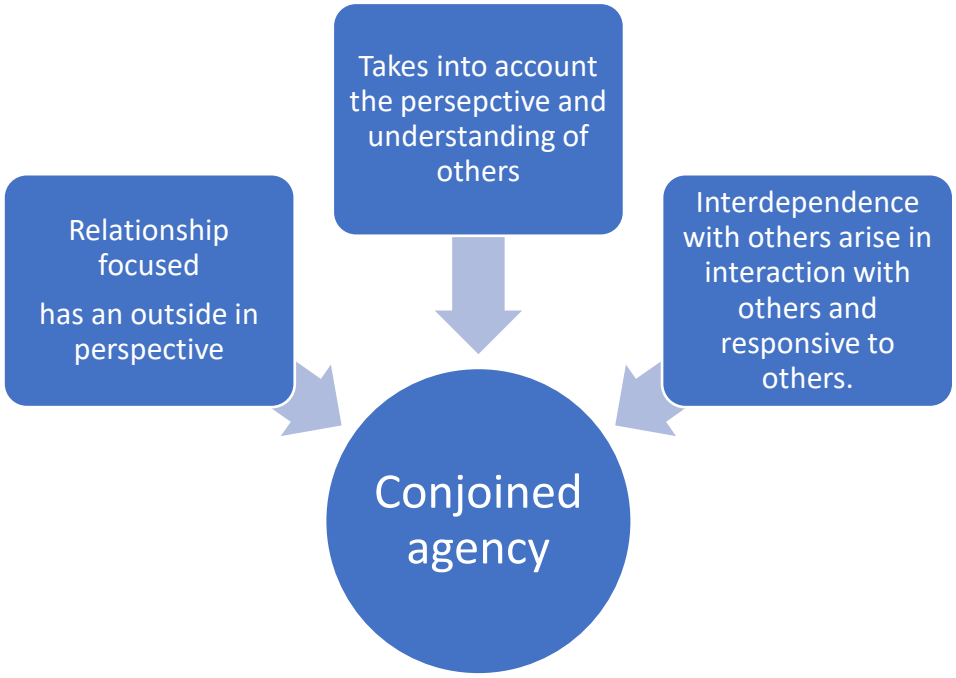


Fig 2.1 Adapted from Markus & Kitayama (2003)

In the Punjabi group's participants discussed the key role which parents play in coming to a decision about their daughters' possible self. The quotation below summarises the view of participants across the Punjabi groups on their thoughts on agency in the traditional western sense and making decision about their daughters' education.

'These are big decisions ones that affect the rest of your life why on earth would we just leave our daughter to make that decision herself. The decision at the end of the day is hers but as parents we are involved in influencing that decision because we have lived longer, we talk from experience we know what's best for our own children', (Tariq: male)

Punjabi parents were very assured in believing that they knew what their daughters wanted and it was not a top down approach whereby the parents decide a career and that's what the daughter had to do. It was a mix of parents knowing their daughters interests and daughters listening to their parents and coming to a joint decision.

'As parents you have to be one step ahead, know what kind of interests your children and then get that to meet in the middle between something they'd be okay doing and something that you want them to, they're only going to thank us when they've got a decent job and earning decent money' (Zulfikar: male).

Within the Bengali groups, agency and the hoped-for possible selves for daughters were more closely linked to religion. Participants discussed the inexperience of daughters to make decisions independently and the 'god given right' (*Sheikh: male*) of parents to make decisions on behalf of their children.

The following view of a Bengali participant sums up the view of Bengali participants and their model of conjoined agency.

'Careers and education is so important to a daughters future that as parents we have to be involved and give the correct guidance or we will regret it in the future. Yeah you can listen to what they want but that doesn't mean we say yes to whatever they

want to do. If it's a sensible choice like a doctor, teacher, dentist then I'm happy I'll agree but if it's something like dancer or makeup artist or media person then no I'm going to say no and I'll persuade them until they see sense' (Shelly: female).

The Bengali groups agreed on a conjoined type of agency given to daughters in their choice of education and careers which was similar to the Punjabi groups based on parents knowing what their daughters' interests were and using these to consider the best option for them in terms of education and careers.

For the Pashtun participants the level of active decision making and influence on daughters hoped for possible selves placed a greater emphasis on religion and culture than the other two ethnic groups in this study. Islamic teachings and the code of the Pashtunwali were given as to why parental agency was a religious right on the decision-making process of children. More than the other two ethnic groups there was a strong sense of a spiritual obligation on how and why parents influenced their daughters' possible selves.

'Allah has made men shepherds over their families guiding them to the right path and to be honest there shouldn't be any question about why parents make decisions for their children really because it's a right given by Allah to us and we are going to be asked by Allah if our kids go down the wrong path' (Faisal:male).

Pashtun participants discussed religion and culture as an overarching framework within which parents and daughters negotiated the hoped-for possible selves. Participants further discussed this framework as a blueprint and success criteria against which the success of a hoped for or the negative consequences of a feared for possible self could be assessed. This contrasts what Mellor (2011) found he has suggested that religion is a source of agency for South Asian Muslim women to pursue higher education.

Although there was still aspects of conjoined agency at play within the Pashtun group the findings suggest that for the Pashtun participants religion and culture provided a type of agency for daughters which was viewed as the *'right level of*

freedom and choice it is god given and not influenced by the west but influenced by our own ways and customs' (Bano). As opposed to the Punjabi and Bengali conjoined agency which took a more carefully crafted route of what daughters interests were and using this to make the most informed choices around education and careers.

This is an important finding for the role that agency plays within the possible selves of different ethnic groups, the finding already reject a western disjointed model of agency however even within the model of conjoined agency there seems to be some variation between the Punjabi and Bengali groups on one side and the Pashtun groups on the other ; although these are a little different, too.

6.2. Decision-making and religion

Within the Punjabi groups, although religion did feature as something which cannot be compromised by education and careers, the understanding of religion was less imposing as that within the Bengali and especially the Pashtun groups. This reflects the literature on the overwhelming adherence of Punjabi groups to the Barelwi sect of Islam, it claims to be a more mystic understanding of Islam and how it regulates an individuals life (Yusuf and Oliver:2017. This could perhaps explain why the religious influence on the Punjabi groups is less present in this study.

The approach that the Punjabi participants used to influence daughters was based around knowing what their daughters were interested in and then using this to ensure that it fit the 'Punjabi dream' that participants articulated as blueprint of success.

'Obviously Islam is the most important part of our lives as Muslims but a lot of people use it to limit what their kids can do and can't do, you can't mix the two that's not fair on the child because they are going to grow up thinking Islam is a strict religion and it really isn't' (Zainab: female)

'As a parent if I am going to use Islam to guide my daughter I'm going to make sure that' she knows that in our religion education is so important and that you should educate yourselves very highly, religion isn't something that stops you from having an education' (Vora:male)

Religion was also seen as compatible and encouraging of seeking knowledge and education within the Punjabi group, this quotation sums up how the Punjabi participants perceived the role of education and how they used it in relation to making decisions and influencing their daughters.

The previous findings section has explored the pertinent position that religion holds in both the Bengali and Pashtun hoped for selves for their daughters. Religion in the context of sub question 2 and 3 was slightly different in the way that religion was used by both these groups to influence their daughters' possible selves.
Bengali and Pashtun groups will be considered together for the influence of religion in the decision making process and influence on daughters' possible selves. Both groups discussed the role of religion as being very important in how decisions are reached and how influence is projected onto daughters.

The Pashtun and Bengali groups seek to influence their daughters' careers and education choices by using a structured religious approach ordained by religious scripture. Although there was some mention of this approach within the Punjabi groups it was applied very loosely to joint decision making and influence on daughters' possible selves.

Both groups discussed in-depth the role that religion played in the process of decision making. 'Mashura' (non- assertive consultation) was considered central to how decisions are made in the Islamic context of decision making. Participants discussed the blessings carried by this approach and gave examples about how it has been widely used by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). [13]

[13] Prophet Muhammad Pbuh- He is known as the final Prophet and messenger according to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The importance of consultation and decision making has been ordained by the Noble Quran and participants in the Bengali and Pashtun groups emphasised that this divine instruction is a blessed instruction.

'Gone are those days where you can force your children but when you come to a decision through wisdom and diplomacy even Allah (swt) has said that is full of Barakah[14] (blessing) and in our family everything is based on Mashura I know the west think that we are telling our women what to do but our decision making is more blessed then that' (Abdul:male:Pashtun group).

The emphasis for both groups was on the spiritual gains of the process of mashura, 'blessings' were discussed as having a consultation process and reaching a decision which has been the practice of prophets and therefore had the approval of God.

I can just say yeah make your own decisions and do what you want but what is better then what has been ordained by the Almighty. Imagine the blessings that decision carries compared to just doing what you want' (Sheikh: male; Bengali group)

6.3. Gender, choices and decision making

The findings suggest a gendered difference amongst all three groups in terms of daughters and son's education choices and hoped for possible selves. Across all three ethnic groups the level of influence and decision making varied between daughters and sons hoped to be possible selves. All three ethnic groups discussed that there was no favouritism or gender bias however there were cultural, religious and societal differences, norms and expectations that suggested daughters required a different kind of parental input. Although this argument is in itself oxymoronic.

In the Punjabi focus groups unlike the other two focus groups participants suggested that they were in fact more protective over sons and thus they were much more involved and authoritative when formulating possible selves for their sons.

'Sons and daughters are equal but different, the expectations on men are different to women and so I can't be the same with my daughters and son if anything I am more protective over my son's, making sure he's not getting into a bad crowd because he has to be the leader of his own family one day I can't afford for him to mess up. With my daughters I know they are more clued on they understand the whole respect side of things and so how I guide them is different (Huriyah; female).'

The reinforcement of gender norms came through very strongly here, the idea of 'expectations' suggests perhaps societal pressures to conform to specific gender roles and to be 'equal but different'. Another participant from the Punjabi group suggested that by guiding daughters into a safe career, most of a parent's job is done. This was also intertwined with better marriage prospects and social standing for both the daughter and family:

' if I can get my girl into a solid degree at uni and then a good job I know she's going to have the respect in the community and lots of rishtas (marriage proposals) but with my boys I need to be more on top because in our area drugs and easy money super cars are what boys want so for my son as long as he has a career in mind and is focused on studying I don't want to push him too much that he starts rebelling and joins one of these gangs (Zubaida:Punjabi).

However, compared to the Bengali and Pashtun groups the Punjabi participants were more open to the idea of hoped for selves for daughters being equal to that of sons. There was even religious reasoning discussed by some participants as to why it was important for daughters to be afforded similar futures to sons.

'I know that Islamically women and men play different roles within society. However even the Prophet (pbuh) had wives who were successful in their own right Hazrat Khadijah was a business women; very wealthy in fact. Hazrat Aiasha was a scholar

of her time. Our daughters should aspire to be the best of the best not told to just sit at home' (Safdar: male).

The sentiments in this quote were shared widely across the Punjabi groups, gender was seen as something that although makes men and women different in the biological sense should not limit them in the social and economic sense. Within the Bengali groups gendered attitudes towards daughters' possible selves came through strongly due to a fear of daughters being cast out by the community and *'forgetting who they are' (Miah: male).* Bengali participants discussed the need to ensure that more emphasis is placed on ensuring daughters do not compromise their identity in order to seek a career. Identity had multiple layers across these conversations it was made up of religious identity, cultural identity, gender identity and family and community identity. Conversations around clothing and 'modest dress', 'hijab' , knowing how to converse in Bangla, being able to cook , awareness of elders in the family and community was criteria of being able to attract a good spouse.

'With girls you have that added stress that one day they are going to get married and leave home and god knows where they will end up. That's why its so important for us to ensure that we push them in such a direction that by educating they are not missing out on any other important parts of who they are like their modesty, their family respect' (Tasnim:female)

Participants in this group also agreed that it was far more difficult to make mistakes for Bengali girls then it was for boys. This meant that more emphasis was placed on ensuring that daughters were guided and influenced in order to give them protection.

'It's harder for girls than boys, with your sons they can mess up and the community will forgive them but for girls it's like one little mistake and their world has ended no one wants to look at them. It's not fair but it is what it is and we've just got to make sure that we guide them to the best choices for education where they don't need to lose who they really are' (Qudsia:female)

‘World has ended’ suggests those girls within the community are shunned and outcasted and they are perhaps deprived of the opportunities that girls who achieve the ideal hoped for self that parents have of them. It was clear from the discussions cross the Bengali groups that parents felt obliged to ensure daughters were more strategically guided then sons due to the stigma of daughters making mistakes. The higher standards expected of women came through very strongly here.

Within the Pashtun groups participants discussed views about daughter’s education and the types of influence they exercised in order for daughters to achieve the hoped for self that they imagined of them with regards to gender. There were similarities between the Bengali and Pashtun groups here in terms of daughters being carriers of respect and therefore for the Pashtun groups daughters were guided to be less ambitious with regards to careers and focus more on ‘having a simple life’. Simplicity was discussed as having less material wealth but being content due to high levels of spirituality and reliance on God. Pashtun participants differed from both the Punjabi and Bengali participants in the emphasis that was placed on acquiring career focused goals and for these parents acquiring Gods pleasure was greater than any other accomplishment.

‘There is too much pressure on our poor daughters to prove themselves at a level which they were never created for, as Muslims and Pashtuns’ we should remember that women were not made for going out and being breadwinners, they shouldn’t have that pressure and they should live a simple life without being judged for not having the best jobs, the most money.

Participants further discussed the pressures placed on females within the community to be successful and how the ideal of success and education had been distorted. Within the Pashtun groups both male and female groups suggested females having a greater role in the respect of a family therefore their possible selves they required more intervention from parents to ensure that they did not compromise the respect of their family. However, within the female only groups there was a much more serious conversation around the effects of this on mothers and the social consequences that mothers must face if daughters do not conform to cultural and religious standards.

'Once a girl loses her respect, she's taken the whole family down with her that's why people want to protect girls from making the wrong decisions more than boys. Especially as mothers everyone is quick to point fingers at the mothers not bringing their daughters up properly and that's why id rather guide my daughter to become an Alimah then send her to university and risk losing everything' (Hajrah: female).

The quotation summarises the discussions that took place within the female only Pashtun groups. There was a real sense of responsibility as mothers to ensure daughters were guided and influenced properly. Mothers were discussed as being the role models for daughters and any mistake by daughters would reflect badly on the image of the mother. Therefore, participants discussed the risk that promoting too much education and career focused possible selves carried. Similar to the Bengali groups there was a gendered notion of having to protect daughters more then sons and sons being forgiven for mistakes. However, there was a difference in who would be affected the most by the 'mistakes' of their daughters, for the Bengali groups it was the family, for the Pashtun mothers it was them. 'she's taken the whole family down' There was also a real sense of collective weight placed on daughters to uphold the family image and social expectations and on parents to preserve their integrity in the community.

6.4. Community and decision making

When discussing sub questions one and two participants across all three groups spoke at length about the influence and role of the community on parent's decision making about daughters' possible selves. Although there was a difference in how much influence the community had on each ethnic group there was still a significant part that it plays when parents are formulating their hoped-for selves for their daughters. Community has been present throughout the findings so far intertwined within and across themes but will be specifically focused on in this section.

Across the Punjabi focus groups there was a strong negative sentiment about the community which participants called 'a double edged sword'.

'In the back of your mind there is always that thing where you've got to make your daughters go into careers that are respected within the community, even though you know they think your kids are failures. So I know I don't care about the community but at the same time I want to prove them wrong. It's like a double edged sword' (Mariam:female).

'No one is really that squeaky clean, no more acting or hiding I think this new generation of kids just don't care about what the community think and if they want to show their legs of they will, if they want to be in a relationship they won't be meeting in backstreets they confirm it on social media, no one can judge no one that's my opinion' (Rozina: female).

The role of the community in influencing daughters was seen as loosening somewhat with the new generation of parents not wanting to burden their daughters with what people thought of them. For these participants the local Punjabi community had changed as more people had become more private about their lives. There was a sense of a loosening of community norms. There was discussion around the reasons for this with participants suggesting that the openness of social media meant that parents could no longer hide what their children were getting up to from the community. The extent to which there has been a change in community validation amongst Pakistani Punjabi's is difficult to comment on in one study.

The role of the community was central to the way Bengali parents influenced their daughters. There was a real sense of community strength and feeling where parents were eager to ensure daughters remained in the good favour of the community. There was sense of pride and honour which came through across the Bengali focus groups of daughters being valued by the community. The burden of staying close to the community was on a parent ultimately; For the Bengali groups if children were to stay close to their identity. Using this approach, the findings suggest that the possible selves influenced by the Bengali groups were deeply rooted in a physical and moral connectedness between an identity which was acceptable to the community.

'Knowing your community is just as important as knowing your religion, gender, and culture they are all connected, I've seen people lose their community connection their kids then go on to lose their religion, culture and in some cases their gender identity. Being distant from your community does not make you a modern Bengali Muslim it just makes you ignorant'.

Participants suggested that the emphasis on education within the Bengali in recent years for daughters has been due to a shift in community priorities of ensuring that daughters are not overlooked for non-Bengali women due to them having higher levels of education. Participants discussed the recent increase in educated Bengali males getting married to Punjabi girls because they had better education.

This participant articulated these sentiments across the Bengali focus groups really well. *There has been a spike recently in Bengali boys marrying outside of the Bengali community and this is really worrying. We were talking about this at the Masjid (mosque) the other day at how many Nikah's (marriage) has taken place between Bengali boys and Punjabi girls in Burnley. A lot of it seems to be down to girls' education, they are allowed to go to uni and make money and nowadays that is attractive for these boys, so I think it's good now that as a community we are educating our daughters in a way where they become educated Bengali Muslim girls' (Miah:male).*

Similar to the Bengali groups the Pashtun groups were also very complimentary of community and the positive influence and role that community had on the possible selves for daughters. Participants agreed that when deciding on their daughters' hoped for self, the community was always taken into consideration. For the Pashtun groups the community acted as a deterrent from daughters making 'bad choices' it provided limits and boundaries which ensured that both parents and daughters knew not to cross for fear of being ostracised and looked down on.

One Pashtun participant stated that *'The community is important to me; if I don't care about what the community think then my daughters are definitely not going to care, community keeps you on the straight and narrow it helps people to make sure that their daughters are behaving it's a good type of pressure' (Ruha: female)* The

straight and narrow was discussed as a pathway that is enlightened by religious and social norms accepted by the community.

'The community is so important for me not just here but in KPK (Khyber Pakhtunwah) as well, because those are our villages our roots if someone from England goes back home to my village I want them to sing my family's praises and tell the people back home how respectful my children are, how deeny (Religious) they are. This is why when our people think about our daughters' futures we've got to think how many people will it affect what will my neighbour think, what will my aunty in Bradford think and what will my grandad in Pakistan think' (Noreen:female).

For Pashtun participants the role of the community within the process of formulating possible selves for their daughters was regulated not just by the local Pashtun community but also in the village and towns in Khyber Pakhtunwah where the community originates from. Participants suggested that the strength of the Pashtun community comes from families still maintaining strong local, national and international links.

Conclusion

The second findings section has aimed to explore the discussions around the following sub questions;

Sub 2 How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education in terms of agency and intersectionality?

Sub 3: What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimensions

Responses to these sub questions were considered together in the findings section as there was clear overlap between how participants seek to influence their daughters and what differences exist between these ethnic groups in term of religion, culture, gender, and community. There were clear differences between the three

groups in terms of how parents influence daughters; for the Punjabi participants influence was fixed around daughters achieving the Punjabi ideal of their daughters hoped for self which was very much in contrast with the Pashtun ideal of their daughters hoped for self and had some similarities with the Bengali participants idea of hoped for selves for their daughters.

The following section will now discuss these findings in more detail and consider them in light of the existing literature and theory.

7. Discussion section 2

This section will consider the findings from sub questions one and two and Sub questions 2 and 3 and discuss these within the possible selves' framework as well as relevant literature. The structure of the discussion section will reflect that of the findings section with similar headings however rather than each ethnic group being considered separately they will be discussed simultaneously to explore patterns and tensions with regards to the following two sub questions.

Sub 2 How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education.

Sub 3: What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimension?

7.1. Intersectionality

As an overall observation to set the scene for the discussion section, the findings suggest differences in how different dimensions of identity intersect each other when parents from the three ethnic groups are considering possible selves for their daughters. According to Syed and Özbilgin (2015), intersectionality relates to how two or more dimensions of identity (such as gender, ethnicity, and religion) may result in multiple and intertwined layers of discrimination or disadvantage. They suggest that intersectionality theory examines how gender, ethnicity, religion, and other dimensions of identity are interconnected with one another and combine in particular ways.

Intersectional approaches have been used in a number of studies about South Asian women (Rose M. Brewer, Cecilia A.Conrad, and Mary C. King 2002; Kanchana N. Ruwanpura 2008). Existing research using intersectional approaches have found that Muslim women in western workplaces are subjected to complex challenges related to their gender, ethnicity, religion, and other individual dimensions of identity, such as family status and qualification(s) (Brah 1994; Koopmans 2015).

The current findings suggest a similar intersectional system which both parents and daughters must consider when making decisions on daughters' possible selves in terms of their career and education choices. Gender, religion, culture, and community expectations were all interconnected across the Pashtun and Bengali groups, however across the Punjabi focus groups there was a much looser connection between these aspects, especially in terms of religion and community.

Participants across the focus groups in all three ethnic groups discussed playing an active role in encouraging and guiding daughters towards certain careers and education choices based on their hoped for feared and expected selves. Furthermore, the role of the parents as the guide and protector was evident across all three ethnic groups in order to maximise their hoped for / expected possible selves for their daughters.

Participants across all three groups discussed ideas around, daughter's naivety, inexperience, lack of foresight, and requirement to follow societal and religious expectations and norms. In a study by Ralitsa Atkins (2007) that surveyed motivations of Asian Americans to study medicine, many cultural similarities were drawn across the Asian continent and not exclusively limited to South Asians. Atkins found that a stress on education and hard work in general, as well as high expectations from parents on their children was present among all Asians Americans that she interviewed.

7.1.1. Broader observations from the findings around identity and influence

The current findings suggest that identity is still central to educational choices within the three ethnic groups in this study. However, for the Punjabi groups' religion, culture, gender, and community were not seen as a disadvantage to formulating possible selves of their daughters. In fact these multiple identities were used to encourage the role of education in their daughters hoped for selves. This however was in stark contrast to the Pashtun group where the use of multiple aspects of identity such as religion, culture, gender, and community were all determinants in

ensuring that education did not become a corrupting force within daughters hoped for possible selves. Comparably the Bengali groups suggested taking a Middleway between ensuring that daughters possible selves in terms of education were an additional aspect to the ideal 'Bengali, Muslim, well respected daughter' self that they hoped for.

The findings therefore in a broad sense correlate with literature which has elucidated how, within both the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, higher education is valued highly (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007; Shah, Dwyer and Modood, 2010; Basit, 2012). However, the current findings cause tension with this wholesome view of these communities; one, because they assume Pakistani to be a homogenised group; two, because they give a simplistic reasoning for the value placed on education, 'as a path to upwards social mobility'. Although this may be broadly true for Punjabi Pakistanis; these finding suggest that for the Bengali groups the value placed on education was partly due to the changing dynamics of the local Bengali community and the fear of daughters being shunned for better educated women from other ethnic groups. The findings suggest that for this group the hope that daughters will marry well and into the community was now reliant on the education of their daughters being a key aspect of their possible self.

There are even more tensions between existing literature on these groups and the findings in this study around Pashtun parents' possible selves for their daughters. Due to this group being treated as a homogenised group under 'Pakistani' there seems to be a gap in understanding of the value of education within this group. The current findings suggest that education holds subsidiary place after religion, gender, culture and community for this group and therefore suggests that the current understanding of the value of education within Pakistani groups is limited to those such as the Punjabi Pakistanis in this study.

As an overall observation of Pakistani, Bangladeshi women and education; the current literature (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007; Dale, 2002; Niven, Faggian and Ruwanpura, 2012; Shaw et al., 2016) is perhaps overly fixated on the idea of social mobility as the key reason for increased participation of these groups within education. This is not to say that it is not a key factor for some groups such as the

Punjabis in this study. However, what these findings suggest is that by looking at these groups through the lens of possible selves we are able to see what other influences encourage/ discourage these groups to participate in education.

The decision-making process discussed by the all three groups suggests a consultative/conjoined approach rather than framing them as victims of their religion and culture these parents suggest that they are involved in the process. As Mirza and Meetoo (2018) suggest however, within educational environments, this popular public and political construction of Muslim women as 'pathological victims' of their culture (p. 237) often leads to girls from these communities being seen as the 'oppressed other' in need of 'saving' (pp. 228–229).

7.1.2. Guiding possible selves

The findings concur with the understanding of possible selves being 'importantly social' (Oyserman, 2002). Each ethnic group was able to articulate the influence that as parents they had on their daughters' possible selves and how this influence differed. The differences in how these distinct ethnic groups influence their daughters' possible selves is central to this study and the overall research question. It has implications for both possible selves research and the significant role played by important others in the development of a possible self and gives it an important cultural, religious, gender and community dimension. Current literature on significant others and possible selves suggest that aspirations are importantly shaped by consensual stereotypes about what people can become (Dunkel and Kerpelman 2005). The current findings are an extension to this understanding of how significant others imagine these aspirations for their daughters and how do they then seek to influence these aspirations.

For example, the level of description and articulation used by all three ethnic groups in this study to help daughters imagine their future hoped for selves. For participants from all three groups it was important that daughters must be able to vividly imagine what the hoped-for possible self looked like in order to deter them from a feared possible self. Previous studies support this view as Oyserman et al found that the

more descriptive or articulated one's possible selves are, the more effective they are in regulating behavioural outcomes (Oyserman et al. 2004; vanDellen and Hoyle 2008).

These findings suggest space to explore the possible link between current research which suggested that the British-Bangladeshi community have recorded a threefold increase in higher educational attainment women's post-compulsory education (Dale et al 2002; Bagguley and Hussain 2007) and the formulating of a vivid possible self where identity is linked explicitly and positively to a hoped for possible self.

However, the above studies suggest many women from this community have been increasingly able to negotiate their educational decisions with their parents and the wider community in markedly ''Western'' ways. They suggest an interplay of familial expectations, community pressure, class, and historical dynamics that continues to affect and shape the decision-making process of young British-Bangladeshi women in post-compulsory education (Bagguley and Hussain 2007). However, the current findings suggest parent's interaction with daughters and the influence of the positive hoped-for selves centred around the vivid image of the successful, powerful, Muslim Bengali women wearing a hijab. This questions the assertion that the increased number of Bengali women accessing higher education is due to an increase in becoming 'liberal' but an increased confidence in a hoped-for possible self which is a balance between the conservative identity and educational/career success.

7.2. Religion, choices and decision making

For the Pashtun group religion and Pashtunwali was used to justify both the hoped for and the feared possible selves' parents had in terms of careers and education and daughters had a level of agency within this framework. These findings suggest that for the Pashtun participants, religion and culture worked as a way to navigate daughters to the hoped-for possible selves and in essence supported their decision to encourage daughters into certain education pathways and careers rather than a complete rejection of education and economic inactivity for daughters.

These findings juxtapose Charsley et al's (2020: 131) findings that religious beliefs do not appear to drive high levels of economic inactivity. Participants discussed careers that were religiously acceptable were those that were in the service of humanity, these ranged from Alimah (religious teacher) Islamic school teacher, nursery practitioner, carer, and midwife. Those careers that were not open to daughters within this group were those that required lengthy study such as medicine, dentistry, those that required daughters to move away from home, had an unequal ratio of men to women and those that required immodest dress. The following careers fell into this category air hostess, engineer, solicitor.

7.2.1. Mashura

Religion has been discussed in various studies on Muslim women's education and career choices however the importance of Mashura (non-assertive consultation) has not been included in previous studies, previous literature includes decision making in South Asian families and navigation of careers and education based on cultural and ethnic capital. (Crozier and Davies, 2006; Mellor, 2011; Modood, 2004; Thapar-Bjorket and Sanghera, 2010; Shah et al, 2010) rather than a religious instruction that contains blessings. Bagguley and Hussain (2007) use meta reflexivity to put forward a more agency centred decision making process for South Asian women, they found that 'Religion was important for many as a source of identity, but it seemed to be secondary as a factor influencing educational decisions. However, this study found that for the Pashtun and Bengali participants the decision-making process was itself more structured around religious understanding of the consultation process then just a simple yes/no argument between parents and daughter and a reductionist approach of low or high levels of agency.

Discussions focused on a structured decision-making process which was a consultation rather than authoritative in nature. There was a period of consultation where daughters were afforded agency to discuss their thoughts about their education and career choices and listened to their parents' views and a collective decision was made by putting trust in Allah. '*and consult with them in ˹conducting˺*

matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him'. (Surah Al Imran Verse 159).

The concept of Mashura discussed by participants suggested that daughters were able to use their voice to discuss and negotiate career and education opportunities rather than just being told what to do. Participants across all three ethnic groups suggested that daughters were able to listen and actively take part in discussions on their future, however for the Punjabi groups there was no strong religious reasoning or the use of mashura. Punjabi participants suggested that parents had to engage in non-assertive decision making due to a changing world and inability to force daughters into careers.

The data showed that there were differences between the ways that the three groups used religion as an influence on possible selves of their daughters. For the Pashtun and Bengali groups there was a clear link between religion, mashura, and agency. whereas for the Punjabi group the link between religion and agency was less strong; there was a link between strong education/career choices and agency, if the daughter's education and career choices were strong in terms of monetary value, status, and secure then agency was given, consultation was only needed when education choices were not strong enough.

For the Pashtun and Bengali groups there was a sense that mashura was necessary in all instances as it carried with it blessings. The difference in the way parents consulted with daughters and the reasons for consultations suggests that the agency afforded to daughters from the Pashtun and Bengali groups was based on going through the process of mashura first and coming to a mutual agreement about what future careers and education should look like. Agency for daughters in the Punjabi groups however was based solely on good versus bad choices, there would be no compulsory consultation period if daughters' possible selves were aligned to those of parents in terms of careers and education, however consultation would be needed if bad choices were being considered by daughters.

By considering the importance of decision making from a religious perspective as understood by the different ethnic groups in this study it brings into question the

simplistic arguments made in previous research which suggest that Muslim south Asian parents and children are in a constant struggle between asserting their own agency and children wanting their own agency (Archer 2007). Recent research supports this view of daughters having an active voice within the decision-making process. ‘Some ethnic minority women are not simply voiceless victims but rather are active agents towards change (Hargreaves and Anderson 2014). Agency refers to an individual’s ability to make effective choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes (Kabir 2010). For participants in all three-group effective decision making was that which included the parents and daughters for the Pashtun and Bengali groups this was due to the blessings it carried and for the Punjabi groups this was down to a changing world and the effect of this on family dynamics.

7.3. Conjoined Agency and Possible selves

Possible selves theory in its original form suggests that agency is the ability to act as an independent autonomic agent being the central element of a situation and an event, whose main quality focuses on the ability to make decisions and to be creative about how to behave in order to reach the wanted aim (Bandura, 1982; Markus & Nurius, 1986).

The current findings suggest an extension to the role of agency within the formulation of possible selves when they are created together with significant others. The findings suggest that all three ethnic groups in this study employ conjoined agency; when making decisions about daughters’ possible selves. Markus & Kitayama (2003) consider two agency models theoretically explained with two different tendencies, eastern and western. The western tradition considers that the main aim of people is to express themselves throughout reaching autonomy and independence whereas the eastern model of conjoint agency is linked through interpersonal connections and mainly takes place in the context of human interaction.

There were strong threads of interpersonal connections to different aspects of identity for all three groups and these were considered using interactions such as

Mashura for the Bengali and Pashtun groups, and dialogue and understanding of future goals and motivations by Punjabi participants. The key facet of how decisions were reached across all three ethnic groups was the active involvement of both daughters and parents.

The findings in this study question the understanding of current research on the decision-making process for south Asian women which suggest that south Asian women employ meta-reflexivity to actively scrutinise their own aspirations, opportunities and the views of families and community to make a way forward for themselves. Rather than having parental norms inculcated into them (Zhou, 2005), they critically select from them making some their own (Archer, 2007: 90). These findings however suggest that by using conjoined agency the participants in this study employ communicative reflexivity, which Archer (2007) states that this type of reflexivity needs a confirmation from others in order to lead to action, and it is also associated with traditional society, as it is collectivistic towards the social.

The findings further suggest that agency is much more of a nuanced concept for parents' possible selves of their daughters from all three ethnic groups in formulating their hoped-for selves. Agency is conjoined (Markus & Kitayama 2003) within an intricate decision-making process which does not fit the understanding of agency as exclusively individualistic; rather a much more nuanced approach involving parents as guides and monitors of successes and failures. Parents in all three ethnic groups were explicit in discussing their active role in seeking to influence their daughters hoped for possible selves based on a number of factors such as gender, religion, cultural norms and community image/expectations.

These findings are important in perhaps revisiting the relationship between possible selves and agency and considering the impact of culture, religion and gender dynamics on these two concepts. Furthermore, although the findings cannot be generalised, they suggest a much more complex relationship between the role that significant others play within the formulation of hoped for selves (Oyserman et al., 2007, Oyserman & James, 2009, 2011)) and how agency is utilised within that process. It suggests a less linear relationship between agency and the formulation of

a hoped-for possible self, amongst the three ethnic groups. The role of significant others such as parents may need to be explored in order to consider the formulation of conjoined agency and possible selves. For Pashtun Bengali participants there was an extension to the understanding of conjoined agency just being 'eastern' there was a definite religious dimension that was central to this consultative approach of decision making.

The role of parents as guides for their daughters was picked up on across all three ethnic groups. The words 'guide', 'guidance', 'shepherd', 'directing', 'right path' were used in discussions on the level of agency shown by parents in regards to their daughters' career and education choices. The Punjabi participants were the most active in decision making for their daughters' careers and education possible selves.

The current findings however suggest no clear-cut use of agency and navigation, on the contrary there is a methodology used by parents by which they 'guide' daughters into making their own 'sensible' decisions on careers and education, and realise their hoped-for selves linked to aspects of intersectionality between religion, gender and culture. The idea of affording daughters agency if there is an overlap between parents and daughters career choices has interesting implications for thinking about agency and possible selves, the idea of significant others in motivating and formulating possible selves was really clear here, parents in the Punjabi groups were savvy and played a calculated role in supporting daughters to think about careers as more than just interests by looking beyond that at long term financial gains.

Similarly, the Punjabi groups suggested that agency is afforded to those who make 'sensible' choices and intervention is needed where a sensible choice is not made and therefore agency must be used within a collective joint decision-making process. The correlation between a good choice and agency is interesting because it suggests that agency is given based on certain criteria. This has implications for future work using possible selves, the findings suggest the more aligned daughters own possible selves are to parents hoped for selves the greater level of agency they have.

7.4. Gender, influence and possible selves

Although there is a paucity of research on the link between gender, possible self-formation and education. Previous studies (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver and Surrey: 1991) have looked at how women formulate their possible selves in relation to men. Research by Knox M (2000) found that 'Girls accessed more feared possible selves related to relational functioning (there relationship to others), whereas boys generated more feared possible selves related to occupation, general failure, and inferiority' Knox, M., Funk, J., Elliott, R., and Bush, E. G. (2000). Such studies suggest women use emotional connections to recognise the self. According to Jordan et al with 'Asian' cultures the self is interdependent on significant others.

These understandings of the role of gender in imagining the self, importantly acknowledge the gendered aspects of possible selves. The current findings also suggest a gendered approach to influencing possible selves of their daughters across all three ethnic groups to varying degrees. Although the way that gender was used to formulate possible selves varied across the groups, Punjabi participants suggested that although there was a biological difference, in terms of education boys and girls should be afforded similar opportunities. These findings question existing literature on Muslim families as a homogenous group Hopkins and Gale (2009) found that there was an apprehension of women in the workplace as it may render the husband's inability to provide for his family.

The findings across the Punjabi and Bengali groups within this study differ from the current literature on Pakistani and Bengali communities. Heath et al (2013) state that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis tend to have more traditional gender role attitudes often thought to be rooted in a more patriarchal home-country culture and widespread adherence to relatively conservative strands of Islam. In this cultural system, men tend to dominate gender relations and act as family breadwinners, leaving women to take care of household tasks, child rearing, and care duties (Aston et al. 2007; Dale and Ahmed 2010, Kan and Laurie 2016).

For the Bengali and Pashtun groups the discussions around gender expectations of daughters was closely linked to the idea of living within the local community and

having to ‘keep face’. There was a sense that living in a close-knit community led to the reinforcement of daughters and sons being expected to conform to societal ‘expectations. Galster (2012); van Ham et al. (2013) state that ethnic residential concentration is often thought to help maintain distinctive cultural identities, practices, and traditions by facilitating more intense patterns of co-ethnic interaction.

Within the Punjabi groups there was broad consensus that sons were in need of being protected and guided more than daughters because of how the influence of selling and taking drugs and gang crime was increasingly ‘leading them astray’ in the local area. Contrary to current research on gender norms of Bengalis the current finding suggests that daughters’ possible selves were dichotomous as a successful career woman and also a mother. This is contrary to what Dale (2002) found in his study on Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in Oldham; Choices over the uptake of post- compulsory education for Pakistani and Bangladeshi young women were much more complex than for their male counterparts.

For the Bengali groups the gendered differences in possible selves were linked to a daughter’s place within society as a future mother and the importance of marriage. For these participants a daughter’s education had to be suited to her being able to also balance a family and carry out her domestic duties. Therefore, for these participants daughters’ possible selves were a balance between having a successful education and career which would lead to them having a successful marriage and domestic life. Careers in the medical field, teaching, or businesses from home jobs were seen as compatible to the duty of wives and mothers.

Bengali participants further discussed the unique place which daughters occupy within the community and the unique expectations which drive their possible selves. This difference was also found by Ahmad (2001) who discovered that in Asian communities’ higher education is seen as extending a woman’s value beyond that of a mere “homemaker”, with implications for future employment, economic security and marriage prospects. Although this may be true for the Punjabi and Bengali groups it was not the case within the Pashtun groups for whom a son’s education/ career was of more importance than a daughter.

There was also a clear gendered differences between daughters and sons possible selves within the Pashtun groups, participants agreed that seeking a career and education was a son's social duty in order to be able to support and protect his household the argument was that they were able to carry the burden of a high intensity career, the same duty to support was not applicable to daughters. The current literature (for example Basit, 1996, 2005, 2012; Haw, 1998; Shain, 2003; Bhatti, 1999) on British Pakistani girls' education attainment does not reflect the deeply entrenched notions of gender and education expressed by the Pashtun groups in this study.

The findings further suggest a reinforcement of gender norms more strongly within the Pashtun female only focus group. There was a deep discussion around the mental strain of employment coupled with responsibilities at home on females. Participants across all the Pashtun focus groups were in agreement that the burden of providing should not be on the 'shoulders of women'. The female participants within the Pashtun groups suggested that daughters use them as role models of what a successful Pashtun woman looks like. This is an important consideration and possibly extends the work on modelling and possible selves that Markus and Osyerman (1989) carried out; they found a link between the limited possibilities of daughters who observed their mothers modelling subordinate roles within the family.

This suggests that possible selves may be gendered according to the societal pressures/influences placed on sons and daughters which formulate the hoped for or feared possible selves for both daughters and sons. Although these findings somewhat concur with Ahmad (2001), who noted that parental encouragement for daughters to enter higher education was qualitatively different to that offered to sons – the latter being perceived as the future "breadwinners". (Ahmad 2001, 144). If these hopes and fears are different then these differences may translate into possible selves' formulation. As an extension to this study future research could look at speaking to young women (and women) themselves about possible selves, and the influence of community, religion. This is a very important aspect of possible selves that requires further attention and exploration.

The findings on gender, possible selves and education in this study are important; firstly, because they consider possible selves that parents have for their daughters and the gendered formulation of these; This has not been done previously. Secondly, the findings suggest that across ethnicities there are differences in how gendered possible selves are formulated and understood within the wider context of culture, religion and community. Thirdly, Existing literature in this area (Kerpelman, Shoffner and Rose-Griffin: 2002) has only focused on African American women and the importance of seeking validation on the formation of possible selves; thus applying possible selves frameworks to the ethnic groups in this study has widened the discussion around how gender is used by significant others in imagining possible selves for their daughters.

7.5. Community and possible selves

Community as an intersectional aspect of possible selves' formulation across the three ethnic groups within this study was viewed as important and a factor when parents thought about hoped for possible selves for their daughters in terms of education and careers. The "community "and "place" embody relational connections in much more profound ways within ethnic minority communities (Bawaka et al., 2016) Furthermore previous studies suggest relational influences of family and community are highly significant informing aspirations and how a young person pursues their future (Fleming & Grace,2017; Gofen, 2009). In the current study there was a differing sense of community influence on the possible selves' participants formulated for their daughters.

Amongst the Pashtun and Bengali groups there was a clear community dimension linked to daughters' possible selves this was less pronounced across the Punjabi groups. The Pashtun groups more than the other two groups suggested the pressure on parents to 'get it right' from the community not just in the local community but also in the villages in KPK in Pakistan participants discussed the networks of communication which existed between families in the local area and villages in Pakistan, saving face and the family reputation in both the local and the international was just as important. This understanding of social reinforcement of pressure to get

it right reflects the current literature that suggests that women are often seen as carriers of family honour, which is closely tied to their obedience, modesty, and seclusion. As a result, practices such as purdah (female seclusion), arranged marriages, and restrictions on mobility are widely observed and socially reinforced (Kandiyoti, 1988; Ali, 2001).

Participants suggested that this pressure drove parents to play an active role in ensuring they guide their daughters' possible selves onto the right path. This is synonymous with studies that have looked at the pressure of community pressure on Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups (Bokhari: 2015: Brah :1997: Afshar:1994: Dale: 2002). However, what is problematic is that for the Punjabi community that most of these studies apart from Bokhari (2015) have focused on Punjabi groups.

However, in this study, in the Punjabi focus groups – although there was an element of wanting to 'please' the community – the participants felt that the new generation of parents have become 'braver' and were not as easily intimidated by community norms and expectations when formulating daughters' possible selves. Contrastingly, within the Bengali focus groups the community was still at the heart of daughter's possible selves; this was especially the case for participants who still lived within the Bangladeshi community and less for those who had moved out into affluent areas. The pressures of living within the community meant that daughters were constantly in the eyes of everyone and were being 'watched'. Roberts (2006) and Saeed (2006) argue the current literature suggests that the community is still central to Pakistani families and that Pakistanis are drawn to 'biradari' [15](clan) they suggest that it affords a sense of security.

Further, Ghuman (1994) Shaw (1988:6; 2000:7-8) also suggests an underlying distinction that ensures the perpetuation of the community's mores, as she suggests that Pakistanis, …do not prize 'individuality' as highly as Westerners do. Similarly, Shaw (2000:292) argues that although Pakistani family structure and employment

[15] Biradari- Biradari" (or Baradari/Birādrī) is a term of Persian origin meaning "brotherhood". In South Asia, particularly among Muslims in India and Pakistan, it refers to a system of social groupings, often based on lineage or occupation, similar to castes or sub-castes. It signifies a sense of belonging and shared identity within these groups.

patterns may have changed ‘can still be interpreted in terms of the desire to acquire property and status in traditional terms, even when they might appear to indicate the contrary.’ The Punjabi participants in this study offered a much more critical view of gaining community approval however this cannot be generalised and is something that can be the focus of future research.

The findings suggest that the community plays a key role for Pashtun and Bengali groups in this study however for the Punjabi group was less pronounced about community pressure. One reason given for this within the Punjabi groups was that participants felt that the power of social media has meant that no family was able to claim complete respectability due to daughters’ and sons’ exposure to social media platforms. For the Pashtun and Bengali groups this was not the case, participants felt that community still mattered and to be able to ‘hold your head up high’ was very important. The community was seen as a positive pressure across these groups and participants felt that it kept other parts of a person’s identity in check,

The watchful eye of the community and the safety net of the community was considered as an important aspect in ensuring daughters were able to identify with their community. Community also acted as a deterrent against any behaviour which transgressed its expectations and boundaries. People’s social interaction and socialization processes may not be limited to a certain area, and their cultural values are therefore becoming less dependent on the social opportunities and constraints of the geographical spaces in which they live (Drever 2004; Zelinsky and Lee 1998). In this view, ethnic minority immigrants’ gender role attitudes may not depend on the ethnic composition of neighbourhoods where they live, and their cultural values could tend to alternate between and hybridize both types of values.

Similarly, participants in the Bengali group suggested that the community reminded a person of their identity and to lose that connection with the community would erode the religious, cultural and gender identity of daughters. Ignorance of culture, community, religion and identity was seen as a loss for the individual therefore there was a real sense of connectedness between these different facets of identity. Second-generation immigrants who grew up in the host-country might be jointly influenced by the cultural values of the mainstream society as well as those of their

parents and families (Dale et al. 2008; Platt 2010). According to research by Eade and Garbin (2005) Bangladeshi settlement patterns in the UK are extremely regionally specific. For example, Tower Hamlets is dominated by families from Beani Bazar sub-district, and from Jaggonathpur and Bishwhanath, while in Camden, families originate from Maulvi Bazar (Carey & Shakur 1985, Ali 2000). These region-specific communities emulate regions in Bangladesh which blur the lines of the local and international.

The findings suggest that the intertwined approach to the community was not seen amongst the Punjabi groups who found the idea of community pressure as outdated and suggested that parents need to move away from this type of pressure when considering their daughters futures. For these participants the community was a self-regulatory tool which enhanced and protected the cultural norms and expectations of daughters. Alba and Nee (2003) also found this in their work; they state that distinctive norms within cohesive ethnic enclaves could exert social control over behaviour in ways that may deviate from the majority society's expectations.

Respect was a key aspect of discussions around community expectations and validation. For the Punjabi and Bengali groups education was a key to respect and validation within the community. Although Punjabi participants were largely indifferent to community pressure; for Bengali groups the community and 'perks' of being accepted by the community determined the hoped-for selves that they formulated with their daughters. Current research suggests that the burden of respect is still attributed to the females In the South Asian family (Ahmed and Sardar 2012; Hopkins and Gale 2009).

Participants within the Pashtun groups attributed the burden of respect on daughters culturally; in order to uphold the family name. This was given as the reason for why guiding them in a more protected way was necessary. There was a sense here that parents were protecting their own respect and honour through the protection of their daughter. Within the Pashtun groups son's careers was prioritised due to Islamically and culturally bearing the burden of financially providing for the family.

The differences between the three ethnic groups in this study in relation to community expectations and their daughters' possible selves was telling of changing dynamics within the community and its influence on families. The findings suggest much more of a community influence on how the Pashtun and Bengali groups formulated their daughters hoped for possible selves in terms of their careers and education. However, this was somewhat less concentrated across the Punjabi focus groups where the powerful family networks seem to be eroding (Aston et al 2007).

The second findings section aimed to present the findings for the following two sub question. They have been grouped together as there was considerable overlap between the responses given by participants for both questions.

Sub 2 How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education in terms of agency and intersectionality?

Sub 3: What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimensions

The findings suggest that the relationship between the hoped-for possible selves of the three ethnic groups in this study and the role of agency is much more nuanced then what current research suggests. There is a complex understanding of the decision making process across all three ethnic groups with a clear structural approach to decision making within the Pashtun and Bengali groups and although this was much looser in the Punjabi focus groups there was a clear belief across all three groups that parents had a right to shape the decision making process with their daughters.

The findings further suggest a clear intersectional aspect to the differences which exist between the influences that participants have on their daughters hoped for and feared possible selves. Furthermore, although the findings cannot be generalised the findings clearly suggest many aspects of possible selves which could be explored further in future research.

The next chapter will bring together the thesis and conclude focusing on the implications of the research undertaken in this study in terms of the possible selves concept itself and future research on the ethnic groups in this study and South Asians as a broader ethnic group.

8. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the possible selves of British South Asian Muslims parents of their daughters considering their, hopes expectations, and fears in terms of education and careers. Using the possible selves' framework this study has analysed educational and career subjectivities across and between three distinct ethnic groups.

This study has looked at three ethnically diverse groups who have been labelled collectively as 'British South Asian Muslims'. The homogenisation of these groups within the literature on education and careers does not give the opportunity to appreciate the differences and or similarities that exist within the process of education decision making (eg. Archer, 2001, 2002; Basit, 1997; Dwyer, 2000; Dwyer, Shah, & Sanghera, 2008; Haque & Bell, 2001; Ramji, 2007; Shah, Dwyer, & Modood, 2010). The study proposed that when considering South Asian groups' education and career choices the narrative is incomplete without focusing on parents' hopes, expectations and fears. By using the possible selves' framework (Markus and Nurius 1980) this study aimed to conceptualise the possible selves of parents for their daughters, what do these parents imagine for their daughters in terms of education and careers? And why? And then through what means do they try and influence/ align their daughters' futures selves to theirs.

The complexities of the gender roles acquired by daughters from Muslim; Punjabi, Pashtun and Bengali groups makes them a significant group to focus on. Within the UK south Asian Muslim women have faced scrutiny on multiple fronts whether questions around integration (Ahmad 2001: Bell and Rajan 2017: Ramji 2007) or educational attainment/ choices (Bagguley and Hussain 2007) .

From a personal and professional perspective these three ethnic groups are significant to my role as a Headteacher of a Muslim Girls' secondary school. My conversations with both parents and daughters and my experiences with existing

literature led me to the conclusion that the literature currently does not give enough space to the complexities of identity and education decision making.

Thus, by destabilising the notion of ethnicity as a homogenous label given to South Asian communities, especially the use of the label Pakistani attributed to communities with varied language, culture, practices, and tradition, the sample in this study has shown how these groups are distinct in their beliefs, values, behaviours and expectations of their daughter's education and careers. Furthermore, how the three group manifest these beliefs and values and expectations is also distinct within the groups as well as across them.

The study began with one research question. This chapter aims to explore this question in relation to the answers gained from the sub questions and the themes construed through the data, the answers I have found and the questions that remain.

The research questions and sub questions listed in Chapter 1, were as follows;
The overall research study aimed to explore the following research question;

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

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Sub question 1; How do participants view different subjects and careers in relation to their daughters' possible selves.

Sub 2 How do they therefore seek to influence their daughters in relation to their daughters' education in terms of agency and intersectionality?

Sub 3: What differences are evident in their views and potential influence, notably across gender, culture, religion, and community dimensions

8.1. Possible selves and significant others

This research has aimed to define the ‘self’ as a concept that is fluid and one which should be understood as context specific depending on identity, culture and social norms and other aspects of an individual’s social profile. Literature on South Asian women has repeatedly found the importance of parents, family and community in future careers and educational choices (Abbas & Ijaz (2010), Thapar-Bjorkert & Sanghera (2011) Qureshi, Charsley & Shaw (2012) and Basit (2013b).
Although the self has been identified in these studies as fluid and content and other dependent, this study is applying the possible selves’ framework because much of the existing literature has minimised this element to familial habitus and debates around agency.

By looking at the possible self of daughters through the lens of their parents, this study has been able to understand fears, expectations and hopes in a contextualised sense, where parents have been able to give reasoning for these aspects of their daughter’s possible selves rather than the research having to unpick an individual’s possible self in terms of their social context this study has used the social context to understand the possibilities afforded to daughters from these three ethnic groups.

This study opened up a potential comparison between how significant others view possible selves for their daughters and how the individual may do, including the extent to which hopes, fears, and expectations are deeply entrenched determined and constrained by social expectations (el. Elder, 1980; Meyer, 1985; Stryker, 1984). In order to further understand the potential link between parents and children’s possible selves and education and career outcomes. They also reflect the extent to which the self is socially determined and constrained.

The findings built on the original premise of possible selves’ research which states the importance of significant others in understanding of an individual’s possible selves. ‘These possible selves are individualized or personalized, but they are also distinctly social. Many of these possible selves are the direct result of previous social comparisons in which the individual's own thoughts, feelings, characteristics, and behaviours have been contrasted to those of salient others’ (Markus and Nurius: 1980).

This study has shown the importance of significant others in the formulation of possible selves and how they seek to influence these possible selves and the impact on how decisions are made rather then what decisions are made. Although the possible selves' theory and subsequent research has highlighted the importance of significant others, they have fallen short of looking at possible selves of children through the eyes of their parent and the process that this may take.

8.2. Possible selves and intersectionality

The findings suggest that the possible selves of daughters from the Bengali and Pashtun ethnic groups were formed on a connectedness between culture, religion and gender and community. However, a much loser connection was found within the Punjabi group. The findings suggest an intersectional system which parents navigate through when considering the hoped for and feared selves for their daughters, when making decisions on daughters' possible selves in terms of their career and education choices. Gender, religion, culture and community expectations were all interconnected across the Pashtun and Bengali groups, however across the Punjabi focus groups there was a much looser connection between these aspects, especially in terms of religion and community.

The importance of the connectedness of religion, culture and gender came through the strongest within the Pashtun groups. There was a sharp sense of daughters' possible selves being connected to the Pashtunwali (Bokhari:2015). Pashtunwali is the unwritten ethical code of conduct and is defined as essential Pashtun values, which are also codified as customary laws amongst most Pashtun tribes. It is considered so essential to the identity of the Pashtun that there is no distinction between practicing Pashtunwali and being Pashtun. All participants, regardless of gender, considered Pashtunwali to be the most moral way to live your life so based the possible selves for their daughters upon this. Islam and the Pashtunwali were seen as synonymous and hence careers and education must be able to adhere to principles of both in order for them to be acceptable and permissible.

In contrast to Bokhari (2015:258) who found that ‘in England there is a growing dissent of Pashtunwali, primarily because younger Pashtuns are finding that Islam is contradicted by it’ the current study found a strong connection between the Pashtunwali and Islam. These findings support those of Bokhari (2015:257) who found that ‘It is this cultural capital which was perceived to be the key influencing factor on educational achievement for their population, namely in the guise of the concept of Pashtunwali’.

8.2.1. Gender

The findings suggested that the possible selves of daughters were formulated through a gendered understanding of their place within the family and community (Bokhari: 2015: Brah :1997: Afshar:1994: Dale: 2002). Across all three ethnic groups the level of influence and decision making varied between daughters and sons hoped to be possible selves. All three ethnic groups discussed that there was no favouritism or gender bias however there were cultural, religious and societal differences, norms and expectations that suggested daughters required a different kind of parental input. The fear of sons making detrimental choices for their futures the fear of sons being influenced by local county line gangs was a concern especially amongst the Punjabi groups, who felt that.

The study has found that the women only focus groups made a stronger connection between the two then the male groups. The women who were all mothers felt strongly about their daughters compromising the moral and religious codes and obligations for the sake of having an education and careers. Bokhari termed this as ‘educational apathy’ in her study of the Pashtun community, ‘educational apathy was reinforced generation after generation by the quality of cultural transition made by Pashtun parents’ (2015).

The current study suggests that apathy is too simplistic a term to use here, apathy suggests that there is no conscious effort made regarding education these finding suggest that there isn’t complete apathy towards education. Rather there is a

decisiveness about what a hoped-for education and career looks like and it is one which cannot conflict with cultural, religious and gender expectations, although this narrows the choice of education and careers daughters are given it doesn't necessary suggest that daughters are not encouraged to pursue 'acceptable' careers and education.

8.3. The role of the religion, culture, community on possible selves

The intersection between religion culture and community was seen very strongly across the Bengali focus groups. The findings here suggest a physical connectedness for this group was important and an exodus away from the community was seen as compromising religion and culture. Identity thus was tied closely with being physically visible within the community. Social interaction necessarily occurs in concrete space (Ha¨gerstrand 1967, 1970; Pred1986; Kwan 1999. places produce cultural meanings (Tuan 1974; Zukin 1995; Oakes 1997; Sibley 1995) and evoke 'structures of feeling' (Williams 1958; Jackson1991; Longhurst 1991).

There was a connection here between the hoped-for possible self of daughters and collective socialisation which was maintained through physical proximity to the community. There are possible links to Bauder's (2001) research in the US which showed how 'neighbourhood effect' has an impact on career futures that is hard to understand even with analysis of 'local sociodemographic context' (p. 593). Participants in this group suggested that strong ties to the community brought a higher level of visibility for daughters which in turn meant better marriage prospects, increased Izzat and a connection with culture and identity.

The connection between possible selves' ethnicity and space has been largely under researched and these findings suggest an extension of an understanding of how these three aspects of socialisation may interact to impact imagined futures (Ball, Maguire and Macrae's 2000 and Bauder's 2001). In contrast to the strong ties of community that came through discussions in the Bengali groups, within the Punjabi

groups there was less of an emphasis placed on this, the ideal of the ‘Punjabi’ dream of a detached house, two holidays a year and a BMW suggested that education and careers were pathways to ‘move on’ from traditional community ties.

The contrast between the two ethnic groups here suggests a connection to Galster’s (2010) ideas about social networks and their influence on individuals. ‘Individuals may be influenced by the interpersonal communication of information and resources of various kinds transmitted through neighbours. These networks can involve either “strong ties” and/or “weak ties.” Within the Punjabi groups possible selves for daughters were linked to ‘weaker’ sense of community. Aspirations of detached houses and living in ‘Reedley’ (Affluent area of Burnley made up of smaller cul de sacs and suburban living).

The differing aspirations and hoped for selves in terms of community, culture, identity and religion is interesting between the three ethnic groups it raises important questions about changing group dynamics ideas and how each group define social mobility. For the Punjabi groups social mobility fits with a purely material and socio economic upwards trend ensuring you have a better occupation then your parents, improved wage, housing and experiences.

However, for the Bengali groups social mobility also defined an intrinsic element of bringing up the community, being role models, being visible in your socio-cultural space, identifying with all facets of your identity. Therefore, the findings suggest a marked difference in the hoped-for possible selves of Punjabi and Bengali groups based on how attached the possible self is to religion, culture and community, for the Punjabi groups there is a very weak attachment in contrast to the Bengali groups where there is a much stronger one.

The implications of these findings are important; It is the first time that the possible selves research has been used to understand the educational choices of these groups. Furthermore, the findings suggest that when considering the educational aspirations of these groups’ intersectionality is not a homogenous aspect of the possible selves of these groups. Each groups’, hopes, expectations and fears are

based on an intersectional model which is important to their own identity rather than a blanket ‘south Asian’ identity.

8.4. Religion

Religion is a multidimensional phenomenon that has deep roots in history and evidently plays a significant role in guiding human behaviour (Alvi, 2013). This study has found different aspects of religion and understandings of it when parents are formulating possible selves for their daughters. The broader findings between religion and possible selves suggest that the Punjabi participants in this study are less explicitly influenced by Islam; there is an understanding of religion and its importance that came out strongly through the focus group discussions but at the same time there was more of a separation between secular education and religious boundaries. Religion was viewed as something individualistic and intrinsic, and outward shows of piety did not shape their daughters’ possible selves. For example, a success Muslim Punjabi female did not necessarily have to wear a hijab whereas this was something which came through quite strongly and clearly from both the Pashtun and Bengali groups.

Purdah was an especially important concept for the Pashtun groups who felt that Purdah was twofold – the invisible boundary between unrelated males and females but also the observance of hijab (head covering). For Pashtuns education and careers were not exempt from the idea of purdah, daughters’ possible selves were aligned to education and careers that did not compromise both the physical head covering and also the invisible boundary between men and women. Thus, careers that afforded the maximum amount of purdah were more desirable then others.

The Bengali participants further showed a much closer connection to daughters’ possible selves and religion through the hijab being a symbol of an educated honourable women. The hijab was linked to ideas of empowerment, respect, status, and role models. Possible selves in terms of education and careers were less restrictive for the Bengali groups when they were closely aligned with religiosity.

8.4.1. Halal and Haram

This is the first study that has explored the ideas of halal [16]and haram[17] linked to possible selves. The permissibility of careers was discussed at length across the three ethnic groups. This study has found a diverse view across the three groups on the link between these concepts and the possible elves of their daughters. Punjabi participants categorised careers into permissible and impermissible but largely on the basis of the value and status they came with. Medicine, dentistry, Optometry and Pharmacy occupied prime position in permissible careers based on monetary value and social status/honour. Makeup artists, admin workers, and sales assistant roles were although not impermissible were the least desirable.

The Punjabi groups spoke at length about halal and haram and there was a consensus that the boundaries of what was classed as halal and haram were contextual and open to interpretation. An important component of religion is the ideologies it holds as true. These ideologies are the bases of a person's religious beliefs, and therefore understanding them will aid in developing a philosophy on the interaction of religiosity and behaviour (Desmond & Kraus, 2014).

The idea of halal and haram was much more fixed for both the Pashtun and Bengali participants. Careers that were permissible were those that were of service to others and those that were impermissible were those that were religiously deemed as such and thus were aligned to the feared selves of daughters. Muslims determine behaviour using the moral code of Halāl and Haram which when translated means "permitted," therefore coded as approach motivation, and "forbidden," therefore coded as avoidance motivation (Halstead, 2007). All religions have a strict moral code entrenched in their scripture which is translated to real life circumstances to promote 'correct' behaviour. An example of this is a religion's moral reasoning applied to traditional education (Alvi, 2013). For example, Islamic opinions on

education are interpreted through the scripture of the Qur'an as a search for truth, growth, and 'real' knowledge, not as a means to benefit for personal gain (Alvi, 2013).

Although Alvi's understanding of the Quran and careers was true for Pashtun and Bengali groups the same was not found within the Punjabi groups. The findings suggest a contrasting view of religion in terms of education and careers, Islam has largely been seen as a barrier for Pakistani Muslim women but these findings have implications for further research; the broad label of Pakistani is not accurate when exploring the relationship between Pakistani Muslim education and career choices and Islam. Punjabi, Bangladeshi and Pashtun understanding of Islam and career and education could be explored further especially within the concepts of halal and haram.

8.4.2. Mashura: Education and career decision making and Is lam

The findings explored decision making from a religious perspective. The concept of Mashura discussed by participants suggested that daughters were able to use their voice to discuss and negotiate career and education opportunities rather than just being told what to do. The findings found that participants across all three ethnic groups suggested that daughters were able to listen and actively take part in discussions on their future, however for the Punjabi groups there was no strong religious reasoning or the use of mashura. Punjabi participants suggested that parents had to engage in non-assertive decision making due to a changing world and inability to force daughters into careers.

Thus, the findings have implications when considering decision making within the Muslim community. The simplistic arguments made in previous research (Crozier and Davies, 2006; Mellor, 2011; Modood, 2004; Thapar-Bjorket and Sanghera, 2010; Shah et al, 2010) which suggest that Muslim South Asian parents and children are in a constant struggle between asserting their own agency and children wanting their own agency should be explored within a religious context to understand the connection between agency, consultation and decision making within the Muslim

community. Future research could consider the structure of decision making across these groups and the idea of choice holding a complex meaning for these groups bound by religious, cultural, and socio-economic meaning and the influence and interpretation of Islam on the decision-making process.

8.5. Izzat, Ijjat and the community

The findings suggest that Izzat plays a central role within the possible selves of daughters across all three groups. Although the term Izzat has no single definition (Gilbert, Gilbert, & Sanghera, 2004). Studies on Izzat define it as family honour, respect (Wellock, 2010) and familial pride (Hand, 1999). Izzat is a highly valued commodity (Gill, 2008) that is inflexible and places great demands on an individual as it must be obeyed at all times in every behavioural act (Jafri, 2009) Participants in the Punjabi groups suggested that Izzat was a key facet of decision-making around careers and education. Careers that would maximise family honour, respect, and socio economic status were preferred. Although the Punjabi groups discussed that community pressure was not as prevalent for them as it was for their parents.

Possible selves were hoped for or feared according to community perception of certain careers and education. Toor (2009) found that Izzat is determined by many factors in Britain, where socio-economic status, education, employment, religion, class and integration into Western culture can all inform the experiences of Izzat for South Asian individuals. For the Pashtun and Bengali groups however Izzat was not a result of acquiring a good education and career rather it was ensuring that a daughter was guided towards choices that would not impinge on her natural honour and respect.

Although both Punjabi and Bengali groups placed Izzat/Ijat on careers such as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, for the Bengali groups the greatest honour for a daughter was to become an Alimah[18] and be of service to others through medical related careers. However, for the Punjabi groups medical related careers were less about service and more about status, money and family standing. For the Pashtun

[18] Alimah- female scholar of Islamic sciences and theology.

groups Izzat and community were the most integral part of a daughters hoped for and feared selves, before education and a career the most important aspect of a daughter's possible self was her Izzat. For this group Izzat was not flexible it was not dependent on anything in fact the opportunities afforded to daughters and the value of her future were all dependent on having or losing Izzat. These findings concur with those of Gill (2008) and Jafri (2009) who suggest that Izzat is a highly valued commodity (Gill, 2008) that is inflexible and places great demands on an individual as it must be obeyed at all times in every behavioural act.

Community as an intersectional aspect of possible selves formulation across the three ethnic groups within this study was viewed as important and a factor when parents thought about hoped for possible selves for their daughters in terms of education and careers. Amongst the Pashtun and Bengali groups there was a clear community dimension linked to daughters' possible selves this was less of a consideration across the Punjabi groups.

The Pashtun groups more than the other two groups suggested the pressure on parents to 'get it right' from the community not just in the local community but also in the villages in Khyber Pakhtunwah in Pakistan For Punjabi focus groups although there was an element of wanting to 'please' the community the participants felt that the new generation of parents have become 'braver' and were not as easily intimidated by community norms and expectations when formulating daughters' possible selves.

This study found that the community plays a key role for Pashtun and Bengali groups however for the Punjabi group there was a hybrid almost oxymoronic relationship between wanting status and honour in the community's eyes but not wanting to play an active role in community norms, away from community pressure.

Although there are some similarities, previous research looks at South Asians as a homogenised group with a gendered understanding of careers and education. Although the current findings suggest a gendered approach across all three 'South Asian' groups the differences in why such gendered differences exist in terms of daughters and sons' career and education choices differ.

By considering the views and actions of significant others; these findings suggest that perhaps this research could be extended to these groups across other communities and geographies and perhaps other aspects of their lives. The current findings suggest that gendered understandings of education and career choices maybe less homogenised across these groups. Gender should be understood alongside a better understanding of religious and cultural differences within/amongst these groups. Perhaps another extension of the findings could consider what does 'protection' connote for boys in these groups? Traditionally girls were seen as being protected however these current findings suggest that boys are also in need of protection.

This was the first study looking at possible selves and Izzat. According to the findings suggest that Izzat still remains a central norm of south Asian communities in this study. Izzat underpinned parents' possible selves for their daughters and hopes fears and expected selves were all based around the notion of Izzat. The findings suggest that Izzat is still expressed through the approval of the community. However, Punjabi groups were found to have a hybrid relationship with the community.

8.6. Hopes, expectation, fears and balance

According to Oyserman and Markus (1990) a lack of balance between the hoped self and the feared self indicates that people act without considering the probable negative consequences for their future possible selves. The current study found differentiated levels of balance between all three ethnic groups.

The Punjabi participants showed the most balanced approach to formulating their daughters' possible selves in terms of careers and education. There was a clear connection between their hoped for and feared selves. For this group the hoped-for selves would achieve academic success leading to a financially lucrative career and thus affording a higher social standing, better marriage prospects, and ultimately become a source of pride for the family. Their fears were similar, the biggest fear was daughters being uneducated, having a job that was low paid, afforded little

social standing and little to no value for the family socially. The relationship between the hoped for and feared self-showed connectedness.

There may be something to be said about consistency between hopes and fears in terms of possible selves, for the Punjabi parents, the balance seemed to create a linear road map that gave a clear route for daughters to achieve their possible selves in terms of education and careers. It was also observed that these parents were determined in wanting to help their daughters manifest the hoped-for possible selves (Vansteenkiste et al 2010).

Although there was a sense of balance between hoped and fears amongst the Bangladeshi participants the same connectedness found in the Punjabi groups was not there. Although the hoped-for selves were based around a good education, a respectful career, a strong sense of religious and cultural identity and Izzat, the feared self-had a stronger sense of loss of Izzat rather than daughters not having an education. Although not the exclusive view within the Bangladeshi group the majority manifested these same hopes and fears. Fear was used as a motivating factor where participants suggested that fear was used to amplify the hoped-for possible selves of daughters. This correlates with Oyserman and Fryberg (2006, Thakar and Khalsiing: 2023) who suggest that feared selves can be vital to motivate an individual to sustain in a particular domain. The study found that the core difference between Punjabis and Bangladeshis here is that one is driven more by aspiration, and the other more by fear of failure

However, the relationship between motivation and feared selves was not manifested in the Pashtun groups. There was a heightened sense of feared selves which participants suggested they used to emphasise how important it was for daughters to not want to become the feared self. What were the hopes of the Punjabi parents were the fears of the Pashtun parents for example education took centre stage in the hoped selves for Punjabi parents and Izzat was based on the concept of having a good education? However, in contrast for the Pashtun parents the notion of Izzat was central with education having to fit the boundaries and expectations of Izzat. The Bangladeshis sit somewhere between these two contrasting hopes and fears.

With education and Ijat being central in both hopes and fears and not relative to each other.

The study has found that an imbalance between hopes and fears directly impact motivation and influence of Pashtun parents on their daughters' possible selves in terms of their education and careers. Pashtun parents view education and careers as a decentralised element within their daughters' possible selves that is not a pre requisite to hope for possible selves but rather make up a central place in the feared selves if the choice of education and career lead to a loss of identity, religiosity, and moral values. Thus, the Pashtun participants in this study preferred a 'good' education which manifested the highest honour and status for daughters in the Pashtun community based on religious and moral codes. Such careers comprised of in order of honour and prestige, Alimah / Quran teacher (religious teacher) a home business, working in childcare, or an Islamic school.

Firstly, the importance of connectedness between the hoped for and feared selves in terms of better understanding motivation and influences as well as educational outcomes of ethnic minority children in relation to their possible selves. The relationship between ethnicity and possible selves, this is an area which within the current literature remains largely but not completely unexplored. The findings suggest that the relationship between ethnicity and possible selves needs to be further explored. Feared selves and motivation require further understanding the current literature suggests that feared selves enhance motivation to achieve the hoped for selves.

However, although this was true for the Punjabi and Bangladeshi groups the Pashtun participants suggested feared selves were amplified to emphasise the importance of not aspiring to the feared selves. There was a sense of hoped for selves not being manifested due to the effort put in to deter daughters away from the feared selves. The negative consequences on the hoped-for selves due to increase emphasis and attention placed on the feared self thus should be considered in future research on possible selves. Therefore, fear seems to be stronger in the Bangladeshi than Punjabi, and even more in the Pashtun groups.

8.7. Overall

This study used the conceptual model of possible selves to understand the role of education and careers in terms of daughters' possible selves by Punjabi, Bengali and Pashtun parents in Burnley and Pendle. The overall research question was;

How do Muslim South Asian parents conceptualise the role of education and careers in terms of their daughter's possible selves?

This thesis builds on the original premise of possible selves' research which states the importance of significant others in understanding of an individual's possible selves. This study has shown the importance of significant others in the formulation of possible selves. Although the possible selves' theory and subsequent research has highlighted the importance of significant others, they have fallen short of looking at possible selves of children through the eyes of their parents.

This research has aimed to defined the 'self' as a concept that is fluid and one which should be understood as context specific depending on identity, culture and social norms and other aspects of an individual's social profile. This study has further shown that the way that significant others view possible selves is similar to how the individual may do including the extent to which hopes, fears, and expectations are deeply entrenched determined and constrained by social expectations (el. Elder, 1980; Meyer, 1985; Stryker, 1984).

The thesis found that the three groups in this study although share the same ethnic label of South Asian, are heterogeneous in terms of the possible selves they imagine for their daughters. Their hopes expectations and fears are different and the mechanisms by which they manifest these hopes expectations and fears is also diverse across the three groups. The thesis further found that education and careers were a key facet of possible selves of both Punjabi and Bengali groups. Although education was encouraged by Pashtun groups secular education for daughters was less important for Pashtun groups unless it met the expectations of Islam and the Pashtunwali.

The study may have potential practical, social and educational impact on how schools and professionals engage with parents from the ethnic groups in this study. The study maybe beneficial in considering a nuanced approach to create meaningful dialogue around career and educational choices for their children. Advice and guidance on careers cannot be seen as a one size fits all model of 'Gatsby benchmarks' [19]rather, culturally sensitive understandings of futures could be considered as more meaningful exchanges when considering different ethnic religious groups.

The findings from this study could also be created into informative workshops for school leaders to support their understanding of possible selves and education and career choices amongst all groups. It may be that this research has the potential to create its own space within the personal, social, health, citizenship education (PSHCE[20]) education delivered in schools. Future aspirations and goal setting are a substantial part of the curriculum in this area so perhaps students may consider their future selves in terms of their hopes, fears and expectations whilst considering the role that significant others play. This would perhaps be much more meaningful when thinking about careers and future aspirations and could create a deeper understanding around the possible selves of pupils.

8.8. Contributions to the literature

The study contributes to the use of the possible selves' literature by applying it to marginalised groups, although this has been done in a small number of studies looking at Latinos and African Americans (Khajavy and Ghonsooly, 2017: Oyserman, Bybee and Terry, 2006)), it has not been used on the groups within this study. It is the first study using the possible selves' framework that has asked significant others (parents) what their hopes, expectations and fears are when formulation possible

[19] Gatsby Benchmarks - The Gatsby Benchmarks are a set of eight standards for world-class careers education in schools and colleges, developed by The Gatsby Foundation and adopted into government guidance in England. They cover areas such as having a stable careers program, linking curriculum to careers, providing encounters with employers and workplaces, and offering personal guidance to students.
[20] personal, social, health citizenship education; compulsory part of the National curriculum.

selves for their dependents (daughters) and how these are then manifested through the influence they exercise. By putting the significant others at the heart of the study the findings have suggested that not only do significant others matter when individuals construct their own possible selves. They are central in how they reflect their hopes, expectations and fears onto their dependents. Thus, this study broadens the understanding of the 'self'.

Furthermore, the study extends the understanding of agency across these ethnic groups and builds on the understanding of agency being conjoined in just the 'eastern' sense, it suggests that agency takes on varied meanings for the groups in this study, such as a religious dimension for the Pashtun and Bangladeshi groups. There is potential to look at this across a wider sample from these groups to better understand this.

Additionally, the study has made contributions to the understanding of parental influence across these groups. The literature review revealed that parental influence is important for the groups in this study, but it falls short of looking at how parents influence their daughters and why. Importantly, this study has shown that parental influence differs across the three groups; as they deploy aspects of their identity and beliefs to strategically influence daughters' possible selves. For the Punjabi groups influence is based around particular career choices, and articulation of the hoped-for possible self that fulfils the 'Punjabi dream' whereas for the Pashtun and Bangladeshi groups the Islamic concept of Mashura (consultation) is central to how they seek to influence daughters' possible selves.

My research contributes to the body of work on Parental influence on Muslim South Asian females career and education choices (Basit, 1997, Ali, 2003; Caballero, Haynes and Tickly, 2007; Ijaz and Abbas, 2010; Kutty,2014: Modood, 2015: Bagguely and Hussain 2016).These studies have largely focused on familial habitus and other social capital concepts to explain the low uptake of careers and education within South Asian groups. The current study extends this work and allows us to conceptualise a much more nuanced difference in future aspirations in terms of: hopes, fears and expectations between and within the umbrella group of 'Muslim South Asians'. It extends our understanding of the heterogenous nature of decision

making within this historically homogenised group. The current study also extends the understanding of decision making around careers and education and that it is much deeper then a simple assumption of South Asian Muslim females decision making can be split between agency versus no agency. The study has highlighted a much more nuanced understanding of this process based on the intersectional nature of the possible selves' parents have for their daughters from these three ethnic groups.

Furthermore my work also extends the body of work on Possible Selves theory and its use as a critical lense looking at the education choices of different ethnic groups (Fiske, 1990; Oyserman, 1993; Shweder, 1991 Dunkel and Kerpelman 2005, Hock, Deshler and Schumaker, 2006; Oyserman, Bybee and Terry, 2006; Strahan and Wilson, 2006; Pizzolato, 2007 Henderson, Bathmaker and Stevenson, 2018). Previous studies have focused on Latino groups in north America; however, the current study is the first to look at parents' possible selves of their daughters from the three ethnic groups in this study. Current literature suggests that possible selves are not asocial however they do not go as far as to look at the impact of significant others on the formulation of possible selves, or the intersectional dimension of decision making in terms of education and career focused possible selves; something which the current study has been able to focus on when considering the possible selves that parents in this study have of their daughters.

Overall, these findings have contributed to the literature in showing that there is much work to be done on the basis of heterogeneity amongst distinct groups within the broad label 'South Asian'. If ethnicity, education and careers is to be studied in a way which affords true social justice to these groups then the groups and their possible selves must be considered through their individual beliefs whether that be religious, social, cultural or gender. Intersectionality is an important understanding of the possible selves of these groups and this study paves the way for possible selves' research which takes this into consideration much more deeply. It is only by having this deep understanding can we move beyond the possible.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 Consent form

Appendix 2 Participant Information sheet

Appendix 3 Ethics form

CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Muslim south Asian parents views on their daughters possible selves
Name of Researcher: Mahwish Hanif
Email: m.hanif2@lancaster.ac.uk

Please tick each box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during my participation in this study and within 6 weeks after I took part in the study, without giving any reason. If I withdraw within 6 weeks of taking part in the study my data will be removed, where this is possible.

   I understand that as part the focus group I will take part in, my data is part of the ongoing conversation and the wider conversation cannot be destroyed. I understand that the researcher will try to disregard my views when analysing the focus group data, but I am aware that this will not always be possible.

3. I understand that any information disclosed within the focus group remains confidential to the group, and I will not discuss the focus group with or in front of anyone who was not involved unless I have the relevant person's express permission

4. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications or presentations by the researcher/s, but my personal information will not be included and I will not be identifiable.

5. I understand that my name/my childs name will not appear in any reports.

6. I understand that the focus groups will be audio-recorded and transcribed and that data will be protected on encrypted devices and kept secure.

7. I understand that data will be kept according to University guidelines for a minimum of 10 years after the end of the study.

8. I agree to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____

Date _____ Day/month/year

One copy of this form will be given to the participant and the original kept in the files of the researcher at Lancaster University

Participant information sheet

3-D University: How do universities' social composition, geography, and organisational culture mediate students' experiences?

For further information about how Lancaster University processes personal data for research purposes and your data rights please visit our webpage: www.lancaster.ac.uk/research/data-protection

I am a researcher at Lancaster University and I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about how students' experiences of university may be influenced by the social composition, location and layout, and organisational culture of their university.

Please take time to read the following information carefully before you decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the study about?

This study aims to explore how students' university experiences vary depending on who they are and where they study. Universities differ in many ways, not least in terms of who studies there, where the campus is and how it is laid out, as well as in the ways in which universities interact with their students through teaching and other activities.

Why have I been invited?

I have approached you because I am specifically interested in understanding the views of different groups that may be in a majority or minority within their university. This includes, for example background elements such as social class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and domestic/international status. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part in this study.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you decided to participate, this would involve taking part in a small focus group discussion, for 60-90 minutes, about your experiences of university. While I will be present, the conversation will be primarily involve you and the other participants in conversation around a number of open questions or prompts. The groups will consist of people with similar interests to you and may already be known to you.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

Taking part in this study will allow you to share and reflect on both your experiences of university as well as those of others. Furthermore, there is relatively little research that compares how students' experiences of university compare, particularly around

campus layout or interactions with staff, and your insights will contribute to understanding these topics much better. All participants will also receive a £10 voucher as compensation for their time.

Do I have to take part?

No. It's completely up to you to decide whether or not you participate. Your involvement is entirely voluntary and will not affect the relationship with your university in any way.

What if I change my mind?

If you change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time during your participation in this study. If you want to withdraw, please let me know within six weeks of the focus groups, and I will, where possible, extract any ideas or information you contributed to the study and destroy/delete them. However, it is difficult and often impossible to take out data from one specific participant from focus group discussions when this has already been anonymised or pooled together with other people's data. If do you choose to withdraw I will look to disregard your views/contributions as much as possible.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is relatively unlikely that there are any disadvantages to your participation, other than the commitment of up to 90 minutes of your time. Please note, though, that some people's experiences of university are negative, particularly if they involve discrimination or marginalisation. If discussions of this topic are likely to distress you, you would be advised not to take part. If you become distressed during the discussions, you can withdraw from the project.

Will my data be identifiable?

After the focus group, only I, the researcher conducting this study, will have access to the ideas you share with me, except for a professional transcriber who will listen to the recordings and produce a written record of what you have said. The transcriber will sign a confidentiality agreement.

All participants will have pseudonyms and any identifying information (such as your name and other information which could identify you) in the transcribed data will be removed – where this is possible – and not shared with others. Please be aware that the other focus group members will know who you are, but you will all be asked not to disclose information outside the focus group without the relevant person's express permission.

How will we use the information you have shared with us and what will happen to the results of the research study?

I will use the information you have shared for research purposes. This will include conference presentations, research reports, journal articles, and so on. I will only use anonymised quotes so that although I may use some of your exact words, you cannot be identified in our publications.

If anything you tell me in the focus group suggests that you or somebody else might be at risk of harm, I will be obliged to share this information with your university's support services. If possible I will inform you of this breach of confidentiality.

How my data will be stored

Your data will be stored in encrypted files (that is no-one other than me, the researcher will be able to access them) on a secure server. I will store hard copies of any data securely in locked cabinets in my office. I will keep data that can identify you separately from non-personal information (e.g. your views on a specific topic). In accordance with University guidelines, I will keep the data securely for a minimum of ten years.

What if I have a question or concern?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact me directly:

Dr Richard Budd, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YD.
Email: **r.budd@lancaster.ac.uk**
Phone: 01524 510625

If you have any concerns or complaints that you wish to discuss with a person who is not directly involved in the research, you can also contact:

Professor Paul Ashwin, Head of Department, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YD.
Email: **paul.ashwin@lancaster.ac.uk**
Phone: 01524 594443

Sources of support

If you the focus group is distressing for you, you may benefit from approaching the student support services at your university.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster Management School's Research Ethics Committee.

1. ***Thank you for considering your participation in this project.***

nstructions: Before completing this application form please read the instructions and questions on the ethics webpage under the heading: **'What level of review is required for my project?'**
Please also refer to NOTES in this form for guidance.

SECTION ONE [Must be completed by all applicants]

Project Details	Answer
Name of applicant/researcher	Mahwish Hanif
Title of Project: [Note 1]	Role of education in south Asian parents daughters Possible Selves
Department	Education and Social Justice
Appointment/position held by applicant within FASS or LUMS	
ACP ID Number (if applicable)	
Funding source (if applicable)	
Grant Code (if applicable)	

NOTE
[1] **Make your title short and descriptive so that people can easily identify the main topic of the research. The title of your project does not need to be the same as the title you propose to use for your publication (e.g. your thesis).**

Type of study

☐ Involves existing documents/data only or the evaluation of an existing project with no direct contact with human participants. **Complete sections one, two and four of this form**

☒ Includes direct involvement by human subjects (including but not limited to interviews, completing questionnaires, social media and other internet based research).
Complete sections one, three and four of this form.

Contact details

1. Contact information for applicant:
   E-mail: m.hanif@olivehigh.co.uk
   Telephone: 07464057309 (please give a number on which you can be contacted at short notice)
   Lancaster University Address:
2. Names and appointments/position of all members of the research team:

Name of research team	Appointment/position

PhD Students

Complete this section if this is a PhD student project

3. **Project supervisor(s) names**: Dr Richard Budd

SECTION TWO

Complete this section if your project involves existing data only, or the evaluation of an existing project with no direct contact with human participants

Anticipated project dates (month and year) Note 2

Start date: **End date:**

NOTE
[2] These dates should indicate when you wish to begin your project (taking into account the timescale of the ethical approval process) and when funding ends or your thesis will be submitted.

Please state the aims and objectives of the project (no more than 150 words, in lay-person's language) Note 3:

NOTE
[3] This summary should concisely but clearly tell the reviewer (in simple terms and in a way which would be understandable to a general audience) what you are broadly planning to do in your study.

Please describe briefly the data or records to be studied, or the evaluation to be undertaken.

How will any data or records be obtained?

Confidentiality and Anonymity

If your study involves re-analysis and potential publication of existing data but which was gathered as part of a previous project, conducted by another individual or collective, involving direct contact with human beings, how will you ensure that your re-analysis of this data maintains confidentiality and anonymity as guaranteed in the original study?

What plan is in place for the storage of data (electronic, digital, paper, etc)? Note 4

Please ensure that your plans comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 .

NOTE

[4] State clearly where and in what format your data will be stored.

Timescales: The standard guidance we provide to people about length of time for retaining data is for a minimum of 10 years. This is not a requirement but a general recommendation. Your study may have a rationale for retaining data longer, but if so, please explain. Where electronic data is to be stored for longer than the recommended period, we recommend storing data on University storage. If data is collected or stored by own devices they need to be encrypted. For data sharing with external partners we recommend using Box.

Data security: Data stored on all portable devices (eg laptops) should be encrypted as well as password protected; data stored on the University server does not, however, need to be encrypted. If you are based and work predominantly away from the University, give consideration to how you will store the data securely as you undertake your research, and how it will be securely transferred to the LU campus for longer term storage.

What are the plans for dissemination of findings from the research? Note 5

NOTE

[5] Dissemination covers a wide range of activities including (but not limited to) reports, academic submissions (such as theses and journal articles), newspaper articles, etc.

Is the secondary data you will be using in the public domain?

If NO, please indicate the original purpose for which the data was collected, and comment on whether consent was gathered for additional later use of the data.

What other ethical considerations (if any), not previously noted on this application, do you think there are in the proposed study? How will these issues be addressed?

Will you be gathering data from discussion forums, on-line 'chat-rooms' and similar online spaces where privacy and anonymity are contention?

If yes, your project requires full ethics review. Please complete Sections 1, 3 and 4.

Error! Reference source not found.**Complete this section if your project includes direct involvement by human subjects**

NOTE:
In addition to completing this section you must submit all supporting materials such as participant information sheet(s), consent form(s), interview questions, questionnaires, etc. See the **checklist** at the end of this form for guidance.

Summary of research in lay terms, including aims (maximum length 150 words) Note 6:

This research explores the 'possible selves' (imagined future selves) that Muslim south Asian parents have for their daughters. The research focuses on three diverse groups within the south Asian community in Burnley Lancashire, namely, Punjabi, Pushtun, and Bengali. The aim of the research is to look at any similarities and/or differences between how parents see their daughters' possible selves as opposed to how their daughters see their possible selves. Also, the research will look for any differences and/or similarities between the three groups in the study.

NOTE
[6] The summary should concisely, but clearly, tell the reviewers what you are planning to do. It is very important that you describe your study in such a way that it is understandable to a general audience. Your study will be reviewed by colleagues from different disciplines who will not be familiar with your specific field of research and it may also be reviewed by the lay members of the FASS-LUMS Research Ethics Committee; therefore avoid jargon and use simple terms.

Anticipated project dates (month and year only) Note 7

Start date: 14/11/2020 **End date:** 1/12/2021

NOTE

[7] These dates should indicate when recruitment will begin, (taking into account the timescale of the ethical approval process) and when funding ends or your thesis will be submitted.

Please describe briefly the intended human participants (including number, age, gender, and any other relevant characteristics):

Parents of children in a Muslim girls school all over the age of 18. Participants will be both male and female, I am anticipating 30 participants in total, 10 from each ethnic group.

Are members of the public involved in a research capacity, for example as data collector (e.g. participatory research) and if so, do you anticipate any ethical issues resulting from this? Note 8

NO

NOTE
[8] This does not refer to members of the public being interviewed, but to forms of participatory research, where you invite members of the public to collect data.

How will participants be recruited and from where? Note 9

Participants will be recruited through an informal message, a half page sheet summarising what the research aims are will be emailed and sent as a hard copy to parents using the Lancaster University email address. The aim will be to ensure that parents are informed in layman terms about the research. If parents are interested they will then receive a consent form.

NOTE
[9] Please include here (if applicable) information about the following: How will participants be able to find out about the study? Will all volunteering participants be included or may you have to turn some away? If you will use different recruitment procedures for different participant groups, clearly indicate this and outline each set of procedures.

Briefly describe your data collection methods, drawing particular attention to any potential ethical issues.

Focus groups will be used to collect data.

As the head teacher of their daughters' school I recognise that there may be an issue of power relations whereby they feel obliged to take part. I will make it clear that participation is voluntary and will have no impact on their relationship with the school or their daughters standing within the school.

Consent

Will you take all necessary steps to obtain the voluntary and informed consent of the prospective participant(s) or, in the case of individual(s) not capable of giving informed consent, the permission of a legally authorised representative in accordance with applicable law? yes

If yes, please go to question 7b.
If no, please go to question 7c.Please explain the procedure you will use for obtaining consent?
Please include sample participant information sheets (PIS) and consent forms in your application. If applicable, please explain the procedures you intend to use to gain permission on behalf of participants who are unable to give informed consent. Please include copies of any relevant documentation. The initial invitation will highlight that its voluntary and will also highlight the anonymity and signed consent

NOTE
[10] Please include sample participant information sheets (PIS) and consent form(s) or verbal consent protocol (where written consent is not possible) in your application. Written consent is preferable but may not always be possible. If you are using the verbal protocol, please explain why this is appropriate and how you plan to record the consent (for example audio-recording, coded table, etc.). A sample participant information sheet and consent form are available here. A sample verbal protocol is available here.
If non-handwritten forms of consent will be used in the study, explain why and what they will be.
If your research includes anonymous surveys for data collection, no consent form will be used because that would compromise anonymity. However, a cover sheet or opening page/section or some type of introduction should clearly inform participants that by completing the survey they are providing consent for the use of the data for research. The cover sheet or introduction may also remind participants of other aspects of what they are agreeing to (but without requiring them to sign or type identifying information such as a name at the end of the information).
If you are using computer-based forms of data collection, describe carefully how consent processes will be addressed.

if it will be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time, please explain why.(For example covert observations may be necessary in some settings; some experiments require use of deception or partial deception – not telling participants everything about the experiment).

NO

What discomfort (physical and psychological eg distressing, sensitive or embarrassing topics), inconvenience or danger could be caused by participation in the project beyond the risks encountered in normal life?

N/A
Please indicate plans to address these potential risks. Note 11
State the timescales within which participants may withdraw from the study, noting your reasons.
I don't foresee any discussion being outside of normal life. They may be thinking about social pressures/questions that they have not thought about before. However, this is not beyond the norm. Participants will be able to withdraw up to two weeks after the research.

Note 12

NOTE

[11] Be as thorough as possible in anticipating potential sources of discomfort. Provide a plan for addressing the discomfort that may arise during the conduct of the research and discomfort that may develop following the conduct of the research, potentially as a consequence of participation in the research. We suggest you include possible sources of support in the Participant Information Sheet. You may also consider providing a debriefing sheet.

[12] **Time limits for withdrawing from the study:** please avoid the phrase "participants may withdraw at any time" because withdrawal for most studies is time limited. For example, once you have published your data, withdrawal is clearly not possible in the true sense. You may want to consider a reasonable time period for withdrawal following data collection, depending on the type of study you are doing, for example:

i. If you are collecting interview data and will be conducting simultaneous data collection and analysis, it may be reasonable to give participants a 2 week period following the interview to withdraw their data. [For other studies, longer periods of time may be appropriate.] An example of wording that may be used is "Participants are welcome to withdraw from the study at any time before or during the interview and up to 2 weeks following their interview (or survey completion)."
ii. If you are collecting your data via focus groups or group interviews, it is impractical to allow participants to withdraw their contribution once the group has started and recording begun. An example of wording that may be used is "Participants are welcome to withdraw from the study at any time before the focus group begins, but will not be able to withdraw their contribution to the discussion once recording has started." You should be explicit in this section about your intention to brief participants about this at the start of the focus group (for example during the setting of ground rules).
iii. If you use anonymous surveys, you need to clearly indicate to participants that they will NOT be able to withdraw their data/contribution once they have submitted it because it will not be possible to identify it as theirs.

How will you protect participants' confidentiality and/or anonymity in data collection (e.g. interviews), data storage, data analysis, presentation of findings and publications? Note 13

Changing names and/or omitting any other information that may reveal their identity, for example an address, name of business, any other personal identifiable information.

NOTE

[13] In the context of research confidentiality means that you will only disclose information that participants share with you in the forms agreed by them in the consent form. In most case, this includes offering anonymity, i.e. using pseudonyms and ensuring that individual participants cannot be identified in your dissertation/publications/presentations.

If, as part of your study, you will take photographs of participants or if you will film participants, please explain what you intend to do with these images. You may only use these images to help you with your data analysis. In that case, you will not show these images to other people nor will you use them in publications/your thesis. Or, you may want to use images of participants in your publications and presentations. In that case, you need to ask participants to consent to your use of these images. These images make them identifiable, unless you pixelate/blurr faces. Whatever you intend to do with

images of participants, make sure to explain this on the application form and also in the information sheet and consent form.
In some studies, it is possible that in the course of the research information arises that gives the researcher cause for concern and that may require her/him to breach confidentiality. For example, if in an interview a participant discloses information that indicates that they or others may be at risk of harm, the researcher may need to share this information with others. In your PIS, when eliciting consent, explain the limits to confidentiality. This is in particular important when working with vulnerable individuals or groups.

Do you anticipate any ethical constraints relating to power imbalances or dependent relationships, either with participants or with or within the research team?

If yes, please explain how you intend to address these? Note 14

As the Head teacher of the school the issue of power dynamics will need to be managed to ensure that there is an effective rapport between me as the researcher and the participants. I will try to suspend the head teacher position by ensuring that all contact with participants will be through the Lancaster university email, and look at developing rapport with them rather then Mrs Hanif introduce myself as Mahwish giving them the opportunity to see me outside of my head teacher role.

NOTE
14 For example, if you are a teacher/former teacher conducting research in the school/language school you used to or are still working in, what are the implications for research participants? Explain clearly that their participation or decision not to take part does not affect their studies or any assessments.

What potential risks may exist for the researcher and/or research team?
Please indicate plans to address such risks (for example, noting the support available to you/the researcher; counselling considerations arising from the sensitive or distressing nature of the research/topic; details of the lone worker plan you or any researchers will follow, in particular when working abroad. Note 15

I don't see any immediate or apparent risks, however if participants have a particularly 'upsetting' example to give regarding their own or daughters education/life then this may require me to tap into pastoral /support services at the school or University and if needed speak to Richard.

NOTE
15 The University's guidance on Lone Working can help you with this, see here: http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/safety/files/loneworking.pdf

Whilst there may not be any significant direct benefits to participants as a result of this research, please state here any that may result from participation in the study.

None but discussion might be interesting

Please explain the rationale for any incentives/payments (including out-of-pocket expenses) made to participants. Note 16 **NONE**

NOTE
[16] If you are intending to use incentives/payments, keep in mind that they should be modest so as not to suggest coercion of the participants. If you are reimbursing for travel, please indicate the financial limit of the reimbursement.

What are your plans for the storage of data (electronic, digital, paper, etc.)? Note 17

All electronic files will be stored on Lancaster university one drive. A Research will be in thesis in presentation and publications. Protected secure voice recorder will be used.

Please ensure that your plans comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 .

NOTE
[17] Data storage: non-audio and non-video data. State clearly where and what format your data will be stored.
Timescales: The standard guidance we provide to people about length of time for retaining data is 10 years (minimum). This is not a requirement but a general recommendation. Your study may have a rationale for retaining data longer and for various intended purposes, but if so, please explain. For example, some data may be specifically collected with intent to be added to a formal databank (quantitative or qualitative), or there may be plans for secondary data analysis that is anticipated from early in the design of the project. Where electronic data is to be stored for longer than the recommended period, it should only be kept on Lancaster University servers, and not on portable or home devices.
Data Stewardship: Please state who will have guardianship of the stored data (and if you are a student, who will be responsible for storing/deleting your data once you have completed your course). Please also include information on who will see the data (e.g. supervisors; research team members; transcribers)
Location: If your data is stored centrally or will be accessible to others, you should note in your application who will have access to the data.
Data security: Data stored on all portable devices (eg laptops) should be encrypted as well as password protected; data stored on the University server does not, however, need to be encrypted.
If you are based and work predominantly away from the University, give consideration to how you will store the data securely as you undertake your research, and how it will be securely transferred to the LU campus for long term storage.

Please answer the following question only if you have <u>not</u> completed a Data Management Plan for an external funder.

Do you intend to deposit your (anonymised) data in a data archive?
Note18 Yes ☐ No ☒

NOTE
[18] Most funders require researchers to preserve and share their data via a data archive. Lancaster University's Research Data Management Policy also suggests that all researchers, PhD students included, should store and archive their data in ways appropriate to the specific study and type of data. Please note that if you store data in a data archive where other researchers, upon request, can have access to this data, this needs to be explained on participant information sheets & consent forms.
There are different ways of storing and sharing data, but you are likely to follow one of these two options:
Example 1: Data will be deposited in Lancaster University's institutional data repository and made freely available with an appropriate data license. Lancaster University uses Pure as the data repository which will hold, manage, preserve and provide access to datasets produced by Lancaster University research.
Example 2: Data will be offered to the UK Data Archive (as per the standard ESRC procedures) or another similar data archive.
For further guidance on data archiving, please see here: Library Deposit your research data

If you have responded '**no**' to question 15a, please explain briefly why you cannot share your data via a data archive or repository. Note 19 Whilst I will be anonymising data the fact that the data is rich qualitative data it will not be suitable to use for other research and will be difficult to contextualise or generalise for alternative usage.

NOTE
[19] You may have reasons for not making your data widely available. For example, due to the small sample size, even after full anonymization, there may be a small risk that participants can be identified. It may also be the case that due to the (commercially, politically, ethically) sensitive nature of the research, no participants consented to their data being shared.
You can find more information about ethical constraints on sharing data on this site: Library data access statements

Audio

Will audio or video recording take place?
no ☐ audio ☒ video ☐

Will portable devices (laptop, USB drive, audio- and video-recorders, etc) be encrypted (in particular where they are used for identifiable data)? Password protected folder

yes ☒ no ☐

If it is not possible to encrypt your portable devices, please comment here on the steps you will take to protect the data. Note 20
n/a

NOTE
[20]Transporting audio/video data: you should state that if you store any identifiable data (audio recordings, participant contact details etc) on portable devices such as a memory stick or laptop you will use encryption. Password protection alone is not sufficient for identifiable data. Information on encryption is available from ISS http://www.lancs.ac.uk/iss/security/encryptionoptions/ and their service desk is also able to assist.
If your portable device cannot be encrypted, you must confirm that any identifiable data (including recordings of participants' voices) will be deleted from the recorder as quickly as possible (eg when they have been transferred to a secure medium, such as a password protected & encrypted PC) and state that the device will be stored securely in the meantime.

What arrangements have been made for audio/video data storage?
At what point in the research will tapes/digital recordings/files be destroyed? Note 21

One drive Lancaster university kept for 10 years. Digital recordings will be destroyed after the Viva.

NOTE
[21] **Storage.** Audio and video data is considered more sensitive than most written data because of its capacity to threaten confidentiality more directly. There are, however, no fixed deadlines, and recordings such as oral histories may be kept in perpetuity.
With audio data that does not need to be kept for the long term, it is common to erase/destroy the recording once it has been transcribed and checked. However, we suggest that you retain the recordings until your work has been examined and/or published, in case you need to check the original recordings for any reason.
For video, it may depend on the types of analyses proposed for the study. There may be good reason to keep the data longer, but the key in completing this section of the application form is to be explicit about timescales for storage, and the reasons for your timescale should be clearly indicated and explained.

If your study includes video recordings, what are the implications for participants' anonymity? Can anonymity be guaranteed and if so, how? If participants are identifiable on the recordings, how will you explain to them what you will do with the recordings? How will you seek consent from them?

n/a

What are the plans for dissemination of findings from the research? If you are a student, include here your thesis. Note 22

Please also include any impact activities and potential ethical issues these may raise.
The research findings will be disseminated through the Viva , publications, Presentations, lay person research summary for the school

NOTE
[22] Dissemination covers a wide range of activities including (but not limited to) reports, academic submissions (such as theses and journal articles), study summaries, and publications:
- If you are a student, be sure to include your academic paper (such as dissertation or thesis) as a form of dissemination.
- Phrasing regarding publication should reflect that you may pursue submission for publication, but you cannot guarantee that the dissemination will include publication. For example, you may write "Results of the research may be submitted for publication in an academic/professional journal."

What particular ethical considerations, not previously noted on this application, do you think there are in the proposed study? Note 23

N/A

Are there any matters about which you wish to seek guidance from the FASS-LUMS REC?

I will speak to the GDPR/safeguarding lead about the use of school communication channels to distribute focus group invitations.

NOTE
[23] It is rare that studies have no ethical considerations at all. Try to be thorough and thoughtful when considering this question. You should not try to invent issues, and at the same time, do not assume that by noting a problem you are hurting your application. This section provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate to the committee that you have a substantial and clear understanding of the potential ethical issues, and that you have given thought to how to address them (even if they may not be able to be addressed perfectly).

SECTION FOUR [Must be completed by all applicants]

Statement and Signatures

By submitting and signing this form, I confirm that

- I understand that as Principal Investigator/researcher/PhD candidate I have overall responsibility for the ethical management of the project and confirm the following:
- I have read the Code of Practice, Research Ethics at Lancaster: a code of practice and I am willing to abide by it in relation to the current proposal.
- I will manage the project in an ethically appropriate manner according to: (a) the subject matter involved and (b) the Code of Practice and Procedures of the university.
- On behalf of the institution I accept responsibility for the project in relation to promoting good research practice and the prevention of misconduct (including plagiarism and fabrication or misrepresentation of results).
- On behalf of the institution I accept responsibility for the project in relation to the observance of the rules for the exploitation of intellectual property.

- If applicable, I will give all staff and students involved in the project guidance on the good practice and ethical standards expected in the project in accordance with the university Code of Practice. (Online Research Integrity training is available for staff and students)
- If applicable, I will take steps to ensure that no students or staff involved in the project will be exposed to inappropriate situations.

- **I confirm that I have completed all risk assessments and other Health and Safety requirements as advised by my departmental Safety Officer: please tick this box to confirm** ☐

Please note: If you are not able to confirm the statements above please contact the FASS-LUMS research ethics committee and provide an explanation.

Applicant electronic signature: Note 24 **Mahwish Hanif**
Date: 29/10/2020

NOTE [24] If you are a student, make sure that you have discussed the project and the application with your supervisor. Build in enough time in your preparation schedule for your supervisor to properly review your application and give their comments before submitting it for ethical review.

Student applicants:
Please tick to confirm that you have discussed this application with your supervisor, and that they agree to the application being submitted for ethical review ☒
Project Supervisor name: Dr Richard Budd **Date application discussed** 29/10/2020
Students must submit this application from their Lancaster University email address, and copy their supervisor in to the email with this application attached

All applicants (Staff and Students) must complete this declaration:
I confirm that I have sent a copy of this application to my Head of Department (or their delegated representative). **Tick here to confirm** ☒
Name of Head of Department *(or their delegated representative)*

In addition to completing this form you must submit all supporting materials. For examples of supporting documents see the checklist below. Note25
Checklist
☐ Advertising materials (posters, emails)
☒ Letters/emails of invitation to participate
☒ Participant information sheets
☒ Consent forms
☐ Questionnaires, surveys, demographic sheets
☐ Interview question guides/interview schedules
☒ Focus group scripts

☐ Confidentiality agreement (if using an external transcriber)
☐ Debriefing sheets, resource lists

NOTE [25]
If you experience formatting issues in your supporting documents after you have copied and pasted them here, at the end of this application form you may find the following guidance useful:
1. On your keyboard select F1 (**or** click on the Microsoft Word help button at the top right of this document)
2. Enter this text in the search field: 'keep source formatting' then select 'Control the formatting when you paste text' and follow the guidance in the 'help window'.

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