Intersectional disadvantages and abuse experienced by Pakistani women living in the UK – Pakistani women's accounts of their journey in and out of domestic abuse.

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1. Abstract

This study provides a comprehensive review of journeys through and out of domestic abuse experienced by Pakistani women living in the UK. The study shows the importance of understanding how intersectional disadvantages based on gender, race, culture and ethnic minority status can lead to Pakistani women experiencing life as inhabitants of inequalities. Questioning the White feminist notion of a 'global sisterhood', this study is underpinned by postcolonial feminism and attempts to give a voice to those who have been silenced. Drawing upon the narratives and voices of fourteen Pakistani women, this study finds that Pakistani women are prone to abuse from an early age. Patriarchal control and gender segregation have shaped Pakistani women's identities, making them vulnerable to harmful customary practices such as honour codes. At the same time, the white curriculum, as an educational institution, plays a fundamental role in reproducing white privilege. This makes schools, colleges, and universities places where racism and stereotypes against ethnic minority groups take root and affect the trajectories of minoritised groups in society. This study sheds light on the obstacles that Pakistani women face when trying to escape their abusive relationships, including factors that worsen their vulnerabilities. The social structure, it seems, harms ethnic minority groups, contributing towards structural intersecting forms and revealing multiple layers of oppression experienced by Pakistani women due to both their race and gender.

Key Words: Domestic Abuse, Honour, Intersectionality, Postcolonialism, White Feminism, Migration, Pakistani Women.

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Part 1: Introduction.

Chapter One: Background to the thesis.

Your first relationship with your parents shapes your perception of love; many of us do not see 'red flags' because they *feel* like home. In many Pakistani families, the patriarchal structure allows oppression against women; it will enable us to think that the male members of the family are protecting the female members. Protection can mean gender segregation; it may mean keeping women under close surveillance and restricting their access to work and education.

However, the patriarchal structure becomes a form of justification for women's oppression. In some family structures, the person who stops participating in the function becomes the problem because the other members benefit from staying the way they are. In a Pakistani family, becoming a problem can, in the worst case, lead to murder. Recently, in England (2022), Somaiya Begum, a 20-year-old Pakistani British woman, became a problem for her family when she refused an arranged marriage. Arranged marriage is a common occurrence, but it could also be a red flag for Domestic Abuse (DA) or Honour Based Abuse (HBA) in a Pakistani family. This factor leads to the abuse of young women because, quite often, an arranged marriage can morph into a forced marriage.

When a young woman refuses an arranged marriage, her family may pressure her and make her feel guilty and dishonourable, someone who is going against the will of the family. Some women may be threatened, physically emotionally abused, or even physically abused to accept the marriage proposal; in such a case, an arranged marriage becomes a forced marriage. In Somaiya's case, the forced marriage unit identified the risk Somaiya faced if she remained with her parents. The authorities guided Somaiya to live with her grandparents for her safety.

However, Pakistani culture is based on kin connections; therefore, the refusal of marriage is not only seen as an insult to the parents but also to the extended family. Again, this is another red flag. The police, without understanding the danger of the refusal of marriage, exposed Somaiya to other potential perpetrators.

We have seen women killed by their family members: Rukhsana Naz (1998), murdered by her brother and mother; Banaz Mahmod (2006), killed by her uncle and other members of her community; Samia Shahid (2016), murdered by her ex-husband and her father; and most recently Somaiya Begum (2022) killed by her uncle. Their stories are symptomatic of the British system's treatment of minoritised cultures – at once naïve and uneducated, yet also arrogant towards another's culture and judgmental of a lifestyle and values different from what it sees as its own.

Growing up as a confident Pakistani British girl, I never saw British institutions as being racist and never thought about what racism felt like. I was aware of the absence of people of colour in various areas of life and of the stereotyping created around my culture. Still, my idea of 'racism' was primarily that of people of colour being verbally and physically assaulted rather than systemically excluded, invisible, and forgotten, or worse, put in grave danger due to the absence of understanding of our 'cultures'. My specific positionality, being born Pakistani in the UK, had me questioning if I was more Western or more 'cultural' due to being Pakistani. The truth is, I do not know. I hold strong traditional values, but I also fight against some of the conventional expectations of women. I think gender segregation is oppressive. However, I also think arranged marriages can work if both parties retain free will. The integration of thoughts on honour and shame is more complex; on the one hand, we think that the whole concept needs to be abolished, and on the other, we demand that it be learned and understood by our British institutions to protect women like Somaiya.

At stake here is the safety of victims, which has been underserved by the 'culturalization' of certain forms of gender-based violence, which discursively overemphasise 'culture' and

'cultural pathologies' to the detriment of developing victim-oriented solutions (Gill & Walker, 2020).

At the same time, rejecting the currency of culturally specific notions and practices can be equally detrimental. I remember talking with Mohammad Mazher Idriss, a Manchester Metropolitan University senior lecturer specialising in HBA, Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), and DA.

Just like me, Idriss spoke about South Asian women and honour, but he, like many others, emphasised that there was no honour in killing (Idriss, 2017: 2018), seemingly rejecting the 'cultural' influences. Although I agree that there is no honour in killing, I also believe that rejecting the existence of the honour culture puts women at risk of experiencing abuse (stemmed by the honour code), which falls outside the mainstream understanding of DA. Additionally, authors such as Gill (2009; 2010; 2014) and Payton (2010) describe HBA as a type of DA and gender-based abuse, as HBA is only *cosmetically dissimilar* to DV and other forms of VAWG. However, by focusing on the similarities, we neglect the differences, which become increasingly pronounced when understanding the honour culture.

In Somaiya's case, the judge stated that the killing was 'inappropriately named' an 'honour killing'; following this, the media nevertheless added that women are killed to 'satisfy sick code of family honour' (Harratt, 2023). There is a duality here that needs to be addressed. In this thesis, I argue that rather than neglecting, disregarding, and fighting against the term 'honour', we in Britain would benefit more if we sought to understand what honour is, what it means to minoritised cultures, how it controls people's daily lives, and how it can put individuals at risk (Begum et al., 2020).

By identifying honour and honour culture and its importance in lived experiences, we could save individuals from becoming victims of crimes motivated by it. If Somaiya's case was understood through the 'honour' lens as a sensitive case, more might have been done to remove her from her home and community. This understanding is crucial to saving lives, as the experience of DA differs for Pakistani women, who not only face multiple obstacles

when living in the UK but find it hard to receive the right help from the authorities when needing to leave their abusive relationship (Graca, 2017).

At the same time, while this study focuses on Pakistani women and forms of abuse that they are vulnerable to, it is essential to understand the background context, extent and conceptualisation of DA in the UK.

1.1 Extent, concept and nature of DA in the UK

Domestic Abuse (DA) is not a new phenomenon (Fulu & Miedema, 2015) and has been a widespread problem in the UK long before COVID-19. However, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, statistical data shows a rapid increase in cases of DA against women (WHO, 2022), mainly resulting from lockdown restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, such as staying at home and quarantining.

For example, in the year ending March 2019, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 2.4 million people (1.6 million females and 786,000 males) aged 16 to 74 years experienced DA in the previous 12 months (ONS 2019). The ONS (2020) further reported that in 2019 alone, there were 671 recorded homicide victims; this accounted for both female and male victims. The report further explained that 48% of female victims were killed in domestic homicide, the majority of which were committed by a male perpetrator who was a partner of the victim. Female domestic homicide saw a rise during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Grierson (2020) noting an increase of two to three homicides per week.

The National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) reported that DA had increased by four per cent across England and Wales during the lockdown, despite an overall crime reduction of 25% (NPCC, 2019). This fits the picture of reports across the previous decade (HMIC, 2015). Thus, while the pandemic exacerbated the issue, DA is not a new problem (Hunter, 2022).

Before 2021, the UK had relied on a non-statutory cross-government definition of DA, with organisations in the public, private, and voluntary sectors altering the definition to suit their organisation better. Some definitions included forms of abuse which are specific to

ethnic minority groups, such as HBA, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. However, currently, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 carries a legal definition of DA:

> "Behaviour of a person ('A') towards another person ('B') is 'domestic abuse' if— A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following— (a) physical or sexual abuse; (b) violent or threatening behaviour; (c) controlling or coercive behaviour; (d) economic abuse (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse" (The Domestic Abuse Act 2021).

According to the legal definition, a personal connection means anyone in an intimate personal relationship who is due to be, currently is, or has been married, in a civil partnership with each other, or who is a parent or relative (The Domestic Abuse Act 2021). It is important to note that this definition was unavailable during this ongoing study.

The Act aims to make changes to protect survivors of DA better and strengthen measures to address the behaviour of perpetrators. The definition makes it clear that the victims are not confined to one gender, ethnic group or sexual orientation. Nevertheless, the consistent neglect of HBA, FGM and forced marriage as 'culturally specific' forms of DA marginalises minority groups who are prone to such abuse (Gill & Walker, 2020). However, some organisations include HBA, FGM and forced marriage in their definition of DA in the hopes of helping and protecting victims and survivors from all communities.

However, the government tends to ignore forms of abuse which do not affect the wider society. For example, the national statistics do not record or mention DA and homicides stemming from HBA, suggesting that the government does not consider abuse and killings stemming from honour as an issue which needs to be addressed. Therefore, BAME women who experience culture-specific abuse are rarely represented, leaving most victims of honour-motivated abuse under-protected. This lack of representation can also lead to a lack of coordination between police, medical teams and other authorities, weakening the support system for victims.

Not only are specific forms of abuse experienced by BAME women overlooked, but these women, for a multitude of reasons, face additional barriers when accessing support from mainstream DA service providers (Grossman & Lundy, 2007). For example, language barriers, racial discrimination, and weak immigration status can hinder women's ability to access support. BAME women may also face cultural and community pressures that can make it more difficult for DA victims to escape the abuser. Like the definition of DA, institutional racism has allowed mainstream DA services to underrepresent women of colour and their cultural experiences and identities. Belur (2008) adds that mistrust of services has intensified due to the insensitive handling of victims. For example, some practices tend to use male translators for female victims, and others respond inappropriately to culturally specific forms of abuse such as HBA, forced marriage and dowry abuse. Izzidein found that stereotyping and racist attitudes towards minority women operated at three levels: "among (other) service users, among the workers, and at the state level (for example, through immigration policies that prevent women from accessing services or public funds)" (2008, p. 20).

Services designed to assist survivors of DA take a mainstream, colour-blind approach to their interventions. Therefore, services 'by and for' BAME women play a significant role in providing support and safety to DA survivors (Belur, 2008). This study shows that Pakistani women described mostly problematic experiences with mainstream services and positive experiences with a culturally specific agency. The existence of 'by and for' services creates a space for BAME women, where their culture is accepted and understood, and tailored support means that more women will be willing to come forward. This shows that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to address these critical needs adequately. Services by and for BAME women are more likely to understand the complex, multi-layered challenges and obstacles that victims from their community face when attempting to access services (Izzidein, 2008). Such services are better equipped to form essential relationships and engage with DA victims and survivors from their communities, creating and implementing services relevant to the diverse and unique needs of the victims.

1.2 Specificity of Pakistani women's experience of DA

To understand Pakistani women's experiences of domestic abuse, it is crucial to understand core concepts and practices which serve to enable this abuse. It is important to note that for most Pakistani women, honour and forced marriage are core to their experience of DA. Despite the neglect of HBA in the legal definition of DA, scholars such as Gill (2013) and Aplin (2019) have theorised honour and HBA to be the catalysts for DA within the Pakistani community.

The notion of honour stems from long-lasting customs and traditions based on behaviour, sexuality and modesty (Gill, 2017). Although the nature and scale of HBA are not nationally recorded in the UK, research has identified prevalence in South Asian communities (Begikhani et al., 2015). Like the DA definition, HBA includes physical, psychological, and coercive actions to maintain the family honour. Many women are subjected to different forms of abuse within the context of keeping hold of their Pakistani identities in diasporic contexts. Young women are shaped to act in a manner deemed honourable, reflecting on their kin. Once Pakistani women are married, their affinal families' honour becomes their sole responsibility. Within both kin and affinal families who keep their women under close surveillance, the women are likely to become vulnerable to a range of abuse ranging from emotional, psychological and financial abuse and physical violence.

Arranged marriage is closely linked to notions of honour and is a common practice in Pakistan. This traditional practice has become more poignant in diasporic settings. During the UK migration process, Pakistani families had a strong connection with their homeland, kinship, and identities (Charsley, 2013). Arranged marriage was one way in which families kept their ties to Pakistan and other Pakistani families (Shaw, 2001).

However, arranged marriage can easily fall under the category of forced marriage, especially when the victim believes that they have no other choice but to accept the marriage proposal put before them. For some families, forced marriage, either consciously or subconsciously, retains cultural rigidity.

Forced marriage is a criminal offence in the UK. The law states that for an offence to be committed*:*

> "The perpetrator must have used violence, threats or any other form of coercion to cause another person to engage in a marriage, and he/she knows the victim does not consent to the marriage or does not reasonably believe that she consents to the marriage (consent must be free and full). It is also a criminal offence to deceive a victim to cause the victim to leave the United Kingdom; and intend the other person to be subject to coercion (force) for the purpose of making her enter a marriage without consent (consent must be free and full)" (Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, 2014).

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) notes that over 50% of all reported cases were of Pakistani origin (Home Office, 2021). At the same time, Sundari Anitha and Aisha Gill (2009), in 'Coercion, consent and the forced marriage debate in the UK', note that there is a lack of adequate reporting and professional knowledge of incidents of forced marriage. As a result, there is a tension between conceptualising forced marriage as purely cultural or as a form of DA.

The emphasis on forced marriage here is important as it proves that although the UK has identified forced marriage as a problem, there is still a lack of knowledge of the practice to document the true nature of the problem. The act of coercion can become difficult to detect when young women are pressured into marriage, and they agree because they feel like there is no other way out, particularly in a culture where girls have acquired learned helplessness (Gangoli et al., 2006). There are multiple reasons as to why someone is forced into marriage.

This can include but is not limited to protecting the younger generation from the Western culture, maintaining kinship connections, and upholding the family's honour. Forced marriage is a corrupt thread of the notion of honour and shame. At the same time, Pakistani women's experiences of abuse do not start or end with the pressure to marry.

The honour tradition and the importance of kinship connection, along with the patriarchal society, means that Pakistani women are vulnerable to HBV, kinship abuse, transnational abandonment and forced marriage (Gill, 2009; Metlo, 2012; Dyer, 2015; Pragna & Sundari, 2016). This differs from the mainstream understanding of DA. At the same time, culturally specific concepts of honour and shame are core when silencing Pakistani women who experience abuse and speak out against their families. This study aims to give voice to these women and shed light on the different forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to.

1.3 Justification/purpose of research

The importance of this study is mainly related to the fact that Pakistani women and their experience of abuse are still under-researched both in Pakistan and in the UK. The study is meant to contribute to the emerging literature on Pakistani women, raise awareness, and contribute to policy developments and practices concerning the problem of DA amongst Pakistani women in the UK. The study aims to be of significant use in gathering new and valuable data from the abused women's perspective. For example, adding information about the impact of DA is the reason some women are reluctant to disclose violent incidents. Moreover, it is essential to recognise factors that inhibit abused women from seeking outside help. Some of the expected outcomes from the study are as follows:

- Increase knowledge about the impact of DA on Pakistani women in the UK.
- Increase understanding of the factors that inhibit Pakistani women from seeking help.

  (honour, kin connection, social norms)
- Influence future policy development and practices concerning the problem of Pakistani women experiencing DA.

1.4 Research aims and objectives.

This study intends to analyse the stories offered by Pakistani women about their experience and journey out of DA whilst living in the UK. The purpose of this study is to identify and document the vulnerabilities that women are faced with throughout their journey of abuse and once leaving the abusive relationship. The research aims to answer three interrelated questions:

1. What are the experiences of DA of Pakistani women in the UK, and how does DA impact them?
2. What are the barriers that inhibit the abused women from disclosing the DA and seeking outside help?
3. What do abused women highlight the issues about their needs and the support of domestic violence service providers?

1.5 Outline of chapters

Chapter One is the introduction, which provides an overview of the nature and extent of DA in the UK. The chapter sheds light on the neglect of Pakistani women in the mainstream understanding of DA. This chapter presents this study's justification and the thesis's outline.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the theoretical standpoint. As a British Pakistani woman, I explore my positioning and explain why I believe postcolonial and feminist literature are appropriate standpoints to hear the voices of the silenced Pakistani women. This chapter is driven by the Holy Trinity, which helps to represent and explain Pakistani people's positioning in the UK: 'Orientalism' (Said), 'Subalternity' (Spivak) and 'Mimicry' and 'Hybridity' (Bhabha). I move on and analyse White feminism, which dominates the field of DA, silencing 'other' women's lived experiences.

I investigate how knowledge from marginalised groups is suppressed, making it easier for the dominant West to rule the frontline. I alter legislation and services to serve only those in society understood within its own 'Western' terms.

Chapter Three grounds the literature of this study. It shows the effects of misrepresentation of one's identity and how race and gender create intersectionality, which affects Pakistani women's experiences in the UK. I draw attention to structural racism in the UK, which has allowed a colourblind approach during the knowledge production process of DA. Structural racism combined with the white curriculum has led to many myths and stereotypes of marginalised groups. The white curriculum often neglects to accommodate ethnic minority groups. For example, forms of abuse which do not affect the wider Western society are often overlooked and viewed as a 'their' problem, leaving many women vulnerable and isolated. This includes abuse rooted in the honour culture, such as forced marriage, kin and dowry abuse.

Chapter Four is the methodology chapter, which describes how this qualitative study was conducted. The chapter, therefore, begins by describing the design of the study, the research approach and the recruitment strategy. The chapter explains that all fourteen interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were uploaded to Atlas.ti and analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Seven themes have been identified, defined and documented. These themes have been grouped under three categories (Appendix 5). The themes help us understand Pakistani women's experiences, perspectives, behaviours and journeys out of DA.

Chapters Five, Six, and Seven capture the results, identifying and documenting seven themes, which are divided into three categories (Appendix 5): chapter five (1) Burden of Expectations (Shaping Identities); chapter six (2) Forms of Abuse (Marriage and Kinship, Transnational Marriage Abandonment, Affinal Kin and Spousal Abuse); and chapter seven (3) Support (Leaving the abusive relationship and Service provision).

These themes consider the entirety of Pakistani women's situation and the multiple identities that a woman of colour has membership in. Women's narratives are used to support the themes found.

Intersectionality posits the social construction of hierarchies and recognises that multiple categorical identifiers of social and economic statuses (like race/ethnicity, education and immigration status) are embedded within the hierarchy.

Chapter Eight is the discussion chapter. In this chapter, I attempt to acknowledge both the individual lived experiences of Pakistani women and how the silencing of Pakistani women underemphasises the role of race, gender inequality and culture, all which feed into the women's experience of abuse. This chapter further emphasises types of abuse which fall outside the mainstream understanding of DA. Further discussion is carried out regarding the absence of women of colour in Western policies.

Chapter Nine concludes the study. First, the White feminist notion of a global sisterhood is interrogated, emphasising that DA and forms of DA need to be improved to espouse the premise truly. Second, I suggest that the reframing of DA should take an intersectional approach. Not recognising unique experiences means that the UK is not equipped to prevent and protect victims from abuse. This chapter provides additional recommendations for policy improvement.

Chapter Two: Crafting the theoretical standpoint

2.1 Positioning

A question often asked is whether qualitative researchers should be members of their study population (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

Whether the researcher is an insider, sharing characteristics and experiences similar to those of the participants, or an outsider to the commonality shared by participants, the researcher's membership in relation to those participating in the research is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation.

I have provided a dual membership as an insider and an outsider in this qualitative research. I am an insider who shares the same gender, ethnicity, culture, and language as the participants. On the other hand, I also consider myself an outsider, a PhD student, a potential academic inhabiting a different social space, one that sets me apart from Pakistani women who have experienced DA. Both positions play an intimate role during the data collection and analysis process.

Ely et al. (1991), Note that it is important for qualitative researchers to situate themselves in the research. The benefit of being a member of group one is studying the acceptance. Being from the same ethnic group as the participants, I can actively use my position as a British Pakistani woman to construct a sense of sameness and commonality between me as a researcher and the participants. My insider membership automatically provides a level of trust and openness with the participants, giving me the space to document a group which otherwise would be difficult to access if I were a complete 'outsider'. However, this commonality can also limit the nature of the study.

Although this shared status can be very beneficial as it affords access, entry, and common ground from which to begin the research, it can potentially impede the research process

as it progresses. The participants may make assumptions about our similarities and, therefore, assume that I already know their individual journeys and/or their vulnerabilities, which can lead to minimal explanation from the participants. For example, many Pakistani women placed me in the same category as them; 'I just had to marry him, you know what I mean, for us Pakistani people, it is normal'. Using terms such as 'you know' and 'for us' marked this sharedness of understanding. To relocate myself as an academic, I had to ask further questions to remove myself from 'our' category: 'What do you mean when you say you had to marry him?' and 'What is normal for Pakistanis?'.

John (1989) explains that engaging in such a confrontational manner almost becomes commonplace. Sometimes, it becomes necessary to confront what the participants want to say through more extensive questioning even if I, as a British Pakistani woman, understand what the participant is trying to say. In such incidents, I need to reconsider my current identity as an academic and make connections to my permanent identity as a British Pakistani woman. The use of dual positioning is perhaps one way to make a connection between the specific knowledge shared by feminists regarding non-Western women and the realisation that the knowledge shared worldwide has created a false representation of women who share with me the same ethnicity and culture.

My research positioning and the commonality identified as an insider also allow me to interact with the participants in their language (Punjabi and/or Urdu). This is a great advantage in terms of sharing viewpoints and interpretations. However, common language can also leave the researcher to act less exploratory and/or allow the participant to give vague answers and explanations. For example, some participants may use concepts from their language, such as 'izzat' (respect, honour, prestige); by placing me in this communality zone, participants may brush over their interpretation of 'izzat' and assume I understand their viewpoint. This research arises out of a desperation to make Pakistani women visible and heard and a deep disappointment as to why Pakistani women are marginalised and excluded in the knowledge production process. I use my research position to plea for the recognition of Pakistani women.

In some Chapters, I will argue that Pakistani women and their experience of abuse differs from the mainstream understanding of DA and that Pakistani women are prone to transnational, kinship and honour-related abuse. To adhere to this epistemology, when appropriate, I reject the pronouns 'we', 'us' and 'our' and replace these terms with 'they' and 'their'. By doing this, I wish – and need to – trouble the universality of 'we/us' and 'them'. As far as this is a plea to recognise 'them' (Pakistani women), recognising 'them' means looking into their history, colonisation, oppression and their representation.

My research allows me to position myself in two ways: the first as an academic (outsider) and the second as a woman of Pakistani origin (insider).

By identifying my position as an insider, my accountability may be questioned and discredited as being 'too subjective' and hence less scholarly. I would counter that the combination of my position as an academic and as a British Pakistani woman grants me the ability to capture and validate the voices of Pakistani women, their thoughts and experiences. I very much become the representative of the Pakistani culture, using my own and my family's experiences as an instrument to support, explain and understand Pakistani women and their experiences. I also academically examine the historical, institutional, and social relations that have contributed towards Pakistani women's vulnerabilities and journeys of abuse.

2.2 Theoretical standpoint.

Postcolonial and feminist theoretical perspectives underpin this research and use these jointly for a fuller theoretical standpoint. A postcolonial theoretical approach does not necessarily include a gendered perspective, so it is necessary and relevant to turn to feminist approaches (Reimer-Kirkham & Anderson, 2003). Conversely, White feminists[1]

In 2020 the AP decided not to capitalise the term 'white' in racial, ethnic and cultural context (Daniszewski, 2020). It is argued that the term white is capitalised by white supremacists, therefore by capitalising the term there is a risk of agreeing that white people are superior. However, I have made the concise decision to capitalise 'White' when using the term White feminism. White feminism plays an important role in my

have relied heavily on Western, white, middle-class women. Resisting non-Western women, this historical suppression of non-Western women has had a pronounced influence on feminist theory (Nicholson, 2010; Rampton, 2015; Fancois-Cerrah, 2015). Before choosing to use the term White feminism, I contemplated whether Euro-American or Western feminism was better suited for this study. Using the term 'White feminism' emphasises that the group's priorities of achieving equality will open doors for all other women.

Women are divided by class, race, sexual and religious differences. These categories are a fact, yet White feminist scholars are highly predicated on sameness: all women suffered equally and in the same way under a unified patriarchy. 'Global Sisterhood' (Naghibi, 2007), 'The Personal Is Political' (Nicholson, 1981) and 'Wages for Housework' (Federici, 1974) were the slogans of the second wave of White feminists. Although these feminist notions carried good intentions, feminism was not as global as it tried to claim (Narain, 2004). There is an element of false universalism in discussing the issue of sameness and differences.

White feminists ignored the existence of women of colour (WOC) or over-homogenized 'women's experience' as derived from Western experience and tended to see non-Western women mainly as helpless victims (Sendi, 2017; Evans, 1995, p. 21). Non-Western women and concepts that apply to them were ignored in studies. This neglect has allowed White feminists to override 'differences', labelling them as a problem for the other, 'coloured girl… not known and hence not believed in; she belongs to a race that is best designated by the team 'problem', and she lives beneath the shadow of that problem which envelops and obscures her' (Willams, 1987, p. 105).

Currently, Western writers who possess great competence in researching a range of issues acknowledge the need for diversity, yet at the same time omit WOC from their work.

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thesis, influencing which women are marginalised and silenced, shaping their experiences. Therefore, I believe the term needs to be visible, recognised and given it its own identity.

Collins (2000), in her book *Black Feminist Thought,* states that some Western/white women claim that they are unqualified to understand or even speak about WOC and their experiences because they themselves are not of colour. Other Western scholars include a few safe, 'handpicked' WOC's voices to avoid criticism that they are racist (Collins, 2000). This justifies why we know very little about Pakistani women in the UK (Mirza,2015). This study attempts to redress this shortfall by representing Pakistani women and their individual journeys out of abuse, understanding and documenting the obstacles along the way and my participant's specific vulnerabilities.

Whilst my work has a feminist orientation, feminism in the West has been different to feminism in Pakistan, especially during both the colonial and postcolonial eras, due to the specific social structure and the specific role of women in both cultures. I think it is crucial to capture how these differences influence the lives of Pakistani women in the UK. Most importantly, capturing the domination of White feminism, aiming to create and universalise the model of feminism and the ways in which this universalising does not work because WOC lives by their own culture and religious beliefs.

It may be natural to assume that research which is focused explicitly on Pakistani women will be underpinned by South Asian feminism. However, feminist movements in Pakistan are enmeshed in global politics as well as the divisions in the country in terms of diverse groups, classes, genders and urban/ rural populations. Due to the polarisation, I have often found it challenging to track the movement of feminists in Pakistan and South Asia as a whole. Although some women in Pakistan have been active, participating in large numbers for national causes, for example, to stop VAWG (see Aurat March in Chapter three, section 3.4.1), I have made a deliberate choice not to draw on South Asian feminism alone.

Instead, I briefly discuss feminism in South Asia and its contribution to postcolonial work, which still applies to Pakistani women living in the UK (see Chapter 3.2). South Asian feminism only applies to women living in Pakistan and not in international spaces.

There are two dominant threads of feminist discourse within Pakistan: secular and Islamic feminism. Secular feminism advocates for equal rights between men and women, viewing feminism as an essential extension of universal human rights. Whereas Islamic feminism tries to provide interpretations of the Qur'an and Shariah, seeking empowerment within a 'rethought. Islam' (Zia, 2009). However, it becomes difficult to apply Pakistan's secular feminism theory to Pakistani women in the UK because the secular movement in Pakistan is concerned with fundamental human rights and gender equality for women living in Pakistan.

Similarly, Islamic feminism in Pakistan mainly applies to women living in Pakistan, often detaching themselves from the West. One of the ways they do this is by rejecting the term feminism. Barlas (2002) emphasises that the term is a representation of Western ideals that demonstrate Western ignorance regarding Muslim women and WOC, seeming utterly blind to the racial politics of speaking for WOC. Liberty associated with White feminism is muted for non-Western women individuals as Barlas (2002) argues that if you are not a white Western woman with Western values, then your position within White feminism is lost, your voice is muted, and your identity is not recognisable.

The ignorance of most White feminists who view WOC as victims of their culture and religion that need foreign intervention, and the paternalistic attitudes of White feminists thus lead many Islamic South Asian feminists to reject the very term feminism due to its affiliation with Western notions of 'liberty'. Thus, Islamic feminists make it clear that they are not fighting for what Western women have gained but for what the Qur'an can give them. On the other hand, the Secular feminist movement is "embedded in Western notions of autonomy and freedom that are supposed to be contrary to Indigenous cultural or religious practices" (Jamal, 2005, p. 56).

Islamic feminists argue that Secular feminists in Pakistan believe that they are inseparable from White feminism and, therefore, are not legitimate in Pakistan. As I intend to study Pakistani women and their experiences in diasporic space, I underpin my research with postcolonial feminism. I intend to argue that it is vital to consider Pakistani women's racial,

cultural and historical orientation to understand their struggle in carving an identity in the West and other intersectional factors they face as minority women. Postcolonial feminist theory forms the background of this work, connecting colonial and postcolonial realities of South Asia. I draw on the work of postcolonial feminism from South Asia (see chapter 3.2) to show how women suffered at the hands of White feminists, who misrepresent their colonised counterparts by imposing silence on their racial, cultural, social, and political specificities and in so doing, act as potential oppressors of women whom they call their 'sisters'.

Hull and Smith (1982), in *But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* lay out both the philosophical and practical argument that the White feminist movement, both academic and grassroots, did not address the specific needs of non-Western women. Furthermore, White feminist research has neglected to examine the basis of its Eurocentric (and often racist) framework. White feminists tend to stand in power relations as oppressors of non-Western women. This compromises any feminist theory and practice founded on simple equality. Chris Weedon (1997) explains that White feminists have tended to downplay differences of class, race, sexuality and location between women to stress that all women share fundamental oppressions.

Thus, concepts central to feminist theory, such as 'representation', 'patriarchy', and 'reproduction', become problematic in their application to non-Western women's lives. Whenever used, these are placed in the context of the lives of white middle-class women and become contradictory when applied to the lives and experiences of non-Western women. Helen Carby (1997), in her essay 'White Woman Listen!', explains that non-Western women are barely made visible within White feminist discourses.

It is important to understand that when White feminists were beginning to read the scholarship of non-Western women, they created, in their own academic space, their assumptions and representations of these non-Western women, failing to represent non-Western women. WOC have been tasked to educate white women about their resistance

to understanding WOC and their differences. This is a diversion of energies and a tragic repetition of the repeated neglect of non-Western women by Western women.

Instead, Hull and Smith (1982) suggested that 'Black women studies must consider as primary the knowledge that will save Black women's lives' (1982: xxv). The declaration emphasised that 'Black women's lives matter'. Although Hull and Smith (1982) focus on Black women, their study also encompasses the lives of other non-Western women, WOC, and race. As Evelynn Hammonds (1997: 171) points out, 'black women's sexuality is often described as in metaphors of speechlessness, space, or vision; as a void or empty space that is simultaneously ever visible and invisible, were black women's bodies are already colonised'.

This statement, although written for Black women, can also relate to Muslim women. White feminists attempt to liberate Muslim women by taking away their veil (Lorber, 2002: 388), failing to recognise that the veil frees those Muslim women from the male gaze and allows them to engage in activities without unwanted sexual attention from men. Islamic feminists argue that White feminists attempt to apply a foreign framework that is incompatible with Muslim culture. These feminists are particularly alienated by attempts of White feminists to liberate them and find the patriarchy is enforced by such efforts (Parashar, 2016).

Given these shortcomings, it is important to qualify 'feminist' with 'postcolonial'. A postcolonial feminist perspective allows the researcher to examine the complex issues at the intersection of gender, race, and culture. It directs us to see how the complex historical, political, cultural, and socio-economic contexts in which human experience embedded affect and shape women's experience of abuse This study builds on postcolonial and critical race theory and fuses them with feminism.

Neither critical race nor postcolonial theory can be understood apart from histories of anti-racist and anti-colonial political struggles. Nevertheless, while their specific histories may differ, critical race and postcolonial theories have in common that they emerged from - and represent - intellectual challenges to contexts of racial oppression. They also borrow heavily from one another and share a commitment to developing a theory based not solely

on the thoughts of academics but also on the voices and experiences of people of colour and the former subjects of colonialism (Parashar, 2016).

Postcolonial scholars have sought to understand the effects centuries of colonial rule and exploitation have had on colonial subjects and their cultures, ultimately to combat the harmful consequences of colonial oppression that have been carried over into the new postcolonial environment. Furthermore, postcolonial theorists work to critique and subvert dominant Western styles of thought, imagination, and theorising to allow the voices of former colonial subjects to be heard. Postcolonial feminism draws on these frameworks, challenging dominant discourses about women. A postcolonial feminist theoretical perspective 'recognises the need for knowledge construction from the perspective of the marginalised female subject whose voice has been muted in the knowledge production process' (Kirkham and Anderson, 2002: 10). The anthropologist Edwin Ardener (1975) proposed that the structures of dominance silence muted groups, and if they wish to express themselves, they are forced to do so through the dominant modes of expression, the dominant ideologies.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988), in her most potent essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' addresses how 'subaltern' women are silenced, muted and marginalised by Western male society and shows the secondary position, the inferior role given to women in patriarchy. Scholars from India and the East have questioned the Western Scholarship Chandra Mohanty (1986) in 'Under the Western Eye', Chilla Bulbeck (1998) in 'Reorienting White Feminism', Edward Said's Orientalism (1978) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988).

Suppressing the knowledge produced by any oppressed group makes it easier for the dominant group to rule because the seeming absence of dissent suggests that subordinate groups willingly collaborate in their marginalisation (Scott, 1985). This becomes doubly significant for this research as a form of 'speaking out' – both on DA and Pakistani women in contemporary British society and within the academic discourse.

Western policy and knowledge-making have often portrayed WOC as victims whose culture suffocates them (Shain, 2000). At the same time, the voices of non-Western women are neglected, with little room for them in the mainstream. This creates a paradox, where some forms of abuse that marginalised women are prone to are underrepresented, with a parallel tendency to focus on some forms of abuse that marginalised women are vulnerable to, which are rendered 'hypervisible' (Walker, 2018). The Western polity often emphasises forms of abuse such as forced marriage and HBA, constructing them as uniquely oppressive due to culture and identity. Here, the sole determinant of the abuse is placed on culture, race and identity, avoiding understanding such forms of abuse through an intersectional lens (Shain, 2000).

HBA is simultaneously a lived reality and attached to stereotypes that are constructed by culture, gender, age, religion, and sexuality. These may constitute forms of abuse themselves and decrease victims' trust in society and its institutions. Therefore, the stereotypes become obstacles for the West and its authorities' capacity to support those exposed to abuse. At a general level, the stereotypes contribute to retaining exposure to abuse. In contrast, intersectional approaches to understanding HBA can capture clients' self-perceived and complex formulations of the causes of, and the character of, their situation and thus increase the possibilities for adequate support.

An intersectional approach to abuse recognises the various ways that abuse is experienced and perpetrated. There is no hierarchy of oppression or inequality for women within an intersectional analysis framework. That is, when women seek out support services for DA, they cannot be forced to decide which oppression is 'higher up in the hierarchy' or comes first. Intersectional approaches to abuse recognise that all oppressions exist simultaneously and that categories of oppression mutually construct each other to create unique experiences of abuse. A lack of attention to abuse through the intersectional lens not only inhibits policymakers from assessing inequalities between women but also inhibits their ability to assess how WOC experiences discrimination and marginalisation.

In Pakistan, social norms play a significant role in muting women, encouraging them to keep secrets about bullying, coercion and fear; this muting of women is what causes a lack of awareness and acknowledgement of Pakistani women and their hardship through their journey out of DA (Sanghera, 2009; Idriss & Abbas, 2010; Metlo, 2012). This study attempts to capture some of the secrets hidden within Pakistani culture. Georg Simmel (1906), in 'The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies', famously states that 'secrecy is not in immediate interdependence with evil, but evil with secrecy'. He adds that 'The immoral hides itself, even when its content encounters no social penalty' – even while forms of DA are normalised within a culture, as this research explores, the essentially isolating effect of immorality as such, entirely apart from all primary social repulsion, is actual and essential (1906: 463).

Secrecy in society remains a central means of control in contemporary society. Unfolding these secrets will increase knowledge about the impact of DA on Pakistani women in the UK and influence future policy development and practices concerning the problem of Pakistani women experiencing DA. Pakistani women have faced many forms of oppression, including colonialisation, migration, racism and exclusion from mainstream studies. This Chapter argues that White feminism must take account of the lives, histories, effects of colonisation, and experiences of non-Western women.

2.3 Postcolonial Theoretical Prospective

The term postcolonial applies to a period after colonisation. Which colonial empire and the end of who is colonialism is unclear (Childs & Williams, 2014). Regardless of which empire is being investigated, the advantage of the term postcolonialism is that it covers all cultures affected by colonisation. The effects of colonisation still exist today because victors and victors' interpretation of the history of their win does not truly recognise history in the way it was (Benjamin, 1973). Decolonisation requires the undoing of colonisation; dismantling a world created by colonialism means giving back what was stolen, such as land, power and identity (Adebisi, 2019).

Additionally, as Anderson (2004) pointed out, in the West, the idea of criminal typology is closely linked to race and social evolution. Associating criminals to non-European races legitimises using colonial subjects to make one race superior and civilised and the other inferior and criminal-like. Taken together, these pose a challenge – although the physical colonisation of Pakistan may have ended, its effect persists in how formerly colonised Pakistanis are viewed and understood in the former colony.

Postcolonialism mainly questions the Westernness of history and why it was ok for the West to ignore and downplay non-European people and places. It reveals the social, political and cultural inferiority caused by being from a colonised nation. I have picked out three fundamental notions which will represent and explain Pakistani people's positioning in the UK: 'Orientalism' (Said), 'Subalternity' (Spivak) and 'Mimicry' and 'Hybridity' (Bhabha). These three theorists, Said, Spivak and Bhabha, are considered central to the field and sometimes called the Holy Trinity (Childs & Williams, 2014).

Drawing strongly on these three foundational critics will allow me to capture the journey of Pakistani people, including their migration process, the struggle of settling, their unsettling identities and their disrupted culture. Furthermore, this approach allows me to demonstrate the consistent struggle with cultural overlap and hybridity.

As a British Pakistani, the work of Holy Trinity allowed me to take into consideration the effects of colonisation amongst Pakistanis and the discourse of minorities in the UK. For me, the Trinity is one of the ways in which I can express how my identity as a Pakistani is constantly under scrutiny, whether that is through orientalist (colonial) writings, art, or the white curriculum. The Pakistani culture is often radicalised, making me feel like my Identity as a British national is superior to my identity as a Pakistani.

I often find myself defending at least one side of my identity, whether that is to explain to my white colleagues that not all Pakistani women are oppressed or forced into marriage or whether that is me explaining to people from the Pakistani community that educating your daughter does not necessarily mean she is losing her Pakistani ties. The Holy Trinity of postcolonial writing reminds me how tired I am of defending my identity as a British Pakistani. I never chose to be from a nation which was once colonised, nor did I choose to

be born in the UK, but my family history and my place of birth are so far apart that I am constantly being made to explain and justify my hybrid identity.

My hybrid identity does not permit me to be a complete insider of both identities. For example, many British Pakistanis, including myself, refer to Pakistan as 'back home'. However, Pakistan has never been my home, I was born in the UK and have spent my whole life here (UK)- I have visited Pakistan approximately six times, and I have family in Pakistan (Grandfather, aunties, uncles and cousins) but Pakistan is not a permeant residence for me. Nevertheless, my Pakistani origin has never let me feel at home in the UK; my Pakistani identity always reminds me that I am different, and Western society has often questioned my race, culture and differences.

Colonial history has allowed colonial powers to represent, reflect, and make visible the Pakistani culture in an inferior way. Therefore, the Trinity allows me to use this space to explain how orientalist (colonial) writings, art, and Western legal systems are always radicalised and unequal to the point that the coloniser does the representation, and the other culture (Orient) is represented.

Said in Orientalism (1978) made the influential argument that scholarly writing from the West presented inaccurate, misleading and stereotyped cultural representation of the East. He argued that these biased perceptions hinder the understanding of the East, its people and its culture. The main importance of Said's Orientalism is that the systems of thinking, talking and representing, which form the basis of colonial power relations, persist. When the West colonised the East, they were forced to see something different: people of different colours, different languages, different clothes, different food, and different traditions.

The West began to interpret these differences 'authorising views of it, describing it, teaching it, settling it and ruling over it. Orientalism was a Western way of 'dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient' (Said, 1978). The West was talking about people it never truly understood- and these interpretations were then fed back to the Western societies. Applying this to Pakistan, the British ended their British Raj in 1947. Pakistanis began to migrate to the UK and brought with them their culture and traditions,

arranged marriage being one of those traditions, which was and still is misrepresented by Western society.

Before the UK even saw people of colour, they already had created an image of them in their minds by reading what colonialists were telling them. This resulted in stereotypes, which apply broad strokes to anyone deemed 'different'. Born in 1992, I often heard white British students in school make comments such as 'Are you going to marry your cousin?', 'Will you have a choice in who you marry?'- Now, 6 years after marriage, I am sometimes asked if my marriage was arranged/forced and if my husband is related to me. Although arranged marriages are a norm in many Eastern and South Asian communities, the West has placed a negative view on migrant community and their traditions surrounding marriages – creating a 'them' and 'us' and emphasising the difference.

British Pakistani women may be subject to Orientalist stereotypes, which often depict them as exotic, submissive, or oppressed. These stereotypes reduce their complex identities and experiences to simplistic and distorted narratives, perpetuating a sense of otherness and reinforcing power imbalances.

White students questioned my freedom during my time in school and college. I was often asked if I was allowed a boyfriend, if I was able to go out during the evening or if my parents would allow me to drink alcohol and go clubbing. However, due to my religion, I was not permitted to do any of the above. I often found myself explaining that other Pakistani women may do all of this covertly and that one of the main reasons you may discover Pakistani women avoiding these is mainly due to respect for their religion, culture and family.

Again, respecting my religion, not drinking alcohol, and not having sex before marriage positioned me as the 'other'. I was still different. This also applies to other aspects of Pakistani traditions and culture, such as modest dressing, the value of honour and the importance of gender segregation. These were represented as 'strange' and 'unusual' at best but also marked as 'problematic' and 'backwards. For all of these, the West used the East as a 'place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences' (Said, 2003:29).

‘Orient’ was a Western invention, portraying the East as needing civilising. In this context, Western invasion was framed as salvation, rescuing the inhabitants who were too lazy and too pleasure-focused to be fit to govern themselves. Western stereotypes suggested that Orientals were indolent, thoughtless, and unreliable (Bressler, 2010, p. 204), and by doing so, they presented themselves as superior. Stereotyping became a justification for the Western colonisation of Eastern countries and left behind a power imbalance.

Homi Bhabha (1994) makes a critical intervention in Said’s work. Disagreeing with Said’s claim that Western representation of the East is based primarily on fantasies, desires and imaginings, Bhabha insists that the Western influence is much more sinister. In Bhabha’s words, ‘stereotyping is not only the setting up of a false image but an image which becomes the scapegoat of discriminatory practices’ (Bhabha, 1994, p. 66). If the colonised were uncivilised, how does the West civilise them? According to Bhabha’s theory, the answer is clear: mimicry - imitation of the coloniser. In ‘Of Mimicry and Man’ (1984), Bhabha describes mimicry as ‘one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge’ (1994:85).

Mimicry is an ambivalent relationship between the coloniser (British) and the colonised (Pakistan), whereby colonial discourse encourages the colonised subject to ‘mimic’ the coloniser by adapting the coloniser’s language, cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values. Nevertheless, the result is never simple; rather, the result is a ‘blurred copy’ of the coloniser. As Bhabha puts it: ‘to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English’ (Bhabha, 1994, p. 87). Mimicry, therefore, locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behaviour of the colonised.

Colonised people were encouraged to mimic their colonisers. The process by which the colonised subjects were reproduced as “almost the same, but not quite” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 86). Bhabha describes mimicry as something which is copied, therefore not original, a being which is described as not original means they hold an inferior position. Pakistanis who migrated to the UK used mimicry as a survival skill; the more Western they acted by speaking English and dressing in Western clothing, the more they were accepted and more likely to get employment. However, this was, for some, only a surface assimilation.

A migrant man will never lose his authentic culture and identity. Therefore, Bhabha states that colonised people are “almost the same but not White” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 89) and that the colonial culture is always potentially and strategically insurgent. Bhabha (1994) highlights that the colonisers attempted to make the colonial subjects just like them but failed. They instead produced something similar but new. This new production is not their own nor fully belongs to the colonised subject. For the next generations of Pakistanis, this becomes an identity which is not genuinely Western nor entirely Eastern, an identity created in-between, marked by what Bhabha (1994) calls 'hybridity'. He argues, ' The colonial hybrid articulates the ambivalent space’ (Bhabha, 1994). The term ‘ambivalent space’ refers to the ‘third space’ (Ghandi, 1998). According to Bhabha, someone like me (British Pakistani) is a hybrid. I am not sure how I feel about the term. Still, it reminds me that I am somewhat of an outsider to my British identity for being Pakistani and for my Pakistani identity for being British. Although I speak both languages, I wear clothing from both cultures and socialise with people from both countries.

My dark hair and skin colour allow people from the West to form opinions about me and my life. On the other hand, being born and raised in the UK makes Pakistani society think that my Western culture dominates my life; when visiting Pakistan, I am often reminded that I have come from ‘outside’ (a different country). Hybridity is the creation of a new transcultural identity which forms within the contact zone produced by colonisation. This is when a colonialised subject mimics the coloniser's cultural habits. Creating a new identity, cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy’ (1994:4).

Thus, mimicry is ambivalent; it can be negative or positive. Negative because a mimic can be disempowered, an individual who can never be the one s/he is mimicking and will always remain inferior to the one s/he is mimicking. However, a more positive model of mimicry can be identified. Colonial subjects are equipped with their own language, cultural habits and the colonisers. The colonial subject can communicate and translate a minimum of two languages; it becomes wiser as they understand two cultures and can adapt to both

the culture of the coloniser and the culture of their society. This fusion creates new identity expressions, and many chose to denote ‘British Pakistani’ to describe this dual cultural fluency.

However, despite this outstanding achievement, a ‘colonialised’ individual is still given an inferior status. Whether you are a migrant or an individual who was born in the UK but also belongs to an ethnic minority community, the sense of ‘otherness’ weakens your identity. For example, as migrants move and settle in Britain, their identities often change; those who maintain a solid link to their country of origin may avoid finalising their dominant identity and rather emerge their original identity with their local, national and transnational experiences, creating new hybrid identities.

British Pakistani women navigate a complex space between their traditional cultural values and the expectations of the wider British society.

They often face pressures to conform to cultural norms and gender roles, which can restrict their freedom and limit their opportunities for self-expression and empowerment. Simultaneously, they engage in processes of hybridity, negotiating their multiple identities and cultural practices, blending elements of their heritage with aspects of their British identity.

Spivak, in her powerful essay ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ (1988) argues that the subaltern woman is constructed as absent, silent, or not listened to. The 'muteness' of women in postcolonial societies is the main issue which her work confronts. British Pakistani women may face silencing and limited access to decision-making processes, both within their own communities and in the wider society. Their perspectives, experiences, and concerns are frequently ignored or overlooked, perpetuating their marginalisation. The main argument of Spivak’s essay is that, between patriarchy and imperialism, the figure of woman disappears not into nothingness but into a marginal position between tradition and modernisation.

Where women are doubly exploited and underestimated in post-colonial discourse. The

The Western perspective of post-colonial studies serves to silence the third world.[2] given that post-colonial studies are a feature of the West's intellectual tradition. Spivak (1988) is hardly impressed with Western efforts to speak for the other or try to 'present her own voice'. She believes that the West is obsessed with preserving itself as a subject and that any discourse is eventually about the discoursing agents themselves.

A core problem for the poorest and most marginalised in society (the subalterns) is that they have no platform to express their concerns and no voice to affect policy debates or demand a fairer share of society's goods. Her use of the term 'subaltern' refers to a social and geographical population outside the hegemonic power structure of the colony and colonial homeland. Spivak questions this through the term the 'third world', which she believes is a creation of the West, locking non-Western cultures into an imperial representation. The subordinate position considers one's class, gender, race and culture. British Pakistani women face not only gender-based discrimination but also racism, Islamophobia, and class-based inequalities. These intersecting oppressions compound their marginalisation, creating unique challenges and limiting their access to resources, opportunities, and social mobility.

I consider the work of the Holy Trinity of the postcolonial theory as I believe it would allow me to capture the effects of colonisation on the struggle of Pakistani migrants settling into the UK. The Trinity also puts into perspective my experience and positioning in the UK. Although I am British, Said's Orientalism reminds me that my Pakistani identity is misunderstood and, therefore, I am prone to discrimination. On the other hand, Bhabha's idea of hybrid identity does not give me a stable position as a British or as a Pakistani; my dual nationality instead sits in a third space, somewhat making me feel like an outsider to both of my identities (British and Pakistani). Whereas Spivak's use of the term 'subaltern'

During the cold war the term 'third world' was used to refer to the three-quarters of the world population. This definition was based on the country's neutrality towards the war. Nations in the third world did not side the United States or the Soviet Union's ways of government (Marcin, 2012).

makes me feel inferior. By asking Can the Subaltern Speak? Subaltern is asking for permission, positioning them as the lower-ranked group who do not give orders, but follow them.

I use the work of the Trinity to demonstrate forms of oppression Pakistani women face whilst living in the UK used to describe certain countries, indicating. In modern times, the definition of 'third world' has changed to classify countries that are poor or developing and are generally characterised by (1) high rates of poverty, (2) economic and/or political instability, and (3) high mortality rates (CFI, 2020). I use the term 'third world' to refer to colonised nations now independent of a foreign power, currently classified as a developing nation.

2.4 Migration, racism and identity: the Pakistani experience in Britain.

It is not rare for someone to ask me where I am from. Normally, my answer is Accrington (a small town in Lancashire), but when further questioned, "No... where are you really from?" I pause. Despite being born and raised in the UK, that question makes one feel like their identity is being questioned, that you are forced or pushed to be an outsider, someone who is not 'truly British'. This question is only asked based on accent or skin colour - mine is my skin colour. Not only am I British, but my parents, my grandparents, and my great-grandfather are also British nationals. I now represent the fourth British generation of my family, who have lived in the UK since the early 1900s. Yet I face a society that not only doubts my nationality but also has assumptions about what my Pakistani heritage culture entails. When people who have been raised in Britain are being made to feel like an outsider, what does this mean for Pakistani migrants who do not speak English? Those who do not understand British culture. Who endure abuse because they are told that authorities will not believe them? For Pakistani migrant women asking for help is just as scary as facing DA. Racism towards Pakistanis has often stemmed from uncertainty and refusal to accept the culture. The West created a false representation of the ethnic group,

which meant that the wider Western society had been uncertain and reluctant to accept a different ethnic group.

Frantz Fanon argues that the West dehumanizes black people; they are not considered human beings. He argues that people of colour are portrayed as problematic beings locked in what he calls “a zone of nonbeing” (Fanon, 1952, p. 7).

The idea of ‘nonbeing’ allows the West to speak on behalf of non-Western people, giving the West the power to mute and marginalise non-Western societies (Spivak, 1988). Gayatri Spivak’s term gives the subaltern no space to speak (1988). The subaltern’s identity, culture and language are shaped by what the West wants to portray the non-Western society as. Eventually, the subaltern becomes nameless (Fanon, 1952). Fanon (1952) argues that each black person (and other people of colour) become nameless by virtue of being named ‘blacks’, ‘Asians’, and ‘Arabs’, more specifically for South Asians (Pakistanis) being called ‘pakis’ and ‘terrorists.

A similar argument has come to the surface regarding the acronyms BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) and BME (Black and Minority Ethnic). As a Pakistani woman, I would not like to be identified as BAME; just like many other people, I want to be described by my specific ethnic identity. The term BAME does not give me any recognition. For example, the term Asian covers Chinese and South Asian groups. South Asia is the home to at least three large nations: Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Just like many Pakistanis, I would not like to be identified as an Indian or a Bangladeshi – we speak different languages, we follow different traditions, and many of us have a different religion. However, these countries have also fought to be independent of each other. Therefore, it is not surprising that few racially minoritised people identify with the BAME or BME acronym (Bunglawala, 2019). The term lacks specificity (Saeed et al., 2019) and emphasises skin colour (Wilson, 2010). Conversely, the term does not always associate with white ethnic minorities such as Travellers and Gypsies. People from these groups are often marginalised and face disadvantages; therefore, excluding these communities from the main categorical language only marginalises them further. ‘BAME’ tries to cover a range of people, but in doing so, it masks inequality and hides differences. These given names/terms make people

anonymous because they eventually become so familiar that they close off the need for further knowledge about people from particular groups.

During my teen years, I often witnessed people call Pakistanis a 'paki', 'curry muncher' and 'terrorist'. Although these terminologies did not offend me, they did make me wonder – why my ethnic group was being labelled and why those in positions of power never put a stop to it. For example, when in secondary school, other Pakistani children were often called terrorists and Taliban. The staff members never really reacted, almost turning a blind eye to the racism, and other students would laugh and encourage the comments. On one occasion, a white British student made a comment towards my brother 'Go to the ISIS mosque'. I spoke up and defended my brother, my religion, and my identity. But then I was the one who was pulled to one side by the head of the year and was treated like the aggressor and the bully, I was the uncivilised one. The school totally disregarded the comment made by the white British student. Such a response feeds into racism, silencing the receiver.

Internalized colonialism is something people of colour, especially those living in the West, have fallen victim to. Internalized colonialism occurs when a historically oppressed group desires to mimic their colonisers, the group deemed 'superior' to themselves. In doing so marginalised groups then start oppressing themselves and others around them because they start questioning their own self-worth, their identity, and their way of life. They are socialised into believing (by their coloniser) that their race, culture, language, and beliefs are somehow inferior, lesser, shameful, and undesirable.

Therefore, there is no surprise when I say that I, now as a mother, worry about my son, who represents the fifth generation. What is he going to face? Will he get a good job? Will he be bullied because of his dark complexion? Will he be accepted in a good institution, or will his Pakistani identity fail him? Will his name 'Israfil Hussain' on an application form create a stereotypical assumption? The same worries my father had for me when I told him I wanted to join the British Army 'They are very racist, they will call you names, I know grown men who left the army because they faced severe racism'. In other words, I could become a victim of racially motivated violence purely because of my skin colour,

something I cannot change (nor do I want to). But it holds me back or makes me feel judged and looked at.

From the very beginning of my PhD, I referred to white people as Caucasian without putting much thought into the meaning. I believed the term Caucasian was a respectful way to address someone of a white origin. I did not know that my choice of words was contradicting what I was fighting for (marginalised groups). Using the term Caucasian, I was feeding into the idea that white people are superior to all other ethnic groups (Moses, 2017) but also justifying their power over all other groups. Ongoing discrimination and racism are visible, but if there is anything to learn about colonisation, it is that it has left a legacy of oppression and the idea of superiority and inferiority, which is structurally engraved into our lives today. I recall that in 2020, Boris Johnson (prime minister at the time) stated that "Britain is not a racist country". Months after this statement, MPs voted against a proposed amendment to the Domestic Abuse Bill, which intended to protect migrant women from abuse. The question we should be asking is: why in the UK do we still treat people of colour as inferior to others? Britain is a multicultural country that has seen migration for over a century yet is still unsure about the 'other'.

2.4.1 Racism and migration

The root of Western racism lies within colonisation, migration and decolonisation. The foundation of colonisation was based on the invasion of one's land, home, and life, as well as conquering and exploiting the population. Colonialism forces its own values, culture and language upon the colonised. Then, one day, colonisers decide to give the country its independence, but by doing so, nothing looks the same; the place has lost its originality and is now a vivid copy of its coloniser's idea of what the land should look like. With Pakistan (Indian subcontinent) as my sole focus, it can be argued that not only did the West (British) brutalise the Indian subcontinent (Cyril John Radcliffe's partition line, creating the largest on foot migrations in human history) but also placed South Asian people within a hierarchy, separating the colonised and the coloniser. This hierarchy/ racial categorisation is firmly built in our society today. It is a framework which has not only allowed the

justification of Western domination but also allowed the West to treat people of colour as the inferior race. This race does not deserve equal rights because they are different.

Nevertheless, Britain called out for help after and during both World War I/two- both times, men from the Indian subcontinent migrated to Britain to help the war-affected country- filling in the labour gaps and rebuilding its economy. Control over people of colour is shown via the Aliens Order of 1920. Just like using others' land, the British picked and chose how and when they allowed people of colour to enter their borders. For example, men of colour answered the British appeal to help with the (First World War) war effort. Nevertheless, when the help was no longer required, the British government processed an order (Coloured Alien Seamen Order of 1925) which not only limited the arrival and settlement of 'coloured' seamen to the country but also labelled them as 'aliens'. This label categorised them and emphasised that Britain was not the homeland of these 'aliens.

Although the order is said to be the 'first attempt by a British government to restrict the employment of black workers' (Lane, 2010), the term 'aliens' alone had a long-lasting effect on all men of colour. I say this based on my own great-grandfather's experience in Britain. My great-grandfather was a sailor who often sailed to Britain distributing supplies. In the 1940s, many former Pakistani sailors, including my great-grandfather, began to leave ports and settle on land. Not only did the 1925 order influence the structure of employment, but it also led to harassment and racial discrimination in housing. It was not abnormal for houses on rent to have the by-line 'No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs' on the window (Favell, 2020, p. 4). Andrews (2017) adds that "No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs'. meant 'No Blacks = No Foreigners = No Immigrants" (Andrews, 2017).

It is interesting to see how Britain rejected sailors 'aliens' via legislation and, once again, reponed the doors to colonial others after the Second World War, allowing them to work and settle in the UK through the British Nationality Act (1948). Nevertheless, the racism continued, including the discrimination of housing, something which not only my great-grandfather experienced but also my grandfather, who spoke about their living conditions. My great-grandfather and grandfather lived in one house (Birmingham, Small Heath) with at least 10 other men. The struggle to find housing meant many single men who had

migrated in the 1940s, including those who arrived after the 1948 Act, would struggle to build families.

Mass migration among Pakistanis took place between the 1950s and 1960s. These were mainly labour migrants (men) who answered the call of appeal and were recruited to industries (Peach, 1996). Although these men aimed to find jobs and fill the labour gap, many employers would not hire men of colour due to their race and lack of English skills.

My grandfather was one of the advantaged Pakistani men who knew how to speak and was able to read and write in English. He migrated to the UK in 1958 to join his father. My father tells me how my grandfather found his first job in the UK- 'My dad was street wondering, he saw a billboard saying, 'vacancies available', he went to enquire about that job, and they asked him if he could read and made him read the billboard, he got the job, at the coin factory making money'. My father told me that the other men with whom my grandad shared a house were surprised that he got a job as soon as he came to the UK. Some men in that property had been searching for months, even years and were unsuccessful. Now that I look back at my grandfather's experience, I wonder whether employment was based on how well he mimicked the dominant culture's idea of 'good enough'. But mimicry and copying will always make the person inferior to the one he is trying to resemble (see section 2.3).

Numerous studies have been conducted on migration policies and Pakistani migrants in the UK (Evans, 1983; Peach, 1996; Somerville, 2007; Castles & Miller, 2009).
These studies have shown us that in response to the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act, the pressure was on the current labour migrants to call their families to the UK before the freezing of unskilled labourer visas in 1964 (Luthra & Platt, 2017). This was the prime period for families to reunite, creating a family-based chain migration. Fearing that the act would take its toll, my grandfather returned to Pakistan in 1962 and then returned to the UK with my grandma the same year. After families arrived in the UK, we often read about where Pakistanis settled and what industries they worked in. But I am looking past that and pulling out the invisible. I want to focus on the gender that has fallen through the knowledge production process.

2.4.2 Invisibility and Exclusion of Women

We already have a clear picture of Pakistani migration from 1940-60, which was typically male-dominated. In the extensive literature around Pakistani migration to the UK, we have lost its women. Using my family's history as an illustration of these processes, I have never mentioned my great-grandmother, not because I do not wish to talk about her but because no one has ever mentioned her to me, even when my dad told me about my family's migration history, he ever mentioned his grandma. But nor did I ever ask. It is only now that I have realised the absence of women in the discussion of the whole migration process and the absence of women in my own family's migration process.

Recalling the title of a foundational collection of black feminist thought 'All the Women Are White; All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave' (Hull, Bell-Scott, Smith, 1982), I want to suggest the problem we have today is with not only race but also gender. The title mentions white women and black men, and as Crenshaw (1989) argues, 'it highlights the tendency to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analyses. Such an approach totally disregards WOC, who are not only marginalised but also silenced, women who are not given the right to be or can only emerge if they are brave.

This is what I see when I talk about migration. I see WOC who are not deemed to be important, not 'brave' enough. Their identity and position in the UK are solely based on their husband's and/or fathers' migration experience. But what about the experience of women like my mother, who migrated to the UK at 15 because she married my father? She was a child who left her parents, siblings, village, and country to join my father (British-born) and his family. She was not just an outsider because she was not a British-born national but also an outsider at her affinal home. Women like my mother are not only marriage migrants but women who formed a crucial part of history. Similarly, some of the first generation of British Pakistani women also have created the next British-born Pakistani generation., yet their experiences have been absent with limited impact on historical gender mainstreaming.

It is not uncommon to see a middle-aged Pakistani woman in the UK wearing a salwar kameez and a headscarf, going to the local market, visiting the doctors, driving on the road, and picking her children up from school. It is also not uncommon for a Western person to look at these women and assume that Pakistani women are oppressed because they are not dressed in a Western way or that they are uneducated if they are not able to speak English.

Despite women's involvement in the world, there is little acknowledgement in the Indian `subaltern' traditions and within the mainstream of White feminism. Shrivastava (2017) in her article 'Invisible Women in History and Global Studies: Reflections from an Archival Research Project', specifically points out some of the historical events where women's contribution has been key to the emerging 'world's largest mass movement' (Shrivastava, 2017: 6). Shrivastava (2017) agrees that there has been the exclusion of data on women's participation in human history. An example of this is shown during the Indian Civil Disobedience movement in the 1930s; women participated in protests, marches, political rallies, and picketing expeditions; on the other side, many women were imprisoned, serving various lengths of prison sentences. Nevertheless, postcolonial studies, including postcolonial feminism and subaltern studies (Spivak, 1985; O'Hanlon, 1988), have attempted to bring to light who are ignored. However, these attempts have been ignored and again silenced by the West.

When we cannot see successful Pakistani women in the UK, this is because the media and the scholarly interest do not lie in this; it is easier to assume that Pakistani men are uncivilised and their women are illiterate. In other words, feeding into the idea of 'otherness'.

2.4.3 The making of the 'other'.

Although colonialisation is over, its impact is still alive. The orientalising representation of the East and Eastern culture has opened the doors of discrimination against people of colour. Bell Hooks, for example, in her book 'Feminist Theory: From Margin to Centre' (1984) states:

> "To be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body…. across those tracks was a world we could work in as maids, as janitors, as prostitutes, as long as it was in a service capacity. We could enter that world, but we could not live there. We always had to return to the margin, to cross the tracks, to shacks and abandoned houses on the edge of town" (hooks, 1984:341).

hooks expresses that although people of colour were able to provide their services to Western society, they did not belong (t)here, so once their usefulness was over, people of colour had to leave the centre and crawl back to the margin. The margin is a place where you can see the outside world, but the outside world does not see you, and when they do, they either look at you and think you are dangerous or inferior. Despite living alongside people from the Indian subcontinent for over 100 years, allowing them to be maids in your homes in India, allowing them to raise your children, allowing them to work for your companies, and then allowing them to help Britain rebuild itself, the British/West still shows hostility and racism towards Pakistani people.

In a marginalising, orientalising gesture, the dominant cultures often see honour-related abuse as an Eastern, 'other culture' problem. The assumption that honour is only an 'other culture' problem automatically tells the wider British society that there is an 'us' and a 'them'. Secondly, prefacing the term with 'so-called' allows the West to prove that these problems do not fit within Western culture and that there is no need to consider them within Western policies.

Mohanty reports the Western tendency to speak and report on the victimisation of the 'powerless' Third World women with their 'barbaric' family and fundamentalist cultural values such as the honour code. These discourses tend to homogenise all racialised 'brown-skinned' women, ignoring any markers of difference (e.g., ethnic, geographical, economic, etc.), and label them as victims of patriarchal cultural oppression, which enables the code of honour to thrive.

Inderpal Grewal (2013) argues that the concept of honour killing has grown out of hegemonic understandings of gendered Orientalism in which the Global East (and its diaspora) is constructed as being naturally governed by patriarchy, while the West is considered to have progressively evolved beyond it. Grewal seeks to challenge this idea; instead, she argues that Western nations have outsourced the concept of patriarchy to the Global East or other "zones that are believed to be anachronistic to the rest of the country" (Grewal, 2013: 2). Implying that the idea of honour and patriarchy only exists 'over there'. Some Westen feminists and activists, such as Phyllis Chesler, further argue that honour crimes are "primarily a Muslim-on-Muslim crime" (Chesler, 2009, p. 62). Kenneth and Dutton (1989) further add that Inderpal Grewal (2013) argues that honour killing has grown out of hegemonic understandings of gendered Orientalism in the Global East. This clearly shows how the West has the power to describe the 'other' as the problem.

Spivak (1988) points to the fact that research is, in a way, always colonial in defining the 'other', the 'over there' subject, as the object of study and as something that knowledge should be extracted from and brought back 'here' (Spivak, 1988). I wish to treat honour as central to ensure it is represented as the structure core to the women in my study rather than appropriated and curated for postcolonial or feminist studies. In acknowledging the centrality, I chose to give the marginalised a voice they are not allowed to have in the mainstream framing.

2.4.4 Lost in migration and shifting identities

The first generation of migrants really believed that their stay in Britain was short; they intended to save money and eventually return to their countries. However, this never

happened, and returning became a myth (Anwar, 1979). I do not know what my great-grandfather's original plan was. Still, when my grandfather returned to the UK with my grandmother, the UK became their new permanent home, especially when my father and his brothers were born (the first British-born generation in my family).

But my grandfather still had land, a house he built, and three shops in Pakistan. We still have these today—the shops are now on rent, and the house, with permission, is occupied by a homeless family. For the first and second migrated generations, what was once a direct experience of life in their country of origin was now only accessible via a phone call or a short visit.

Some people feel their attachment to their homeland diminishes over time (Cohen, 2008; Vertovec, 2009). Especially those who migrated to the UK at a young age or via marriage would experience a range of different formative experiences, some of which are drawn from mainstream life in the UK and others from households where they had clear links to the country of origin (culture, food, social ties). For example, my mother, who migrated to the UK at the age of 15 (married migrant), often says that her childhood was taken away from her and that she had to come to the UK and adapt to life here. She is 50 now, and when she visits Pakistan, she wants to return to the UK after a short stay because the UK is where she has spent most of her life. It is the country where her children were born. Pakistan is where her father and some of her siblings are; it is where her mother and sister are buried, so the emotional tie will always remain. This creates the ‘third space’. The third space is a place where hybrid identifications are possible—a place where culture overlaps. Homi K. Bhabha introduced the term third space. He describes the third space as a transition space, where political, aesthetic or everyday practices subvert postcolonial power relations and norms. A third space is not a physical place; it is much more a space where hybrid identifications are possible and cultural transformations can happen (Bhabha. 1994, 1996).

For me, the third space is not about creating a new identity but rather being torn between two identities. As a British Pakistani, I need to fit into both British and Pakistani cultures. Speaking English, Punjabi and Urdu, wearing both Western and Eastern clothing,

celebrating Pakistani and Muslim holidays but working and studying in Britain – each, in turn, sometimes makes me 'too British' for the Pakistani community and 'too Pakistani' for the British community. Each sometimes makes the position an outcast: I have felt like this on two occasions.

The first was when I joined the University of Cumbria and moved to Carlisle, a predominately White city; I often felt like I never fit in. Firstly, there was no halal food available; the situation forcefully made me a vegetarian. Secondly, the month of Ramadan was very different as I was unable to contact any local mosques for a Ramadan calendar. Thirdly, I often felt like people would stare at me whilst I was doing my Asda shop or even walking through town. My time in Carlisle made me miss my culture, my community, and my traditional cuisine, and it was clear that I was too Pakistani in Carlisle. On the other hand, my visit to my affinal family in Pakistan was the opposite; I was too British for the village because I did not wear a scarf to cover my head, I disliked the traditional drinks, I was afraid of certain animals (the family's livestock), and when speaking Punjabi, I would also add some English to my sentences.

This third space creates a sense of double consciousness, a sense of belonging and alienation. Migrants and return migrants share a sense of being split: Du Bois (1994) looks at black Americans; 'One ever feels his two-ness, – an American, a Negro: two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings' (Du Bois, 1994; 5). Research conducted by Werbner (2015) explains that a migrant feels the need to manage the insider and outsider perspectives at once, seeing themselves through the disapproving eyes of those who stayed at home (the county of origin).

Pakistanis formulating a new identity consider it to be the hardest part of living in Britain (Metlo, 2012: 18). Being part of two contexts, two countries, two sets of values, which are often different and contradictory, trying to suspend total assimilation in the host society, Pakistanis had to find a way to identify themselves (Al-Rasheed, 1994).

2.4.5 Conclusion

The arrival of migrant people who looked different, acted differently, and lived a different lifestyle unsettled many in British society. Although the colonisers tried to understand the other, it is important to understand that there is a difference between knowledge of 'other' people in order to understand them and knowledge of the 'other' to show power over them or to alienate them and their way of life.

After all, there is a significant difference between the will to understand for the purposes of coexistence and the attempt to understand for the purpose of domination and power over the other.

The aftermath of colonisation has proven to be lethal to some British Pakistani women. Still, it is haunting to the extent that even I, the fourth-generation British-born Pakistani in my family, must experience discrimination and racism mainly triggered by a false representation of my culture. Living as we do – as the 'other' – I can relate to bell hooks' following statement: ' We developed a particular way of seeing reality. We looked both from the outside in and the inside out. We focused our attention on the centre as well as the margin' (hooks 1984). In doing so, we can never truly belong to one group, neither the centre nor the margin. I can also understand how being torn between two cultures can be problematic, especially if your family does not want any Western influence on you. This then leaves an uncertain person confused, isolated, and, in some incidents, a victim of abuse.

When investigating issues of migration, discrimination and racism, we often lose the visibility of women. Their lived experiences as migrants, victims of discrimination and racism are often overshadowed by 'white women and black men'. This also shows that WOC and their vulnerabilities are not well documented, and those women that we do hear from rarely make it to the mainstream knowledge production process. Therefore, I intend to be the voice for these invisible women. I also propose documenting Pakistani women and their journey out of DA. I use the word 'journey' to capture women's experiences in the UK as British-born women and as migrated women and their experiences with the UK authorities, laws, practices and regulations. This will help show how the state also influences the victimisation of these women.

The next chapter uses postcolonial feminism to represent Pakistani women. The chapter explains how the misrepresentation of marginalised women creates systematic inequalities, structural intersectionalities and structural violence. I go on to discuss how Pakistani women are vulnerable to forms of abuse which fall outside the mainstream understanding of DA, covering HBA, dowry abuse and international abandonment.

Chapter Three: Initial focus and grounding in literature

My study gives an insight into Pakistani women, their migration process, victimisation, their experiences of abuse and their individual journeys in the UK. For each of these women, equality looks different. Although they share the same race and culture, their experiences differ. Sharing one characteristic does not mean that you are completely the same. For example, I have friends who are also Pakistani, but their language and traditional practices differ from mine, mainly due to their geographical location of origin. For example, my friend from Kashmir told me that it is forbidden for any female to have a nose piercing. But for many other Pakistanis, nose piercings are acceptable for all females, mainly to look pretty and to wear a nose ring on the day of her wedding. Another friend from Attok has a completely different dress code to me. Her specific culture also has its own traditional dance, and many of their elderly women have homemade tattoos on their faces- dots on their chins, the middle of their forehead and sometimes on the corner of their eyes. My point here is that race and culture are undoubtedly difficult to understand and trace. Just like there is no one answer for all races, there is no one answer for a global sisterhood. White feminists' emphasis on a global sisterhood, which tended to focus on White, middle-class, Western, heterosexual women, has led to the marginalisation of issues of class, heterosexism, racism and the colonial legacy as they affected women's cultural and political and economic productions (Plain & Sellers,2007).

3.1 Importance of representation.

One group does not represent or can speak for all. It is important to remember that 'though all women are women, no woman is only a woman' (Spelman, 1990, p. 187).

I use the lens of postcolonial feminism to seek to challenge those White feminists who often universalise and homogenise women's issues and, moreover, misbelieve that their writing represents all women equally. Postcolonial feminism allows me to represent Pakistani women, their history, colonial impact and intersectional disadvantages. It allows me to identify and correct the 'blind spots' of White feminists, criticised for not capturing 'racism, nationalism and class conflict' (Vickers, 2002, p. 6). Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1986), reflecting on Said's Orientalism, adds that mainstream feminists often disregard non-Western women, describing them as the 'third world' women, as an embodiment of underdevelopment, oppressive traditions and powerless others (Mohanty, 2003). In the white lens, women from South Asia are often perceived as victims of male-dominated cultures, backwardness, religious and patriarchal structures, helpless and unenlightened about the gravity of their plight. These women, including Pakistani women, are portrayed to be in desperate need of the so-called civilising forces of equality and rights, which are so proudly embraced in liberal White cultures. Postcolonial feminism is fed by the idea that equality looks different for every woman. As Kamla Bhasin (2000) states, "After all, women are not only women. We also belong to a caste, class, race, religion, etc, and this affects our situation and power" (Bhasin, 2000, p. 65). This challenges the idea of universal oppression, instead speaking to highly contextual specifics. Following Mohanty's critique, Gayatri Spivak discusses the idea of double colonisation of third-world women through her reinterpretation of subalternity. She writes about the difficulty of people from the low caste, working class, and women from a tribe and having their voices heard clearly. Spivak adds that being poor, black, and a woman means that a person can experience more than singular or double oppression. In the early 1980s, several critics explored Black women's difficulties in working with popular feminist discourses. Helen Carby, in her essay 'White Woman Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood' explains that coloured women are barely made visible within its discourses. Chris Weedon (1997) also argues that White feminists tended to downplay differences in class, race, sexuality and location between women. One of the main views Bell Hooks (1984) holds is that to be a feminist, you need to want for all people, male or female, freedom from sexist role patterns, domination, and oppression.

In her book 'Margin to Centre' she describes this barrier between two communities, the black people who lived in the margin and the White people who lived at the centre: 'We could enter that world, but we could not live there. We always had to return to the margin' (Hooks, 1984, p. 9). Hooks adds that the feminist theory appears from privileged Western women who live at the centre. These women lack knowledge and awareness of the women in the margin. Middle-class white Western women were able to make their interests the primary focus of the feminist movement and employ this commonality that made their condition equal when it came to oppression (Hooks, 1984).

On the other hand, there are some White feminist movements which apply to WOC. For example, third-wave feminist Judith Butler (1990, 1993) holds the view that gender is influenced by language, performance and social norms. There are two significant points which I would like to address here. First, in South Asia, one term – *Linga* - is used to describe sex and gender (Bhasin, 2000, p. 3). The terminology makes it clear that in South Asia, a male will always become a man, and a female will always become a woman. This supports the work of Butler, who states that gender is a concept based on language and how it 'understands' and 'projects' sex/gender (Anderson, 2004). Secondly, for many women from the Middle East and South Asia, the argument of sex and gender may not be as necessary yet. These women are still fighting to be heard by the West, many are still victims of patriarchy and male-dominated societies, and others are still fighting for equality, the right to education, the right to vote and the right to practice their religion. Using the veil (burqa) as an example, for some White feminists, wearing the veil is a sign of oppression, lack of agency, male domination, ignorance, and backwardness (Abu-Lughod, 2013). The wearing of a veil was used to justify the U.S. war in Afghanistan (Le Renard, 2014). Wearing the veil takes different forms in different Islamic communities and has different meanings. It is affected by history, class, piety, and modernism. For many women, wearing a burqa provided women in Pakistan and Afghanistan with freedom; they were able to move freely out of gender-segregated living spaces, where gender segregation in these communities is a moral requirement (Legate et al., 2020). Muslim women are still ignored, and the West fights against the wearing of a burqa, stating it is a sign of oppression.

White feminists have ignored or silenced non-Western women with their own powerful voices. For example, Bell Hooks (1984) writes about her experience in a graduate class on feminist theory: 'When I criticised this oversight, white women directed an anger and hostility at me that was so intense, I found it difficult to attend class'… 'I was told that they were not angry; I was the angry one.' (hooks, 1984:12). Using Hooks' experience, it can be argued that White feminists are threatened and feel that there might be a possible shift in power dynamics, and therefore, immediately go on the defensive and attack the person raising the questions. White feminists have overcome and achieved a great deal. But when women from the East face the same problem that White feminists have overcome, they avoid the women who need help. An example of this is shown in the work of Alice Schwarzer, a German scholar who looks at the Islamic culture and argues that migrants and refugees with an Islamic cultural background carry their traditional sexism with them (Fekete, 2006). In this narrative, the West has long overcome the patriarchal structure, voicing that feminists protect free women. As a result, gender inequality becomes a problem of the other. The other here will be the Muslim men and women alone.

3.2 Postcolonial feminism(s)

Postcolonial feminism is criticised by mainstream feminism, arguing that postcolonial feminism weakens the wider feminist movement by dividing it (Mohanty, 1986). To uphold their superiority, White feminism ignored non-Western women, fearing that non-Western women's contribution to White feminism would weaken the White feminist movement (Mohanty, 1986). White feminists are unaware of the extent to which their perspectives reflect race, class and cultural biases (hooks, 1984).

Postcolonial feminist writing and criticism emerge from socially specific struggles, and until White feminism learns to listen to these voices, it is unlikely to move beyond an appropriative position (Plain & Sellers, 2007). This lack of understanding amongst White feminists and their failure to give due regard to indigenous movements and their different forms of feminist intervention has created this gap.

This gap has, conversely, allowed critics to name feminist movements as unpatriotic, un-Islamic, un-Indian and so on. Here, the failure to address the multiple oppressions of non-Western women jeopardises the validity and legitimacy of the feminist movement. White feminists rarely pay attention or talk about women from the East or South who are stoned to death for adultery, barred from school, or beaten for showing an ankle or wearing high-heeled shoes, how they were prohibited from leaving the house unless accompanied by a male relative (Whitcher, 2005). South Asian feminism is a response to local issues in South Asian countries. Narayan (1997) describes how feminist groups in South Asia have taken up a wide range of issues, including dowry-murder and dowry-related abuse of women; police rape of women in custody; issues relating to women's poverty, forced marriage and HBV (Narayan, 1997).

South Asia consists of countless cultures and various beliefs; as a result, the feminists in South Asia have found it difficult to create a clear, visible movement (Parekh, 1999). Traditional practices, education, gender equality, and the veil are often discussed among South Asia feminists. For example, Gandhi, the leader of the Indian independence movement, spoke up for women and traditions 'It is good to swim in the waters of tradition, but to sink in them is suicide' (Parekh, 1999, p. 95). This is a good example of the traditional practice sati mentioned above. Spivak argues that we hear about what sati is. However, we never hear from the sati-performing brown women themselves (O'Hanlon, 2017). What Spivak means by this is that sati was banned by the British, and the women of India, no matter what class or race, women, Hindu or Muslim, had no say in colonial production. Lata Mani (1987:152), an Indian feminist, states that in India, a sati woman was not a victim. She was a heroine, able to withstand the blaze from the fire of her husband's funeral. Spivak, in her essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988) has emphasised the dangers of letting the subaltern (oppressed) women speak without finding that the West constrains their essential subjectivity. How can a subaltern woman speak if she is oppressed, and how does an oppressed person have a voice? Subaltern people are often left without a voice, leaving these marginalised women in colonial texts without a language to speak nor the attention of the colonial process.

Additionally, some scholars in the West reject specific movements created by White feminists, movements that many of them thought merely replicated oppressive bourgeois logic and strategies for gaining power. This includes the work of Adriana Cavarero and Julia Kristeva, who consider 'who is speaking', 'The other voice', 'The speaking subject' and its own unconscious experience, and how the pressures of other social structures influence it. Spivak warns, in the discourse on sati, 'one never encounters the testimony of the women's voice-consciousness'. It must be remembered that however realistic the widow's voice may seem, they are represented, created and framed by a Western perspective.

Moving on to education, poverty is large in South Asia. Some families cannot afford the fees, others see it as an unnecessary luxury, and others as a liability. Here, the liability is interesting. Jean Drèze states that an educated girl means marrying an educated boy, the bigger status of the boy's family means a bigger dowry, and for poverty-stricken families, it is unthinkable to meet the dowry demands of an educated groom (Drèze & Sen, 2002, p. 162). Taliban is another restriction, preventing young women from education. We often hear about Malala Yousafzai. But there are so many other girls still under the Taliban's control, still unable to go to school, and we still do not talk about them. Malala Yousafzai is now a Pakistani activist for female education, and she says, "We realise the importance of our voices only when we are silenced" (Yousafzai, 2014). "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful" (Yousafzai, 2014). In her world, everyone was and still is silent. The Western world has accepted Malala but again ignored other girls under the Taliban's control.

Postcolonial feminist theory has always concerned itself with the relationship between White feminists and their indigenous counterparts. In their eagerness to voice the concern of the colonised women, White feminists have overlooked racial, cultural and historical specificities that mark the condition of these women. In so doing, they have imposed White feminist models on colonised women and, thereby, worked as an oppressor. Using postcolonial feminism as my theoretical standpoint gives me the space to question White feminists on their tenancy to treat third-world women as the other.

Postcolonial feminism considers what core (norm) in the Western world is and what is appointed as 'other', mainly characterised by migration. For example, the tradition of arranged marriage, the practice of dowry and the culture of honour. All three traditions covertly carry a corrupt thread of abuse- arranged marriage leading to forced marriage, dowry leading to dowry-related abuse and affinal kin abuse, and the culture of honour leading to honour-based abuse and, in extreme cases, honour killings. All of these are represented as the 'other's problem, falling outside the mainstream understating of women and abuse.

3.3 Pakistani women, abuse and definitions of DA

The question remains- what happens to Pakistani women who experience abuse which falls outside the mainstream understanding of DA. If all DA awareness and service provision are based on Western women and their experiences, how do we identify specific types of abuse prone to Pakistani women? How do Pakistani women seek help? And what intersectional disadvantages Pakistani women face whilst living in the UK. To explore these questions, we first need to state the current definition of DA under The Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

> "Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is 'domestic abuse' if— A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive. Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following— (a) physical or sexual abuse; (b)violent or threatening behaviour; (c)controlling or coercive behaviour; (d)economic abuse (e)psychological, emotional or other abuse" (The Domestic Abuse Act 2021).

Previously, the UK relied heavily on the cross-government definition:

> "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

> • psychological • physical • sexual • financial • emotional. The definition of domestic abuse also includes honour-based abuse (HBA) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)" (2013:2).

It is widely accepted that DA affects victims in comparable ways. However, there is also evidence to suggest that those from a minority background, particularly from a migrant community, are disproportionately impacted by DA (Gill, 2009). It is noted that WOC are also at risk of facing specific types of abuse, which differ from the mainstream understanding of DA. For example, Pakistani women (and ethnic minority women) are prone to HBA, although the term is captured in the cross-government accepted definition (DA). HBA is not stated nor defined legally under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The failure to recognise such abuse showed that Britain is contributing towards structural violence and racial blindness, creating systemic inequality (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005).

Although my thesis focuses solely on Pakistani women, during this review, I grasp the experience of other ethnic minority communities who do not fit in mainstream society and are silenced during the knowledge production process. Postcolonial feminism allows me to demonstrate racial blindness and white privilege in a more systematic manner.

3.4 The systematic inequality – Structural intersectionality

People of ethnic minority face what Platt (2007:70) calls the 'ethnic penalty', which is the poverty and socio-economic disadvantage that minority groups face because of their ethnicity. What is disconcerting about Platt's (2007) research is that it shows lesser outcomes for ethnic minority groups with the same level of qualifications and language skills as their white Western counterparts. Structural Inequality for minority groups is pervasive and extends to the criminal justice system, healthcare, housing, and schooling.

Within the criminal justice system, institutional racism against minority groups has been well documented, particularly within the police force (Bowling & Phillips, 2002).

“In comparison to the white group – [arrest rates are] twice as high for Black and mixed ethnic women and were three times higher for Black men” (Lammy Review, 2017, p. 5). Whilst people from ethnic minority groups are subjected to over-policing for certain crimes, Belur’s (2008) research highlights the under-policing of DA in minority communities due to ‘cultural sensitivity’. The history of distrust between ethnic minority communities and the police (Bowling & Phillips, 2002) translates to chronic underreporting of certain crimes within minority communities, resulting in many opting to use informal support services (Belur, 2008) or self-reporting to DA services (Imkaan, 2020). Mistrust of the police has been intensified by practices such as using male translators for female victims or responding inappropriately to abusive practices such as HBA (Belur, 2008).

The institutional racism extends beyond the criminal justice system to services such as DA agencies, health care professionals and social services. Research with refuges in England ‘found stereotyping and some racist attitudes to be operating at three levels: among (other) service users, among the workers, and at the state level (for example, through immigration policies that prevent women from accessing services or public funds)’ (Izzidein, 2008, p. 20).

Abuse affects people in different ways; ethnic minority people will have specific factors which can often compound the effects of the abuse, such as culture and racism. This can be explained through the concept of ‘intersectionality’, which recognises that people of ethnic minority groups experience the world (including domestic abuse) differently to their Western white counterparts as they are having to contend with further barriers due to their race (Crenshaw, 1991). Crenshaw (1991) divides intersectionality into ‘structural’ and ‘political’ intersectionality. Structural intersectionality describes the multiple layers of oppression experienced by WOC due to both their race and gender. Crenshaw (1991) also introduces the concept of ‘political intersectionality’ in which WOC are caught in the margins of feminism and anti-racist agendas as the two can often have conflicting agendas and ignore the multiple identities held by WOC (Gill, 2009).

However, Gill's (2009) research highlights that intersectionality is not a static and cumulative sum of oppressions but a 'dynamic' process in which individual experiences and different understandings of culture can influence one's experiences of violence. Kwong-Lai Poon (2011: 124) recognises that intersectionality is a complex weaving of identities such as class, disability, sexual orientation, and internal factors. Kwong-Lai Poon (2011) states that 'We need to explore how the experience of violence is mediated, not only through homophobia and heterosexism, but also through privilege (whiteness) and other forms of oppression; how meanings of violence, power, control, agency, strength, and resiliency intersect with social dimensions such as race, gender, class, disability, and sexual orientation within relationships' (Kwong-Lai Poon, 2011: 124).

Statistically, DA has been shown to follow a different trend within minority communities. The Office for National Statistics (2019) data shows that in 2018-19, the rates of DA amongst ethnic minority communities were higher than their white counterparts. White victims represented 5.6% of the victim population, Asian/ Asian British people made up 3.8%, and black victims made up 7.1%, whilst mixed race victims made up 12.9% (ONS, 2019; table 7b). Furthermore, Gill (2017:560) argues that 'black and native women are more likely to be murdered by an intimate partner.' This is supported by statistics which show that '59% of all homicides in London in 2005–06 were of BAME women' (Thiara & Gill, 2009, p. 43).

These figures do not completely represent the problem due to chronic underreporting of DA. Data shows that underreporting is even more acute within minority communities, and findings from Imkaan (2020) strongly suggest that ethnic minority women were more likely to stay in abusive relationships due to the barriers associated with leaving. Safelives' (2020) dataset with 42000 clients showed that 'BME clients suffered abuse for 1.5 times longer before seeking help compared to those from a white British or Irish background'.

Research shows that a woman facing DA must make 11 contacts with agencies before getting the help she needs; however, this rises to 17 if she is BAME' (Brittain et al., 2005). In some close communities, in particular the South Asian community, there is also a strong

notion of protecting the community and cultural integrity by not disclosing the abuse, and this pressure can come from the community or individuals. Disclosing abuse can be seen as bringing shame (sharam) to the family and the community (Izzidein, 2008). Research by Safelives (2015) has also shown that some ethnic minority individuals were apprehensive about disclosing the abuse due to 'specific issues related to racism including stereotypes about refugees and migrants.

A further barrier to leaving DA faced by ethnic minority communities is immigration status. According to Safelives, 1 in 5 ethnic minority women have no recourse to public funds, and a subsection of these victims do not report domestic abuse due to their insecure immigration status. The current political climate has created a hostile atmosphere for migrant women, and some do not come forward as some agencies turn them away due to their immigration status and many fear deportation, which is often used as a control tactic by the perpetrator (Imkaan, 2020). 92% of ethnic minority migrant women surveyed by Imkaan (2020) reported that their perpetrator used their immigration status against them, which acted as a barrier to asking for help. Due to the limitations of the domestic violence rule (the immigration rule for migrants on a spouse visa), the threat of deportation is not only perceived. However, it can be a real threat to migrant women (Belur, 2008).

After leaving abusive relationships, research has shown that ethnic minority women face additional obstacles. Ethnic minority women are overrepresented in refuge spaces, with ethnic minority women occupying 6 in 10 refugee spaces despite occupying only 13% of the general population (Lavatt et al., 2020). Representation of refugees could be symptomatic of many complex factors which are prevalent in the ethnic minority community. Socioeconomic status is one factor which has meant that some victims have ended up as refugees as they have lower incomes and fewer savings, which would otherwise enable them to flee safely. The social isolation of migrant women can also mean that they are unable to rely on an extended support network for housing when fleeing domestic abuse (BAWSO, 2020).

3.4.1 Why Pakistani women?

In Pakistan, DA is an endemic social issue in the cities and rural areas, which is increasing at an alarming rate. Generally, DA is considered a private family issue without any appropriate focus on assessment, intervention, and solutions in Pakistani society. Women must bear violence and discrimination daily due to the misuse of social and cultural values and religious norms in Pakistani society. The factors associated with DA in Pakistan are the low economic status of women, lack of awareness about women's rights, lack of education, falsified beliefs, imbalanced empowerment issues between males and females, male-dominant social structure, and lack of support from the government. As a British Pakistani woman, I often come across Pakistani women who are aware of the injustices they face. Yet, they do not come forward to prevent themselves from becoming victims of DA, nor do they seek help because they are too young, afraid, or they believe that they must remain loyal to their kin group.

Several reasons have contributed towards my decision to research Pakistani women: (1) I am a British Pakistani woman; (2) Pakistani women are under-researched and underrepresented; (3) the patriarchal society oppresses them; (4) cultural norms and capitalism silence them; and (5) The acceptance of gender-based violence in the Pakistani society with no real consequences for the perpetrators. We do not need to look that far back into history to see the injustice against Pakistani women. The #MeToo movement in 2017 and the high-profile case of gender-based abuse in 2021 alone show the hardship Pakistani women are faced with. In 2017, my social media was flooded with women disclosing their experience of sexual violence, tagging their posts with #metoo, a campaign that ruled over social media for several days. It was empowering on one hand to see women speaking up and showing solidarity but also disturbing on the other to wake up to enormous volumes of stories of sexual violence and abuse at the same time. However, the number was not a surprise to many of us. It reflected an outrageous fact that at least 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced sexual and gender-based abuse in their lifetime.

I was hoping that Pakistani women would pick up the courage and speak about their own experiences of sexual violence and other forms of abuse. I heard/saw nothing.

Some of my friends who chose not to participate in #MeToo expressed their fear of backlashes, especially because the perpetrators were either their parents, partners or close kin members. This fear originates from the entrenched victim-blaming culture we, as Pakistani women, are hindered by, rooted in the patriarchy that is omnipresent in the societies we live in, cultures we practice, and systems and values that our families are guided by. The #MeToo movement has certainly impacted the public debate around gender issues in Pakistan, especially gender roles, DA, sexual harassment, and discrimination against women. However, it has not been without shortcomings and failures. Some Pakistani women who have spoken about abuse and harassment publicly, whether that is DA in the home or harassment at work, have received very little help and sympathy from the nation. In two high-profile cases, Ali Zafar was accused of sexual harassment by Meesha Shafi and Mohsin Abbas Haider, whose wife accused him of DA. Both alleged perpetrators received significant support from the public and authorities on the basis that these allegations were defaming and damaging to their reputations.

In the summer of 2021 alone (between July and August), Pakistan witnessed several cases of gender-based violence, shedding light on the deplorable state of women's rights in the country. On July 3rd, 2021, Saima Ali was shot dead by her husband, Raza Ali, after he allegedly opened fire on her and her children. Twelve days after, on July 15, 2021, Qurat-ul-Ain Baloch, a mother of four, was allegedly tortured and murdered by her husband in Hyderabad in Pakistan's Sindh province. Then, 27-year-old Noor Muqaddam was brutally tortured and beheaded by her boyfriend in the nation's capital (Islamabad) on July 21st, 2021. On August 14, 2021, Ayesha Ikram, a social media influencer, was harassed, groped and stripped of her clothes on Pakistan's Independence Day by more than 400 men on the grounds of one of the country's major national monuments, the Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore. This is just the latest in the long history of the struggle against gender-based violence in Pakistan.

2021 alone shows that Pakistan's problem with VAWG is intensifying and impossible to ignore. Many are calling these cases 'femicide' to draw attention to the scale of the problem and its systemic nature. Femicide has been used to describe killings of women by intimate partners and family members; it has also been used to describe gender-related killings in the community. The term femicide was introduced in the last century to describe killings of women that were gender related to recognise the impact of inequality and discrimination, identified internationally as a root cause of VAWG (Council of Europe, 2011). Femicide occurs because the occurrence of VAWG continues to be accepted, tolerated and justified. Like all VAWG, the many causes of femicide are rooted in gender inequality, gender expectations, and systemic gender-based discrimination. Pakistan ranks near the bottom of global gender parity indices, with the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2020 rating it at 151 out of 153 countries (WEF, 2020).

Of course, women have continued to face new issues in the wake of the #MeToo movement. Since 2018, Aurat March - Urdu for Women's March - has been held in many cities across Pakistan to coincide with International Women's Day on 8 March. While most of those who attended and protested were from the urban upper and middle classes, all women clamoured against Pakistani society's hypocrisy in how all women are treated. The women displayed their grievances on placards and banners carried by females and males. The core issues in this context are education, child marriage, forced marriage, lack of health facilities, harassment in public places and deprivation of property. But as usual, differences of opinion came to the forefront. It was the slogans and signs held up in 2019 which drew wider attention to the movement. Participants faced criticism and abuse in the mainstream media, alongside intense trolling online. It was the statement 'mera jism, meri marzi', which translates to my body, my choice, in particular, which touched a nerve in 2019 and continues to cause controversy ahead of this year's march (2022). Critics claimed that these messages reflected the influence of White feminists, serving a 'Western agenda'. Aurat March proponents have argued that the 'mera jism, meri marzi' was about a woman's control over her own body. However, the phrase was seen by critics as obscene, having a sexual connotation and going against the highly prized expectation of modesty in a woman.

Even fellow feminists and social activists called the posters disrespectful to tradition and values. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assembly even passed a resolution condemning the women's march for being 'anti-Islam' and contrary to the ideology of Pakistan.

Pakistani society has once again used threatening tactics (death threats), religion, and women's modesty to silence women. In many areas, these tactics work. Between 2018 and 2021, I visited Pakistan twice, the combined duration of the trip being 14 weeks. I can confirm that I did not hear or see any signs of Aurat March during my stay. People from both my natal (Mirpur) and affinal (Dadyal) area choose to ignore the whole topic, reinforcing the norm that abuse is a taboo subject, women should accept ill-treatment and that women should remain silent to maintain their honour and modesty. The persistence of male domination in Pakistani society is very much part of life, with male domination so deeply rooted that patriarchy is rarely even identified as a concept – unlike democracy, autocracy or oligarchy, whose relative merits are vigorously debated. The notion that male supremacy is 'natural' is self-fulfilling since those who wrote the laws, the philosophy, the history, the medical treatises, and the scientific texts were largely men writing for the benefit of men. To understand forms of abuse experienced by Pakistani women, it is first important to note that Pakistani society is a patriarchal society, and this is the main cause of oppression and gender inequality. The next section will discuss the patriarchal society, how patriarchy influenced violence and how this contributed towards the oppression of women.

3.4.2 Patriarchy and Violence

Throughout history, in most male-dominated societies, women have often been treated as subordinate to men and have been vulnerable to male violence (Kennedy & Dutton, 1989; Strauss & Gelles, 1986). In much of the violence literature, patriarchy has been used to explain domestic abuse against women, as well as other forms of VAWG that are patterned along gendered lines (Hunnicutt, 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Exploring domestic abuse using a patriarchal framework sheds light on how the problem of domestic abuse against women is anchored in social and cultural conditions rather than in individual attributes. Narrative analyses reveal how patriarchal norms are linked to domestic abuse and how this has a direct effect on the position and role of females in the home and produces inequality in marriage.

Patriarchy as a concept is defined in many ways in feminist literature. Some use the term patriarchy to refer to a historically specific concept of male power over women and younger men (Millet, 1969; Hartman, 1979). Some use it to refer to a male ideology based at the psychological level by referring to the symbolic power of men (Mitchell, 1974). Others use the social system of gender relations. Among them, some emphasise that the root of patriarchy is biological. Arguing that it is a sexual system of power depending on the male hierarchical ordering of the society (Eisenstein, 1981). Finally, others emphasise its manifestation in the economic relations of production (Atakan, 2014). According to Lerner (1986), patriarchy is "the manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general" (Lerner,1986, p. 239). The concept of patriarchy was mainly developed and used by feminist theories to explain the continuance of male dominance in modern societies. Contemporary feminist theories, including Liberal, Radical, Marxist, and Socialist theories, agree on the point that patriarchy is a system of power relations resting on male domination; however, they differ in explaining the sources of women's subjugation. Among those feminist theories in which patriarchy is a central concept are the ones classified as Radical Feminist, Marxist Feminist and Socialist Feminist theories.

Patriarchal values are embedded in Pakistani society, which determines the subordinate position of women. Patriarchal control over women is exercised through institutionalised restrictive codes of behaviour, gender segregation and the ideology which associates family honour with female virtue. From a very young age, I was exposed to gender segregation. Whether at a family gathering or a marriage ceremony, men and women were seated separately. To date, I am still witnessing the segregation, not so much from my natal family, but in my affinal family.

I would argue that I am confident, not afraid to use my voice, and not afraid to fight for what I believe in. What I have also realised is that no matter how strong a Pakistani woman may feel, patriarchy can still influence her actions. For example, when I witness and when I am a part of gender segregation, as a woman, I feel inferior, and like the other women around me, I also lower my voice. I feel the need to tiptoe so the men do not hear me, and some women stay on standby in case the men need anything, such as food, ashtray, or tissues, validating men as the superior gender. Sarwar and Imran (2019) argue that the segregation of women in the house also negatively affects a woman's status. In some households, house sections are segregated when male guests or family members visit. Women will neither sit in mixed gatherings nor will they prominently be brought out in public. This restricts women's mobility as they have no option but to stay home, further restricting career access and development opportunities for women.

What drives Patriarchy as a system - what fuels competition, aggression, and oppression is the dynamic relationship between control and fear. Patriarchy encourages men to seek security, status, and other rewards through control. In a Pakistani household, this control is gained by adopting an honour-based family system, a system which rests upon socially constructed understandings of rigid femininity and masculinity (Mirza, 2015). Under this system, women and girls purported sexual purity is central to the family's reputation. As girls reach adolescence and young adulthood, their virginity prior to marriage and fidelity to their husband during marriage are extremely important in upholding family honour; violations of these patriarchal norms can lead to harsh consequences (Baker, Gregware, and Cassidy 1999). Women and girls are expected to follow honour codes that minimise overstepping of sexual boundaries. For instance, women may be expected to dress modestly, not interact with male strangers, refrain from initiating separation from a male partner, and/or not leave domestic spaces without being accompanied by a male family member, particularly during evenings (Hague, Gill, and Begikhani 2013; Kulczycki & Windle, 2011). Although many Pakistani families in the UK allow women to leave their homes without being accompanied by a male family member, many of these women are kept under close surveillance. They may find it difficult to experience free movement.

On the other hand, in Pakistan, it is still common for women to be accompanied by a male relative when leaving the household. When visiting Pakistan, I often saw women who, before leaving the house, would loosely wrap a scarf around their heads. They would then leave the house with a couple of elderly ladies or be accompanied by a male relative. In any case, a woman would not leave the house alone. Islam makes it compulsory for women to wear a headscarf, however, the reasoning for the headscarf is not based on religion. It hides women from men and is seen as a symbol of modesty and respect. Some women would lower their heads and put their scarves over their faces to hide their faces. This was to protect women from the eyes of men who may lust over them. I never wore a headscarf, so when I saw these women lowering and covering their heads/faces, it made me feel somewhat naked, to an extent a little embarrassed that I was not covering myself. The problem with Pakistani society is that it teaches women to cover themselves to protect them from unwanted looks and attention from men. A woman's dignity and self-respect are always questioned. However, we need to ask why the men are looking. Why does no one teach young boys to respect women no matter what they wear? Why is it okay for men to look at women inappropriately? These questions are never put forward because patriarchy enables men to act in any manner, and the reasoning is that 'men act like men'. As if being a man is an excuse for an uncle to lust over his young niece or a male cousin to rape his female cousin.

The oppression of women is certainly an important part of patriarchy. Oppression in a patriarchal society means that the oppressed is unable to make his or her own choices.

According to Hooks, "Being oppressed means the absence of choices. It is the primary point of contact between the oppressed and the oppressor" (1984: 5). All throughout modern feminist thought, it has been claimed that all women are oppressed. Allegedly, women all throughout the world share a common oppression by virtue of their sex. On the other hand, the diversity of their classes and/or races ends the commonality. During the second wave of feminism, White, middle-class feminists fought against sexist oppression. Generally ignoring oppression threaded from race and classism. Class, race, religion or

sexual preference are not given that much importance in the study of women's oppression (hooks 1984: 5).

The problem here is that by the 1980s, many Pakistani migrants (including other ethnic groups) had settled in the UK. For many families, including my own, by the 1980s, the UK was the home to the second British-born generation of Pakistanis. Despite the settlement of a community that is strongly patriarchal, during this period in the West, the concept of patriarchy was not typically viewed as a useful theoretical lens for understanding the multifaceted oppression of women, at least in academic circles (Hunnicutt, 2009). Theorised heterogeneously by feminists in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s to articulate women's systematic, structural oppression, it provided frameworks for making links between seemingly distinct areas of women's experiences. However, criticisms indicated that patriarchy as a concept was historical and unable to account for gendered experiences that intersected with other structural oppressions - alongside the turn to culture (Barrett, 1990); therefore, in the 1990s, the term fell from academic grace. However, in recent years, the term patriarchy has resurfaced in academic texts (Enloe, 2017; Gilligan and Snider (2018; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2016) suggest that the concept has been reclaimed as a valuable analytical tool. However, questions remain over whether the theoretical problems with patriarchy have been sufficiently addressed.

Despite the resurfacing of the term 'patriarchy', women who fall victim to patriarchy are still marginalised and silenced by mainstream White feminists. Pakistan is a third-world country. I use this term here to describe a nation which is different from the first world. Indeed, the term is often used within the postcolonial literature. However, Byrne (2016) explains that the term third world does not describe a nation in the modern era. In this case, I believe that there is no stable term to describe any nation, as each nation has its own culture and way of life. White feminist thinking is distinct from third-world feminism. Western societies were not subjected to colonial rule; they were not made to feel inferior, nor did they migrate and struggle to create a new identity. Nevertheless, white feminists tend to disregard the impact of colonialism and the struggle that came with it.

They do not take into consideration that these women have different experiences and are oppressed not only by patriarchy but also by the West, by White feminists themselves. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why Hooks developed the concept of 'white supremacist imperialist capitalist patriarchy' to cover all grounds of oppression. She still fails, however, to enumerate third-world countries' oppressed situations, which contributes to the profundity of oppression in post-colonial societies. A striking difference that should be pointed out is that third-world women's experience of oppression is laden with many factors, such as poverty, cultural norms, gender inequality, limited educational opportunities and religious obligations.

Audre Lorde (1984) stresses that although differences should not be the cornerstone of feminist critique, there is a need to recognise and affirm them. The acknowledgement of the diversity of women and their representation must be adequate. The supposed conceit of Western theory must be challenged by forcing the integration of the marginalised and colonised (Genz & Brabon, 2009, p. 121). The construction of gender goes beyond the experience of the white, heterosexual woman (Genz & Brabon, 2009, p. 28). One must not privilege one group over another while retaining the uniqueness of each of these varied groups (Sim, 2001: 322). In short, there should be a feminist pluralistic perception that rejects a uniform or essential woman. It is argued that White feminists fail to address the radical voice of the oppressed from developing nations and other women who are stuck in a more complex web of interlocking oppressions. Black feminists, such as Hooks, stress how white women ignore the existence of WOC and poor women; however, Hooks herself has ignored the plight of 'others' (ethnic minority women). While using her voice, she claims that women of the so-called 'third world' also oppress black women by bringing the "same kind of contempt and disrespect for blackness" (Shah, 1997, p. 94). She refers to them as "third-world divas" (Hooks, 1990, p. 102) who must respect women's boundaries of experience (Hooks, 1990, p. 102). hooks' statement paints a picture of the 'third world' women as being oppressed to a lesser degree than black women.

Hooks tries to create a boundary between third-world women and Black women when it is quite clear that both face discrimination- although their experiences may differ. However, both are misrepresented and silenced by White feminists.

Therefore, women from the third world are not only marginalised, but they are also the most ignored, misrepresented and targeted group. This is not to say that all ethnic minority women do not experience discrimination, perhaps of a different sort, but they are likewise mislabelled and excluded through racialised sexism (Mukkamala & Suyemoto, 2018, pp. 32-46).

Some people may argue that the victim's race and religious identity do not matter. They do, however, especially because violence is always a multi-layered phenomenon. Racialised women are often targeted for both their gender and religious identities. No part of a victim's identity can be erased from the narrative. A colour-blind racial perspective embodies the view that the West has moved beyond race and racism and that the colour of someone's skin does not matter today. People who argue that 'race' was made too much of an issue in the Brown killing reflect a certain type of racial colour blindness. There are debates in the field about the definition of racial colour blindness that include whether the term is best captured through the denial of the colour of someone's skin, through the denial of institutional racism, or both.

The long-held mainstream and standard celebration implies a one-size-fits-all assumption. Women are assumed to represent all women across races and heritages, embody the gender of the Western female, and speak for all women in one voice of gender equality. Yang (2020) highlights that uniformity and universality have been established by dismissing diversity and racial inequality within the realm of gender. Not all women share the same experience. Many factors, such as race, culture, and class shape their experiences. Keeping WOC in the periphery, in a support role or irrelevance to Western women's suffrage, or simply discarding their existence are some of the mechanisms of the racial divide. When race is ignored, we are not only taking away one's identity. However, it also denies the system of privilege and oppression that exists based on race.

By ignoring race, we encourage racial minorities with Western experiences, which is attributed to the shortcomings of those minorities. The following section will cover the issue of colour blindness.

3.4.3 Colour blindness (structural violence is allowing direct abuse).

A colour-blind racial perspective embodies the view that the West has moved beyond race and racism and that the colour of someone's skin does not matter today (Neville, 2014). There are debates in the field about the definition of racial colour blindness that include whether the term is best captured through the denial of the colour of someone's skin, through the denial of institutional racism, or both. Some people may argue that the victim's race and religious identity do not matter (Leber, 2014). It does, especially because violence is always a multilayered phenomenon. Racialised women are often targeted for both their gender and religious identities. No part of a victim's identity can be erased from the narrative. White feminists have often been criticised for their long-held 'mainstream' and 'global sisterhood' celebration, implying a one-size-fits-all assumption. White feminists attempted to represent all women across races and heritages, embody the gender of the Western white female, and speak for all women in one voice of gender equality, dismissing diversity and racial inequality within the realm of gender.

Not all women are equal in Western history; the struggle for racial equality is encapsulated and often eclipsed in the struggle for gender equality. Marginalising WOC, muting their experience in the mainstream, and only listing to Western women- are some of the mechanisms of the racial divide. A common mistake made by White feminists was that they tried to speak for all women without considering the 'others' wants and/or needs. For example, during the second wave, White feminists attempted to liberate Muslim women by taking away their veils (Lorber, 2002). They did this without asking, understanding, or knowing the Muslim women. Nor did they hear or listen to the other women, failing to recognise that the veil/ hijab/ burka freed many Muslim women from the male gaze and allowed them to engage in activities without the unwanted sexual

attention of men. This is not to say that some Muslim women are oppressed by their own families and/or state to wear the veil/ hijab/ burka with no freedom.

All veiled women that I know have had a free choice to wear the veil/ hijab/ burka. What I have also witnessed is that the oppressors of Muslim women are no other but the West. Over the years, across Europe, many courts have been able to impose restrictions on donning religious symbols or clothing in the workplace as well as public spaces such as parks. France, for instance, prohibited wearing hijabs in state schools in 2004. In April 2011, France became the first European country to ban full-face veils in public areas. Then, in 2014, the country's top court upheld the dismissal of a Muslim daycare worker for wearing a headscarf at a private school where religious neutrality was demanded from all its employees.

In some states, Germany has banned public school teachers from wearing headscarves. Countries such as Belgium, Austria, and the Netherlands have also passed laws that ban full face-covering veils in public places. The European Union's highest court reaffirmed that companies in Europe can forbid women from wearing headscarves to work – a ruling that led to widespread condemnation from human rights activists and Muslim nations for sanctioning Islamophobia. The decision by the European Court of Justice on headscarves in the workplace and other intuitions is another blow to the rights of Muslim women who wear headscarves. Added to this were the inappropriate comments made by Boris Johnson in 2018 when he referred to veiled Muslim women as "letterboxes and bank robbers" (Telegraph, 2018). His comments led to a surge in anti-Muslim attacks across the UK. In the aftermath of these comments, Dearden (2019) reported that islamophobia incidents rose by 375%, with perpetrators abusing Muslim women. The oppression against Muslim women is not only present in Europe but worldwide. For example, in early 2022, in the Indian state of Karnataka, Muslim students who wore a hijab were not allowed to enter colleges, schools and exam halls and were chased and harassed by Hindu mobs.

The discrimination against and oppression of Muslim women has left them with no option but to choose between their religious beliefs or living a normal life with freedom of movement, right to education, and work. For women who choose religion, their freedom

is stripped away from them, leaving them with no choice but to stay indoors. We do not hear from the White feminists here, who speak about 'one size fits all' and remain silent. This is because the hijab/burka is not their problem and does not affect their lives; therefore, the whole issue is whitewashed.

Islamist feminists argue that White feminists attempt to apply a foreign framework that is incompatible with Muslim culture. These Islamic feminists are particularly alienated by the attempts of White feminists to liberate them. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, the state policy on race relations took an 'assimilationist' approach towards ethnic minority communities (Vasta, 2007).

This approach leads to the process where ethnic minority groups are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. That is Western society. This approach gave way to a more liberal but neo-colonial multicultural policy which ignored structural racism and, as black feminists argued, also violence against ethnic minority women. Growing race discontent, the rise of religious fundamentalism and the post 9/11 'war on terror' in the 2000s meant that the government returned to the policies of assimilation, now dressed up as social cohesion or social integration (Rabasa et al., 2004). Simultaneously, the state pursued policies of multi-faithism, which respected religious differences, particularly as a way of diffusing Muslim extremism, but ignored gender equality.

The tensions created by these developments have now heightened in a climate of austerity. As black feminists struggled to hold onto the gains made, by the late 2000s, alliance building proved increasingly difficult as the ethnic minority women's movement became divided on issues of religious identity, immigration and arguments about culture versus patriarchy as the cause of violence against ethnic minority women (Gill & Anitha, 2011). This left many scholars in the West uncomfortable when talking about forms of abuse ethnic minority women were/are vulnerable to, for example, for Pakistani women - forced marriage and HBA being strongly linked to the Pakistani cultures with a religious overtone, particularly this brings Islam into the discussion, creating allegations of racism, Islamophobia and Western imperialism if anyone from the West questions or discusses the topic (Welchman & Hossain, 2005; Thiara & Roy, 2010).

This is something I had experienced when presenting my work at the European Society of Criminology help in Ghent, Belgium (2019). Those who attended my session raised the issue of racism; it was clear that everyone recognised the importance of raising awareness of minority women and the forms of abuse they are vulnerable to. Nevertheless, one participant added that many European scholars might avoid the topic purely because they do not want to talk about culture, religion, or an ethnic minority group that they are not familiar with, mainly because they fear saying something offensive and then being labelled racist. Today's researchers are showing a reluctance to research ethnic minority communities, and this leads to little or no research, knowledge, policy development or practical understanding by agencies when understanding DA and ethnic minority women. The idea of living in a world in which the colour of someone's skin does not matter in terms of social relationships and lived experiences is especially attractive to some. For example, for white individuals who benefit from racial privilege, not seeing race or racism provides an opportunity to maintain a positive sense of self because, for them, good people do not consider race when interacting with others. The assumption here is that by not noticing race, the individual does not treat people differently based on racial group membership. Unfortunately, good people with the notable goal of ignoring race do harm in interracial interactions.

3.4.4 Services by and for ethnic minority women

There are too many ethnic minority women who have been denied the appropriate support and are not being adequately protected or getting the specialist help they need after suffering DA. Institutional racism throughout local authorities becomes visible when the religion and cultural needs of WOC are not considered. Authorities are also failing to provide suitable accommodation to WOC following DA, with police, housing authorities and social services failing to respond adequately to religious hate crimes and services

failing to adequately safeguard WOC, and the continued failure to provide appropriate interpreters for women with limited or no understanding of English (Belur, 2008).

Research conducted by Thiara and Roy (2020) for Imkaan found that WOC reported a 'blunt' service, lacking an understanding of ethnic minority women's intersectional experiences. It was found that many DA services failed to provide specialist response to WOC, failing to place the needs of the victim/survivor at the heart of interventions. Thiara and Roy (2020) concluded that women with weak immigration status faced further difficulties and were reluctant to come forward, mainly due to the fear that they would be misunderstood and that their report of abuse may be seen as feigned - a way for them to strengthen their asylum case. Other migrant women avoid reporting their abuse due to the fear of their data being shared with other authorities (immigration enforcement). With the threat of immigration enforcement being used as a tool of coercive control by perpetrators, migrant women feared local authorities believing that their report of abuse may lead to their deportation.

WOC often face several barriers when attempting to/or accessing support. These include language barriers, living in close-knit communities where mobility is difficult, weak immigration status creating fear of deportation, WOC feeling judged by Westen services for their cultural differences, services not understanding women's lived experiences, lack of understanding of the dynamics of relationships with the perpetrator and other kin members (Gill, 2009). Many services have the tendency to treat victims of abuse as suspects, especially those who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF), being barred from the service because of their immigration status. This refusal of help, topped with the lack of access to services in their own language (and a lack of interpreters), can easily create an impression that Western services have no intentions to accommodate and protect ethnic minority women. Southall Black Sisters found that only 11% of women with NRPF involved in Women's Aid's No Woman Turned Away project were accommodated in a suitable refuge (Women's Aid, 2019). It was also concluded that support only became available for women who were on spousal visas and could access a route to support under

the Domestic Violence Rule. This meant that migrant women on other visas or with no visa faced the unacceptable choice of remaining with the perpetrator(s) (Southall Black Sisters, 2020).

This demonstrates how mainstream services frequently fail to encompass the larger context in which ethnic minority women experience abuse. Often, cultural expectations such as maintaining family honour allow generational cycles of abuse in families and communities, normalising forms of abuse such as early and forced marriages (Aplin, 2022). The failure to understand the context of these women and their reality can often result in the omission of content when attempting to serve the needs of this population. These omissions most often result in not being able to provide the connectedness necessary for healing.

Therefore, services by and for WOC become extremely necessary and important. These services specialise in culturally specific treatment not only via training but also by their own identity. Caseworkers within by and for services can develop a genuine relationship with women who have experienced abuse. They can respond to these women in their own language and are thoroughly familiar with the context in which the women and perpetrator exist. Caseworkers from by and for services not only understand the women's culture but also their religion, norms and practices, patriarchal positioning and barriers the victim faces when leaving the abusive relationship/home.

By and for services create a space that can help women overcome barriers relating to language, cultural understanding and Immigration status. The sense of belonging and sameness removes the fear of not being understood or viewed as different (Thiara & Roy, 2020). By and for organisations allow women to form supportive connections with other ethnic minority women who share similar experiences. Communicating in their own language is also an important support element for some WOC. The element of sameness benefits abused women in many ways: they are no longer isolated, they may feel understood, others around them accept their cultural norms, and they are able to

communicate in their own language. Imkaan (2012) stated that 89% of ethnic minority women who accessed by and for led service ending VAWG organisation reported improvements in their mental health and well-being.

By and for services redefine the help for WOC, supporting women through the three main stages of becoming a survivor of abuse: reporting, supporting and healing. The caseworkers hope to change women's experiences from the moment they seek help through their cultural and religious understanding of BAME women's experiences. This fills a crucial gap in mainstream services, recognising the profound impact of these factors on women's circumstances and decision-making processes. These services are also able to help women rebuild their lives after surviving the abuse by creating a safe space to interact with other women, enhancing their English-speaking skills, helping them with their CVs and guiding them through applications for work and government benefits. Such services play a critical role in the current conditions, where mainstream services still fail to cater to the diverse needs of WOC. Therefore, by and for services offer a more culturally sensitive and understanding environment, bridging the gap that does not exist within mainstream assistance and supporting women.

3.4.5 DA and HBA

While debates on DA and VAWG and girls in the West have been dominated by gender equality, those that focus on violence against ethnic minority women and girls have engaged with the vexed question of similarity and difference. The notion of the 'collective victimhood' and the 'global sisterhood' (Thiara & Gill, 2010, p. 42) has often ignored differences between minority and white majority women, while pluralist or diversity arguments can equally fail to recognise commonalities (Sen, 2005). The failure of multiculturalism to recognise power divisions within communities means that the needs and interests of ethnic minority women were not addressed, particularly as the Western world did not want to threaten its own power base. This meant that issues such as forced marriage, HBA and other forms of abuse were ignored as cultural practices which had to be either respected or resolved through self-policing.

Pakistani women are often pressured to use informal mechanisms, where male community and religious leaders or the head of the families would mediate and reconcile women back to abusive situations. The violence itself has rarely been challenged.

Women are often blamed for provoking violence or abuse by failing to live up to traditional expectations and reminded that, according to their culture and religion, it was their duty and fate to tolerate abuse and suffer in silence so that they could save their marriage and/or uphold the honour of their parents and families. This policy translates into agencies such as the police and social services pursuing a policy of non-intervention, including becoming involved in formal or informal mediation to reconcile women with their husbands and families rather than providing safe exit options (Mirza, 2015).

This leads to structural violence, producing inequality in the health and well-being of the victims. A clear example is HBA: 'A crime or incident which has or may be committed to protect or defend the honour of the family/community. It incorporates a range of violent behaviours from forced marriage and female genital mutilation to killings' (Eshareturi et al., 2014, p. 370). Drawing attention to forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to, HBA denotes forms of abuse that the nation is aware of but IS rejected at a political, institutional, mainstreamed level. There have been debates as to whether HBA should be located under the framework of DA. As mentioned previously, the Home Office includes HBA under the DA framework. On the other hand, it has also been noted that HBA differs from DA. For example, unlike DA, HBA is usually perpetrated by multiple perpetrators – including the victim's extended family and community members. "Victims at risk of HBV were more than seven times more likely to be experiencing abuse from multiple perpetrators compared to those not identified as at risk of HBA" (Safelives, 2017, p. 8).

The use of the term 'so-called honour' and the statement that 'there is nothing honourable about honour-based abuse' (Gill, 2009) is highly contested, eliciting strong reactions from different groups, with some arguing that such crimes should occupy a unique criminal category and others maintaining that no differentiation should be made from other cases of DA or murders. I remember presenting at the British Society of Criminology Conference

(2018), and an audience member stated, 'Isn't it just murder? Why do we need to say honour when killing someone is murder? Why complicate it by saying honour'? Though there is no universal definition that is deemed to be cross-culturally appropriate, feminist groups, scholars, and activists found themselves at odds in their conceptualisations of honour-based crime, its cultural linkages, and concerns about how it should be addressed in the politico-legal realm (Chesler, 2009).

On one end of the spectrum, radical feminists argue that honour crimes are a cultural phenomenon embedded within a backward patriarchal framework inherent to fundamentalist immigrant groups, which, Chesler (2009) contends, is very different from other forms of gender-based violence prevalent in the West, including DA. This conflation between religion, culture, gender oppression, and HBA has been condemned by transnational and postcolonial feminists who have been vocal in questioning the intentions and accuracy of the "honour crime" label and the blame placed on the 'backwardness' of the Global East.

Instead, transnational and postcolonial feminists draw attention to the historical and geographical structures of inequality that generate gender inequities across the globe, paying particular attention to the role of colonialism and imperialism. This approach seeks to reveal the ways in which the West can exert and maintain economic, political and cultural control of the Third World and its diaspora (Rajan, 2000). Patil (2013) powerfully captures the essence of transnational and postcolonial feminist thought, noting that it "encourages an examination of how categories of race, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, nation, and gender not only intersect but are mutually constituted, formed and transformed within transnational power-laden processes such as European imperialism and colonialism, neoliberal globalisation and so on" (Patil, 2013, p. 848). This lens offers an alternative approach to the dominant liberal and radical feminist ideologies overrepresented within Western discourses.

Honour-based practices are rooted in underlying patriarchal notions of collective 'honour' (*Izzat in Urdu*) over individual needs (Gill, 2009), with strong consequences for defying the

status quo and bringing 'shame' (*sharam in Urdu*) to the family and community. Research shows that preserving family honour is particularly incumbent upon women within some minority communities (Gill, 2009; Izzidein, 2008). Consequently, an honour-based family system rests upon socially constructed understandings of rigid femininity and masculinity. Under such systems, women's and girl's purported sexual purity is central to the family's reputation. As girls reach adolescence and young adulthood, their virginity prior to marriage and fidelity to their husband during marriage are of extreme importance in upholding family honour; violations of these patriarchal norms can lead to harsh consequences (Baker, Gregware, and Cassidy 1999), and in some cases leading to their murder. The motivation behind HBA and/or honour killing is when a family member claims that their reputation is at risk due to the women's or girls' behaviour. Therefore the men and many alpha females in the family will believe that they are in need of washing or cleansing the families honour from shame by shedding the blood of a relative; the person murdered or abused is, in most instances, a woman; the murderer is typically a male relative or members of the community, and in most cases, the murderer is revered in his social circles as an 'honourable' man (Mansur, Shteiwi and Murad, 2009). For some Pakistani women who wear Western clothes, talking to the opposite sex, refusing an arranged marriage, or even wanting to marry someone outside their kin group can be deemed shameful. When I was in secondary school, I often heard about young girls who breached their family's code of honour; their families would send them to Pakistan as a form of punishment. Parents believed that the visit to Pakistan would help restore their honour, and their Westernised children would be reminded of their roots and what is expected of them.

Some of the high-profile of honour killings in the UK include Rukhsana Naz, murdered in 1998 by her mother and brother after she became pregnant by her boyfriend and announced her intentions to divorce the man she had been forced to marry; Tulay Goren, murdered in 1999. It was believed that she was murdered because she was in a relationship with a man of whom her family did not approve; Heshu Yones, stabbed to death by her father in 2002 after he discovered her relationship with a man of whom he did not approve; Shafilea Ahmed, murdered by her parents in 2003 for her 'Western'

values and for refusing an arranged marriage; Samia Shahid, found dead in northern Punjab (Pakistan) in 2016. Her family initially claimed that she had died of natural causes, but a post-mortem revealed that she had been strangled. A report released by Pakistani police implicated Samia's father and her previous husband in the murder, stating that her divorce and remarriage had brought dishonour to the family (Iqbal, 2019; Dayer, 2015). Banaz Mahmod was murdered by her male relatives in 2006. Banaz had been in contact with the police on five separate occasions before her death, with concerns that she would be murdered by specific people from her kin group. Her death illuminated the key failings in police response to HBA and led to ACPO creating the first national policing strategy on HBV. Banaz's case alone illustrates some institutional failings and missed opportunities to safeguard victims of this abuse.

The literature consistently suggests that HBA should be treated as seriously as other DA. There is a 'one chance rule'—frontline professionals might only have one opportunity to save a victim's life (Eshareturi et al., 2014). For a long time, the government and institutions have dismissed HBA as cultural, justifying a non-interventionist approach (Siddiqui, 2014; Eshareturi et al., 2014).

Over the last few years, there has been a recent shift from cultural sensitivity/relativism to 'mature multiculturalism', which means that multicultural sensitivity is not an excuse for moral blindness (Siddiqui, 2018, p. 367). This approach places a positive responsibility on institutions to not dismiss abusive practices in ethnic minority communities as 'cultural' but to acknowledge them as a public issue (Siddiqui, 2014). Positioning HBV as a cultural problem can be dangerous as it is not culture but people who kill other people (Gill et al.,2018).

The Home Office has reported on mandatory honour-related data collected for 2019 and 2020 (Home Office, 2021). This showed that there were 2,024 'honour'-based abuse offences (of which 140 were forced marriage and 74 were female genital mutilation) recorded by 43 police forces in England and Wales. Further information from 30 forces on types of offences recorded included: assault without injury (28%), assault with injury

(17%), threats to kill (10%), kidnapping (10%), malicious communications (7%), rape of a female aged 16 and over (6%), harassment (5%), stalking (2%), cruelty to children/young person (2%), public fear, alarm or distress (1%).

This national prevalence data establishes that police reports of HBA are dispersed across the UK and that the types of 'honour' offences being recorded are varied. However, data from other sources indicate that these figures represent only a minority of actual cases and, thus, do not reflect the true extent of HBA in the UK. For instance, over a 12-month period, there were 12,107 calls logged by Karma Nirvana, a national charity with a telephone helpline for 'honour' based abuse and forced marriage, with 70% of these cases related to victim support (Karma Nirvana, 2020a). It is also noteworthy that during lockdown, there was a 355% increase in calls received (Karma Nirvana, 2020b). Likewise, 1,507 potential cases were reported to the Home Office's Forced Marriage Unit in 2018, reflecting a 21% increase from the previous year (Forced Marriage Unit, 2019). Collectively, these figures indicate that the scale of the problem is far greater than police-reported data alone would suggest.

Failing to recognise particular types of abuse and marginalising DA can lead to poor responses or unsuccessful intervention; more concerning is that victims may not be taken seriously, or their situations may be trivialised because professionals trained to address DA may be unprepared to respond to HBA victims as they may underestimate the risks posed by extended families and communities not only nationally be also internationally (Eshareturi et al., 2014).

3.4.6 Forms of abuse rooted in honour.

In some parts of the world, especially in South Asian and African countries, dowry has become a condition for marriage. Dowry was introduced in society with the sole purpose of aiding newly married couples. However, with the passage of time, the concept of dowry became a mere transaction of money and other valuables demanded by the groom and his family instead of the true merits of the bride (Singh, 2013). If dowry demands are not

met, various forms of abuse can be inflicted upon the bride to pressure her to bring such wealth. So in the process, there have been various cases of abuse, including murder, suicide, physical abuse, emotional abuse and transnational abandonment. Dowry-related abuse has been regarded as a universal phenomenon, cutting across all sorts of boundaries and is on continuous increase worldwide; it may be taken as a matter of grave concern that dowry harassment and death are typical problems of South Asian societies (Nuhu, 2015). 'Bridal torture' and 'Bride Burning' are terms which have been used to describe victims of dowry abuse. Dowry-related crimes are defined by the United Nations (2009) as "any act of violence or harassment associated with the giving or receiving of dowry at any time before, during or after the marriage" (2009: 20). Dowry is the exchange of gifts or money, to the family of either the bride or the groom, in exchange for the person hand in marriage. Dowry is commonly practised in some South Asian and African communities.

The dowry system is a great evil that still exists in many societies, including Pakistan. It is an act of discrimination against unmarried and married women and their families, whose values are defined based on the prices of their respective dowries.

Dowry is an example of greed and selfishness and is a great curse, especially for the parents of the lower middle class. Dowry contributes to other forms of gender-based violence, such as sex-selective abortions. Families fear having a daughter as they may be unable to meet dowry needs (Sen, 2003). Women's rights have been exploited in the name of the dowry system. Research has highlighted that many Pakistani women stay unmarried and uneducated because their parents fear that they may not be able to meet dowry demands (Bloch & Rao, 2002).

Based on the belief that dowry is an evil custom, the anti-dowry movement in India began at the end of the 1970's this publicised hidden dowry-related abuse in families. However, no such movement was visible in Pakistan until 2018 when a social media campaign called 'Stop Jahezkhori' or 'Jahaiz khori band kro' (stop dowry) went viral, with the campaign aiming to stop the practice of dowry in Pakistan. Much of the scholarly attention on dowry abuse in South Asian communities focuses on Indian women. Similarly, the limited UK dowry abuse studies available also focus on Indian women (Anitha & Roy, 2016),

neglecting and failing to understand dowry abuse and its effects on Pakistani women in the UK. This scholarly neglect in studying dowry abuse in the UK also feeds into the assumption that since dowry does not necessarily affect white women, therefore, Western scholars may not feel the need to explore an issue which is not affecting their society.

Another prevalent form of HBV is 'forced marriage', which is one in which the victim is unable to consent or is coerced, threatened or pressured into marrying an individual against their will. Metlo (2012) presents a clear definition of forced marriage: This is when "one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities or mental incapacity, cannot) consent to the marriage and violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is involved. Coercion may include emotional force, physical force or the threat of physical force, and financial pressure" (Home Office, 2022). Forced marriages have been described as involving the lack of free and full consent on the part of at least one of the parties to a marriage. It has been reported that in 2016, the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) "gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage in over 1,400 cases" (Safelives, undated).

A forced marriage should be distinguished from an arranged marriage, which is legal and between two consenting adults. It is important, however, to consider that the lines of consent can be blurred in some. However, not all arranged marriages where victims receive undue pressure or coercion to enter a marriage (Gill, 2009). Siddiqui (2002) argues that "forced marriage is primarily about the control of female sexuality and autonomy' and 'women's 'sexual purity' reflects on the honour of the family" (Siddiqui, 2002, p. 9). Other reasons given for forced marriages are responding to peer group or family pressure; attempting to strengthen family links; ensuring land, property, and wealth remain within the family; preventing 'unsuitable' relationships such as outside the ethnic, cultural, religious or caste group; fulfilling longstanding family commitments; and preventing the influence of Western culture in the community. Such reasoning has led others to argue that HBA always precedes forced marriage: "You never have a forced marriage without HBA, ever. And I say that with conviction" (Dyer, 2015, p. 27). Victims of forced marriage may find themselves subject to emotional or physical abuse by family members if they

refuse to marry the chosen partner. In the most extreme cases, it may also involve abduction, false imprisonment, sexual abuse, and murder (Metlo, 2012).

The establishment of the Home Office Working Group on Forced Marriage in 1999 was a watershed moment when the British state first began to recognise harmful practices, and it was also a milestone in theorising, practice and activism. This development led to heated debates on forced marriage and HBA at the discursive and policy levels, focusing on definitional problems of consent and coercion in forced marriage and the distinction between HBA and DA. It also brought to the fore the tensions between race and gender and responses based on community or state inaction. Forced marriage was made a criminal offence in the UK on 16 June 2014 under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act. The legislation not only hoped to reduce the overall number of forced marriages of British nationals in the UK but also overseas.

Forced marriage is widely recognised to be underreported, and therefore, accurate information about the scale of the problem is difficult to determine (Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2018). Despite the legal protection, forced marriage will always exist, with its true nature often hidden. I say this with confidence because, as a Pakistani woman, I know the importance of kin connection, and some families maintain this connection by getting their children married. I also know that many Pakistani women do not recognise that they are victims of forced marriage. Why? Because they often justify their marriage as 'I had to', 'that is what they (family) wanted', 'it was up to my family', and 'no was not an option'. Some of these women go ahead with the marriage, knowing that agreeing to a marriage is easier than going against the family.

Another form of abuse rooted in marriage is transnational marriage abandonment (TMA); this is a practice in which perpetrators take victims abroad and leave them with no means of returning or accessing support. The work of Pragna and Sundari (2016), along with Southall Black Sisters, have identified three forms of abandonment: (a) abandonment in the country of origin, having never been sponsored to visit the UK; (b) abandonment in the country of origin, following a short stay in the UK; (c) abandonment in the UK. Young

women who migrate to the UK through marriage (marriage migrants) are often vulnerable due to their immigration status. Provisions for migrant DA victims were first introduced in 1999, following campaigning by Southall Black Sisters. When the issue was debated in the House of Commons (1998), the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department stated:

> "When the overseas spouse becomes the victim of DA during her first year here (UK), she faces the prospect either of staying within that violent relationship or of being refused settlement if she escapes from it because the marriage would then no longer be subsisting" (Lady Paton; Lady Dorrian and Lord Young, 2016).

The idea was that those migrants whose right to reside in the UK depended on their relationship with their British or settled spouse should be allowed to remain in the UK even after the relationship broke down if the reason for the breakdown was domestic violence.

If not, they would be faced with the impossible choice of staying in an abusive relationship to be able to remain in the UK on the one hand or leaving the UK on the other hand. Unfortunately, one of the requirements to be granted indefinite leave to remain as a victim of DA is that one must be a resident in the UK at the time of the application. This means that victims of TMA, who have been recognised as victims of DA, cannot make use of these provisions.

There is no rational reason not to allow victims of DA to apply for indefinite leave from abroad. When the provisions were first introduced, the Home Office accepted that individuals who came to the UK as partners, with an expectation to settle in the UK, should be allowed to stay even if their relationship breaks down because of domestic violence. DA victims who are stranded abroad have the same expectations.

Once it is accepted that TMA is a form of DA, the requirement to be in the UK at the time of application creates a fundamentally flawed system that prevents victims of DA from applying for indefinite leave on the grounds that they are victims of DA (Anitha et al., 2017).

Not being able to return to the UK also often prevents the abused women from initiating, let alone engaging effectively with, family and criminal law proceedings. They may be prevented from seeing their children, claiming financial maintenance, or bringing their perpetrators to justice. The impact of abandonment also creates contexts for further forms of VAWG due to the stigma associated with divorce, women's vulnerability within natal families and issues related to inheritance and residence arrangements within the natal home after divorce. Abandonment itself constitutes a form of VAWG. It is rooted in and results in the gendered devaluation of women and is enabled by gender-blind transnational formal-legal frameworks, which construct abandoned women as an inferior class of citizens and as a category of women who can be abused and exploited with impunity. Not allowing victims to return to the UK perpetuates this cycle of abuse, preventing them from access to justice and reparation, effectively cooperating with the abuser and allowing British citizens who have sponsored their foreign spouses to come to the UK, and the British citizens then abuses their position of power to dominate and abuse their foreign spouses.

3.5 Conclusion.

DA disproportionately affects those from a minority ethnic group due to long-standing structural inequalities. The evidence has highlighted that ethnic minority victims are different to their Western counterparts due to their cultures and language, which make them unique but can also serve as barriers to accessing support. Research also shows that minority communities are statistically more likely to experience so-called HBA. An intersectional lens should, therefore, be applied when working with victims of DA, remembering that everyone brings with them a unique set of oppressions. The evidence shows us that there is still a long way to go in tackling abusive practices in minority communities. It is important that professionals responding to DA in minority communities continue to challenge institutional racism, receive training on working minority communities, strive for representation in their organisations, and invest funding in ethnic minority organisations. DA cannot be tackled in silos without addressing inequalities facing

ethnic minority people. Institutional racism and structural inequality will continue to be perpetuated through the silence of policymakers, and their inaction will strive to disenfranchise marginalised groups further. The next chapter provides insight into the overall rationale and methods used in this study. I explain my approach to recruiting participants, collecting, analysing, and presenting the data.

Chapter Four: Methodology and Methods

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research design and data collection methods. It begins by describing the study's design, research approach, recruitment strategy, sample population and selection process, and the instruments used for measuring the data. The chapter also discusses the philosophical and theoretical foundations for this study.

The research design is grounded in feminist methodology, with its unifying characteristic focusing on the marginalisation and impersonality of Pakistani women. This research focuses on hearing and elevating the voices of Pakistani women living in the UK. Using feminist methodology as the foundation on which to build an intersectional analysis acknowledges that domestic abuse (DA) looks different to every woman. This study ensures that the interests of DA survivors are central to the research design and aims.

This is a qualitative study with 14 in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were uploaded to Atlas. ti and analysed using inductive thematic analysis. Seven themes have been identified, defined and documented, falling under three categories (add the three broad themes here) (Appendix 5). These themes help us understand Pakistani women's experiences, perspectives, behaviours and journeys out of DA.

4.1 Rationale of methodology

This study gives voice to marginalised women, titular Pakistani women who have experienced DA. The traditional defining and measuring DA method is questioned (Kanuha, 1996). Particularly because the prevalence of DA cannot be measured without

considering that different cultures define, experience, and acknowledge DA differently (Yoshihama, 1999). Taking this into account, there is a major limitation in mainstream understanding of DA due to circumscribed attention to sociocultural contexts. Therefore, previous studies of DA have tended to be of low relevance to people of different cultures, as there is a high possibility that the research does not capture the specific forms of abuse that are particular to women of different cultural backgrounds.

This study uses qualitative analysis with an intersectional and postcolonial feminist approach. It attempts to acknowledge both the individual lived experiences of abused Pakistani women and the intersectional disadvantages that shape Pakistani women's journey out of DA.

As Bograd (1999) explains, "the trauma of domestic violence is amplified by further victimisation outside of the intimate relationship, as the psychological consequences of battering may be compounded by the 'micro-aggressions' of racism, heterosexist, and classism in and out of the reference group" (1999:281). Taking intersectional disadvantages into account, this study uses a qualitative, interpretative approach to explore Pakistani women's journey out of domestic abuse (DA) and the impacts and barriers that they face when living in the UK. Qualitative research, specifically semi-structured interviews, is used to 'capture lived experiences of the social world, and the meanings people give these experiences from their own perspective' (Corti & Thompson, 2004, p. 327). I needed to create a space where Pakistani women could speak and be heard to achieve this aim. Using qualitative methods, I have produced a rich understanding of a phenomenon that could not be achieved through numbers and statistics (quantitative study) (Braun & Clarke, 2013). While there is a long history of quantitative research using survey data to determine the prevalence of DA, quantitative analysis is mainly used to examine discrete events and is not suitable to adequately capture patterns of DA which are different from the mainstreamed understanding of abuse (Allen, 2011; Dobash et al., 1998; Kimmel, 2002)

A qualitative approach allows me to draw attention to the invisibilities in feminism. White feminists have often placed a label on WOC – telling WOC how oppressed they are, what they are allowed to think and how they can speak. We never really hear from the WOC themselves, leaving their experiences unheard and unrevealed. With muted voices, we fail to identify unique and isolated experiences. Therefore, I reflect on Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) work on intersectionality to justify using a qualitative approach. Intersectionality theory allows me to examine and understand how Pakistani women who live at the intersection of racism and sexism may be harmed when their unique experiences as WOC are not recognised (Crenshaw, 1991).

Interviewing Pakistani women and taking the intersectional approach will provide detailed lived experiences of abuse, which has been eliminated in the mainstem understanding of DA. This gives voice to those women who have been marginalised and hidden from dominant cultural discourses during the knowledge-production process of DA. Pakistani women's voices, which are often silenced or muted, and experiences of abuse 'must be heard across different perspectives, from different theoretical disciplines, and in different forms' (Kanuha, 1996, p. 46). This endeavour must address the paucity of such perspectives in the mainstream literature. Practically, such accounts will likely also improve the response to victims and survivors from diverse backgrounds.

4.2 Researcher reflexivity

Researchers' identities are critical in qualitative research because they form part of the context for interactions with participants and bring their traditions, values and personal qualities to each aspect of the study. The researcher actively creates and selects the research context (Gouldner,1965) because the researcher is aware of their standpoint and research positioning. My research allows me to position myself in two ways: the first as an academic (outsider) and the second as a woman of Pakistani origin (insider).

Outsiders have criticality by virtue of being 'fresh eyes'; however, their lack of awareness of specific situations can mean that the outsider researcher may also miss important

phenomena and thus seriously misinterpret local meanings and practices (Rosaldo, 1989). Close-knit, marginalised communities rarely welcome outsiders to research their culture. Therefore, it can become exceedingly difficult for an outsider to fully access the researched communities and to interview people who openly talk about their lives. As an insider, on the other hand, the researcher is already familiar with local micro-politics in ways that outsiders could never realise. For example, as a Pakistani woman, I share the same culture, traditions, religion and language as the participants.

I actively use my position as a Pakistani woman to construct a sense of sameness and commonality between the participants. However, this commonality can also limit the true nature of the study. Awareness of the norms in the Pakistani community and a lack of distance between me and the participants could cause me to take women's experiences for granted. Knowing my ethnic background, some participants may assume that I already have knowledge of their individual journeys and/or their vulnerabilities, which can lead to minimal explanation from the participants. In such situations, it was important for me to reinforce my position as an outsider to capture the participant's interpretation of their social norms, traditions, and culture.

As a British Pakistani woman and a PhD student, I have the opportunity of a dual position. My position as an insider makes me extra cautious about the women's safety, especially when interviewing, recording and transcribing their interviews. This is probably because, as an insider, I know how much of a taboo subject DA is in Pakistani culture. I must consider how my research findings may benefit but also affect women who are already severely marginalised and disadvantaged in the UK. As an outsider, I need to ensure that my study does not reinforce negative stereotypes about women. I have had a considerable advantage as an insider and used it to communicate with women, something that an outsider would likely find difficult. For example, as some of my participants were migrants, they spoke very little or no English. My position as an insider allowed me to interact with the participants in their own language (Punjabi and/or Urdu), and this is a great advantage in terms of sharing the viewpoints as well as the interpretations. However, common

language can also leave the researcher to act less probingly and/or allow the participant to give vague answers and explanations. For example, a common word used by participants was ‘izzat’; the central meaning of izzat is honour, reputation, or prestige (Stevenson, 2010p . 913). However, some women used the word ‘izzat’ to describe affront, honourless, humiliation and mockery. By placing me in this communal zone, participants may brush over their interpretations of ’izzat’ and assume I understand their viewpoint.

Being a cultural insider has many advantages when researching an ethnic minority group, particularly in terms of negotiating access to women who are migrants, understanding the spoken and unspoken "language" of the interview, and in terms of recognising idiosyncratic cultural references. Insider status is also important in bringing internal divisions within an imagined minority community to the fore. Chew-Graham (2002) argues that prior knowledge can affect how the researcher is perceived, the information that participants provide, and the data analysis. Participants may assume that the insider researcher sees things the way they do because of their sameness or may even seek to impress or agree with the researcher based on their perceived connection. My position as an insider/outsider meant I had to continually reflect upon my position, which changed throughout the research and how factors such as my culture, class, education and secure immigration status influenced the data collection and analysis. For example, this study found that many women were withdrawn from gaining an education or further education once married. Furthermore, seven of these women were migrants through marriage with weak immigration status. In the rigidly hierarchical sense, my status as a British-born PhD student may have been perceived as more prestigious compared to the position of the women taking part, creating power imbalances. Contributing towards the power dynamics was my association with the University and my connection with the service providers that some of the women relied on.

I was considered an outsider on many levels. Firstly, my association with the University meant that my research was ‘official’. My access to the service providers and presence on the residential day (see 4.3) allowed me to speak to women at the refuge, informing them about the research and their potential involvement, and created a sense of formality. My

involvement with the services – who were also my 'gatekeepers' (see 4.5) – may have generated suspicion and made me be seen by some as an "official representative" from the organisation, who wanted to collect personal information from women who escaped an abusive relationship, some with weak immigration status.

Unsure about my true intentions, some women may have been reluctant to participate, worried about giving the 'right' answers, saying the right thing or not sharing their true experiences (Wiles et al., 2006). My identity here has shifted, and the sense of sameness no longer exists. However, my insider/outsider identity guided me in choosing my research topic and question, and in the care I have taken to maintain firmly on the side of the women. Qualitative aspects of my PhD have shaped my research design. I took advantage of my insider status – the shared culture, nationality, migrant background. These allowed me to access marginalised women. The class division between myself – a PhD student and a researcher with secure immigration status – and the women interviewed was something I could take advantage of during my data collection and analysis, as it allowed me to negotiate some form of detachment from the participating women. It also allows me access to places they may not have access to and through research dissemination may allow me to advocate on their behalf.

4.2.1 Language and Translation.

Language is critical, especially when women are denied the right to express themselves. A claim that women are 'silent' or 'silenced' does not necessarily mean that women are literally silent, nor that they cannot use language (Cameron, 1998). Silence can also play the role of protection for some women; not speaking about the conditions and obligations which they live under means protecting themselves from fear, isolation, or attack. Language is a social practice grounded in history and the conditions of its user's lives. In this research, some participants did not speak English fluently; therefore, they spoke Urdu or Punjabi during the interviews. Language is a major component of any human culture, so the interview data was not in the same language as the research being reported.

Language can be translated and, to some extent, changed. Nevertheless, language has minimal potential for 'reinventing' from scratch (Cameron, 1998). The transcriptions of these interviews are in English; however, several words will be presented in their original form because the terms they alluded to are unclear. Other phrases on their own do not capture the true nature of the incident. For example, the phrase (لا حول ولا قوة إلا با لل) 'Laa Haula Wa Laa Quwawata il la Bil Laah' is in Arabic (the language of Islam).

In simple English, it means 'There is neither might nor power except with Allah'. Pakistanis use this phrase as a form of prayer for death. For many Muslims and Pakistanis, this phrase is associated with death and tragedy. However, one of the research participants used this phrase when describing her mother's reaction to her divorce. Translating this phrase into English does not explain what the statement means. Therefore, using it in its original form helps us to understand its context. The significance of this method employed in the study was not only to provide a literal translation from one language to another but to promote conceptual equivalence of the assessment tools to improve the reliability and validity of the research data. 'Conceptual equivalence' is when the translator is responsible for providing a technically and conceptually accurate translation of the concepts spoken by the women (Jandt, 2003). As the translator, my accuracy becomes important; any misconceptions or errors made within the translation process can lead to the loss of conceptual equivalence. This will misrepresent the women's experiences; their journeys become altered to fit the translator's perception of what the women's journey should or is expected to look like.

4.3 Recruitment process and data collection.

To recruit Pakistani women, it was necessary to identify a geographical location with a high population of people identifying as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh Pakistani.

I understood Cumbia was not well populated with Pakistanis. Evidence of this is shown in Census 2021, where only 0.1% of Carlisle's (133) and South Lakeland's (63) population account for Pakistani residence (ONS, 2021). Whereas Eden (21) and Allendale (34)

account for 0.0% (ONS, 2021). After systematically searching the Census 2021, I decided to study in Lancashire. Firstly, because the county has a large population of Pakistanis, where two districts alone, Blackburn with Darwen (17.8% - 27,525) and Hyndburn (13.2% - 10,825), have the largest population of Pakistanis compared to other ethnic minority groups (ONS, 2021), with such large populations, the recruitment process and advertising reached a wider population.

Secondly, living in Hyndburn (Accrington) improved my accessibility, availability, and flexibility to DA services and potential participants.

Disclosing marital problems and abuse to other people is still considered improper in Pakistani communities (Jordan & Bhandari, 2016). Working alongside DA service providers has facilitated access to the Pakistani population and advertising the study to those who have experienced DA. Six DA service providers were identified in Lancashire who served communities with a large Pakistani population: HARV (Accrington); WISH CENTRE (Blackburn with Darwen); Domestic Violence Service (Preston); Pendle Domestic Violence Initiative (Nelson); Lancashire Women's Centre (Accrington, Blackburn, Burnley, Nelson, Blackpool) and Humraaz (Blackburn). All six service providers, including Preston City Council, Pendle Borough Council, Accrington Town Hall, Nelson Town Hall, University of Central Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, Awaaz, and the Women's Centre, were contacted via email as well as telephone calls. A formal meeting was arranged separately with three service providers (HARV, Whish Centre and Humraaz), which offered an opportunity to build rapport with the services and to utilise this occasion for recruitment purposes. After ethical approval was obtained from the University of Cumbria's Research Ethics Committee, and upon approval from the three services, the university and local councils, participant invitation sheets (Appendix 1) were distributed in common areas such as notice boards, building receptions and windows. The sheets were also placed in more reserved areas, such as reading corners and the female toilets. This enabled women to read about the study and take note of my contact details in private.

Humraaz held a residential day, where the victims and survivors of DA who were using the service had the chance to meet and enjoy an organized day of activities. Invitation to the

residential day provided the opportunity to speak to women at the refuge, informing them about the research and their potential involvement. The service providers worked as the gatekeepers between the researcher and the women who wanted to participate. Women who wished to participate were required to fill out a participant information sheet (Appendix 2), which was available in hard copy (kept by service providers). Once a hard copy was completed, a routine email would be sent to the researcher asking them to arrange an interview date/time with the participants. This was all arranged via a staff member of the service provider. Alternatively, those women who did not have access to a service provider could email the researcher (the email address indicated on the invitation sheet) to express their interest, and the researcher would then forward a participant information sheet to the potential participant.

4.3.1 Participants

I had no specific requirement for the number of women I wanted to hear from. However, I was aware that a sample size which is too small would fail to support claims of having achieved either informational redundancy or theoretical saturation. On the other hand, a sample size too large would take away the deep, case-oriented analysis required for a qualitative inquiry. This study had a moderate sample size of 14. Whereas 18 women expressed interest in the study, 14 were ultimately involved as participants. Three women initially expressed their interest but did not come forward to participate, and the remaining woman was Bengali. The call was only for Pakistani women, so this woman could not participate. The main inclusion criterion required by the study was that the Pakistani women who offered to take part were no longer in an abusive relationship. The criterion was made to ensure that the research could capture the women's individual journey out of DA in a safe and supportive manner.

Before the interview stage, each participant was provided with a form (participant information sheet) consisting of structured questions. The questionnaires were designed based on the participant's demographic information. It is believed that information

gathered via biographical questionnaires would usefully supplement and extend the rigour of qualitative interviews.

This study's demographic data (Appendix 4) showed that 50% of the respondents had migrated from Pakistan to the UK. The average age was 26.7 years old, and 42.8% of the women had one or more children, with one woman pregnant. Over half of the women in this study were unemployed (57%), and the remaining 42% were employed. Ten years was the longest a woman had experienced abuse, and only 21.4% of women were divorced. Up to 35.7% of the women had graduated from university, and only one had no education. It is important to note that the sample size for this study was 14. Therefore, the true extent of women's education can be difficult to measure and apply to the wider population. Therefore, further comprehensive studies should be conducted to build upon such findings.

4.3.2 Interview Process

Participants were interviewed in the designated rooms suggested by the service providers involved. Interviews were conducted at Humraaz and HARV. It was anticipated that some women might have possible feelings of distress due to their recollection of their journey out of DA whilst living in the UK. This is why all interviews were conducted at the service provider's branch, where help and advice were available to the participants. This was to safeguard the participants' well-being and ensure their emotional well-being, particularly after the interview. The purpose of the interview was to collect valuable data to clarify, investigate and better understand Pakistani women's vulnerabilities when in an abusive relationship and their journeys out of DA.

The data collection procedure in the study consisted of four phases, namely completing the participant information sheet, giving verbal and written consent, conducting a face-to-face interview with the participant, and aftercare. The first part of the data collection stage involved asking the participant to complete a participant information sheet. This included a set of structured questions, namely personal details including age, language, place of

birth, education, marital status, number of children, and number of years since leaving the abusive relationship (Appendix 2).

Some participants did not understand English fluently. Therefore, service providers guided women when completing the participant information sheet during the English Language class. The service provider Humraaz used this opportunity to allow women with weak English to understand each question and develop their writing skills. This study aimed to gather some demographical characteristics of the participants. Information obtained from the participant information sheet's mixture of structured questions would help with the semi-structured interview, generating rich and in-depth data for the study.

The second phase involved gaining verbal and written consent. Before the interview began, the purpose of the study was explained to the women, and the women were asked for their consent verbally and in written form (Appendix 3). All participants were reminded of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. As part of this process, the consent form was read by each participant, and afterwards, the participant was invited to print her name and sign at the end of the document as a confirmation of consent. Each participant was asked for permission for her interview to be audiotape-recorded.

The third stage was semi-structured in-depth interviews, which were chosen as a key method in the study because they offered the researcher an interactive approach and provided in-depth research data. Although a set of questions was prepared before the interview, these questions provided a framework for focusing on the topics discussed and as guidance for the interview process. Changes were made as the interview progressed based on the participant's responses. The final phase was for the participants, once the interview was over, to clarify any questions they may have had about their involvement in the study. All participants were reassured that their participation was confidential. After each interview, a staff member from the DA service was made available for any women who wanted further assistance. Additionally, a flyer from the service providers was given to each participant; the flyer included a contact number if the women wanted further professional help.

4.4 Thematic analysis

A thematic data analysis was carried out in parallel with the interviews. In thematic analysis, transcripts are read multiple times with field notes, and key concepts are noted (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To provide a rich and detailed account of the interviews, ATLAS.ti. was used, in which the following six phases of thematic analysis were followed (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Muhammad & Alexander, 2013):

- Familiarizing yourself with your own data by transcribing the interviews
- Generating initial codes
- Discovering patterns and linking them to the relevant codes
- Searching for themes, collecting codes to make themes
- Reviewing themes, ensuring that all themes are relevant to the study • Defining and naming themes and producing the report

Backman and Kyngas (1999) suggest that the open coding stage involves a situation where the researcher and the research data are interconnected. Reflecting on this researcher's experience, identifying codes at this stage required significant concentration and motivation to continue this lengthy process.

The open coding procedures started when I identified recurring patterns and phrases. I then generated initial descriptive codes, a vast index encompassing everything interesting. I then collated linked codes in tentative groupings at the broader level of themes.
Once the relationship between the coded data was noted, sub-groups were created. Overall, seven themes were identified, with an additional twenty-two sub-themes. The seven themes (Appendix 5) were divided into three groups: (1) Burden of expectation, (2) Form of abuse, and (3) Support available. Illustrative quotes from participants' narratives are used to present findings.

The parentheses after each quote contain the participant's name, the country they were born in and the number of years they experienced abuse. For example (Halima-B10m)- the woman's name is Halima, British born and experienced abuse for 10 months. (Shagufta: P-12y)- the woman's name is Shagufta, born in Pakistan and experienced abuse for 12 years. A pseudonym was allocated to each woman; this pseudonym has been used throughout this study. The women's real names have remained anonymous and will not be used in this study. The anonymity mainly protects the women, allowing them the right to privacy.

4.5 Ethical Issues and Considerations.

The university granted ethical approval in July 2017. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. All respondents were assured that their participation was confidential and that they could be involved in the study. Participants' right to withdraw from the study without explaining their reasons was also explained. All interviews were conducted in a safe and private place within the agencies' compound (HARV and Humraaz), in the interview or counselling rooms, and with the participant's consent. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to all participants at each stage. Protection issues such as trust, privacy, and confidentiality are essential when disclosing DA incidents. Before the interviews started, the first few minutes were used to discuss the confidentiality and anonymity of the participant's involvement. Some participants found it distressing once they had mentioned a location or date of birth; they asked to 'cut it out'. All participants were assured that no dates, locations or names would be used in the research.

Data analysis stage: Identification of the participants in the interview transcripts was done by allocating pseudonyms for each interviewee. All information given during the interviews and in the structured question forms were treated as confidential materials and stored in a controlled environment per the university's regulations. The audio recordings, interview notes, structured question forms and transcripts of those interviews are stored in a locker and can only be accessed by the researcher.

The materials will be securely kept in their original form and destroyed upon completion of this study.

Availability of support systems and services: In line with the suggestion by Ellsberg and Heise (2002: 40), who states that 'as a minimum standard, researchers have an ethical obligation to provide respondents with information or services that can respond to their situations', prior to the interviews, the researcher ensured that appropriate support was available before, during and after the interview. For example, a staff member from the DA services was available in case a participant needed professional advice or help. Participants were encouraged to discuss any possible causes of distress or concern that arose during the interview or aftermath with the member of DA service staff. These issues were guaranteed to be dealt with appropriately and with complete privacy assured. During the interviews, no situations arose where mandatory referral for additional support was required. None of the participants expressed any concerns during or after the interviews. Additionally, all participants were informed that support would be available after the interview.

Gatekeeping: Gatekeepers are essential mediators for accessing study settings and participants within social research. They may be persons within organisations who can grant or withhold access to people. Gatekeepers may also represent any individual or group who may be invaluable for the researcher, primarily due to their knowledge, connections with, or membership in a research population. Gatekeepers are not only able to provide access to an otherwise difficult to reach group, but they can also help with recruitment strategy by circulating details of the study to the group on the researcher's behalf. As already described, in this study, DA service providers acted as the gatekeepers.

DA services such as the Wish Centre, HARV, and Humraaz promoted my study to suitable candidates by circulating study details to women accessing the services. Humraaz, a service by and for BAME women, used its English learning class to introduce my study to Pakistani women. Those who wanted to participate were then put forward to me. Humraaz also provided me with a secure space to interview any women who wanted to participate in my study. This included women who had used their service and those who had never accessed it.

Most (13) of my interviews took place at Humraaz. At the end of each interview, a Humraz staff member was available for participants who wanted further support or guidance. However, I failed to recognise the limitations of such gatekeepers and their continued presence. For example, participants who used the service before may have felt obliged to speak positively regarding the service provision. Others may have been uncomfortable knowing that a Humraz staff member was close to the interview room and, therefore, may have been more careful when answering my questions. Gatekeepers have played an essential role in my study. Without having access to by and for services, I would have found it extremely difficult to access Pakistani women. On the other hand, I also need to recognise that having such gatekeepers can create restrictions, making some participants uncomfortable.

4.6 Conclusion

Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on how people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live (Holloway, 1997). This inquiry process investigates a problem where the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting and builds a complex analysis through detailed description and explanation and a careful examination of data. Although there are different approaches within the broader qualitative research context, most qualitative studies have the same aim of understanding the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) have noted that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach, meaning that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena based on the meanings people bring to them.

The most effective way to hear and understand these Pakistani women was to talk to them and listen to their experiences. Evans and Spivak (2016) state, ‘ The only real and effective way you can sabotage something this way is when you are working intimately within it’. For me to work intimately, I chose to conduct face-to-face interviews. Using a qualitative approach and analysing Pakistani women’s accounts with an intersectional lens means that

I have been able to recognise a long history of violence and systematic discrimination, which have created deep inequities that disadvantage these women. These inequalities intersect with each other; for example, patriarchy, migration, racism and sexism often result in support services limiting their resources to the needs of mainstream societies and dominant groups.

I have given Pakistani women the voice to share their lived experiences while still focusing on the structural inequalities (race, gender, class, sexuality) that constrain and shape the lives of abused women. I attempt to address social problems and represent marginalised women's interests and voices. My prime focus is on the 'simultaneous, multiple and interlocking oppressions of individuals' (Mann & Grimes, 2001, p. 8). Although I bring out the differences and the unique struggles of Pakistani women, as Andersen and Collin (2001) highlight, it is also essential to distinguish a structural approach as requiring analysis and criticism of existing systems of power and privilege.

The findings and results of this study are presented in the chapters below, divided into three chapters representing the three main themes and the sub-themes identified in this study. The three main themes are presented in the following order: burden of expectations (chapter five), forms of abuse (chapter six), and support (chapter seven). Direct quotations from the women themselves are included. This not only gives these women space to talk but also raises awareness of the experiences that marginalised Pakistani women face as victims of DA in the UK.

Part Two- Findings and Results.

It is crucial to understand that women's experiences of abuse are shaped by their intersectional identities and locations (Crenshaw, 1991). Indeed, prior research (Thiara & Gill, 2010; Patel, 2003) shows that BME (Black and minority ethnic) women, who are located at the intersection of numerous structural inequalities, face additional issues and pressures that compound their risks of DA. This research shows the importance of understanding how both patriarchy and intersectional disadvantages, based on gender, ethnic minority and immigration status among Pakistani women, can lead to women experiencing life as inhabitants of oppression and abuse, which is often described as culture-related abuse.

This study identifies and documents seven themes, which are divided into three sections: (1) Burden of Expectations (Shaping Identities); (2) Forms of Abuse (Marriage and Kinship, Transnational Marriage Abandonment, Affinal Kin and Spousal Abuse); and (3) Support (Leaving the abusive relationship and Service provision). These themes consider the entirety of Pakistani women's situation and the multiple identities that a woman of colour has membership in. Intersectionality posits the social construction of power hierarchies. It recognises that multiple categorical identifiers of social and economic statuses (like race/ethnicity, education and immigration status) are embedded within the hierarchy. These categories can intersect, resulting in compounded disadvantages. All the intersections need to be seen in their historical and social context. The intersecting creates oppression, and because the hierarchies of power are cut across categories, the person can face simultaneous disadvantages (Crenshaw, 1991).

The seven themes which have been identified capture a pattern of amoral and harmful customary practices within Pakistani society, which aim at oppressing women. Patriarchal control over women is exercised through institutionalised restrictive codes of behaviour, gender segregation and the ideology which associates family honour with female virtue.

This study sheds light on how Pakistani women are shaped to believe that they hold an inferior position compared to men; they are made to be free from the burden of thinking, raised to be just bodies whose only purpose is to sacrifice themselves to their families and community. Often, there is a culture of shame and silence that prevents Pakistani women from disclosing abuse in their lives. As this study shows, several factors play a role in Pakistani women's decision to disclose abuse, which include but are not limited to the frequency and severity of abuse, access to education, awareness and knowledge of services and immigration rights. Thus, Pakistani women experiencing DA are at the intersection of disadvantages that range from their immigrant status, insensitivity to mainstream services, and perceptions of maintaining the family honour, including the pressure created by Pakistani society to be a 'good' and a 'modest' daughter, sister, mother and wife.

Chapter Five: Burden of Expectations.

Burden of Expectations (Theme One).

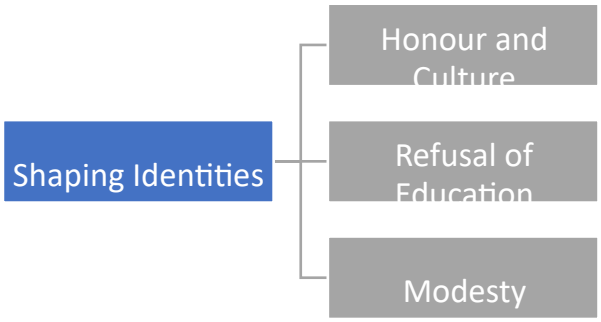

Figure 1: Showing the central theme, 'shaping Identities' and three subthemes.

Pakistan is a patriarchal society where men are the primary authority figures, and women are subordinate. Patriarchal values embedded in local traditions, religion, and culture predetermine the social value of gender, which has serious implications for women's and men's life prospects. The theme 'Burden of expectations' identifies two basic perceptions: that Pakistani women are shaped to be subordinate to men and that a man's honour resides in the actions of the women of his family.

Gender is one of the organising principles of Pakistani society. This theme shows that Pakistani women are made to see themselves as responsible for the family honour and readily offer themselves, their bodies, and their sexualities in sacrifice to uphold male patriarchal values. As Shahla Haeri (2002) in *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women* asserts, "Men have honour. Women represent honour; they symbolise honour; they are honour. Objectified into manipulative possessions, women conceptually lose a sense of individuality and autonomous identity in the eyes of community" (Haeri, 2002, p. 36). Tazeen Ali and others (2011), in Gender Roles and Their Influence on Life

Prospects for Women in Urban Karachi, Pakistan: A Qualitative Study, found that both men and women could put equal effort into their professional lives. However, women had the additional burden of household work and to fulfil the sexual needs of the husband. As my PhD focuses on women's experience of abuse, it fails to capture their work/professional life experiences. However, like Tazeen Ali and others (2011), this does capture the extra burden on women in the house, which resulted in making the women feel stressed, powerless, frustrated and depressed.

Women are expected to hide their emotions, to compromise with their opinions and to sacrifice their dreams. Women commonly felt pride in providing comfort to their husbands at home. Unlike boys, young girls face many educational restrictions, career, and marriage restrictions. Their subordination is maintained through the allocation of fewer resources, restrictions on mobility, seclusion norms and even violence in cases of resistance. This theme documented that women are perceived as chaste daughters/sisters, fertile wives, and nurturing mothers. My PhD documents women's traits and responsibilities and establishes parameters for what is legitimate for women. These affect their personality, lifestyle, and health, including their reproductive behaviours.

5.1 Shaping Identities

South Asian women writers (Indian, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani) have attempted to illuminate their issues in domestic and private spheres.

The quest for female identity remains the most prominent struggle that most writers aspire to achieve. For example, Shashi Deshpande, an Indian feminist novelist, explores the struggle of South Asian women in search of their identity. She notes that: "Women have been quite suppressed, quite oppressed...a large section of women is even suffering today. We have women going about with ghunghat (scarf) on their faces. Moreover, women have no choice but to decide to have children. We have many people who still advocate 'Sati' (Indian tradition of wife burning) who consider dowry a necessity, who count it a loss when a girl is born and a profit when a boy is born" (Deshpande, 1993, p. 23).

This theme highlights the struggle of the female figures in their resistance to patriarchal control over their bodies and sexualities. More than half of the women interviewed spoke about men and women being conceptually divided into two separate worlds. Home was defined as a woman's legitimate ideological and physical space, while the men dominated the world outside the home. The interviewees reported that women were encouraged and shaped to stay hidden within the home, carrying out domestic work. For example, Shagufta (P12y), who migrated to the UK through marriage, was constantly told to carry out chores. Shagufta's mother aimed to perfect Shagufta's skills within the home as she believed every girl/woman should know how to cook, clean and serve the family. Shagufta goes on to explain;

> *I used to cook. I used to wake up and make breakfast for my brother and mum. I used to stay in school all day, and when I came back (home) in the evening, my mum purposely told me to do this like this and that because daughters should know what to do in the house* (Shagufta-P12y).

Similarly, Zainab, a British-born woman, was forced to take over the household tasks at 12. Her family believed training Zainab with home duties at 12 would prepare her for any domestic work she may have to do once she is married. Zainab states:

> *Everything changed for me when I started high school (at the age of 12). Everyone said I was a woman now, so they made me clean, cook and cover. That is all I remember: school, mosque cleaning, cooking, and covering* (Zainab-B4y).

Like Zainab, other women felt as though staying at home was more accessible, that staying at home meant that all the expectations were met, and that the women were hidden from the public, which meant they could remain modest and were less likely to dishonour their families. This study confirms that the ideological demarcation between public and private, inside and outside worlds, is maintained through the notion of honour and the institution of modesty in Pakistani society and its British diaspora. Zubaida Metlo (2012), in The Perception of Honour among the British-Pakistani Community in Watford, United Kingdom, adds that though honour rules are met both for men and women, it is noteworthy that only women are forced to comply with them. Men are made lenient and

even remoulded whenever a need occurs. For example, Norwood Russell Hanson has observed that: “the selection of marriage partner had such large consequences for the entire kin group and the honour of the family, children, and especially daughters, have a little or no say in the choice of their marital partner and could be beaten if they refuse to marry” (Dobash & Dobash, 1980, p. 45). Since the notion of male honour is linked with women's sexual behaviour, their sexuality is considered a potential threat to the honour of the family (Iliffe, 2005; Wilson, 2006). To ensure that they do not dishonour their families, society limits women's mobility, places restrictions on their behaviour and activities, and permits them only limited contact with people who are not part of their kinship. It is fair to state that Pakistani women are trapped in a web of dependency and subordination due to their low social, economic, and political status in society. Many women suffer from all forms of poverty. To change women’s position and societal view of their inferiority, structural changes need to be brought about in the social and economic order that shapes our social world.

5.1.1 Honour and Culture.

‘Izzat’, often translated simply as ‘honour’, is a symbolic and rhetorical construct whose meaning is constantly contested as it conveys different things in different contexts (Sen, 2005; Welchman & Hossain, 2005). A word so powerful can risk losing its true nature when translated into English.

Aisha Gill and Avtar Brah (2014) note that words translated into English as ‘honour’ rarely convey the totality of their culturally specific meanings, not least because they often lose their connotations, which distorts their meaning (Terman, 2010). The Urdu word izzat refers to a broad spectrum of sociocultural behaviour and relationships that tie together kin and community groups.

Family honour reflects a family’s reputation and dignity (Dodd, 1973) or social status (Feldner, 2000) and prestige (Cowburn et al., 2015) amongst the kin group, extended kinships and the community. Family honour corresponds to how consistent individuals’ behaviours are with cultural and religious norms and expectations (Dodd, 1973). Individual

actions can raise or lower the *entire* family's honour; its effects sometimes reach the extended family (Cowburn et al., 2015; Dodd, 1973). Once a family's honour is lost, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to recover (Dodd, 1973; Harrison & Gill, 2018).

Throughout the anthropological literature, men have been portrayed as obsessed with maintaining honour and upholding the family name at all costs. At the same time, women were represented as "silent, passive, and marginal figures who were secluded in their houses, modestly covered head to toe in order to exorcise the potential sensuality of their bodies and removed from any outside activity or role" (Weidman, 2003: 13). Therefore, women's behaviour, in particular, has a significant impact on the family's honour (Gill & Brah, 2014; Siddiqui, 2014). Women are expected to uphold "the family's religious and cultural integrity" (Dwyer, 2000, p. 478). Their sexuality and virginity, or 'sexual purity', are of uppermost importance to their family's honour (Gill & Brah, 2014; Haddad et al., 2006; Siddiqui, 2014). Norms dictate that women must maintain their virginity until marriage and only have intimate relations with their spouse (Cowburn et al., 2015; Shankar et al., 2013). My PhD identified eight women (six born in the UK) who spoke about how honour was more important to their families ''than the actual individual'' (Zainab-B4y). All women emphasised that although they were oppressed, vulnerable and abused, they felt the need to keep the family's honour, either according to their own will or forced by the stigma of humiliating the family.

This research found that women who did not obey men's orders and rebelled against the code of honour were punished indirectly; this included women who left their abusive relationships and tried to find independence. In these situations, husbands attempted to shame their wives in the hopes that they would either return to their abusive relationship or become isolated from their families and communities. For example, four Pakistan-born women spoke about their husband's attempt to shame them by making comments regarding the women's impurity, modesty and loyalty.

The women interviewed asserted that when a man felt dishonoured by his wife, he would attempt to reclaim his honour by creating rumours about his wife's sexual behaviour

outside the marriage. Four Pakistani-born women spoke about *being accused* (Iqra-P10y) of *running away with an English man* (Nazmeen-P4y). Iqra adds (P10y) that *men show their jealousy (of the women's independence) by shaming them, which is quite humiliating for women*. In honour culture, one of the women's primary duties is to preserve chastity within marriage. This is crucial for the maintenance of the family's honour. Women's sexual behaviour outside the marriage and leaving the marriage means bringing dishonour to her family and shaming her family name. This fear of shame not only makes it harder for women to leave the abusive relationship**;** *I did not (call the police) because I wanted to keep his and my family's respect* (Bushra, P2y), but it also makes it difficult for women to seek independency outside of their marriage without carrying the burden of shame, primarily when the women are not supported by their natal families:

> *My dad found out (I left the relationship), and he said that I was a disgrace. I disgraced the family…. To him, it was all about honour, and he did not care about how I was treated* (Sofia-B7y).

Wilson (2006) has spoken about the perception of women's sexuality inherent in the notion of shame. She says that the promotion of the idea that a woman should feel shame about her body and her sexuality serves to discourage women from crossing patriarchal boundaries. A woman must " be watchful of all her actions - how she walks, responds to others, what she wears, because patriarchy demands that shame is always present under the surface" (Wilson, 2006, p. 12).

Honour and shame are deeply embedded in women's families, kinship, and community. Therefore, women's sexual modesty and modesty in appearance have often dominated the social relations between families, kins, and tribes in pre-marriage settings. Modesty is perceived as a public symbol of family honour, giving men the right to control women's bodies with the excuse of protecting them.

5.1.2 Modesty

Pakistanis possess inner and outer modesty (haya), reflected in behaviour, speech, and appearance. For many people in the West, the modest dress of Muslims, particularly the woman's head scarf or hijab, has become synonymous with the concept of modesty in Islam. However, modesty encompasses far more than the clothes one wears. It is also an external public symbol of family honour in most patriarchal societies. Yet, many associate the term modesty with specific dress codes.

This notion of modesty is found across all cultures, but these notions are not defined or practised in the same ways. The modesty code constitutes a fundamental pattern in many Middle Eastern and South Asian cultures. After studying modest related practices amongst 92 societies, Stephens (1972) found great variations in the notion of appropriate clothing as well as the perception of which bodily parts need covering. Today, the concepts of modesty are highly elaborated and central of daily life in the Islamic culture of the Middle East and North Africa.

These concepts play a significant role in shaping local practices relating to veiling, premarital virginity, and marital fidelity. Rothenberg (2003) discusses two theoretical approaches that can help understand modesty in Pakistani society. One approach is through Islamic principles. This approach focuses on Islamic texts, such as the Qur'an and the Hadith. This approach identifies that Islam holds modesty for women highly important.

Traditional Islam mandates that only the face and hands should be visible when in public (Winter and Williams, 2002). Such modesty often takes the form of long, loose-fitting clothing (jilbab dress or salwar-kameez) and a hijab head covering to conceal the hair and ears. Research confirms that many Muslim women believe their religion and modesty bolster their body image (Bigger, 2006; Droogsma, 2007; Odoms-Young, 2008). According to those interviewed by Odoms-Young (2008), "by covering, they were treated with more respect and viewed in a less sexual manner" (Odoms-Young, 2008 p. 2581). One woman went as far as to say, "you protect yourself by cover" (2008, 2579). The question of Hijab or the veil (The head covering (hijab) is what Muslim women wear to cover their hair and

is a general cover. The veil, or the face covering (niqab), is a specific covering worn by some) is currently one of the most controversial issues in both in the Muslim country and the West, where it causes collective hysterical paroxysm. The issue of the veil is undoubtedly the core of a very intricate subject linked -in a confusing way- to various concepts such as tradition, modernity, freedom, women's bodies, tragedies of identity and the challenge of living together in multicultural societies.

Scholars have often argued for and against the representation of the veil in Islam. Nawal El Saadawi argues that some women wear the veil 'to assert their authentic Islamic identity and indigenous culture. They do not know that the authentic identity of a Muslim woman is not to be veiled and that the veil is not an Islamic dress' (Saadawi, 1997, p. 96). Saadawi goes on to explain that some women wear the veil as an anti-Western protest; the women are proud to be a Muslim veiled women who are not Westernised and are recognised by their religion or culture (Saadawi, 1997).

None of the women within this study wore a veil, nor were the veils forced upon them. Rather, my research shows that modesty is a problematic concept which is used to control and judge women; there is this idea that covering up makes you modest and respectable. Alternatively, my research fails to capture the link between modesty and religion. Instead, women within this study spoke about modesty in relation to honour, rather than a religious practice/obligation.

The struggle of modesty was experienced mainly by British-born Pakistani women, which illustrates the second approach to modesty. This approach can be described as an aspect associated with honour and shame.

For some, modesty and sexual restraint are part of a strict code of maintaining men's honour by avoiding shame through the strict regulation of women's behaviour, including their modest comportment and sexuality. My interviewees stressed that a woman's dress code somehow determines her character, as Maria explained:

> *Girls who were always seen out were given a bad name (by the Pakistani community), and even girls who wore Western clothes were given a bad name, even*

though they were covered. Wearing jeans and going out with friends was seen as being too Westernized (Maria-B6y).

Jeans are said to be very Western and therefore frowned upon. In contrast, wearing traditional Pakistani clothing (shalwar kameez with a dupatta (scarf)) represents women who have higher character compared to women who wear no scarf. For British-born women, wearing traditional clothing means that they do not fit in the Western world, and wearing Western clothing means they are likely to be judged by the Pakistani community. Sofia speaks about not being able to dress like her friends due to keeping the family's honour:

The way I dressed, I had to be respectable like in my traditional Asian wear. I could not wear the clothes my friends would wear... I would not wear things like English clothes, I could not wear things like that, that was like a disgrace, but yes everything was just to do with honour like being respectful (Sofia-B7y).

Pakistani women living in England negotiate between the Muslim and British aspects of their identity. The set of individual dispositions which originates in the family field under the influence of South Asian cultures and Islam, changes and is transformed when it meets non-Islamic fields. In their study, Franceschelli M. O'Brien M. (2015) used the terms 'modern and modest' to explain two different dispositions reflecting the influences of South Asian and British culture. The idea of 'being modern and modest' summarises the effort of bringing together different identity orientations originating between the family and the wider British society.

Like Maria and Sofia's experience, Franceschelli M and O'Brien M. (2015) found that clothing was the indicator used to explain what 'modern and modest' meant to women. 'Being modern' signified having a contemporary outlook and wearing Western clothes such as jeans, dresses, leggings, t-shirts and tops. 'Being modest' was described as the justification behind the practice of covering up to reduce women's perceived sexual allure (Tarlo, 2010). However, the dichotomy 'modern and modest' goes beyond mere clothing

dispositions and reflects a perceived dualism between what is associated with Western and secular and what is considered traditional and religious (Archer, 2002).

In Pakistani society, modesty transcends the issue of what to wear and encompasses attitudes, behaviours and relationships with others. For the young women making transitions to adulthood, modesty is an aspiration and a goal rather than something they must achieve. Surviving in the UK, which happens to be the dominant society, may mean women taking control of their own lives, wearing Western clothes, and socialising with the opposite sex - things which can be seen as dishonourable by the community. The community then begins to judge the woman, making her family feel ashamed, to the extent that the family may feel the need to isolate her by making her stay at home and obey her father, husband and elders. Halima (B10m) talks about how Pakistani society's expectations of family honour shape the behaviour of family members; families who support their daughters are also judged by the community, making them feel ashamed. For example, Halima's family supported her when she left her abusive relationship, but leaving her husband had a negative stigma; as a result, the community often taunted Halima's family for bringing Halima back and supporting her: *My message is not to those who are abused, but to the community, stop talking about us accept us no matter what the situation, we are human, not used goods give us a chance do not kill us with your looks and words, help us heal rather than beating us down and looking at us as though we are shameful people. Stop making our families put their heads down. My family helped me; why should they have to suffer? I think we have suffered enough* (Halima-B10m).

It is this burden of expectations which makes Pakistani women in this study powerless. The idea of powerlessness links to the idea that Pakistani women are dominated by men, kinship and society. They are situated to take orders and rarely have the right to give them. Some of the fundamental injustices associated with powerlessness are inhibition to develop one's capacities, lack of decision-making power, and exposure to different forms of abuse due to the lowered status given to these women. Iris Marion Young (2009), in 'Five Faces of Oppression', states that the powerless are those who lack authority or power, even in this mediated sense, those over whom power is exercised without their exercising it; the powerless are situated so that they must take orders and rarely have the

right to give them. Oppression, in this sense, is structural rather than the result of a few people's choices or policies. Its causes are embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following those rules. Marilyn Frye describes this as, "an enclosing structure of forces and barriers which tends to the immobilization and reduction of a group or category of people" (Frye, 1983, p. 11).

The culture of silence goes hand in hand with powerlessness. Some Pakistani women in my study felt so powerless that they did not even talk about their oppression. Others were reminded that it was forbidden to even mention the abuse inflicted on them; this created a culture of silence. It is necessary to note that the culture of silence identified here differs from the silencing of marginalised women by Euro-American scholars. For example, White feminists have ignored or silenced non-Western women with their own powerful voices. Bell Hooks (1984), a black feminist, for example, writes about her experience in a graduate class on feminist theory: "*When I criticized this oversight, Western women directed an anger and hostility at me that was so intense, I found it difficult to attend class'. I was told that they are not angry, I was the angry one" (*Hooks, 1984, p. 12*).* White feminists silence anyone who feels threatened and feel that there might cause a possible shift in power dynamics, and therefore immediately go on the defensive and attack the person raising the questions. I have noted factors that White feminists have overcome and turned a blind eye to when South Asia feminists experience the same thing.

Alice Schwarzer, a German scholar, looks at the Islamic culture and argues that migrants and refugees with an Islamic background carry their traditional sexism with them (Fekete, 2006). The West has long overcome the patriarchal structure, voicing that feminists protect free women. As a result, gender inequality becomes a problem of 'The other'.

The culture of silence in this section refers to oppressed Pakistani women who are unable to voice their negative experiences to get help; this occurs in two ways. The first is when the oppressed woman knows that they are being oppressed but cannot talk about it or voice their suffering or concerns. A deeper level of silencing occurs through indoctrination. At this stage, the oppressed believe that they are the inferior gender, members of the kin.

They are taught by their families and society that their inferiority is normal and a fact of life. In some cases, education and literacy are withheld from these women, preventing them from gaining knowledge about themselves and restricting them from finding means to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

5.1.3 Refusal of Education.

For most of the participants, marriage was one of the main reasons why women were withdrawn from gaining an education. As noted by Ojala, a British-born woman:

> *In most South-Asian communities, a girl is seen as a burden or believed to be an outsider who will eventually marry on and move into a new family. Any investment made in her is a waste, as only the family she finally marries into would savour the returns* (Ojala-B6y).

Therefore, for most families, getting their daughters married is more important, educating a daughter can come with a price. Educating a daughter may mean delaying her marriage and once educated, she may distance herself from her customs and tradition of becoming a 'good' daughter-in-law/wife, she may dishonour the family, Honour' codes depend largely upon control and objectification of women; it relates to male domination over women (Reddy, 2014; Sen, 2005).

Acting as a method to police the behaviour of women and their sexual autonomy, thereby allowing men to exercise control (Ortner, 1978, p. 23). A central component is the ability to protect male honour by forcing women to comply with acceptable norms of behaviour as set and controlled by men (Sen, 2005, p. 50). Thus, 'honour' adheres differentially, and unequally to men and women. Women are responsible not only for their own 'honour' but for that of their male family members, and women who transgress 'honour' codes are treated far more harshly than their male counterparts (Baker et al, 1999). Acts such as wearing Western clothes, having a boyfriend, having pregnancy before marriage, being torn between two cultures (West/East), or even wearing makeup can be seen as breaching

the family code of honour and can trigger HBV (Honour Violence). Individuals who violate prevailing honour codes bring dishonour to their entire family, which represents a significant threat to the family's future and even its survival, and become vulnerable to HBV (Honour Violence. According to Sen (2005), honour crimes are actions that remove the stain of dishonour from a collective through the emotional, social or physical coercion of the person whose actual or imputed actions have brought about the (perceived) dishonour. Different violations of the honour code are associated with different punishments; thus, HBA manifests in numerous ways, including physical abuse (e.g. beatings), sexual abuse, emotional abuse (e.g. coercion), psychological abuse (e.g. threats) and financial abuse (e.g. withdrawal of financial support).

5.2 Conclusion

To reduce the risk of shame, families restrict their daughters from education and enter them into marriage. This secures the honour in the sense that the women are made to stay at home with no education, making them feel illiterate, uneducated and inferior. The women have no space to experience any other culture but the one they are forced to stay in. Alternatively, marriage protects the family's honour as it minimises the risk of sexual relations before marriage or even pregnancy before marriage is an act which can no longer take place.

Therefore, to maintain every aspect of the daughter's life under control, it becomes easier for parents to get their daughters married. After marriage, the burden of her is lifted from the natal family to her affinal family. In this study, half of the women (four migrants and three British-born) left their education to get married. Although for some women, leaving education for marriage was a norm, over a quarter of these women were pressured or threatened to drop out of education. For example, all three British-born women, Zainab, Sadia and Sofia, were pressured to get married once they left secondary school; going to college was not an option as their families believed that marriage was more important. Zara (Pakistan-born) was also restricted from studying; however, the threat came from her potential affinal family. Zara explains*:*

> *I was good academically, my mum said no (to marriage) not yet she's still studying… it was them (potential affinal family), they forced it, every time my mum refused, but this time when they asked for my hand my mum said no but then they said that after this time they are not going to ask* (Zara-P5m).

Fearing that Zara may not receive another proposal within the kin group, her family felt pressured to get her married. As a result, Zara was left with no choice but to leave her studies.

Women who were able to graduate before marriage often became victims of verbal abuse, abuse which was perpetrated by their affinal families. Only three women (one Pakistani born and two British born) had graduated before they moved in with their affinal family. Iqra (Pakistani-born) and Ojala (British-born) were often taunted for being educated. Iqra stated that her affinal family would say:

> *What's the point of studying so much and you cannot even get a job in the UK?' Pakistan education has no value here (in the UK) … knowing how to cook, clean and serve is more important. It is like them saying there is no point of view of an education if you cannot make a round chapatti* (Iqra-P10y).

Similarly, Ojala's mother-in-law began to taunt Ojala about having an education and her lack of knowledge on *how to be a wife/daughter-in-law* (Ojala-B6y).

Education was seen as a threat: having an educated woman in the house meant she knew her rights and was less likely to accept being a domestic worker for the affinal family. This study shows that within the groups the participants belong to, women who are educated, strong, and know their rights tend to face more rejection socially simply because they are self-sufficient and are less likely to serve their affinal family. This then makes the family less dominant upon the educated women. The family is left with no leverage to force submission out of these women and, therefore, has no control over them. The only way to bring an educated woman down was to taunt and remind the women of their presumed lack of qualifications for the position of a 'good' daughter-in-law/wife.

This study also identified two women, Nazmeen (Pakistani born) and Maria (British born), who were promised (by affinal family) further education after marriage. Once married, the 'education' topic becomes a taboo. Nazmeen, for example, was pressured to leave her studies to get married to a British national. She was promised that once arriving in the UK, she could resume her studies. However, this never happened; Nazmeen was physically and verbally abused for asking her husband the first time when I mentioned *my education… he was like no, you cannot study… I just said why, and he started beating me* (Nazmeen-P4y). Fearing that this may end her marriage, Nazmeen decided to stay quiet about the incident and never mention education again. Nazmeen stated that her family and the community would frown upon her if she went against her husband for education; *everyone is going to think that it's not a big deal; people are going to say it's a small matter. so, I stayed quiet* (Nazmeen-P4Y). Similarly, Maria voiced her interest in education; she was promised that after her wedding, she would be able to go to university. However, this never happened. Instead, Maria became a stay-at-home daughter-in-law whose only purpose was to obey and serve her affinal family.

With little education, women are given limited opportunities to make choices for themselves and change the realities of their lives. This study shows that many affinal families somewhat feared education. Education is an important factor which can protect Pakistani women and their future, it can save them from forced marriages and dowry abuse in particular.

Deyessa et al (2010) indicate that if a woman is educated, it can provide a shield to her against DA because education enhances women's empowerment. This creates power dynamics between men and women within the household. If women are considered stronger compared to the male members of the family, either in education or employment, the family will resort to abuse, attempting to control the women by stopping their growth (Niaz, 2003). The feudal lord of Sindh province in Pakistan is against women's education as they believe that if women become literate, they will forget their culture (Babur, 2007, p. 29). Marium (2014), on the other hand, encourages male education, stating that educated

men are more tolerant, and cooperative and in the case of rural women, if men are educated, they can stand against strong rural traditional norms against women.

This is because education allows women to become independent. Being independent means women can move away from marriage relations. They understand that they are under no obligation to keep kin ties. These women want more freedom. Independency means moving away from the expected standards of behaviour for men and women. The Pakistani community is then no longer adhering to the strict codes of honour—the women who were expected to be insiders are not going outside.

As shown above, marriage in the cases of participants of this study interfered in various ways with the women's education. Marriage is an essential institution in Pakistan and is considered an important moral and social obligation (Shaw, 2001). Marriage is seen as the best security for a girl. Chastity is highly valued for girls and is a reason for preferring early marriage; this leaves the young bride dependent on her husband and affinal family. The next chapter will discuss marriage and how many women have no say in choosing a partner; some are forced, and others are deceived into getting married.

Chapter Six: Forms of Abuse

Forms of Abuse (Theme Two).

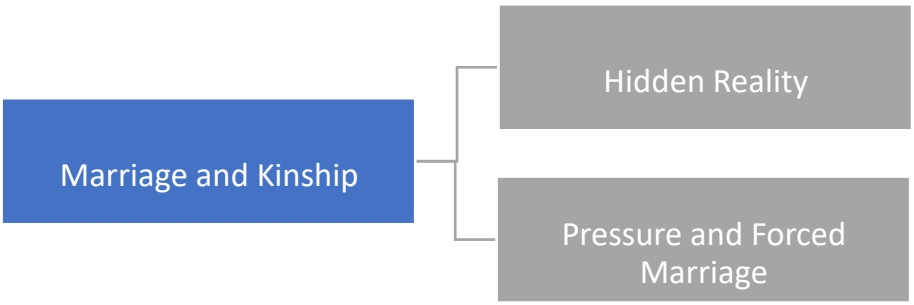

Figure 2: Showing the main theme 'marriage and kinship' with two subthemes.

This chapter is divided into four sections which discuss different forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to: marriage and kinship (section one), transnational marriage abandonment (section two), affinal kin abuse (section three), and spouse abuse (section four).

Section 1: Marriage and Kinship

6.1 Marriage and Kinship

In Pakistani society, marriage is a key mechanism that activates or constructs kinship ties (Afzal et al., 1994; Shaw, 2001 and Bittles, 1994). Within the subject of social anthropology, kinship and marriage are among the oldest and most debated topics (Hendry, 1999). Although the functions of consanguineous marriage have been of interest to anthropologists and sociologists since the nineteenth century (Ember and Ember 1983;

Fortes 1969; Levi-Strauss 1949; Murdock 1949). Anthropologists have generally resisted the application of the evolutionary paradigm to the analysis of kinship and marriage systems, the classic complaint being that 'social' and 'biological' categories overlap but are not identical (Fox, 1983; Sahlins, 1976). At the same time, with few notable exceptions (Hughes, 1988), those advocating an evolutionary approach have generally failed to provide compelling explanations to account for these discrepancies. For example, one of the most powerful insights afforded by the evolutionary approach to the study of human behaviour is the asymmetry that characterizes sexually reproducing species, deriving from the higher potential rate of reproduction of males relative to females (Brown et al, 2009).

Marriage plays an important role in maintaining the kin connection between families who have migrated to the UK and with families and people from the *baradari* (kin group) who have been left behind (in Pakistan). To the extent that kinship and marriage systems determine the structure of the human society. At the same time, long-term population processes such as migration and diffusion likely shaped the observed pattern of variation in kinship and marriage systems. Unravelling the interactions between these facets of history becomes crucial for understanding the evolution of human social organisation, and of human behaviour more generally (Jones, 2003; Gamble, 2008). Shenk et al. (2016) work suggests that individuals and families making marriage decisions face a decision between expanding their social networks (extensive kinship pattern) and reinforcing existing kin ties (intensive kinship pattern). Kinship networks widen the social network of the family, creating not only more kin but also a more diverse set of social ties (Walker & Bailey, 2014). These ties may be used to strengthen kin connections, maintain wealth and property, gain rights to forage in a more significant number of territories or develop exchange and sharing relationships with a more significant number of people.

My research found that for families, marrying their daughters to someone within the kin group was a way in which networks were formed and maintained at the level of the household, the extended family or the wider biraderi (descent group). For example, Zainab's family, who had migrated to the UK accompanied by their immediate kin, felt as though the kinship needed strengthening, as they were the first generation in the UK. The

families agreed that marrying their children would ensure the family stays united in the UK:

> *My family was so happy two brothers are going to be together forever because of their children, because of my marriage. This marriage wasn't for me, it was for kinship to make the kinship stronger. To keep the family wealth and to stay strong I think.... it was for family honour and strength and power…. Sometimes, I think this was the reason why my granddad treated me like a princess, he used to say you are the glue that's going to stick the family together forever* (Zainab: B-4Y).

Kinship marriages are not only related to assets, inheritance, strengthening the kinship, reproducing the next generation of the kin or/and honour-related but rather a safety mechanism for the new bride and the kin group. For some families' kin marriages are seen as a privilege; keeping one's daughter within the kin group means preventing ill-treatment, enabling women to maintain regular natal kin contact, and extracting better treatment from their affine (Charsley, 2005), as opposed to women who marry strangers in far-off places. This is the primary reason, argues Das (1973: 39), that marriage within the kin group is occasionally preferred to marriage with a kin member: women married near natal kin tend to have regular visits/contact and are less cut off from family support. Palriwala (1996) recognises women who live near natal kin as constantly moving between the conjugal and natal home for visits and periods of rest. Broadly, these researchers, along with others, indicate that long-distance marriages with non-relatives result in alienation from natal kin and women's vulnerability in the domestic realm because of the absence of support structures (Jeffery, Jeffery and Lyon, 1988; Grover, 2009: 5).

In my research, two women (Shagufta: P-12y and Najma: P-5y) spoke about marrying within the kin group. Both women did not speak about their relationship with their husbands but rather referred to their whole marriage as a connection to their affinal family, in particular the relationship they had with both their mother and father-in-law.

For example, Najma (P5y) emphasises that her mother-in-law was her *phupho* (dad's sister), she added that she accepted the marital proposal because she was close to her phupho and that their phupho's family liked her:

> *It was my phupho, it was from her house. They all liked me, so they said they wanted me for marriage. I said yes because we were attached to my phupho, so it happened; I got married to my cousin* (Najma, P-5y).

Shagufta added that her parents and her husband parents' marriage was determined through the traditional practice *watta satta*[3]. As her father-in-law and mother-in-law were related to her natal family. She stated that she accepted the marriage, assuming that she may not *'feel as though I was leaving my mum's house'* (Shagufta: P-12y). Watta satta marriages provide an extreme example of how marriage is used to construct reciprocal ties. In such marriages, two families exchange their daughters in marriage, so that if one marriage ends in divorce, the other one will as well. Within my study, only Maria (B6y) experienced the tradition of watta satta:

> *My dad promised (his brother) that he would take his daughter for my brother (in marriage) when it was time for marriage, and my uncle said, "If you're taking my daughter, I will take yours," so basically, that's how our marriages were sorted…*
>
> *...I had to go along with it because my brother is marrying from the same house if I say no, that's going to cause problems between the family, and I do not want to be the one messing the relations up. So yes, it's not really a yes-no thing; you just do it because you know you have to* (Maria (B6y).

Exchanging daughters exemplifies an act of trust or an attempt to curry a high form of social capital. However, at the same time, it suggests that even within kinship groups with sharply defined boundaries, levels of trust are low, so they must literally exchange their daughters to foster trust. There is a common mistake made by families when choosing a partner for their daughters. In Maria's and other kinship marriage cases, parents may take less care in choosing a 'good' husband for their daughters and spend more time choosing a 'good' family that will strengthen the kinship. As a result, when the husband becomes abusive, the family may expend less effort on preventing their daughter's maltreatment

[3] Watta-Satta, (literally, 'give-take') is an exchange marriage also known as bride exchange, usually involves the simultaneous marriage of a brother-sister pair from two household.

within her marriage as they may balance out the negatives (abusive partner) with the positives (good family, kin-connection). Alternatively, marrying someone from the same kin group can make it harder for women to leave the abusive relationship. This study identified that women remained in abusive relationships for two reasons: the first, attempting to keep the family together (Najma: P5y), and the second, being *forced by their natal family to stay quiet and try to make it work* (Zainab: B-4Y). Women who attempted to leave the relationship and tackle the abuse were then faced with their natal families, who did not support their decision to retaliate or leave the relationship; *he (father) said that I was a disgrace I brought shame on the family (*Sofia: B-7y); *My father didn't get in touch with me when I told him I wasn't happy here (Pakistan) I want to come back to the UK, he was like oh well you are going to have to make it work…* (Sadia: B-3y). Other women felt pressured to stay in an abusive marriage to save and maintain the kinship ties: *I do not want to break my family that was a burden, even my in-laws… and mum used to say cope with it, it is our family you will brake relations …* (Najma: P-5y). This study found that for some women, living with an abusive partner was something women just had to deal with. Imbedded in these women is the idea that leaving their abusive relationship can potentially break down kinship ties.

The selection of a marriage partner has consequences for the entire kin group, children, and especially daughters, have little or no say in the choice of their marital partner and could be beaten if they refuse to marry (cited from Dobash & Dobash, 1980). This theme shows that marriages were arranged for the benefit of larger kin groups and by the wishes of the male heads of household (Dobash & Dobash, 1980). It is noteworthy that many daughters may be treated as a commodity with no choice in selecting their marriage partner.

6.1.1 Pressure and Forced Marriage

In Pakistani society, marriage is a universal phenomenon, and consanguineous marriage is a major feature of the society (Afzal et al., 1994; Shaw, 2001; Bittles, 1994). Mostly marriages are practiced as a religious obligation for family formation and childbearing

because most of the childbearing occurs within marriages in Pakistan (Sathar & Kiani, 1986). Moreover, it is preferred that marriages should be arranged by parents rather than by the couple concerned (Shaw, 2001; Hussain, 1999). As shown above, in the cultural context of Pakistani society, a marriage generally means a relationship between families rather than only between the couple concerned (Fazalbhoy, 2006). It is reported in several demographic studies that in Pakistan, the age at marriage is remarkably lower in close-kin marriages as compared to non-kin-related marriages (Afzal et al., 1994; Shaw, 2001; Bittles, 1994). Evidence of this is shown in this study, which identified two British-born women, Sadia and Sofia, who married at the age of 15 within their kinship in Pakistan, making them victims of both children[4] and forced marriage. Nour (2009) notes that many factors contribute to early marriages. Among them, poverty is the most common. Females are considered an economic burden on families as it is very costly to educate and clothe them, and they eventually must leave their households. Therefore, child marriages are considered as a solution to share the economic burden.

The literature suggests that marriage carries a dowry to the bride's family, so young girls get married, the more the parents get grants, and the economic burden of nurturing a girl is lightened. However, this study notes two reasons why families marry their children at a young age: firstly, to control sexuality and second, to prevent any unwanted behaviour which can lead to shame. However, not all women agree to marriage, and this then leads to pressure or forced marriage. Disagreeing to a marriage can worsen a woman's situation, it can make her vulnerable to many forms of abuse, including violence, isolation, coercive and controlling behaviour.

In the UK, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) commissioned a study on forced marriage in 2003, where a distinction is made between arranged and forced marriage and forced marriage is defined as a marriage where one or both parties do not consent freely to the marriage; entry into such a marriage is accompanied by physical, mental and/or

[4] Child marriage has been described by a network of UK-based NGOs, the Forum on Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls (2000) as marriage taking place when one or both partners are under the age of 18. The legal position in the UK places the legal age of marriage at 18 although children over the age of 16 can get married with parental consent.

emotional duress and coercion from family members. Forced marriage is primarily about the control of female sexuality and autonomy and women's sexual purity, which reflects on the honour of the family. In other words, the consequence of behaving dishonourably and humiliating the family can be forced marriage – this has led some to argue that forced marriage is itself a crime of 'honour' (Latif, 2011). In contrast, an arranged marriage is where the family arranges the marriage, but both parties give their free and full consent (Uddin & Ahmed, 2000).

While policy documents make a clear delineation between arranged and forced marriage (Scottish and Government, 2011), centred on the presence or absence of consent, the lived experiences of women in this study demonstrate that the demarcation between these categories overlap. For example, both Sadia and Sofia were taken to Pakistan at the age of 15 to be married to someone they had never met. Despite their lack of consent, removal to another country, and being a child at the time of the marriage ceremony, both Sadia and Sofia described their marriage as 'arranged' rather than 'forced'. Anitha and Gill (2009) argue that "consent and coercion in relation to marriage can be better understood as two ends of a continuum, between which lie degrees of socio-cultural expectation, control, persuasion, pressure, threat and force" (p. 165).

Fear of shame also pushes parents to pressure (force) their children into marriage; evidence of this will be shown in Zainab's journey below. However, before discussing being pressured or forced into marriage, I first want to talk about women who accepted an arranged marriage. Three Pakistani women (Bushra, Nazmeen and Saira) explained that they accepted the marriage proposal because *it was up to the family if they said it was okay and gave the go-ahead. It is better to go along with it* (Bushra: P-2y*).* All three women left the sole decision of their marriage to their parents, stating that their parents would make *the right choice* (Nazmeen: P-4y). Saira adds that although her family asked Saira whether she wanted to get married, Saira trusted her parents and left the sole decision of her marriage on them, she adds: *my mum and dad asked me it is not like they never asked me. I just said whatever you think is best, do that* (Saira: P-6m).

The tradition of arranged marriages and the involvement of parents in matchmaking leaves little room for their children to make their own decisions; therefore, accepting becomes the norm, as shown above. Other women in this study accepted their arranged marriage because they feared that saying 'no' was not an option; *he would not (father) have accepted a 'no', so rather than causing a fuss, I agreed* (Kiran: B-5y). Very few identified the scenes of pressure to marry as being forced into marriage, this may be because those women accepted the marriage rather than refusing to marry. There seems to be an undefined yet fine line between an arranged marriage and feeling the pressure/being forced into marriage. Existing research shows some of the complex interplay and differences between forced and consensual arranged marriages (Shan, 1991). And some literature points out that the differences between arranged and forced marriages can sometimes be fuzzy and inchoate (Caroll, 1998).

Evidence of this is shown when Kiran begins to explain the element of force when she accepts the marriage proposal:

> *I do not think I was emotionally forced I guess that does come but you don't think of it like that I felt like I couldn't say no I had to go along with it because it was my dad, and he is a big person in my family… I think saying no would have caused more problems than saying yes. In a sense it was… yes emotionally I got* delled *(forced) into it* (Kiran: B-5y).

Similarly, Maria speaks about not having a choice but to accept the marriage; she adds that not getting married was never a choice and that saying no would mean going against her kin, which Maria was unwilling to do. Maria does not identify this pressure to marry as force; she adds:

> *Not getting married to him was not an option; I would have been forced otherwise. My family would 100% make me because we have been promised for and everyone, the community, family knows, so if I didn't marry, that would have been a big shame on my family, something my family has kept up…. I don't even know what the consequences would be if I said no all I know is that it would be bad, very bad. It's worse because it's not just my mum and dad I have to face it's my whole family,*

> *grandparents, uncles, community, family in Pakistan and also extended family. Imagine all of them against you on your own, it's just best to go along with it. I mean how bad can it be your marrying into your own family it's not like you're marrying into a stranger's family you already know everyone, everything, expectations, and how the family lives* (Maria-B6y).

Kiran and Maria both show that they feel powerless compared to the kin group members. This pressure is an element of force which is not recognised or voiced by these women who accept these marriages in fear. Half of the women who took part in this study were either forced or felt a scene of pressure to marry a person of their parent's choice. This mainly affected women born in Britain. However, very few accepted or identified this as a forced marriage. None of the women experienced physical abuse by their natal family. However, they all felt some form of emotional abuse, leading them to accept the marriage. Evidence of this is shown in Zainab's journey, who was arranged to marry her cousin when she was born, Zainab voiced out that she was not ready for marriage. Her refusal was seen as a threat to the family's honour, and as a result, Zainab was isolated until her wedding day; only then was she allowed out of the room she was captured in. However, Zainab does not state that her marriage was forced, she justifies her marriage as family honour:

> *My family never hit me, but I think the emotional abuse was worse. They locked me in my room for four days because I said no. The day I came out, it was my wedding day, I had to marry him to keep the family honour…… I understand the value of honour and family connection, so I went through with the marriage* (Zainab: B-4y).

Zainab's interpretation of her lived experience somewhat downplays the true nature of the abuse she experienced. For example, Zainab talks about not being physically abused but then goes on to explain being deprived of her liberty. Deprivation of liberty by its nature denotes using some physical force, a 'locking up'. In Zainab's case, her freedom was taken away, and she was under continuous supervision and control up until she agreed to the marriage. Agreeing to a marriage to escape the physical force is a forced marriage. However, Zainab herself does not recognise the force element of her marriage.

Similarly, three British-born women (Sofia, Sadia and Maria) felt they had *no choice* but to accept an arranged marriage. It was interesting to see that none of these women felt they had *no way out* (Sofia: B-7y), but accepting the marriage did not describe this process as forced. For example, Sadia *had no choice but to choose someone from there (Pakistan)* (Sadia: B-3y). That was the only way she was able to get access to her passport and come back to the UK. However, she describes this as having 'no choice' but to marry rather than being forced into marriage. As mentioned above, Maria also did not use the term force. Instead, she spoke about her fear of the unknown.

> *I don't even know what the consequences would be if I said no all I know is that it would be bad, very bad.* She adds that rather than going against the *whole family, grandparents, uncles, community, family in Pakistan and extended family… it's just best to go along with it. I mean how bad can it be…* (Maria: B-6y).

Although all three women (Sofia, Sadia and Maria) did not want to get married, they eventually accepted the proposal and justified their acceptance. Women in this study believed they *had to go with it; it was that simple* (Ojala: B-6y). Justifying their marriage and stating it was that 'simple' underrepresents the true nature and the seriousness of their journey into marriage. Minimising the seriousness of such a situation will automatically undermine the 'force' element in such marriages, replacing force with pressure as it has done in this study.

Forced marriage should be conceptualised as a pattern of behaviour by the family, the inability to recognise it being predicated on patterns of upbringing. As shown by this study, most women were shaped to become 'good' wives, others were married by the age of 15, and some were made to follow cultural norms leading up the actual event of the marriage. The trauma of the process of being forced into a marriage was no less profound. For these reasons, it is essential to consider forced marriage as a pattern of behaviour rather than one isolated event. Conceptualising forced marriage as a process rather than an event makes the abuse more visible, showing the process leading up to the marriage. All the women in this study discussed the instrumental role their mothers, families or the wider community played in introducing the idea of marriage to them from a young age or early

adolescence. As Yuval Davis (1997) argues, mothers are not only biological reproducers but "cultural" reproducers for the nation. This captures the socialisation starting in childhood, how the mothers, the kin group, and the community have a key role in transmitting 'appropriate' cultural values, created mainly through a patriarchal structure. The role of parents in such a process is an active one.

As mentioned previously, marriages are preferably arranged by parents, and such marriages have a higher status than love marriages, where the couples have exercised their own choice (Fazalbhoy, 2006). Marriages between people of different classes, education and biraderi remain taboo in the Pakistani community (Fortunato, 2009). An example of this is presented in this study: Iqra, a Pakistani migrant, married a British man of her choice, the man was from Iqra's extended kin group, but because the marriage was of her own choice, the marriage was disapproved by both her natal and affinal family.

As a result, Iqra was left alone to fight against her abusive husband. Her family constantly reminded her that the marriage was her own choice; therefore, she must deal with the issues independently. Iqra explains:

> *All that pressure and guilt is falling on me I must suffer, it's double the suffering because the marriage was of my own choice, everyone is saying you chose the marriage….and it is extremely unfair (*Iqra: P-10y).

As mentioned above, to avoid an un-arranged marriage, some families might take less care in choosing a 'good' husband if the husband is from the same kin or fits the families' expectations. Getting married and receiving a good marriage proposal is vital in Pakistani society. There are many motives for forced marriages, including parents' desire to control unwanted behaviour and sexuality, preventing a relationship outside ethnic, religious, cultural or caste group, or ensuring land, property, and wealth remain within the family, protecting the family honour, controlling alcohol and drug abuse or to control Westernised behaviour, behaving in a 'Westernised manner' (Samad, 2003). Forced marriage, therefore, is a form of social control. It is a control by the family of female sexuality, and to protect family honour. It is about power relations between men and women and the power of parents over their children, especially daughters. When parents become

concerned about their children's behaviour, they may force their children into marriage, hoping that their children will follow the family's codes after marriage. However, rushing to get their children married or getting a proposal accepted, parents may hide the real reason they need the marriage to take place. For example, parents may hide the reality from the bride's parents, and they may not mention that their son has a girlfriend or is an alcoholic. Not knowing the whole reality, the bride's parents may accept the marriage proposal, making their daughter vulnerable to abuse after marriage. Hiding the reality of a situation becomes more accessible when one family lives in the UK and the other in Pakistan.

6.1.2 Hidden Realities

People from Pakistan are from a transnational community; therefore, transnational marriages are seen as an instrument for maintaining close links within the kin group across borders. The existence of transnational solid links between the countries of origin means the search for potential marital partners is not restricted to the Pakistani community in the UK. The maintenance to this link is shown in this study as over half of the participants married a partner across the border, and seven participants who were born in Pakistan married someone from the UK. Two British-born participants married someone from Pakistan.

The incidence of transnational marriage is associated with the limited potential marriage pool among the British Asian population, which is subdivided by status, education, language, religion, class, and kinship. Identification with kinship networks and communities in the country of origin remains strong. As a result, traditional community values continue to govern individual and group behaviour within the transnational community. It is commonly thought, in the UK Pakistani society, that brides from Pakistan are of higher value than those born in the UK. This is because brides from Pakistan carry traditional beliefs, they practice gender roles accordingly, and most importantly, they are not influenced by the 'Western culture'. Families who seek such brides may portray a false image of the groom to secure a suitable bride. Hiding the reality from the bride and her

family becomes more accessible when the families live in two different countries (Cameron, 2006).

Charsley (2005) adds that she suspects that some of the cases where men are taken to Pakistani to marry are, in fact, concealed forms of male forced marriage in which a young man whose behaviour, such as having a girlfriend or using drugs, is worrying his parents. They are taken to marry a Pakistani woman, hoping this will bring them back to the desired path. The corrective power of marriage to someone from a less 'corrupt' society is certainly given as a normal justification for forcing young women to marry (Samad & Eades, 2002). Charsley (2005) found that one Pakistani family got their son married in Pakistan in an unsuccessful attempt to put an end to his drug-taking lifestyle.

Another man said his brother was forced to marry a cousin in Pakistan but left home as soon as his wife came to the UK. The option to resist such compulsion by refusing to consummate the union is probably more readily available to men than to women (Das 1974: 34), but similar to the women in this study, men in a forced marriage situation may decide that the easiest path is to go along with the wedding and immigration application, in the knowledge that, unlike most women in forced marriages, the men may be able to carry on with their chosen lifestyle after their spouse has come to Britain.

Like the findings within this study, Charsley (2005) also found that some men after marriage turned out to be very different from the image portrayed of them, which may have been very much in favour of the marriage. This research has documented three British men and their families who hid the true nature of their situation when selecting a bride from Pakistan. Shagufta, a Pakistani-born woman, migrated to the UK after marrying her British husband. One month after she arrived in the UK, her husband was sent to prison for 4 years. Shagufta goes on to say:

> *I did not know what my husband had done here (UK) no one told me or my family that he has a court case, 4 years punishment, and he went to jail, I don't know anything about this matter (Shagufta: P-12y).*

Nazmeen, who was also a Pakistani-born woman, only found out about her husband's affair and child once she came to the UK. Maria, a British-born woman, married a man after his family convinced her natal family that the groom was religious. It was after marriage that she realised that her husband had a drinking problem. Maria explains that:

> *His mum and sisters knew about his drinking habit, but no one had ever mentioned it to my family* (Maria: B-6y) or me.

It is important to note here that these women are deceived into marriage. Some men are also forced (not identified in this study).

For example, men who have relationships before marriage may not wish to get married, and men who abuse drugs may not feel ready for marriage, but they are forced into relationships to 'fix them'.

Once married, the husband may feel no connection to his new wife, neglecting her and refusing to support her financially; if their wife is from Pakistan, they may even refuse to apply for her visa. This leaves the new wife isolated, with a lack of financial support and a vulnerable immigration status. Research looking at men and forced marriage is minimal. Therefore, this theme (Hidden Reality) contributes to the knowledge production process and can also be used to understand why some migrant brides are abandoned by their British Husbands.

6.1.3 Conclusion

Forced marriage is one of the leading crimes of 'honour' in the Pakistani community. It is a demeaning form of marriage settlement arranged by 'force' by the family members. It can end in self-harm, suicide or even murder by family members. While it tends to be considered a cultural practice rather than an offensive act, it almost always becomes a tradition of crime (Metlo, 2012). Honour and kinship obligations: Respect, honour, shame, patriarchy, and kin connection are the notions embedded in Pakistan as a social norm. Kinship obligations, often sustained by marriages between overseas settlers and those

who stayed back home, are still practised today. As families become scattered through labour migration, marriages between cousins and extended kins become essential. New marriages with relatives are necessary to keep kinship relations strong and uphold the family name and wealth (Ballard, 2001). This cultural structure works from generation to generation to transfer familial and communal values and legitimise male domination over women.

Pakistanis in the UK live in a 'kin-based society'. During the last three to four decades, Pakistani communities have constructed and provided certain relationships to one another, with the basic idea of formulating their kinship groups in the UK to identify personal and collective behaviours in their respective communities.

Section 2: Transnational Marriage Abandonment

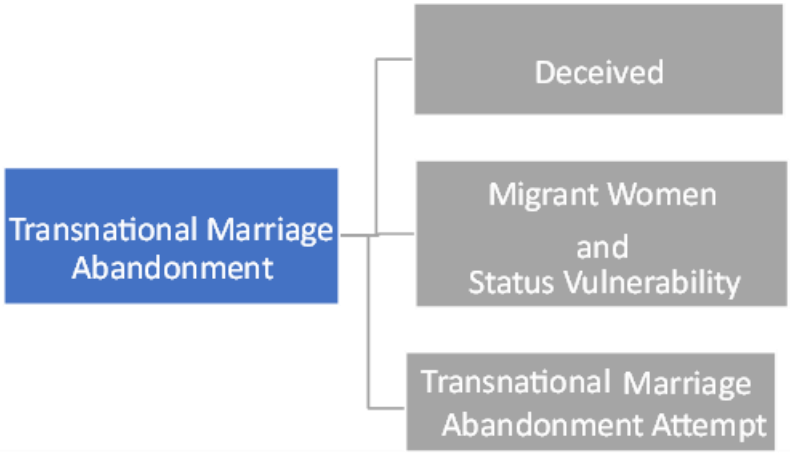

Figure 3: Showing the main theme 'Transnational marriage abandonment' with three subthemes.

Transnational marriages are seen as an instrument for maintaining close links within the biraderi across borders. Such marriages are also seen as a method of cultural rejuvenation, particularly by elders of the immigrant family who may be concerned that their offspring who have grown up in Britain are losing touch with their heritage.

6.2 Transnational Marriage Abandonment Attempt

In recent years, the act of deliberate abandonment or 'stranding' of a woman in her country of origin by a husband who returns and remains in the UK has recently been recognised as a form of Domestic Abuse (Anitha, S. et al., 2016). The process leading to abandoning a woman is calculated and follows a pattern of DA and coercive control. The practice of abandonment typically involves a British national or British resident husband and his migrant wife.

Pragna Patel, the Director of Southall Black Sisters, has delineated three forms of abandonment:

i. Women who migrate to the UK after marriage are ousted or forced to flee within the UK due to abuse; ii. women who migrate to the UK after marriage are later deceived into visiting their country of origin and abandoned there. At the same time, the British husband returns to the UK and revokes their visa.

ii. After marriage, women are left in their country of origin with their in-laws; they are never sponsored by their husbands (Anitha, S. et al., 2018)

During my research, I found two migrant women (Shagufta and Saira) who had experienced the second category of abandonment, whilst an additional two (Najma and Zara) married migrants refused to visit Pakistan, aware that their British national husbands attempted to abandon them in Pakistan if they agreed to travel. This 'attempted abandonment' can take the form of persuasion, coercion, or forceful expulsion and should be recognised as extending the recognised repertoire of abandonment outlined by Patel. Najma's husband made it clear that he did not want his migrant wife to live in the UK with him; he offered to support her financially if she returned to Pakistan with their children: *he wanted us to live there (Pakistan) he said he will send us spending money, I said why should I go to Pakistan (Najma-P:5y)*. In Zara's case when simple persuasion did not work her husband revoked her visa. Zara, who was pregnant at the time, stated that her husband used the pregnancy to lure Zara into visiting Pakistan:

> *He lovingly said that you're not in good health (due to pregnancy), go back to your mum in Pakistan for two weeks, and I will call you back to the UK when your delivery time is closer*.

Unable to send Zara back to Pakistan, Zara adds:

> *The police came to arrest me, saying that your husband has cancelled your visa. He cancelled my visa and tried sending me back to Pakistan.* (Zara-P5:m).

Although both Najma and Zara were not stranded in their country of origin, the intention of abandonment was there.

The recognition of Transnational Marriage Abandonment (TMA) has come to light in recent years with charities (Southall Black Sisters) and researchers (Anitha, S. et al, 2018; Patel, P.

et al, 2016) fighting on behalf of abandoned migrant women, making space for TMA within legislation and policy development of DA. However, the focus on migrant women has neglected and marginalised British women who are abandoned by their natal families in their partner's country of origin. This research identified two British-born women (Sofia and Sadia) who were abandoned in Pakistan, the sole purpose of their abandonment being marriage.

British-born women who are forced into transnational marriages have the right to return to the UK. These women are not abused or abandoned due to immigration or bordering regimes mobilised by the West. I believe transnational forced marriages, which lead to the abandonment of British-born (by their families), should be conceptualised as TMA. For example, Sofia and Sadia were taken to Pakistan to get married and left there to *make their marriage work*. Sofia, for example, was left in *Pakistan for seven years* (Sofia: B7-y). She was unable to come back to the UK until she was able to get pregnant, while Sadia had to make her marriage work for her father to let her back into the UK; *I told him (father) I was not happy here (Pakistan) I want to come back to the UK, he was like oh well you are going to have to make it work. I am not letting you come back here (UK) you are not coming back to this house* (Sadia: B-3y). It is fair to state that both women have fallen victim to transnational forced marriage (TFM). Although the characterisation of the deprivation of liberty falls under the act of forced marriage, I have chosen to characterise the deprivation of liberty in transnational forced marriage as abandonment rather than a single case of forced marriage. This is due to two specific reasons: (1) although the transnational abandonment was a result of the family's decision to strip away the women's liberty, in the UK, there is no mechanism in place which identifies the absence of young people. By stating that Sofia and Sadia were both forced into marriage, we fail to note that the UK needs to identify and track young people who do not return to the UK once they are in transnational space or who do not enrol in college or start work after their final year of school. And then (2) repatriation by FMU is only possible for women who seek support or for those who are identified as victims of forced marriage. Both Sofia and Sadia did not have the means to access any service which would help towards their repatriation. Therefore, educating young people about TMA and the services available for victims

becomes extremely necessary. Educating young British people about TMA and forced marriages in transnational spaces means that authorities, services and victims themselves may be able to identify a possible act of TMA before they leave the UK. This means the FMU/FMPO can come into force initially, preventing TMA and TFM.

This study shows that all the women's journeys regarding their abandonment were different. However, they all shared one commonality, and that was deception. Pakistani-born women were deceived by their affinal family, whose main aim was to send them back to their natal family and never allow them back into the UK. On the other hand, British-born women were deceived by their natal family, who lowered the women in, convincing them that their trip to Pakistan was 'just' a holiday to visit extended family members. However, on arrival, the women were subjected to abuse, their passports confiscated and forced into marriage. The women were told that they could only return to the UK once they had accepted the marriage and completed the marriage ceremony. Once the women reached Pakistan, their passports and all other forms of documents were taken away from them, they were either convinced or forced into an arranged marriage.

6.2.1 Deceived.

This theme identified that abuse, deception, and coercive and controlling behaviour were exercised by the husbands and/or family members to abandon women across national borders.

Deception was a common means used to lure women into visiting Pakistan, depriving women of their rights and exposing them to a range of abuse. In the context of ongoing and escalating abuse, four women were deceptively taken to Pakistan and abandoned in their natal/affinal home and were prevented from returning to the UK. Here, the abusers can dominate, abuse and exploit women, knowing that the women would not be protected by the legal frameworks in Pakistan and across transnational spaces. Abusers abandoned the women in Pakistan because they believed that the women were unable to gather the resources needed to return to the UK. Leaving women behind can lead to further abuse because female abandonment after marriage is deemed to be a matter of

great shame; this leaves the abused women isolated and 'stripped of honour'. The deception process of the four women in this study began with their natal families or husbands convincing the women that they were only going on a short holiday to Pakistan. The people involved in the abandonment all play along with this idea of a holiday; some even help to control the women before, during and after abandonment. This is shown in Shagufta's case, who spoke about not having access to her passport during her journey to Pakistan, her passport remained in the custody of her sister-in-law, who helped Shagufta's husband with the abandonment, *My sister-in-law had my passport the booth women (airport security) asked for it, she still didn't give it to me for me to show, she showed it herself* (Shagufta, P12Y). Both Shagufta and Saira (migrants) believed that they were going to Pakistan to visit their natal families. They were both accompanied by their husbands and, on arrival, stayed at their natal family homes, after which they were abandoned without their passports. In Saira's case, her husband stayed with her for 10 days, after which he convinced her that he is going to visit his sister and stay with her for a couple of days:

> *He told me to stay with my mum for couple of days, he said two days before leaving for the UK he will come back for me, and we will leave together……. he only got his own return ticket not mine; I did not know this at the time, he had the passports… he returned to the UK, he didn't come back to me* (Saira: P6-m).

Shagufta (P:12y), abandoned in Pakistan twice had a similar experience. The second time she was deceived and was told that she was going to Pakistan to meet her mother, after which she would go to Umrah[5] with her husband and sister-in-law. Her husband and sister-in-law left Shagufta at her mother's house and convinced her that they were going to a wedding, after which they would return and go to Umrah together. However, two weeks later, they (husband and sister-in-law) came back to the UK; *they didn't tell me that they were returning to the UK. My passport and the tags on my bags, they had taken them off* (Shagufta: P-12y).

[5] The ʿUmrah is an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca that can be undertaken at any time of the year, in contrast to the Ḥajj, which has specific dates according to the Islamic lunar calendar.

Shagufta was abandoned in Pakistan twice, and both times, her children were taken from her. Shagufta visited Pakistan to attend her brother's wedding. During this trip, Shagufta was accompanied by both of her children, husband, sister-in-law, father-in-law and mother-in-law. Shagufta spoke about her in-laws' behaviour changing towards her, they began to withhold information from Shagufta, making her feel isolated. Her husband eventually returned to the UK with their two children, leaving Shagufta in Pakistan to take care of her ill mother-in-law. Shagufta goes on to say:

Their (affinal family) behaviour messed up a lot, they left me in Pakistan, they got their sister married and didn't tell me, after one or two weeks they left they left me in Pakistan…. my 3-year-old son and 9-year-old son he (husband) kept them…. brought them back to the UK, passport, all my documents he (husband) took them with him (to the UK) and left me in Pakistan with his mum, he said my mum is ill stay with her (Shagufta: P-12y).

During Shagufta's first abandonment, she had some form of contact with her affinal family. Although there was no contact with her affinal family in the UK, in Pakistan, she was still the daughter-in-law who lived and served her affinal family in their Pakistan home.
During the abandonment, Shagufta was still living with her affinal family, this protected Shagufta from shame. Rather, Shagufta was seen as a victim by the community and other kin members. She was a woman who was abandoned in Pakistan without her children, and yet she attempted to keep her ties with her husband's family. This made Shagufta a 'good daughter-in-law' who needed to be treated better. Here, the pressure of the community fell on Shagufta's affinal family, who had no choice but to allow Shagufta back into the UK. However, Shagufta's second abandonment was difficult. She was deceived and abandoned in her natal family home in Pakistan, again without her children. Her abandonment by the Natal family was treated differently by the community. This time, the abandonment was shameful and embarrassing. Shagufta was no longer treated as a victim of abandonment but rather seen as an unwanted, shameful daughter. Shagufta was led to believe that she

and the rest of her affinal family, including her children, were going to Umrah. However, on the day of the flight, only Shagufta's husband and sister-in-law were ready to leave the county:

> *It was our last day in the UK before traveling to Saudi, and I asked my sister-in-law that you said the whole family is going, but no one is ready... they told me that the second or third day, my children will also come, but they will come with the rest of the family. I didn't know that they were playing a game with me* (Shagufta: P-12y).

Believing her affinal family, Shagufta left the UK with her husband and her sister-in-law. As Shagufta did not read or speak English, she was unaware that the flight, she was in fact, a flight to Pakistan; *they said that they were taking me to Pakistan to meet my mum, and after that, we were going to Umrah... two weeks later, they came back to the UK. They didn't tell me that they were returning* (Shagufta, p12). Once abandoned, Shagufta was denied any communication with her children and was verbally abused by her affinal family.

Current research on TMA (Anitha, S. et al., 2016, 2018; Patel, P. et al., 2016) has defined the abusive act as a deliberate abandonment of a woman in her country of origin by a husband who returns and remains in the UK.

The intention of the practice is to abandon the wife, preventing her from her residence rights in the Western country, in this case, that being the UK. This study also found women abandoned in their country of origin. However, this study has also identified two British national women (Sadia and Sofia) who were abandoned in Pakistan. This shows that the current research on TMA (Anitha, S. et al., 2016, 2018; Patel, P. et al., 2016) has marginalised and silenced women who are deceived into leaving their country of origin and abandoned in a different country, forced into marriage and unable to return to the UK.

Both British-born women, Sadia and Sofia, were lured into visiting Pakistan *at the age of fifteen* (Sofia: B-7y and Sadia: B-3y). Although their deceptions differed, Sofia '*thought it was a family holiday',* whereas Sadia had to visit her unwell grandfather. However, on arrival, both women were pressured into marriage and were abandoned by in Pakistan (by

the natal family) to 'make their marriage work'. Sadia refused to get married, however this resulted in her passport being taken off her, leaving her with *no choice but to choose someone from there (Pakistan)* (Sadia: B-3y).

My research found that British-born women found it more difficult to settle in the UK once they escaped their abusers in Pakistan. Migrant women found refuge and began their new lives in the UK without their husbands and in-laws. Whereas the British-born women had natal families in the UK, and that was something they had to face once returning. For example, Sofia (B7y), abandoned in Pakistan for seven years, finally escaped and arrived in the UK. On arrival, Sofia avoided visiting her parents as she feared they would pressure her to return to her abuser in Pakistan to protect the family's honour; she adds:

> *I couldn't go back to my mum and dads I couldn't go to my family or no one… If I went back to them my mum and dad…. they probably convince me to go back home (Pakistan). I brought shame on the family my family do not care about my wellbeing they just care about how they look to other people* (Sofia: B-7y).

This research identified that although migrant women are able to settle in the UK with some help from the authorities, British-born women found it more difficult to settle and find acceptance from their families and the Pakistani community.

Migrant women will find and accept support from DA services, meet other migrant women, or have natal relatives in the UK who also support their settlement.

Their natal families in Pakistan will also accept the migrant woman and support her settlement in the UK. This is for two reasons: migrant women settling in the UK will avoid ostensible abandonment in Pakistan, which saves them from bringing shame on the family; the second is financial support. Once the migrant woman is settled and is able to save money, she may become the main source of income for her natal family in Pakistan who live in poverty. Therefore, a migrant woman living in the UK without a husband is still of value to her natal family in Pakistan. A British woman, on the other hand, is the opposite. Her financial situation does not affect her natal family because her family is already settled and working in the UK. She is neglected by the community she has been raised in, leaving her isolated from the community and the family. For British Pakistani women, their families

are somewhat their 'safety net', protecting them from the outside (Western) world. This 'safety net' allows the women to be recognised by their family name, and the community accepts the young women because they carry their family and their community's honour. However, the day the British woman decides to leave her family, she loses her identity; she no longer has her 'safety net', leaving the woman all alone with no community and no identity. Other Pakistani communities will also reject her as she dishonoured her family and has been stripped away from her family name. Raised to be amongst other Pakistanis and restricted from living the Western life, these women are left with only the Western world they were once protected from.

6.2.2 Migrant Women and Status Vulnerability.

Immigration status is a direct result of transnational marriage. This study identified that the nature of abuse depended on the process of settlement and adaptation to the new country (UK). Immigration status intensified and facilitated Pakistani women's experiences of abuse within the home, creating new methods of control and coercion which is unrecognised and absent in policy documents.

Immigration makes it easier for men and their families to control migrant women in every aspect of their lives. For example, Socio-cultural norms against divorce compelled women to remain in abusive relationships, and insecure immigration status prevented marriage migrants from seeking help. Affinal families are aware of women's insecure immigration status; they use this as a weapon to keep the women in fear and inferior to the rest of the affinal family, leaving them dependent upon their abusive partners (Anitha, S. 2018a).

When arriving in the UK, migrant women within this study were socially and economically dependent on their husbands and their affinal families. To control migrant women, husbands and/or their families discourage, prohibit and/or prevent migrant women from not only learning English but also adapting to their new surroundings (the West). This is shown in Zara's care, whose affinal family disapproved of her wearing Western clothes:

> *My husband had ordered me some English style clothes and the people at home (affinal family) did not approve of it despite that their daughters wore English clothes. But they told him that like this he is going to make me free, he's going to spoil me that's how the home people (affinal family) started the abuse towards me* (Zara-P: 5m).

Six out of the seven migrant women come from traditional, rural backgrounds, with very little English language ability. Once these women arrived in the UK, they had very little opportunity to improve their language skills as their lives were largely regulated by their husbands and their husband's family, as their culture dictates. Although some women wanted to learn English, they were unable to gain any language skills due to the restrictions and lack of support by their husband and/ or his families:

> *I wasn't that educated but despite that I wanted to learn the language, read English and stand on my own feet, get out, be something and do something for my future, you shouldn't depend on people you should do it yourself. But, nothing happened, no one helped me going out to learn English* (Shagufta: P-12y).

Language barriers meant that women were less likely to understand or gain knowledge about DA, understand service provision, and their rights.

Najma, for example, did not know that abuse was illegal in the UK. Other women were repeatedly told that they do not know anything, making the women feel as though they needed their husband and/or his family to live and survive in the UK; *in Pakistan, I was educated and modern. However, when I came here, my in-laws made me believe that I did not know anything. It is true I did not know the basics* (Nazmeen-P4y).

This study found that immigration status was used to create fear and control migrant women; *'He would say I will divorce you, I will deport you* (Iqra-P10y). Some women were told that leaving the house or asking for help would lead to them being sent back to Pakistan as they do not have permanent residency. Fearing this, women stayed in their abusive relationships, as they were unaware of their immigration status or their rights:

At first, they kept me in fear, I didn't know anything about my stay, and I had never seen my passport (Shagufta-P12y).

I did not know anything about my rights (in the UK) no one ever mentioned anything about DA and it being illegal. When I used to get fed-up and cry a lot, they used to say go to Pakistan, but the authorities would take the children off me. They used to tell me that I cannot leave my husband because if I do, I will not get my stay, and I will be sent back to Pakistan which would be shameful for my parents. When a woman comes from Pakistan, there are these things that are embedded in her mind by the UK family, this makes her inferior and helpless (Najma-P:5y).

It is not only the migrant women who are exposed to the threat of being sent back to Pakistan. This study has identified that migrant women's natal family are also often threatened by the women's affinal family. This often occurs when a migrant woman leaves the abusive relationship and has taken shelter in a refuge; having a no-contact order in place, the British husband and his family are not allowed to contact the migrant woman, in which case they may contact the natal family in Pakistan threatening to revoke the migrant women's visa and inflict further abuse upon her:

No contact, they did not talk to me direct, but in Pakistan, they used to say it to my mum and dad, they were scaring them, saying that they are going to deport me, we are going to do this and that when we find her (Nazmeen-P4y).

Threats to the natal family were found to be a method of shaming the migrant woman and her family. Once these women left their abusive relationship, their natal families did not want them to return to Pakistan. They rather wanted the women to settle in the UK, even if this meant taking shelter in a refuge and rebuilding their life in the UK. This is because being sent back to Pakistan after marriage was deemed to be shameful. Saira goes on to explain that:

It is not about coming to the UK it is about my family's respect, if I stayed in Pakistan, I would have had no future, at least here (UK), people do not know me I can live my life without people thinking I am a walking shame for my family (Saira: P-6m).

It is important to note that all seven migrant women had migrated following marriage, the quickest sponsor being six months and the longest being three years. In all cases, the husband would leave for the UK after the wedding, with the intention of applying for a spouse visa, which enables the migrant woman to join the British husband. During this period, the woman is left with her in-laws in Pakistan with some form of communication with her British husband. Nazmeen adds that he came to the UK; I stayed in Pakistan with my in-laws, and *then, till coming here, I stayed there for three years with my in-laws*. Of these seven migrant women, two were deceptively taken back to Pakistan and abandoned there. Studies conducted by Sundari Anitha, Anupama Roy and Harshita Yalamarty (2017) identified women from South Asia (India) who married British nationals, while these women waited for the spousal visa, they would have regular communication with their husbands, some husbands might even visit on holidays, but eventually, the communication would fade away, and the women are left with no sponsor and no contact with their husband. Due to this research being based on women living in the UK, none of the women were abandoned in this way. However, Shagufta mentions knowing women from Pakistan who marry British nationals but never get sponsored, such women are left in Pakistan, vulnerable to abuse from the community as they are seen as an 'unwanted bride':

> *I have seen so many women like me in Pakistan who are suffocating and cannot return back to the UK, some never made it, and many have been sexually abused, and they have been left in Pakistan whilst their kids or husbands are in the UK, these women cannot find a way to come back to the UK, they cannot find a way to be with their kids. I am just thankful to Allah (God) that I have made it here (UK), but I want something to happen for those women as well. I want them to use my story as an example and think if she can do it, so can we* (Shagufta-P12y).

6.2.3 Conclusion

TMA is an emerging and growing problem due to the continued increase of migration overlapping with marriage. This opens transnational spaces within which perpetrators can commit new forms of abuse. TMA is embedded within DA as coercive control is exercised

over the woman. The impact of abandonment also creates contexts for further forms of abuse against women due to the stigma associated with divorce, women's vulnerability within the natal home and issues related to insecure immigration status. This research shows that beyond the various processes of control and individual acts of harm that lead to and outlast the act of abandonment in transnational marriages, abandonment itself constitutes a form of VAWG. One of the main issues raised in this theme is the lack of knowledge associated with British national women, who are taken to Pakistan (or any other country linked to their ethnicity) and left trapped in abusive and unwanted marriages and in circumstances that involve the deliberate infraction of their legal rights to protection and support. This is an area which requires more research. Alternatively, this theme has also brought to light the involvement of affinal families when abandoning women, which feeds into the next theme identified in this study (affinal Kin).

Section 3: Affinal Kin: The oppression of in-married women

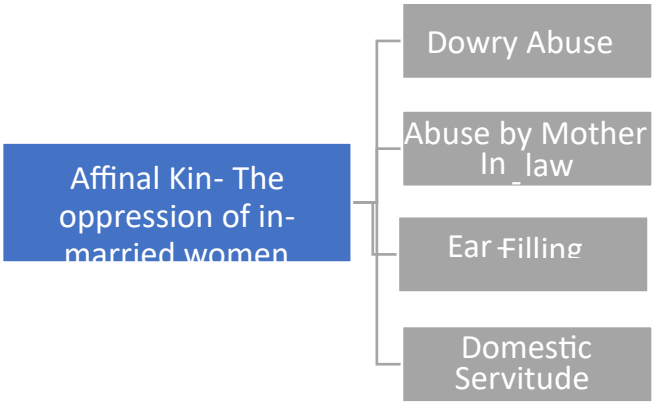

Figure 4: Showing the main theme 'affinal kin' with four subthemes.

This chapter explores Pakistani women's experiences of family abuse, particularly the role of the husband's family in these experiences. It was found that as well as partner abuse, some women were also being abused by their husband's mothers and other members of the affinal family. This theme is a dimension of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse that is overlooked, with much work on DA focusing on abuse between partners (Scottish Executive, 2002). Little is known about the nature of the affinal family abuse towards the new bride, why and how it can become violent, and how it can add to women's abuse and oppression in a family abuse context. This study identified the particular role of the mother-in-law in instigating and perpetrating abuse against daughters-in-law. The sociocultural norms in extended family households, such as a preference for a grandchild to be a boy or the son maintaining a joint household, can cause tensions and hostility between mothers- and the new bride. These tendencies have the potential for abuse that is associated with the everyday practices of power and control, where the mother-in-law will voice her dominant position, leaving the new bride as an inferior member of the family who has no choice but to obey not only her husband but his family members.

6.3.1 Abuse by Mother-in-law.

The very few researchers who have written about abuse perpetrated by mothers-in-law have tried to explore the possible reasons and causes for this (Jeffery et al., 1989; Raj et al., 2006; Gangola & Rew, 2011). Before exploring the women's experience of abuse perpetrated by their mothers-in-law, it is important to provide a brief overview of why some mothers-in-law abuse their daughters-in-law. This study identifies that power and position are the core of this abuse. For example, before marriage, a woman's position is clear. According to the patriarchal structure, she is her father and mother's responsibility. Additionally, the structure places her male relatives as superior to her while she is seen as the one who is caring for the family's honour and, therefore, in need of their protection.

However, researchers such as Mand (2008:289) argue that a woman's status in the affinal home is not static but alters through different stages in her life. The powerful mother-in-law was once herself in a relatively powerless position as a young daughter-in-law within her own affinal home. With the birth of a son, an oppressed daughter-in-law lives in the hope of one day becoming a powerful mother-in-law, ultimately superseding the power and control of her mother-in-law (Rew, Gangoli and Gill, 2013: 152). This is understood and termed by Kandiyoti (1988) as the 'patriarchal bargain', where the subordinate new bride's positioning within her affinal home eventually changes, usually by having a son who provides long-term economic and social security by maintaining the joint extended household (Rew, Gangoli and Gill, 2013: 150).

The power gain here is via the birth of a son, in which case Pakistani mothers tend to develop very close relationships with their sons, making it difficult, if not impossible, to share their sons with another woman. This study identified two women (Zara and Zainab) whose husbands wanted to make their marriage work. However, this did not go down well with the mother-in-law and other members of the family. For example, Zara, a migrant, spoke about how her husband supported her and attempted to help Zara settle into the UK.

However, Zara's in-laws did not like the idea of Zara and her husband getting close. Therefore, to drive a wedge between the couple, the affinal family began criticising Zara's husband and telling him that he is making his wife 'too free':

> *My husband had ordered me some English style clothes and the people at home did not approve of it... they told him that like this he is going to make me free, he's going to spoil me that's how the home people started the abuse towards me* (Zara: P5m).

Similarly, Zainab's husband tried spending some time with her, however, he was constantly told that he is 'spoiling her':

> *At first my marriage was ok, my husband allowed me to have a phone, we use to go out for meals and watch films. My mother in-law didn't like it she used to say to my husband 'you're spoiling her'* (Zainab-B4y).

This study has found that when a son tries building a relationship with his wife, this causes tension within the mother and daughter-in-law relationship. Terms such as 'spoiling' and 'free' make it clear that mothers-in-law fear that they will lose control of their daughters-in-law, potentially threatening the long-term benefits of living in an extended household, such as economic support and care in old age. For reasons such as these and the difficulty a mother may have in sharing her son with another woman (Kakar, 1978), mothers-in-law can thwart the development of intimacy between a son and his wife (Jeffery, Jeffery and Lyon, 1989: 31). As Ojala explains:

> *This may sound wrong, but I felt she (mother-in-law) was jealous or felt threatened any time my husband gave me some affection. She would call him down if he decided to stay in the room with me instead of being downstairs with his brothers* (Ojala- B6y).

It was noted that a new bride could potentially threaten the mother-in-law's long-term plans and security if, for example, she convinces her husband to move into their own

home, forming a nuclear household. This breaks the traditional joint household and leaves the mother-in-law potentially alone in old age and with no economic security.

Therefore, the mother-in-law aims to preserve the joint family structure and ultimately to ensure her daughter-in-law does not develop the confidence nor gain the loyalty of her son sufficient to encourage him to break the joint family. In doing so, according to the women within this study, family abuse perpetrated by mothers-in-law is motivated for the mother-in-law's personal gain and self-interest. Participants explained that domestic servitude, control of marital relations, and constant 'ear filling' (see below) were ways in which mothers-in-law controlled and dominated the relationship between their son and the new daughter-in-law. Maria recalls being a 'puppet', controlled by her mother-in-law, who made it difficult for her son to build a marital relationship with Maria:

> *We let our mother-in-law take control, if mothers cannot let go of their sons, then why marry them in the first place. At this point it had been six years I was putting up with this. Now that I look back, I was bullied and my life that wasn't mine I became my mother-in-law's puppet who wanted me to do everything for her children* (Maria-B6y).

Tactics employed by mothers-in-law to prevent intimacy, such as keeping their daughter-in-laws busy with household chores to prevent them from having opportunities to be alone with their husbands, were identified in interviews. The implied reason for the mother-in-law's control of intimacy between her son and his wife is fear that this may lead to separation from her son emotionally or that the power will shift from the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law. When a husband becomes complicit in the abuse perpetrated by his mother towards his wife, it is unlikely that a daughter-in-law will ever be a threat to the mother-in-law and her position in the affinal family.

6.3.2 Domestic servitude

> *I was like a domestic slave like I was always cleaning sorting the house out, doing all the earns in the house and the cooking and the cleaning and the guest would come, and I would just be serving, and it got so normal. I was so used to it, I never*

used to go out anywhere, I used to be inside the house all the time. If I wanted to go out, I couldn't go out I couldn't do anything (Sofia-B7y).

Domestic servitude is one of the most common forms of abuse perpetrated by the mother-in-law. Women within this study commonly recalled having no choice but to cook and clean for their affinal family. Seven women (Shagufta, Iqra, Najma, Halima, Sofia, Kiran and Maria) spoke about having countless duties and no time for themselves. Four women recount feelings of being treated like a 'domestic servant'; for example, Maria states, *'I do not know when but eventually she (mother-in-law) turned me into a mindless domestic slave, I know slave is a powerful word, but hands-on heart that's what I was a slave'*. (Maria-B6y). This study found that a new bride would do what she could to fit in or make her new family feel happy and proud of the new addition. However, in doing so, these women lose their identity as they become so focused on completing tasks at home that it is eventually expected from them. Najma explains that a new bride tries her best to be there for the affinal family, but their efforts are taken advantage of; *we give them everything at first, which makes our value less, and they start using us as domestic slaves* (Najma-P5y).

Although domestic responsibilities exist in many relationships, they are magnified for new daughters-in-law with little power to negotiate a fairer division of labour. Mothers-in-law use this domestic servitude – disproportionate domestic workloads – as an effective tool of coercion and control. This tactic resonates with Stark's (2013) coercive control framework, which shows how perpetrators control women by regulating their behaviour and movements. Through the gendered role of a wife and the expectation to do housework, mothers-in-law were able to regulate, monitor and control the movements of their daughters-in-law.

Sleeping patterns were also monitored, as daughters-in-law were expected to wake up before the rest of the family and begin the food preparations. In Halima's case, she was expected to wake up at a specific time and have food prepared throughout the day. Each meal was expected to be ready at specific times:

> *I would get up at five o'clock in the morning, at five am get up do the cleaning and stuff, make food for my father-in-law and mother-in-law and if the sisters-in-law were here, I would make that as well...*
>
> *After that after I would do a bit of cleaning, they would eat around six-thirty again because they are diabetic, they had to eat at specific times for their tablets that is something they use to tell me and then after that do washing up, washing the clothes and everything. I was not allowed in the garden* (HalimaB10m).

Maria was expected to shadow her mother-in-law; her mother-in-law eased her into the domestic work, after which all domestic responsibilities fell on Maria:

> *My mother-in-law started making me work with her in the kitchen, and I began doing chores, not just mine but everyone's chores. I would be expected to wake up before everyone, fix breakfast for my husband, all four of his siblings and his mum and dad, they all used to eat at different times and different dishes after that I would clean the kitchen, hoover the house, and put washing on which took time as there were so many of us* (Maria-B6y).

Although it is difficult to determine whether or not control of marital relations was the intention behind domestic servitude, it is clear that it was one of the consequences. This study identified that women were expected to carry out domestic work throughout the day, not just for their husbands but also for their families; I used to be with the family constantly cleaning and cooking, and *I used to always be busy with everyone* (Najma-P5y). These acts not only caused direct emotional and physical exhaustion and strain but also instigated spousal abuse and discord: for example, when a mother-in-law overwhelms her daughter-in-law with housework so that she is too physically exhausted to spend time with her husband, this can become a cause for marital discord as experienced by Kiran*; my husband completely backed off, and she (mother-in-law) had a lot of power in the relationship (*Kiran-B5y). This study also found that to break up intimacy, some mothers-in-law would complain about the new bride to their sons, which would then trigger spousal abuse.

6.3.3 Ear-filling.

Ear-filling is a tactic employed by some mothers-in-law to provoke spousal abuse. The son is used to 'control' the daughter-in-law.

For example, if the mother-in-law dislikes her daughter-in-law or wants to punish her for not acceding to her wishes, she creates a distance between the daughter-in-law and her son. This is done by 'filling her son's ear', which can lead to spousal abuse; this gives power to the mother-in-law, to whom the daughter-in-law remains inferior. Existing literature does not cover such abuse in any detail. However, researchers such as Fernandez (1997: 447) and Raj et al. (2006) identify this as a form of control perpetrated by the mother-in-law to maintain her son's loyalty.

This study identified five women (Shagufta, Zara, Iqra, Zainab and Ojala) who explained that 'ear-filling' was used as a tool of coercion, control and intimidation utilised by the mother-in-law and other members of the affinal family to sustain spousal abuse. Members of the affinal family, namely the mother-in-law, would complain about the daughter-in-law. Zainab explains that at the beginning of the marriage, her husband was, in fact, good and not abusive, but after the constant 'ear filling' from his mother, he eventually turned against her; *it started to get worse she (mother-in-law) turned my husband against me with lies such as I refused to clean, I stayed on the phone whilst my husband was at work* (Zainab-B4y). Other women in this study also recounted their mothers-in-law complaining to their husbands about various things: saying she is not nice (Shagufta-P12y), *she's always on her phone, she doesn't do anything* (Zara-P5m). Like Zainab, Zara also explains that the ear-filling eventually turned her husband against her; '*at the start he used to believe me like I would say I did this work, but after that even he began to say I was lying'* (Zara-P5m). Both Ojala and Iqra were certain that the reason for her mother-in-law's ear-filling was to create distance between them and their husbands and to sustain spousal abuse. Ojala explains:

> *A classic trait of my mother-in-law's was that she would pick and choose certain aspects of our culture and use it to highlight how disrespectful my family were towards her. It would set my husband off….* (Ojala-B6y).

Zara's mother-in-law not only complained about the way Zara carried out domestic work at home, but she also used to complain about the way Zara looked, attempting to make Zara look unattractive in front of her husband. Zara recalls:

> *I can see my mother in-law provoking things, she was saying things she was not supposed to say like she would comment on my looks when my husband was around, you know boys do not like hearing that their wife is not good looking especially a new wife, they want people to say oh look how beautiful your wife is they do not like it when people say she's dark, she's skinny things like that* (Zara-P5m).

Ear-filling is best understood as a tool of coercion, control and intimidation utilised by mothers-in-law to sustain spousal abuse and also a feature of family abuse perpetrated by the mother-in-law towards her daughter-in-law.

6.3.4 Dowry-related abuse.

Dowry is a common traditional practice in South Asia - is a transfer of parental property, gifts, or money upon the marriage of a daughter. One of the basic functions of a dowry is to serve as a form of protection for a new bride against ill-treatment by her husband and his family. A dowry used in this way is actually a conditional gift that is supposed to be restored to the wife or her family if the husband divorces, abuses, or commits other grave offences against her (Anitha, S. et al., 2018; Chatterjee, S. 2018). However, when such traditional practices are misused, they can become very dangerous. Dowry demands to underpin popular explanations of abuse by the affinal family, resulting in abuse of the daughter-in-law or, in extreme cases, bride burning (Gangoli and Rew, 2011: 422; Rew et al., 2013, p 156).

Researchers such as Gangoli and Rew (2011: 422) comment that in popular discourses, dowry is seen as the instigating factor in verbal abuse when, for example, a mother-in-law taunts and ridicules her daughter-in-law for bringing a small dowry. This study showed that none of the migrant women experienced abuse related to dowry, whereas five British-born women had experienced some form of dowry-related abuse.

Dowry is a practice which can continue long after the wedding. Unsatisfactory dowry can make a new bride vulnerable to verbal and physical abuse. For example, Sofia's family promised that the dowry payment would continue after she married, but when they were unable to keep up with this Sofia, was taunted and physically abused:

> *I started getting abused and my in-laws they started demanding money, and they kept saying to me, ring your dad because he promised about the money that he was going to… that he was going to give us money for keeping you here to live with us. It was the dowry money, and it was all about the dowry money to them that is all they cared about.*
> *When I was not able to give it to them, I was scared, I started getting beaten every day like my hair was being pulled, they were pulling my hair and pushing me, this was my in-laws and husband both, so it was from both sides, so it became normal to me* (Sofia: B7y).

Ojala was given a big dowry, which included a new car, house, and £50,000; as mentioned previously, a dowry is for the new bride to help her begin her new life and secure her future if the marriage does not work out. Factors such as economics can result in a daughter-in-law gaining power over the mother-in-law, who can then lose her superior position. Ojala's mother-in-law feared just that. After receiving her large dowry, Ojala's mother-in-law wanted to control it:

> *My dad said to them (in-laws) that he will be giving me a house, which was on his name at the time, and he said he will eventually put it on my name. He told them that he will be giving me 50k and a new car.*

> *My mother-in-law was happy and said "we will move to the new house" …. I was confused because that house was for me and my husband, so why would she move her family into my new home* (Ojala-B6y).

After the wedding, Ojala's affinal family moved into Ojala's new home, '*his family moved into our new home which my father had given to me'*. Ojala's mother-in-law attempted to take control of the whole house and regularly demanding Ojala to put the property in to her name:

> *She (mother-in-law) started swearing and declared I was living in 'her house' and had to follow 'her rules'. I looked at my husband in disbelief, he had nothing to say. I said, fine, you live in this house, I will leave. She responded that I should go to my dad and tell him to write the property over to her (mother in-law)* (Ojala-B6y).

Ojala found it difficult to claim her own dowry and to defend herself, every time she spoke up against her mother-in-law, she was either verbally and/or physically abused by her husband:

> *My husband followed me and smashed the glass on my head, saying, "How dare you speak to my mother like that. His family only gave me four gold bangles on my wedding, so every time we argued, they wanted their bangles back. This time, I took them off and said take your bangles and give me my stuff back, you take what you gave me I will take what I brought with me. He didn't like that, so he hit me again* (Ojala-B6y).

To reclaim her superior position, Ojala's mother-in-law often packed her bags to leave the house, indicating to her son that she could not live in a home that is not hers:

> *He said (husband) "you will get what you want, my mum is packing her stuff, she is going to leave the house". She had packed and never left so many times that I looked at him and said, "I never asked her to leave"* (Ojala-B6y).

Alternatively, to show power and superiority, Ojala would be asked to leave the house during affinal family gatherings. This tactic was used to show Ojala that her mother-in-law is the 'alpha female' and when her guests are in the house only, she would be present. Ojala's mother-in-law would use the ear-filling tactic on her son and make her son remind Ojala that she was inferior:

> *He (husband) said I should leave the house for a few days, his mum had family coming over and it would be best if I wasn't there. As usual, I just followed his instructions and went to stay at my mother and fathers house* (Ojala-B6y).

This was a common tactic used against Ojala by her mother-in-law to regain the power position and to show Ojala that she (mother-in-law) has power over the home and her relationship with her husband. Although parents prefer to give more dowry to ensure their daughter has a comfortable time in their affinal home and does not endure taunts and possible violence as a result of an unsatisfactory dowry (Ghosh, 2004: 103), in Ojala's case, abuse was endured because the affinal family wanted to control the large dowry, not having control meant not having control of the new daughter-in-law who can become a potential threat to the joint affinal family.

Existing studies typically show that dowry abuse is common when a bride brings a small amount of dowry to her affinal home and/or a bride is unable to keep up with the dowry demands post-marriage (Ghosh, 2004: 110). This fails to show how dowry can be used to help escape or become a coping mechanism for women in abusive relationships. Two British-born participants used their dowry for their own benefit. Sadia wanted to leave her husband, but her natal family was unhappy with her decision, leaving her abandoned in Pakistan with no income, forcing her to make her relationship work. Eventually, Sadia sold her gold, which was given to her as part of her dowry, in return for a ticket back to the UK; *I sold my gold (dowry), my dad did not get in touch with me or anything, the gold my father put on me I sold it to come back to the UK* (Sadia-B3y). This study identified that selling dowry carries a stigma and can lead to further affinal abuse. As experienced by Kiran, who sold her dowry to financially support herself.

Kiran's mother-in-law disapproved and, as a result, became more demanding and restricted Kiran from going out or having a social life:

> *My mother in-law found out and that's when the problems occurred because in a Pakistani family if a girl is to be seen as selling her wedding gold it's a very big thing in an Asian community it's a big hoo haa. That's when the problems occurred* (Kiran-B5y).

This study notes that dowry abuse is not only associated with the amount of dowry received but rather what can be done with that dowry. Too much dowry may provide a new bride with the opportunity to gain more power, so fearing that there may be a power shift, the affinal family may demand or attempt to withhold the dowry from the new bride, and this can lead to dowry-related abuse. Alternatively, having a small amount or being unable to keep up with dowry demands can also lead to dowry-related abuse because the new bride is then positioned as inferior to other family members. She may be abused for more dowry, despite to please her new affinal family, the new bride becomes vulnerable and can easily become a victim of abuse.

6.3.5 Conclusion

Mainstream understanding of DA focuses on the stereotyped household structures and relationships. This fails to represent the role of the mother-in-law in the instigation and perpetration of family abuse against the daughter-in-law. Additionally, due to the nature of this relationship and the extended family structures and relationships within which women are rooted, the power dynamics are far more complex with abuse by the mother-in-law. Affinal kin abuse is mainly possible when the new bride's husband does not support her. The lack of support then allows other members of the family to step in and take control of the new bride. The absence of spousal support may mean that there is a lack of communication between the new couple; this creates room for affinal family members to ear-fill and/or create misunderstandings between the new couple, making the new bride vulnerable to spousal abuse. This is shown in Zara's journey, who spoke about how her relationship was affected due to the involvement of her affinal family;

'before he was good, we use to go out, he took care of me, but slowly, slowly the home people turned him against me then he began arguing and then started hitting me' (Zara-P5m).

Pakistani women's experiences of family abuse stem from kinship structures and relationships, which are not represented in the wider literature on DA. This section has shown that the affinal family, mainly the mother-in-law plays a significant role in perpetrating and instigating abuse upon the daughter-in-law. However, whilst taking this into account, it is equally important not to lose sight of abuse perpetrated by the intimate partner.

Section 4: Spousal Abuse

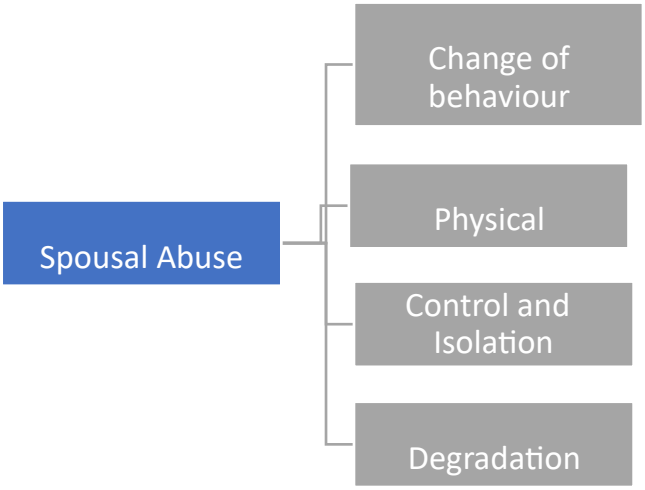

Figure 5: Showing the main theme 'spousal abuse' with four subthemes.

6.4 Spousal Abuse

This section focuses on DA perpetrated by the husband; working with the issue of DA, this theme does not introduce entirely new ideas. Instead, it amplifies and expands what has long been understood as central to the experience of abuse in personal relationships but has been marginalised in the mainstream understanding and knowledge production process of DA over time.

As mentioned previously, DA can take many forms, from physical to emotional abuse. Abusers control through fear, intimidation, humiliation, and manipulation. DA is not a one-

incident offence; it is an offence which includes repeat offending victimisation within a relationship. Although the act of abuse may look different for each victim, the main commonality of DA in a relationship is that the abusers continually maintain control and domination over the victim.

Research has often shown that DA is not a single act of abuse but rather a cycle of acts which feed into the abuse. Identifying the cycle of abuse is important, as it refers to the acts and feelings of the abuser and the victim. This study has found similarities in each woman's experience of abuse. Eight out of the fourteen participants (five migrant women (Shagufta, Zara, Bushra, Najma, and Saira) and three British-born (Zainab, Maria, and Ojala) stated that their relationship with their husbands was good at the early stages of their marriage. Both Saira and Najma (migrant women), for example, recalled having a good relationship with their husbands after the wedding. They spoke about how their husbands were supportive and showed interest in the relationship:

> *After the wedding, it was quite good. He was okay with me. He came to Paskenta after a year, and then after five years, I came to the UK. I stayed with my mum and dad. My life was good, and he was good with me as well. I used to talk to him on the phone every day* (Saira-P6m).

> *'It was good in Pakistan, whenever he used to come, we used to enjoy it; my first anniversary was in Pakistan, we celebrated it well. Everything was good, everyone was nice. Then I came here (UK)* (Najma-P5y).

Both women stayed in Pakistan, whist their husbands returned to the UK and began working on the sponsorship. The distance worked well for both couples, and their communication was regular. Najma's husband even took time off work to visit Pakistan and celebrate their first anniversary together. Interestingly, the migrant women spoke about how happy they were after marriage with their husbands and their new relationship;
There was happiness in my heart, not that I was coming to this country (UK), but that I had a new life with me, my husband (Shagufta-P12y). On the other hand, the British-born

women did not necessarily speak about their relationship with their husbands but instead spoke about having no burden and having freedom; for Ojala, being able to go to university and start a new job after getting married was her freedom. Similarly, Zainab also expresses a sense of freedom; at first, my marriage was ok; my husband allowed me to have a phone, and *we used to go out for meals and watch films* (Zainab-B4y).

This study found that once the wedding period was over and the new brides settled into their new lives, the acts of abuse had started, whether it be physical or verbal abuse, refusal of education, restriction of mobility or other forms of abuse which harmed the women. These acts were then justified by blaming the victim for the abuse. This would be in the form of gaslighting or telling the new bride that she is at fault for not complying or understanding the situation. This study identified three sub-themes: 'Change of Behaviour', 'Degradation', and 'Control and Isolation'.

6.4.1 Change of behaviour.

It is not always easy for a person to know they are in an abusive relationship, as an abuser may disguise their behaviour or character in the early stages of a relationship. The study found that often controlling and possessive behaviours did not show until the bonds of a relationship grew tight. Eight women – four migrant women (Shagufta, Zara, Nazmeen, Najma) and four British-born (Halima, Sadia, Maria, Ojala) – found that their husband's behaviour had suddenly changed. For some migrant women, this happened as soon as the women came to the UK, and for others, it took a couple of months to see the negative change in their husbands' behaviour, Sadia says; *after three months things changed totally, he was just being… hitting me beating me… abusive* (Sadia-B3y).

Shagufta explained how her husband's behaviour changed so much that she no longer recognised him as the man she married;

Later, his behaviour changed bit by bit, like anger, hitting me, getting angry at the child hitting him, his behaviour changed a lot…. this cannot be the same man (Shagufta-P12y).

Shagufta's husband's behaviour, like all other British husbands who married Pakistani-born women, changed once their wife had arrived in the UK. Although it is unclear as to why this was, it can be argued that these men felt some form of resentment towards their new wives. For example, in Shagufta's case, her husband had a girlfriend; Shagufta's presence meant that *he could not go here and there with her* (Shagufta-p12y). In Saira's case, before her marriage, she was told by her husband that his daughters were ok with him getting married. However, once Saira arrived in the UK, things were different. Her stepdaughters did not like her and left home. As a result, Saira's husband abused and blamed her for the absence of his daughters. Saira stated *I did so much for him. I left my own country. He did not even think about me for a minute. He really troubled me; all the hardships I have gone through have all been caused by him* (Saira-P6m).

This study found that the change of behaviour created a distance between the couples. Some husbands refused to share a bed with their wives, some did not stay at home enough to spend time with their wives, and others began verbally abusing their wives in front of other family members. These actions made women feel degraded, unwanted, and isolated from their partners and from the rest of the family.

6.4.2 Degradation.

This study noted that 'degradation' was one of the common features of abuse, the primary aim being to deny self-respect to their partners. This was achieved in two ways: the first was sexual withdrawal and/or unwillingness to share the same bedroom, and the second was having marital affairs.

It is necessary to clarify that this study does not imply that withdrawal of sex and/or not sharing a room is a direct form of abuse. Instead, it demonstrates that for some women in this study, when sexual withdrawal of the husband and/or unwillingness to share a bedroom becomes common knowledge in the family, the knowledge is actively used to degrade or humiliate the women. A woman 'abandoned' in this way is ostensibly treated – by virtue of her husband's rejection – as an unwanted or inferior member of the family. This study also shows that women who did not share a room with their husbands were

made to share a room with another family member (sister/mother-in-law), putting them in a subordinate position. As the affinal family becomes aware of the distance between the husband and wife, some may use this as an opportunity to control the new wife, creating space for affinal kin abuse.

In this study, three women, two of whom had migrated to the UK (Shagufta and Najma), and one was British-born (Maria), experienced this. Sexual withdrawal not only degraded but also humiliated women, Maria talks about her own experience:

> *Eventually, he stopped sleeping in the same room as me. I don't know how, but I ended up sleeping with my sisters-in-law every night. He never allowed me to have a phone, he never spoke to me, he didn't sleep with me, and no one said anything to him* (MariaB6y).

Similarly, Shagufta's husband also stopped sharing the same bed as her, and as a result, Shagufta ended up sharing her room with her mother-in-law; *we shared a room, obviously, a wife and husband that became separate, I moved to my mother-in-law's room I use to sleep with her* (Shagufta-P12y). The affinal family did not question the husband's decision of not sharing the room with the wife. Instead, they rearranged the wife's sleeping space, who then had no choice but to share a bedroom with another member of the family, giving the women no privacy and making them feel that their personal space had been invaded. No relationship with their husband (Maria-B6y), no bedroom, and no privacy meant that these women were in danger of not only losing their own self-respect but were being actively degraded in family hierarchies.

Extra-marital affairs were another means by which husbands humiliated and intimidated their wives. This was experienced by both Nazmeen and Najma. The affairs did not only affect the women's self-esteem and self-respect, but also affected their position within the family. For example, if a husband does not respect his wife, the affinal family may follow and start controlling the woman's life. Najma's affinal family was aware of her husband's affair, but they chose to ignore the situation. Instead, Najma's mother-in-law told Najam that a husband's affair is a norm and that everything will eventually get better:

> *She (mother-in-law) already knew, but they hid it from me. Then she kept reassuring me that this is what happens in the UK; everyone has one, everything gets better, and everything will be okay. This was how she reinsured me each time, so I carried on thinking I had my in-laws on my side* (Najma-P5y).

Nazmeen was humiliated when she found out that her husband was, in fact, having an affair with his own cousin and that they had a child together. Nazmeen was completely unaware of this, and when she confronted her husband and his family, they made Nazmeen feel as though she was crazy for making up such accusations:

> *She was his real Khala's daughter (his mother's sister's daughter), and then I was shocked, like, what is this? Even in his messages, it mentioned her little baby girl was his. Then I asked, and he said, "Oh no, she's like my sister." Then what could I say after that? That's such a shameful moment for me* (Nazmeen-P4y).

Knowing the truth but having no one on her side, Nazmeen was isolated. She was made to feel as though she was wrongly accusing her husband and another member of his family. Nazmeen, having no one to talk to, decided to remain silent and carry on as normal. This study notes that degrading and humiliating a woman eventually led to her being controlled and/or isolated by her affinal family. When a husband refuses to share a room with his wife and/or has extramarital affairs, his actions show the family and the wider community that his wife is not a priority. Although this is not a characteristic of abuse, when a husband refuses to take care of his wife, other family members view the wife as an unwanted bride, who is then seen as a second-class family member. Once the women are deemed inferior, they will often be degraded and humiliated, the affinal family beginning to control her and potentially leading to affinal kin abuse. Aware of this, some women will seek to make amends - this is how the refusal to maintain marital relations can be seen as a form of control and coercion.

6.4.3 Control and isolation.

Nine participants (six migrant women (Zara, Iqra, Nazmeen, Bushra, Najma and Saira) and three British-born Sofia, Kiran and Ojala) spoke about being controlled and/or isolated in

their relationship. This study found that control and isolation were used to limit resources and support for the women and to manage the women's behaviour inside and outside the house. This often involved dictating of rules and behaviours that women were expected to follow, and such coercive control meant that women felt watched and always controlled, even when the perpetrator was not present. Zara's husband demanded to know her every move whilst he was not home:

> *When he used to come home in the evening, he used to ask, "What have you been doing all day?" Although the house was locked at that time, he still used to ask, "What have I been doing all day?" and "Who do you stay with all day this and that?"* (Zara-P5m).

Similarly, Bushra's husband also wanted to observe his wife's every move, to the extent that he stated that he was going to *place cameras in the house to see who came into the house* (BushraP2y).

Stark (2013: 27), in his coercive control model, explains that 'controllers' use tactics such as depriving women of vital resources and support systems and dictating every aspect of their lives as a way of compelling obedience. Tactics consist of depriving women of the resources needed for independent living, such as money, clothing, food, sleep and transportation, "fostering dependence which consequently isolates women" (Stark, 2013 p. 28). This is backed up by Kiran's experience; *my husband was not supporting me I was not earning so obviously I did not have much money they took a lot of things away from me they took a lot of liberties away from me* (Kiran-B5y). Saira's husband repeatedly told her what women should be doing at home, this shaped her behaviour, leaving her isolated at home;

'I spend the whole six months at home. He used to say that a woman does not need anything else other than food; she should make the food, eat it and clean the house (SairaP6m). Iqra was expected to do everything for her husband; *I had to serve his breakfast to his dinner in bed, clean the room, be prepared for him, and be perfect, and I did all that* (IqraP10y.) Complying with these demands is deemed a source of self-esteem for women: they comply with their husband's wishes, hoping to be praised or to keep him

happy. Women during this stage did not fight back, they instead attempted to satisfy their husbands and attempted to calm them down. Najma, for example, stayed away from her husband as he did not want to see her: *my husband said he did not want me in front of him, so I had to stay in my room. That was so difficult with children* (Najma-P5y). The findings in this section support Pierson's (2001) view that women are made to 'walk around on eggshells', trying not to 'set off' their partners. The most significant facet of isolation was that women's contact with natal kin was being controlled or completely prohibited. As indicated by Zara, such tactics can foster dependence, consequently isolating women from family, friends and the outside world: *I didn't have any friends on the street, the room was closed off, like no window to look outside, nothing just walls, no TV at home nothing, my husband broke my mobile he didn't let me speak to my mum and dad, I just did the housework* (Zara-P5m).

It was found that women eventually learned their husband's moods and did whatever they could to avoid any confrontation. In doing so, women begin to accept that they are responsible for their own abuse because they should be aware that their actions will trigger their partner. Therefore, if the partner becomes physically abusive, the woman may even accept that she is responsible for her own abuse.

6.4.4 Physical abuse.

Kiran, a British-born woman, was the only woman in this study who did not experience any physical abuse. For most women in this study, physical violence continued until they left the abusive relationships. Physical abuse included pushing, punching, slapping, kicking, choking, and throwing objects; *he used to hit me almost every night…. I never told anyone anything; this went on for four years* (Zainab-B4y).

> *One time, he got hold of a slipper, and he began hitting me all over my body, when he used to be really drunk, he used to say today I am going to kill you he used to bring the knife and point it at me it was so hard to escape this used to go on for two-three days in a row* (Bushra-P2y).

Many cultures consider shoes to be dirty, as they frequently touch the ground and occupy the lowest part of the human body. Indeed, in many Eastern cultural traditions, it is a grave insult to show someone the sole of your shoe. To hit someone with a shoe is even more insulting and degrading. Zara's abuse continued throughout her pregnancy. Zara's husband felt that the pregnancy was coming in between Zara and her ability to carry out domestic chores. Therefore, Zara's pregnancy escalated the abuse conflicted upon her:

> *Grabbing me by my hair, my neck, slap my face, whatever was next to him pick it up and hit me with it, once he threw hot tea on me, shouting, swearing and a slap was an everyday thing, but sometimes, when he used to get angry, he used to hit me a lot. I used to say take care not over me but at least for the baby what if something happens to the baby, he used to say: nor do I care about you or the baby* (Zara-P5m).

Iqra, who was also pregnant, explained that her husband's abuse became more severe as she was unable to complete her husband's demands:

> *When I got pregnant, I did not have that kind of stamina. I could not be that sufficient that he throws a thing and wanted his wife to pick it up, I use to say I will do it, but give me five minutes my room was on the third floor taking things up and down would make me dizzy, vomit* (Iqra-P10y).

It was interesting to see that none of the perpetrators experienced guilt after the abuse, and none apologised to the victim.

Instead, it was found that women were physically and verbally abused until they left the abusive relationship. It was the women who felt the need to apologise to their husbands, as they were unsure why the abuse was taking place. Self-blaming, shame, believing this was a one-off incident and feeling frightened were some of the common episodes the women experienced:

> *I do not know what I have done to my husband. I even asked for forgiveness in case I had done something* (Saira—P6m).

> *I was sitting near his feet, asking for forgiveness, and he kicked me in my tummy. He then started hitting me a lot* (Najma-P5y).

> *I literally put my hands together and begged him for forgiveness* (Ojala-B6y).

When the women realized that they were unable to control their husbands' anger, they felt helpless and asked for forgiveness. Kearney (2001) describes this stage of enduring abuse as a shrinking of self, which involves restraining one's emotional responses to avoid flare-ups, perform unwanted tasks or accept undeserved punishment. Walker (1984) refers to this as a 'learned helplessness' situation. The woman alienates herself from the abuser. However, Olson (2002) argues that as a woman withdraws and does not make any decisions to ensure peace, this withdrawal from any decision-making also contributes to tension building and poor communication in the family. Peterson et al. (1989) argue that victims of domestic violence experience passivity rather than learned helplessness as a way of protecting themselves from being assaulted.

Ojala's husband was the only abuser who, after the abuse, showed some form of guilt. The guilt was rounded by the fear of being caught or exposed to others. To prevent this from happening, the husband would promise not to do it again. Ojala constantly forgave her husband's abusive behaviour, but this never ended the abuse instead, it restarted the cycle of abuse:

> *The force (slap) was hard enough for me to fall to the floor, and I could feel a burning sensation on my cheek. He had also dropped to the floor, and I could hear him constantly apologizing. He was sweet and attentive. As time went on, I convinced myself that he had only made a mistake. He hit me again. He had no remorse and no feeling. Again, he was sweet after this* (Ojala-B6y).

This study has shown that the cycle of abuse differs for each woman; how the women react to the abuse shapes their experience. Whilst it was difficult to capture what the abuser's thought process was, I identified four common feelings women felt during their journey of abuse. Some women felt (1) shame – women would stay quiet to protect their families and

husbands' reputations. Others were (2) self-blaming – when the abuser blames the woman for their actions, self-blaming is another way to protect an abuser and can also be a direct consequence of the abuse. All expressed (3) being frightened – this restricts the victim in all aspects of life, fearing that any wrong step taken will trigger abuse towards them, and (4) believing the abuse will stop. Things will change because the abusers have showered the victim with love and promised that it will "never happen again", or someone in the community will step in, neither of which happens.

DA in the West does not necessarily capture the experience of many marginalised women. Pakistani women also live by the cultural norms, which not only carry the stigma of divorce but also honour. This alone makes women available to their abusive partners.

This, taken together with themes explored previously, shows that there is yet a gap when understanding Pakistani women and their experiences of abuse. Pakistani women become exposed to abuse because of the patriarchal society and the family system in which women have no inherent value and status. As this research demonstrates, women are deprived of their rights, for instance, the right to education, the right to decision-making in family matters and the right to marriage. For a Pakistani woman, marriage and family are very sensitive issues. She can never think of leaving her abusive family owing to the communal and cultural taboos. In the Pakistani culture, a respected and modest woman is never to leave her home or complain about her family. She is also threatened that she will be punished if she disobeys her family.

6.4.5 Conclusion

Abuse is common and can occur in any social class, culture and race. Although existing models provide an alternative way of understanding why women may stay in abusive relationships. This section shows that the cycle of abuse looks different for every woman.

Often, the ability of help-seeking is ignored; for example, a migrant woman who does not know English and is being abused by her affinal family may find it more difficult to leave the abusive household, fearing that her immigration status would be used against her by

the authorities. The fear of not knowing what may happen if she seeks help can further isolate migrant women. To understand Pakistani women and DA, it is important to focus on the intersections such as race and immigration status and how these contribute towards multiple oppressions. The impact and prevalence of abuse can be higher when abuse is layered with forms of oppression in race, gender, sexuality, and class. In addition, the response to abuse from service providers is not equal, mainly because many services lack knowledge of intersectional factors and are unable to understand how someone's culture and race influence and shape their experiences. This is when a tailored service to help marginalised women is needed. The following section looks at women's experiences when they decide to leave.

Chapter Seven: Support

Support (Theme Three)

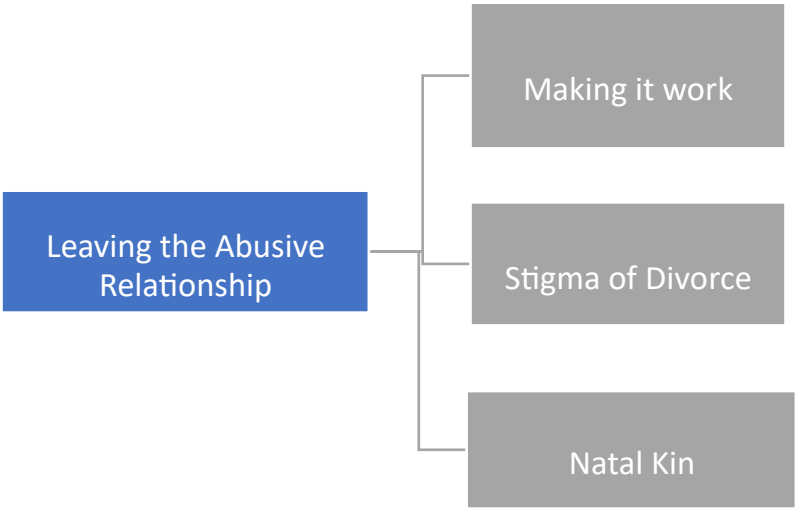

Figure 6: Showing the main theme 'leaving the abusive relationship' with thee subthemes.

There are many factors surrounding why women remain in abusive relationships, including lack of financial resources and support networks, fear of further abuse, and cultural norms (Collins, 2000; Eckstein, 2011). However, Pakistani women living in the UK face additional barriers that may prevent them from leaving abusive relationships, including bringing shame to the family (Siddiqui, 2014) and their insecure immigration status (Anitha et al., 2017). All participants experienced complex negotiations and difficulties in leaving their relationships. Three sub-themes emerged which show why some women were unable to leave their abusive relationships sooner: attempting to make the relationship women rather the going against social norms, lack of support by natal family, and the stigma of divorce.

7.1.1 Making it work.

Pakistani women are often taught to believe that marriage is the ultimate destination for a successful life. To achieve anything in life, she first needs to achieve the title of a 'good wife'. Hence, being brought up in a culture like this, almost every woman tries to invest all her energies into making her marriage work out successfully. According to the Pakistani

social norms, a woman who disobeys her husband or complains to others of his bad behaviour is not considered to be a 'good wife'. She is labelled as a bad character woman (Ahmad, 2009; Faiz R, 2015). Women would rather be abused than be called a 'bad wife', according to Dobash and Dobash (1980), this is due to the pervasive sense that females are born to be wives. *"To be a 'real' woman requires becoming a wife and to be a complete wife means being a good mother, nothing less is acceptable and little more is tolerated"* (Dobash & Dobash, 1980, p. 76). To keep honour intact, the woman's place must be in the home as a good wife/mother. Therefore, Pakistani women are not encouraged to have a public life. Dobash and Dobash (1980) add that "*[Women] in their position as wives, become relatively separated from the world and isolated in the home where they are meant to be subordinated to their husbands and serve the needs of others. The situation is part of the patriarchal family"* (Dobash & Dobash, 1980, p. 76). They further observe that 'she becomes circumscribed by her role as a wife, progressively isolated from outside contact, and increasingly subservient to her husband's expectations and demands. *"These changes give rise to the conditions under which marital violence emerges"* (Dobash & Dobash, 1980, p. 76)

This was one of the barriers women in this study were faced with. Despite the abuse, four women in this study spoke about wanting to make their relationship work.

Fearing that their marriage will break, two migrant women, Najma and Saira, and British bone Ojala asked for forgiveness. Najma explains that despite her husband having an affair and abusing her, she asked him for forgiveness:

> *I said if I have made any mistakes, just forgive me each time, I turned it on myself, saying if I have hurt you, I am sorry that day, he hit me a lot I was sitting near his feet asking for forgiveness, and he kicked me in my tummy he then started hitting me a lot* (NajmaP5y).

After being abused by both her husband and her affinal family, Ojala was still willing to make her marriage work, even if that meant putting up with further abuse and restrictions. Ojala stated:

> *I still wanted to be with him I didn't want to be divorced that would have killed my family. So, I tried again but this time it was worse my husband said he was willing*

to take me back if followed these terms: I was not allowed connection to my friends and family, I had to listen to his mum, and it was her house, I would have to live and breathe on his terms (Ojala-B6y).

Here, Ojala's husband uses coercive control, he tells her that her activities will be monitored and that he will decide where she goes and who she socializes with. This clearly shows a perpetrator who attempts to gain control and power by eroding a person's autonomy and self-esteem. Ojala, like many other women, was willing to bear the physical pain and abuse, but they were not willing to give up on their marriage. Most of the women strictly followed social and cultural norms; this was one of the main reasons for them to continue staying in an abusive relationship. Two migrant women, Shagufta and Iqra, had hope that their marriages may be able to work. Shagufta hoped that having a second child might stop her husband from being abusive however this never happened:

I was happy that Allah gave me another baby, I was thinking that maybe he will be good, my life might become better stop this difficult time. After that, I had my second child. His behaviour stayed the same he did not change (Shagufta-P12y).

Iqra, another migrant woman, began experiencing abuse soon after her engagement. The abuse continued even after Iqra's husband left Pakistan for the UK.
Iqra hoped that after the wedding, her husband would treat her better. However, this never happened, the abuse got worse. Iqra then hoped that once she migrated to the UK, her husband would stop the abuse, she goes on to say:

Once I got married, you know, I thought things might get better, but they did not. Then I came to the UK, and when I came to the UK, I thought like now things are going to get better, if he has a day off am there; he doesn't have to do overtime and the financial needs have gone (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra was the only participant who got married of her own choice, going against the social norm of an arranged marriage. She expressed a sense of a burden she was carrying because of her decision to marry and to be in a long-term relationship with a partner of her choice. This sense of burden kept Iqra in the abusive relationship for as long as it did, as she felt the sense of personal responsibility of choosing her own partner. She speaks about having the burden of making her marriage work because the marriage was of her own choice:

> *All that pressure and guilt is falling on me. I must suffer; it's double the suffering because the marriage was my own choice; everyone is saying you chose the marriage* (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra also spoke about being left alone to resolve the situation because it was she who made the decision to marry her partner, and therefore, she should resolve her own marital problems: *Every previous abuse is less, it gets more severe; everyone (affinal family) heard it, but no one stopped it they use to say it is between the wife and husband and it was a marriage of your own choice, or they would say to you if there was no understanding then why did you get married* (Iqra-P10y).

Choosing her own partner was a significant factor in understanding the consequences and deciding on whether to leave the partner Iqra had chosen. Iqra felt judged by society and felt that she was in the 'wrong', and the fear of judgement led her to place importance on staying in the relationship over her own safety. Due to the stigma of divorce and negativity surrounding being single or leaving a marriage, this study found that many women felt pressured to stay in their marriage. The prospects for the Pakistani woman who leaves her marriage are extremely bleak, as her dignity and honour are almost entirely dependent upon her marital status.

As a result, many women did not, at first instinct leave their abusive relationships, fearing that everyone (community, affinal and natal family) would blame them for not being able to hold the marriage together (Thiara, 2013).

7.1.2 Stigma of Divorce.

Getting a divorce with dignity has proven to be very difficult in Pakistani society. Once married, women are often reminded that the marriage should be maintained at any cost. Women are routinely told that getting a divorce will not only bring shame to the family, but it will also have a devastating stigma on the woman herself (Gill & Brah, 2014; Sen, 2005; Siddiqui, 2014). The common perception that prevails is that divorced women have no right to remarry and are forever a disgrace to themselves and their families. Meanwhile, men have no such thing to fear. The patriarchal structure allows the men to use this stigma to control their wives. This study found that some men threatened their wives with a divorce (Iqra, Bushra and Ojala), knowing that the stigma of divorce will not only create fear but will also remind the women of their inferior status. Iqra goes on to explain:

> *I have been hearing I am going to divorce you, men having this power to divorce you knowing our culture does not accept divorced women; it is shamed that they consider you as a damaged good no matter how good you are, even if you have done nothing wrong* (Iqra-P10y).

Ojala's husband had given her a verbal divorce (Islam), and when she had told her parents, they made a statement which in Islam is associated with death:

> *I told my parents. Laa Haula Wa Laa Quwawata il la Bil Laah was my mother's tearful response when she heard I had been given Talaq (divorce). My life was over (*OjalaB6y).

The meaning of this phrase 'Laa Haula Wa Laa Quwawata il la Bil Laah' (there is no power and no strength except with Allah (God)) is a person's admission that he is unable to do anything without the help and support of Allah.

Although in Islam, this phrase is uttered when some serious matter befalls a person that they cannot cope with or there is something that is very difficult for them to deal with, in Pakistani society, this sentence is used when someone dies. For Ojala's mum, the stigma of divorce was no less than as if her daughter died. Once leaving their abusive relationship and attempting to get a divorce, both Kiran and Halima spoke about the community making them 'feel like used goods' (Kiran- B5y), making the women feel inferior by putting women 'down'. Halima goes on to explain that although she is happy that she is now in her natal home, she adds that *in our culture, they say that if a girl comes back (to her natal family) after marriage, people put me down and stuff* (Halima B10m). This study identified four British-born women (Halima, Sofia, Sadia and Kiran) who struggled to get an Islamic divorce.

This study has shown that withholding a religious divorce not only allows controlling or coercive behaviour but also leads to what can be termed 'spiritual abuse'. For many women, a religious divorce is often perceived to be more significant, personally and spiritually, than a civil divorce. When getting married, having both an Islamic ceremony and a civil one, the Islamic marriage can hold more value. In such instances, a civil divorce would not mean anything, prohibiting the woman from moving on with her life. To truly start over would require an Islamic divorce. This is a position which I can identify with, as my religion plays a big part in my life: without an Islamic divorce, I would not be able to meet new people, and I would most likely feel restricted from my freedom. Thus, withholding the religious divorce can be read as an extension of abuse.

In Islam, men and women do not have the same rights to divorce. A husband can refuse an Islamic divorce, giving them the power to control the wife. The refusal is often used to exert leverage in relation to other aspects of the divorce. This has a significant impact on the woman's wider living conditions. For example, some women may feel like they are severely

restricted in their social and personal lives. It affects their ability to re-marry and directly affects the status of any children they may have in the future. A husband can unilaterally divorce his wife with the simple utterance of 'I divorce you'. The wife, on the other hand, has access to two other types of divorce, which are contingent on the husband's approval or the intervention of an Islamic scholar (known as Khula and Faskh). Therefore, the process of getting an Islamic divorce whilst the husband refuses can become difficult for a woman. Maryaniwal and Talwasa (2021) state that due to the negative views on divorce in Muslim society, Muslim women prefer to live with toxic, torturous, and extremely abusive marriages rather than being labelled as "divorcees," and religious institutions exacerbate this approach.

Women who have failed to get a divorce have been referred to as 'chained wives' who are trapped in religious marriages because their husbands refuse to divorce them. The problem of chained wives typically happens because husbands attempt to weaponize religious divorce to trap their wives and hold them back from remarrying or stop them from getting a fair settlement in civil divorce cases. Whereas before women had to fight for their divorce and others suffered in silence, not knowing how to finalise a divorce, in 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 began to recognise that withholding a religious divorce by Muslim husbands may constitute controlling or coercive behaviour and a form of spiritual abuse which could lead the husband to be imprisoned. This development was in reaction to various calls for action to tackle the issue of 'chained wives' in religious communities. Unfortunately, the 2021 act did not benefit Halima, Sofia, Sadia and Kiran as their experience of the divorce proceedings where prior to 2017. As a result, all four women had to act via sharia law (Islamic law). Sofia goes on to explain that:

> *Islamically, he must accept my divorce, but he won't, so at the moment, I am still married, and I actually cannot move on until I am single. How can I find another person if I am still married Islamically (Sofia-B7y)?*

Sadia, whose husband lives in Pakistan, also took the help of the Sharia council, being separated for 11 years; Sadia's husband remarried in 2014 he also had a child from his second marriage. Yet he refuses to divorce Sadia:

> *He is still not giving me a divorce because he said he wants to keep us both, and I am not having any of that because the only reason he wants to keep me is because I am from the UK…. But he said if you want a divorce, you must give me £10,000, and I will give you a divorce in return. But I refused to do that, so I spoke to someone and asked what I could do. They said I should go to the Sharia Council* (Sadia-B3y).

Waiting to be divorced, Sadia spoke about not being able to settle down and move on with her life. As mentioned above, Pakistani women are constantly told that if they leave their husbands, no one will marry them; fearing this, many women think they have no choice but to make their marriage work. This research found that after separation/divorce, some women already had the perception that they were no longer worthy of marriage. Bushra (P2y) adds that *men do not want to touch you, their families will never consider you as an option*. Being single *forever* (Busra-P2y) or not being *accepted* (Zainab-B4y) by another man or family was a major concern for women who had left their abusive relationship. This was a struggle for many women post-separation. Bushra (P2y), a migrant woman, did not want to return to Pakistan after she left her husband. This was due to the stigma of divorce and the fear of the community in Pakistan. Fearing what her life would be like in Pakistan as no one would accept her and her 'fatherless' children. Bushra explains that her life in the UK would be easy as no one knows her, and she can feed and educate her children, she goes on to say that in Pakistan:

> *I cannot do anything I do not have a house there, how will I feed my children, how will I educate them. I cannot do anything there (Pakistan). I might be single forever, but at least I will be safe if I stay in the UK* (Bushra-P2y).

Migrated from Pakistan and pregnant during her participation, Iqra (P10y), felt completely on her own after leaving her affinal family:

> *I have no one, I am on my own, I am pregnant, looking after a child is hard… I am in tension. The blame is on me, and I must give answers (about the separation). When I had a child, I did not know what was going to happen to my child because my in-laws and everyone had said what is it to the man he will get married again and have more kids that's what our culture is, first divorced on top of that with a child, on top of that your family (Natal family) wasn't agreeing with the marriage then they are not going to take you back* (Iqra-P10y).

Like Iqra, many women face extreme pressure from their natal family to stay in their abusive marriage. This leaves some women feeling helpless and with no other option but to stay and endure the abuse or leave and face shame from their natal family and the Pakistani community.

Either way, women are exposed to different forms of abuse, leaving them vulnerable, isolated, and alone. Some parents disown their daughter once they have divorced their husband, this is primarily due to honour and protection for other family members. For example, the failure of a woman's marriage may cast doubts on the character of other siblings, potentially damaging any unmarried sister's chances of securing a good match (Brandon & Hafez, 2008). Therefore, the natal family's responses to divorce are being shaped by cultural ideologies of honour and shame, which depict divorce as unacceptable and possibly lead to social ostracism.

7.1.3 Natal Kin Support.

Family plays an important role in individuals' lives throughout the life span. The level and strength of influence, however, differ depending on the culture and, possibly, the country of the individual. As mentioned previously, Pakistan is a patriarchal and patrilineal society that values a strong family system. The family structure and system have a strong influence

on an individual's life, decision-making, social roles, and selection of profession (Taqui et al., 2007). When two individuals enter into marriage and plan to develop a family of their own, the woman's natal family do not cease to influence their relationship. (Clark et al, 2010). Instead, the affinal family plays a great role in the new relationship, influencing the abuse upon the new bride. The mother-in-law and the sister-in-law (see affinal kin abuse) are often identified as the instigators or a direct source of conflict that may lead to DA (Mirza, 2010). On the contrary, a wife's natal family is often identified as a source of assistance and protection against DA for the woman (Naved & Persson, 2005), however, when the help of the natal family is refused, the women are left further isolated and become more vulnerable to abuse, in some cases natal families force women to stay with their abusive partners in order to protect them from shame, shame of having a daughter who is unable to be a 'good wife'. Natal kin support was a theme which centred on how the women's relationships with their natal families progressed because of their rejection of the social norm based on making a marriage work no matter what the situation.

All the in women in this study spoke about the significance of their relationships with their natal families. The parents of five women were supportive throughout. Parental relationships broke down for five women who were still isolated from their parents at the time of the interviews, and for the remainder of the women, those whose natal families disagreed with the separation but later began to support them, women. This theme found that for women, their relationships with their parents and siblings were important to them; the bond they had with their natal families and the personal costs of bringing shame to the family when leaving the abusive relationship was devastating to them. This study does suggest that natal kin can be unforthcoming in supporting abused daughters for reasons, such as cultural ideologies of honour and shame that assume no interference in marital disputes and the stigmatisation of divorce. These factors do not only impinge on natal kin support but also prevent daughters from confiding in natal kin. As mentioned above, five women recounted experiencing pressure from natal kin to stay in their abusive marriage. Sadia, for example, a British-born national, was abandoned in Pakistan to make

her marriage work. When she told her father that she was unhappy in her marriage, her father refused to support her decision to leave:

> *My father basically didn't get in touch with me when I told him… I wasn't happy here; I want to come back to the UK; he was like oh well you are going to have to make it work what not. I am not letting you come back here (UK) You are not coming back to this house*.

In Iqra's case, her choice in marriage significantly affected the level of support she received from her natal kin. Not adhering to the cultural ideal of marriage being arranged by parents, Grover (2009: 26) argues that 'love marriages' can severely curtail their access to natal kin support post-marriage. This study found that Iqra was hesitant about complaining or bringing their marital grievances to their natal kin as she felt that she could not hold their parents accountable for her situation because she chose her partner:

> *In front of my family, I had to take responsibility for what was happening in my relationship; it was my responsibility because it was my choice (Iqra-P10y).*

When the abuse became more frequent and severe, Iqra decided to leave her husband and to file a police complaint, in doing so, Iqra's natal family refused to get involved, forcing Iqra to defend herself in a foreign country (UK):

> *My parents were very angry at me because I had left the house. My parents they did not approve of the idea of leaving him or divorcing my husband…. My parents are not supporting me at all because I have left the house* (Iqra-P10y).

Maria was not only married to her first cousin but was involved in a bride exchange (watta satta). Maria explains that this resulted into the natal kin pressure to stay in the marriage. The 'close kin' marriage and natal kin pressure to maintain the marriage also made Maria feel bound to the marriage irrespective of the abuse received by her affinal kin:

> *I didn't tell my own family because my brother and his wife were happy, she was expecting, and I didn't want to mess anything up, so I stayed quiet* (Maria-B6y).

This shows that 'close kin' marriage does not always ensure natal kin contact, nor does it ensure the good treatment of daughters. Rather, it can act to constrain natal kin support and daughters from leaving abusive marriages for fear of severing kinship ties. These accounts not only clarify the literature which attributes lack of natal kin support to cultural ideologies of shame, kinship, and divorce but also elucidates the perception by natal kin that abuse is a 'normal' part of marriage and women should make it work with their abusive partners (Ahmed, Reavey and Majumdar, 2009: 16).

With the burden of making a marriage work combined with the stigma of divorce, some women may feel as though they have no way out and no one to turn to. This study identified two women (Halima and Sofia) who, despite the burden and stigma of leaving their marriage, wanted to leave. However, not knowing how to leave or where to go, both women harmed themselves. Sofia, for example, was abandoned in Pakistan by her natal family and was expected to get pregnant, and only then was she allowed back to the UK. Both her natal and affinal family wanted Sofia to get pregnant, this was a tactic used to make sure Sofia had no choice but to sponsor her Pakistani-born husband and to keep the marriage together, Sofia states:

> *I think its honour; they thought I may mess about after marriage and leave my husband or something like that, so they (natal and affinal family) wanted me to come back (UK) when I was pregnant because then I have no choice but to stay in the marriage and obviously be respectful for my parents…. My family (natal) never asked me to come back to the UK.*
>
> *When I spoke to them, they just kept telling me that just keep your in-laws happy and do what you have to do to keep them happy because that is your family, your married, your husband, what they are saying and doing is right for you'* (Sofia-B7y).

The only time Sofia did attempt to escape her abusive husband and his family, Sofia's dad found out, and he told Sofia that she *'was a disgrace I brought shame on the family' (SofiaB7y)*. With no support from her natal family, Sofia felt as though she was trapped and had no way out. Sofia eventually fell pregnant, she knows that having this baby meant that she would be linked to her abusive husband forever, she kept the pregnancy a secret and tried her best to have a miscarriage:

> *When I turned twenty-one, I got pregnant, but I basically, I didn't want to, I started hurting myself, I took tablets, I made myself fall down the stairs… They didn't know I was pregnant, so they are just thought that obviously I must be having a heavy period. I didn't want to deal with all the abuse I didn't want to deal with all that. I was twenty-two, I think I convinced them to let me come back to the UK. not having a baby was the only way back for me, yes, I could have had the baby, but then I am linked to my husband forever. I wanted out without any attachments, so I had to do what I did, yes, it was hard, but only I know what I was going through and what I had to go through* (SofiaB7y).

Previous work has demonstrated an extremely strong association between domestic violence and self-harm (Boyle & Todd, 2003). Susan P. Y. Wong and others (2011) found that specific violent episodes often triggered self-harm. Victims considered self-harm a method for airing painful emotions caused by abuse or as a last resort to escape by dying when they saw no other options and were no longer able to endure the violence. The reasons for and functions of self-harm can be extremely diverse. Self-harm may be a means to alleviate acute negative feelings (Klonsky, 2007). Self-harm may also be a coping strategy to escape pain and suffering. Nonfatal self-harm may be carried out to forego terrifying urges to die (Klonsky, 2007). Connors (1996) adds that in the context of trauma, survivors may also self-harm to reenact traumatic experiences to communicate or externalize previous or remembered trauma.

In Sofia's case, self-harm was used to induce a miscarriage. For Sofia, the result of a miscarriage minimized any possible connection to her abuser; the self-harm was

somewhat a coping strategy which led to hope and hope that she was able to escape the abuse with no other connections to her abuser.

Sofia convened her family and was able to come back to the UK. However, on arrival, she escaped, and since then, Sofia has had no contact with her natal family:

> *I couldn't go back to my mum and dads I couldn't go to my family or no one… If I went back to them, my mum and dad are going to be like go back to Pakistan to your husband, what have you done and somehow, they probably convince me to go back home (Pakistan), and I obviously do not want to do that. I brought shame on the family my family do not care about my wellbeing they just care about how they look to other people* (Sofia-B7y).

Halima, like Sofia, felt as though she had no way out; as a result, she also resorted to self-harm. Halima was being abused by both her husband and her affinal family members, she was unable to leave the house and was not allowed to contact her natal family. On a couple of occasions, Halima attempted to call her natal family for help, but this resulted in further abuse. Not knowing how to get out of the house, Halima took an overdose, once in the hospital, she was able to contact her natal family for help:

> *They gave me like 52 paracetamols and said to me die, I ate them at that point because I knew that was the only way I was going to get out of the house* (Halima-B10m). Once Halima's family found out that Halima was experiencing abuse, her brother and mother told her to pack her bags: *he (brother) said to me, get your things and let's go, but I didn't get anything then I said let's just go, leave the things, so I just walked out with my brother and my mum* (Halima-B10m).

Halima was taken back to her natal home and received all the support when it came to applying for a divorce. This study also documented that women who received support from their natal kin found it much easier to leave their abusive relationships. Five women in this study found that their natal kin supported them when they wanted to leave their abusive partners.

Ojala, a British-born woman, expressed how supportive her father had been and added that it was normal for natal kin to send their daughters back to their abusive partners:

> *When I wanted to leave, he (father) asked me what I wanted to do, and without any questioning, he listened to me and did what I needed him to do. That is a big deal in the Pakistani community because normally, parents send their daughters back (affinal home) again and again, asking them to make it work* (Ojala-B6y).

Nazmeen also had the support of her natal family, she talks about how many people associate a separation with negativity, but her family was able to look past this and support their daughter, who was in need at the time:

> *My family is supportive mashallah, so many people think that in these situations we have lost all our respect this and that. But this has not affected my family* (Nazmeen-P4y).

Other women in this study found that although their families eventually supported them through their journey out of the abusive relationship, the families' first reaction to their decision to leave was negative. As mentioned previously, staying in an abusive relationship is normalised; women are expected to stay with their partner no matter what; due to this, when the topic of separation is brought up, many families do not know how to react. Families/parents become reluctant to support their daughters, especially when the situation is unfamiliar to them. Saira goes on to explain that although her mother wanted Saira to leave her husband and return to Pakistan, her father was against it, Saira adds:

> *My father is saying this (divorce) does not happen in our families, as in no one in our family has ever got a divorce, so why are you doing it. He says it is the family honour people in Pakistan are going to talk and say that you ran away, she ran away with a younger man.*

> *People will not know what he has done to you he will not tell them the truth he will say you left with another man. My dad said just put up with him* (SairaP6m).

The lack of support shown by Saira's father indicates that the cultural ideologies of shame, honour and respect influenced the natal family's decision on whether they want to accept or reject their divorced/separated daughter. The concepts of honour and shame not only prohibit the natal family to come forward and support their daughters but also prohibit women from disclosing the true nature of abuse. It was also noted that although some natal families were aware of the abuse inflicted on the women, they chose to ignore it; DA is a taboo subject and something that families very rarely talk about (Metlo, 2012; Gill, 2006). For example, both Najma and Zara's (Pakistani-born) natal family were aware that their daughters were dealing with some form of abuse. At first, both families either ignored the abuse or asked their daughters to stay with their abusive partner. Najma spoke about her family knowing that she was in an abusive relationship, but they never asked her:

> *'They knew I was dealing with something, but they did not know to what extent, they never asked'* (Najma-P5y).

Najma's natal kin tried avoiding the abuse for three-four years. However, as things did not get better, Najma's family stepped in and told Najma that they were on her side and would do whatever they could to support her. However, this did not sit well with Najma's affinal family, as a result, her husband and his family began to abuse Najma's natal family in Pakistan: *They (affinal family) kept ringing my mum and dad in Pakistan they were saying every penny we have we are going to use it and send her back to Pakistan they kept threatening to do this to me, so my parents were really upset, my mum got ill worrying about me. She was sent to the hospital because I did not have anyone else here in the UK. So, they were worried about me and what I was going to do… my family called me every day, and my family supported me because they knew that for three years, I had been suffering* (Najma-P5y).

Similarly, in Bushra's case, when her husband found out that Bushra had the support of her natal family, he turned on Bushra's natal family '*and started swearing at them*' (Bushra-P2).

Zara informed her natal family about the abuse; however, her family chose to remain silent. Zara's father stepped in when the abuse got more frequent. However, Zara's father did not ask his daughter to leave the relationship, instead, he discussed the abuse with her husband, which made the situation worse for Zara:

> *When he (Husband) hit me for the first time, I spoke to my mother and father that he had hit me, my mother and father stayed quiet, saying its ok, it doesn't matter it's the first time, and we will see later if he does it again. Then, after that, when he began to hit me a lot, my father tried explaining it to him in a loving manner, saying that don't do this to her don't hit her, she is pregnant what if something happens to the baby, but he got angrier* (Zara-P5m).

Aware that their daughter was in danger, Zara's natal family decided that she could no *'longer live at that house (affinal family)'* (Zara-P5m). Zara's natal family supported Zara and contacted other natal family members (extended family) in the UK to help Zara leave the abusive relationship.

7.1.4 Conclusion

Divorce in the South Asian community can carry with it shame and the questioning of a woman's character (Gill & Brah 2014; Sen, 2005; Siddiqui, 2013; Metlo, 2012). This can adversely affect natal kin because the marriage prospects of younger female siblings can be damaged after the divorce of a sister. Thus, along with personal fear and guilt that cultural factors can create, women can also endure pressure from natal kin to stay in abusive relationships and endure them 'silently'. In this context, the emotional and psychological costs of divorce can be too high for women. When we add to this that some women have no capacity for economic survival out of the relationship, leaving becomes even more unviable. If women were to leave an abusive relationship, she has to find

emotional help, financial support and a safe place to live in. This becomes different for migrant women who have unviable immigration status, do not speak English and are unaware of their rights.

Section 2: Service Provision

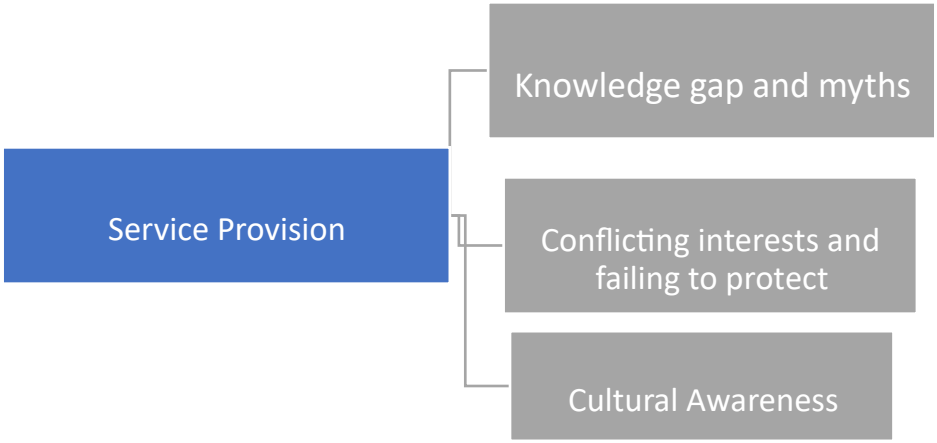

Figure 7: Showing the main theme, 'service provision', with three subthemes.

7.2 Service Provision

Since the 1990s, there has been increasing criminalisation of domestic violence, echoing a shift from its perception as a 'private' matter between applicant and respondent to a 'public' matter, in which the police are automatically expected to play a role (Hester, 2006; Burton, 2010). There has been a parallel shift towards blurring the boundaries of criminal and civil law remedies and the development of hybrid civil-criminal remedies. Hitchings (2005) identifies this trend as starting with the criminalization of breach of the civil ASBO order in 1998. In England and Wales, civil orders to protect victims of DA have been in use since 1976. There are six main behavioural protection orders for interpersonal and family violence currently in use in England and Wales: restraining orders (RO), non-molestation orders (NMO), occupation orders (OO), Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO), Forced Marriage Protection

Orders (FMPO) and Female Genital Mutilation Protection Orders (FGMPO) (Bates & Hester, 2020). Research studies, however, argue that family abuse is under-reported amongst South Asian women who cannot or do not, access service provision (Burman, Smailes and Chantler, 2004: 343; Anitha, 2008: 197).

As documented throughout this study, there are a number of factors which can constrain Pakistani women to remain in an abusive relationship, and these can also inhibit access to service providers: cultural issues such as shame; the stigma of divorce (Gill and Mitra-Kahn, 2012: 145); socio-economic factors (Burman & Chantler, 2005, p. 62); and the community and family ostracism (Will et al, 2018). Acknowledging these barriers is essential to a nuanced understanding of Pakistani women's help-seeking strategies. This identifies and documents factors that can affect and shape women's help-seeking: firstly, the knowledge gap of support services and rights; secondly, the conflicting interests of service providers; and, thirdly, a failure to understand the victim's needs due to a lack of cultural awareness. Researchers such as Burman and Chantler (2005) and Thiara and Gill (2010) argue that service provision responses of this kind, or the lack of it, are due to cultural stereotypes, a fear of being labelled racist, and a lack of understanding of the issues that frame service responses.

This study confirms that many Pakistani Women lack the social support to enable them to leave abusive relationships. Women feel pressured to conceal their abuse within their homes. Due to the stigma of shame, many women either choose not to call or are unable to call upon the authorities to help. This study documented that during the process of help-seeking, many Pakistani women first seek help from their natal family (see theme-natal family). However, for some women, more often than describing help-seeking from family, women described their inability to tell their parents about the abuse or their desire to separate from their abusive partner because they did not wish to worry their parents or to stigmatize their family. Some also did not trust their parents to be supportive of them. Women's concern regarding their unsupportive natal family only delays women from help-seeking from professionals. Along with the lack of support from natal families, this study

identified that delays in help-seeking were common, with the dominant reasons for this being social stigma, marriage obligations, lack of awareness, loss of social support and limited knowledge about services available. Culture influences how women view and/or interpret their experiences, abuse, and help-seeking.

This study identified that the patriarchal constructs of honour and shame enmeshed with immigration status were very powerful, fuelling fears about potentially incurring the wrath of the extended family and losing access to children due to the women's weak immigration status.

This section identified three themes which arose from the women's lived experiences, providing an insight into factors which affected and shaped women's help-seeking opportunities: (1) Knowledge gap and myths, (2) Conflicting Interests and Failure to Protect, and (3) Cultural Awareness. These themes show specific barriers Pakistani women face when seeking and receiving help from authorities. While each woman's experience differs, barriers to women obtaining protection from DA can include a lack of proficiency in the English language, fear of racism in mainstream services, or anxieties about confidentiality in culturally specific services. Immigration status is also a key factor: if they are not citizens, women may not be aware that they have the right to remain in the UK if they report DA.

7.2.1 Knowledge Gap and Myths.

This study found that many migrant women lacked knowledge about existing services and help available to them. This study notes that migrant women are more vulnerable when it comes to getting help from local authorities, this was due to the lack of English language skills, fear of racism in mainstream services, or anxieties about not being a UK resident. Abusive partners and their families took advantage of migrant women's lack of knowledge, creating myths which indicated that help-seeking led to the deportation of migrant women. Many migrant women were unaware that the UK immigration law offers women

independent leave to remain in the UK under a 'domestic violence exemption'. Saira speaks about not being aware of her status:

> *When I came from Pakistan, I did not know if I would even get my indefinite stay, I did not know what to do* (Saira-P6m).

Najma spoke about how her immigration status was used against her:

> *They used to tell me that I cannot leave my husband because if I do, I will not get my stay, and I will be sent back to Pakistan, which would be shameful for my parents. When a woman comes from Pakistan, there are these things that are embedded in her mind by the UK family, this makes her inferior and helpless* (Najma-P5y).

Threats of deportation are used by perpetrators as a way of maintaining control of the women; it is also a mechanism that makes migrant women fear services, preventing help-seeking. While some women managed to contact services and escape abusive relationships, the majority of women had little access to relevant and appropriate information or knowledge of where to go for advice and help. Maria (B6y) spoke negatively about the services available and their awareness of migrant women and women who were unable to leave the home. She goes on to say:

> *Awareness is not good; only when I went to university I realised that there is awareness out there [of the potential abuse] and different sorts of help. But when I was locked in those four walls, I did not know any of that. That is scary because I am British-born, so what happens to women who are not born here and suffer the same? Also, what about the women who never get out to read posters about abuse how are they meant to know where to go?* (Maria, B6y).

Maria's question regarding migrants and how they receive knowledge about help-seeking is answered through Najma's and Iqra's lived experiences. Najma spoke about the lack of awareness of DA and how her immigration status was used to threaten her residency in the UK. She believed going back to Pakistan meant her children would be taken away from her by the UK authorities, she was unaware that DA was illegal in the UK and that the UK services also helped migrant women:

> *I did not know anything about my rights no one at home (affinal home) ever mentioned anything about DA and it being illegal. If anything, when I used to get fed up and cry a lot, they used to say we can go to Pakistan, but the authorities would take the children off me. I used to get scared thinking they* [UK authorities] *will take my children off me they used to say, you do not have a UK visa you do not have that I used to cry so much and think a person with a red passport are they the only once who have a life here* [UK] (Najma-P5y).

Similarly, Irqa was also unaware of her rights in the UK. However, Iqra was able to get help from many services (police, Women's Aid, and social services). Although Iqra received help from services, the lack of awareness meant that Irqa was unaware of her rights and how she was able to use these services. Iqra felt as though the services put her through more hardship and made her go through specific procedures which could have been avoided. Iqra was not informed about her rights and options, in, stead she was told that she had to complete specific procedures which were optional. For example, Iqra did not want to give a statement to the police, but she was told that without a police statement, she was unable to get a crime reference number:

> At *the time, you think that's the way because you do not know the laws. The helpline told me that a lot of the women do not do police cases, and still they get refuge, and I was like, no one told me this* (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra's experience shows that lack of knowledge not only delays women from leaving abusive relationships but also affects women's experience during their time with services. This study found that some service providers, including the police, were more interested in completing their own duty that they were conflicting with other service providers. This not only pulls the victim in different directions but also overlooks the victim's needs and rather forces on placing the victim in services just to make statistics.

7.2.2 Conflicting Interests and Failing to Protect.

Conflict of interest occurs when a service provider's service to a victim is compromised or might be compromised because of decisions or actions in relation to another aim (Reamer, 1998). Conflict of interest can be described as a situation where regard for one duty leads to disregard of another. It is important to mention that in this study, only one migrant woman (Iqra) who was pregnant at the time experienced such conflict.

However, it was important to create a theme based on this topic as it involved a conflict between three services (police, women's aid, and social services) that not only failed to protect Iqra appropriately but also did not match her rights.

Iqra, who was reluctant to contact the police and any other services, clearly reported the abuse to her GP, who put Iqra through Women's Aid. Although Iqra wanted some form of support, she did not wish to leave her affinal family due to the fear of not being able to go back to her affinal or natal family. The Women's Aid, without informing Iqra or explaining the procedures to her, contacted both the police and social services (due to Iqra's pregnancy):

> *I did not go to the police, I went to the GP, she saw the bruising and the swelling, I was in touch with the Women's Aid, the Women's Aid called the police the child services, which I did not want because I was not planning to leave the house and my parents said do not leave the house my parents were already not supporting it. So, I asked why you called social services, and she said I had to or else I would have*

lost my job... the social services came and said they could not give me any accommodation unless I reported it to the police (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra felt like she had no option but to give a statement against her husband, something she did not want to do, she just wanted an incident log number. But as the police were more interested in getting Iqra's husband arrested and punished, the police withheld information from Iqra regarding her rights. For example, the police told Iqra that she could only get accommodation once she had given her statement:

When the police came, I told then I do not want to press charges they told me they had enough evidence, and they are going to arrest the guy, and we are going to do everything. I said you are going to arrest the guy and do everything; I am already being abused and assaulted then I will not be able to go back, I cannot go back where am I going to go. They said you give a statement for your safety and all that only then I will get an accommodation, so I gave the statement, but I came to know later even without a statement, you can get an incident number at that time, I was not told that if they had told me that I would not have given a statement and I could have got accommodation (Iqra-P10y).

The police overlooked what Iqra wanted, disregarding the culture Iqra comes from and the stigma attached to leaving the marriage and contacting the police. The police failed to note that Iqra's culture does not accept women who go against their husbands, and this may mean being isolated after she reports the abuse. The police were interested in closing the case rather than accommodating Iqra and informing her of her rights and the different options available to her:

My experience was that they do not tell you everything, the police are more interested in getting him punished (Iqra-P10y).

The police's actions here are supported by the Crown Prosecution Service, in a report conducted by Michelle M Dempsey (2004), states that; "stopping DA and bringing

perpetrators to justice must be a priority for our society. We are determined to play our part by prosecuting cases effectively" (Dempsey, 2004: 3). This statement alone shows that the Crown Prosecution Service is very eager to help victims to seek justice, rather than helping women receive the support they need and want once leaving the abusive relationship.

It is important for services to understand that for some women, justice is not as important then for them to leave the relationship safely and live a life safely once they have left.
The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS, 2022) found that victims frequently withdraw support from the prosecution; one reason for this may be that, like Iqra, some victims of abuse are made to give statements, but in reality, they are not interested in punishing the abuser and reliving their past experiences but rather are more concerned with moving on and being protected by services around them.

Iqra's lived experience also shows that the social services faced a conflict of interest between their responsibility to identify and protect the child (Iqra's pregnancy) or the victim of DA. The social services got involved as Iqra was pregnant, on the request of the social services, Iqra was escorted to the hospital to examine the wellbeing of the baby. During the examination, both Iqra and the social services were told that she was eight weeks pregnant, but again, the social services failed to inform Iqra that they were unable to carry her case forward as she was not twenty-two weeks:

> *And when I am done with the statement (police), they tell me that the child is insignificant because it is eight weeks it's not twenty-two weeks we cannot carry the case we are closing the case...my experience with child services was not good because they were in hospital when my scan happened they saw the scan they knew my child was eight weeks they were supposed to tell me at that time that they will not carry the case because the child was not twenty-two weeks, they were supposed to tell me that the police without a statement will give me a crime number*

I do not have to give a statement because one it is stressful, traumatising and then you have to tell everything and when the police gets involved everyone goes against you, everyone went against me (Iqra-P10y).

Here, the social services were quick to drop Iqra's case once the police had received their statement and had enough evidence to punish Iqra's husband. The study found that the prioritisation of the services left Iqra vulnerable, unprotected, and with no support. This shows that the poor quality of services prevention, referrals, and decision-making led to poor safeguarding procedures for Iqra, who had no access to adequate advice or space to disclose their experiences of abuse:

The Women's Aid told me they could not support me with accommodation, but they were the ones who called the child services and the police; they made the situation worse that is why I could not go back, getting out of your house it has to be properly you cannot just go like that. They said it was your safety because I still was not safe in the B & B because I was only one mile away (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra was provided accommodation in a B &B, which was one mile away from her abusive husband's address:

The B & B they gave to me was within one mile of where my in-laws lived the living conditions of that B & B was so bad (Iqra-P10y).

Iqra had no choice but to stay in a B & B for nine weeks until her Destitution Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC) arrived. Under the Domestic Violence Rule, DDVC allows migrant women who are eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain to access public funds.

The accommodation was funded by a volunteer service, as Women's Aid stated that they were unable to support Iqra with accommodation. It is worth noting that clients with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) are at high risk of homelessness and destitution because they cannot access mainstream housing, welfare benefits and employment. Services can

find it difficult to engage with NRPF clients due to the limited support options available. This was experienced by Iqra, once Iqra's DDVC had arrived, Iqra's caseworker told her that the service was no longer paying for her accommodation and that Iqra would have to declare herself homeless:

> *it was Friday I rang them I said I have received the DDVC card, and they told me to pack my bags, we are not going to pay from tonight, go to town hall and declare yourself homeless, I went into complete shock, I did not know where the town hall was, I did not know what declaring homeless was. I called my case worker- like, how can they do this to me, they should have given me some time it was Friday if I do not have anywhere to go, where am I going to go, its Saturday and Sunday none of my case workers are working, where am I going to spend Saturday and Sunday? It was my luck that the card was wrong, the second card came that was wrong as well, before the third one came, I was in touch with the independent choice's helpline'* (Iqra-P10y).

The services provided to Iqra clearly show that Iqra was not the priority of any services available to her, this left her vulnerable, unsafe, and fearful of the unknown situation she was in. The services which are tailored to protect abused, vulnerable women failed to the extent that Iqra stated that no service checked up on her, the only time she was contacted was if they needed something for themselves to tick a box:

> *I thought if I die, these people will not even know they do not even message me, unless* there *is a process or something, like there is no help* (Iqra-P10y).

Although not all women have negative experiences with service providers, this case has shown that when poor quality of service is received, it can leave abused women feeling isolated, vulnerable, and pressured to do what the service asks from them. Service providers are there to accommodate these women's needs and make them feel safe, but in some cases, like Iqra's, women are used to tick boxes, make statistics and make arrests. Both Saira and Sofia reached out to the police once they left the abusive relationship; they wanted reassurance that they would be protected and safe. Instead, the police told Sofia,

who was a victim of forced marriage and transnational marriage abandonment, that she was not really experiencing DA. Sofia was told that because her abuser was not in the UK and she is not in contact with him, she was not experiencing abuse. Additionally, the forced marriage unit also failed to investigate Sofia's marriage procedures and abandonment. This meant that no one was made accountable for Sofia's forced marriage, abuse, and abandonment. Sofia states:

> *I went to the police, and they said it is not domestic abuse because you are not in contact with your husband you are not here (Pakistan) with your husband now. He is not abusing you here (UK), and also, because you are not in contact with your family, there is no abuse… the forced marriage unit at the police station helped me they just gave me guidance really, there was no action taken really against my family and husband, just the police told them I was safe and I do not wish to contact them* (SofiaB7y).

Similarly, Saira was told that the police were unable to help her. Despite her abuse and abandonment, the police told Saira that if she asked for help sooner, her case would have been handled, however at this present time, they were unable to help, instead, the police referred Saira to the DA service:

> *I told the police that he left me in Pakistan, he took my passport, the police said if you had come before we could have helped and spoke to him but six months have gone by so we cannot do anything for you. We will speak to him but not yet, I do not understand why they could not help me they just referred me to Humraaz* (Saira-P6m).

Only three women (Shagufta, Zara and Ojala) spoke positively about their experience with the British police. Both Shagufta and Zara, when talking about the help received, compared the policing in the UK to the policing in Pakistan. Both women spoke about how 'true' and 'friendly' the UK police are. Adding that the Pakistani police are 'corrupt', Zara adds:

> *There is that in Pakistan, if you call the police, they will take you, even if that means beating you, here, they are friendly they talk to you and only act if you have made a mistake* (Zara-P5m).

In Pakistan, social acceptance of violence is high, and women lack information about their rights (Weiss, 2012). Fear of corruption and ill-treatment at the hands of the police further discourage them from seeking state intervention (Hassan, 2015; Siddiqui et al., 2008). Corruption and a lack of accountability in police institutions were a major impediment to engaging with police in Pakistan, as reported by previous research (Hassan, 2015). Women who manage to break these barriers and flee abuse in Pakistan are faced with over-subscribed women's shelters, lack of rehabilitation, and eventually homelessness, forcing many to return to the abusive relationships they escaped from (Siddiqui et. al 2008). Alternatively, state institutions in Pakistan were not able to offer women who had been abused basic services they needed to live independently, regarding legal expenses and financial provisions, which made it difficult or impossible for women to challenge violence in Pakistan (Siddiqui et al., 2008).

Interestingly, although Ojala speaks about how helpful the police were she adds that she only contacted the police because her father asked her to. If it was up to Ojala, she would never get the police involved due to the fear that having the police intervene would worsen the situation. Ojala was not the only woman in this study who was reluctant to contact the police. Kiran, Bushra and Maria also spoke about not wanting to contact the police, they believed that contacting the police would make the situation worse because they would damage the family's reputation, Maria adds:

> *Authorities need to understand that many Pakistani women, including me, would not report abuse because we do not want to get our family in trouble we only want to get away from the trouble* (Maria- B6y).

This study found that women felt the need to put the families' honour before their own personal needs; their individual needs are often neglected as the women are encouraged to stay in their abusive relationships for the sake of the family honour.

Police and/or encounters with service providers also played a significant part for women when they wanted to come forward. Nadia Siddiqui and colleagues (2008, 7) draw parallels between the UK and Pakistan at many levels. They argue that structural, political, cultural, and racial frameworks in Pakistan and the UK were central to the creation of conditions in

which women could be subjected to abuse. In the UK, for example, this was indicated by fundamental inadequacies and injustices within the immigration and asylum system, whereas in Pakistan, this was demonstrated by the way in which religious and cultural norms were bolstered by a corrupt political system. It is important for service providers to understand women and their culture. This study has found that the lack of cultural knowledge and customs on behalf of the professionals, coupled with the fear of being accused of cultural insensitivity, has played a part in the lack of necessary services being provided or thoroughly investigated. As mentioned by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), individuals with multiple identities, such as race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics, intersect with one another and overlap. Such an individual's experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism; any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the way WOC are subordinated. As policies and service providers fail to embrace the experiences and concerns of WOC, they become insensitive to different cultures, therefore their entire framework has been used as a basis for translating women's experience or the Black experience into concrete policy demands which must be rethought and recast (Crenshaw, 1989).

7.2.3 Cultural awareness

In 1970's feminists (the first wave) the problem of DA was predominantly fought by and for middle-class, educated, white women (Phillips and Cree, 2014). The middle-class, educated, white women worked together to assess the gaps in services and the societal factors that perpetuated DA in the home. Services and interventions were developed, such as shelters and hotlines, and these practices became the standard. Therefore, services in the UK were not shaped nor prepared to accommodate women of ethnic backgrounds.

Even in the early days of the movement, WOC stated that their experiences of DA were different than those of women in the dominant culture. Confronting this marginalization head on, the second and third wave of feminists who began their work in the 1980s with

postmodern, anticolonial/postcolonial, and transnational perspectives (hooks 1990; Spivak 1999; Mohanty 1988).

Although DA services meet the needs of many women who share the cultural values, background and experience of the dominant (white, middle class) culture, women from other racial, ethnic, socio-economic populations often cannot access and utilize these services effectively. This reflects the work of Kimberle Crenshaw on 'intersectionality', Crenshaw (1989) highlights that the focus has mainly been on the most privileged (Western) group members who marginalize those who are multiply burdened, and obscures claims that cannot be understood as resulting from discrete sources of discrimination.

This study identified six Pakistani women (two British-born and four Pakistani born) either spoke about feeling judged by the police or the lack of understanding of the Pakistani culture by the UK servicers. Creating misunderstandings and/or neglecting the duty of care for women in need. For example, Zainab, who fled her abusive marriage, asked the police for help, Zainab spoke about feeling judged by the police officer:

> *I hate the police they were so horrible and started making things up like, so you ran away with a boy? You are getting forced into marriage…* (Zainab-B4y).

Zainab felt that the police had a biased opinion on the Pakistani culture, which led them to assume what Zainab had gone through. This can result in abused Pakistani women being very apprehensive about contacting the appropriate authorities. Fear of a racist backlash and stereotyping within the wider society often exacerbate the situation, and as a result, South Asian women, children and young people may choose not to highlight the abuse (Bowling and Phillips 2002). Zainab explained that there was a lack of understanding of culture and family honour amongst services which meant Pakistani women were not able to get what they needed from services:

You hear people say why don't she just leave, but just leaving for us Pakistan people mean relying on services because that's all you have. But services are shit there they say we accept all, but they don't even understand our culture, not understanding our culture means they do not get our situation…. services need to understand culture, and they need to understand honour and family ties. To be able to understand us, you can't help us if you do not understand us, our history, or our family ties (Zainab-B4y).

Both Zainab and Iqra (P10y) eventually wanted to speak to someone who not only understood their culture and language but someone who themselves was South Asian. Iqra adds that if a person does not understand the Pakistani culture, they cannot truly help because they are incapable to fully understand the extent of abuse the woman has gone through and what it means if she leaves the abusive relationship. Iqra adds:

First, no matter what the agency, child services, police or whatever, if they know a woman is Asian, Indian Pakistani, is Bengali, the first thing they should do is give that woman a person who speaks their language whether or not they know English or not, because that person will understand the culture, they understand the background and sometimes when you express something in English it is not the same when you say it in your own language the impact is different. The communication is different (IqraP10y).

According to this study, Pakistani women generally preferred service providers with the same ethnic background and who spoke their own language. For example, Zainab (B4y) expressed that once she was able to speak to a South Asian woman, she felt better:

Asian woman who deals with honour-based violence came and spoke to me I felt better and supported she understood everything, like my family situation, relations

and expectations. Within the five months, I had lived in a refuge which wasn't very nice because there were no Asian people there (Zainab-B4y).

Halima states that having a South Asian woman (from the DA service) was useful as she was able to help and give advice accordingly and took into consideration the cultural aspect of things. Halima adds:

The key workers (name) she advised me on how I can get my belongings back and everything and how I can manage everything, and she did say apply for the Islamic divorce and get all that done. She was also Asian, so I think she understood dowry and stuff, so it helped a lot because she knew how Asian marriages work (Halima-B10m).

Additionally, all seven migrant women were referred to a DA refuge called Humraaz. All the women spoke about how great the service was, they mainly pointed out the fact that the staff members were South Asian and the women using the service were also South Asian. Bushra adds, *'it's quite good because there are a lot of Pakistanis there'* (Bushra-p2y). *'The staff helped a lot'* (Najma-P5y). Saira states that the service has not only helped her leave her abusive relationship, but the staff have also given Saira the opportunity to meet new women and learn about the ways of life in the UK. Although Saira is now in her own home, she is still welcomed by the refuge and can visit and take part in trips and activities with other women who are currently still using the service:

I got new friends, I have learnt to live, they have done so much for me that I can now do *everything myself, like shopping. My heart is at ease when I am here. My house is not far from here, so I can still visit* (Saira-P6m).

As mentioned previously, once a Pakistani woman leaves her family, she is somewhat shunned by her family, community, and friends. As Pakistani families are specifically structured (patriarchal), without a father figure, women are not accepted in the wider Pakistani community, leaving them further isolated. Therefore, for Saira, creating those

new friendships becomes important as it allows her to move on and create a new life without being alone and isolated. Women in this study generally state that it was useful to have case workers who were South Asian, as they not only understood the culture but were also able to provide advice, taking into consideration the numerous stigmas women must face once leaving their relationship. However, Bushra relocated to a refuge that was managed by a South Asian man and had a very different experience. Bushra spoke about the South Asian manager and how he tried persuading Bushra to return to her abusive husband. He told Bushra that the help in the UK is poor and not worth going through as she will be ignored:

> *The manager (refuge) told me that the refuge is not a good place and that if I was to move, I would be stuck there for ten-twelve years. He said that the social workers will ignore me and forget about me, like that, the manager scared me, he started telling me to sort things out with my husband* (Bushra-P2y).

Although many women expressed their disappointment with the UK authorities and their awareness of the Pakistani culture, levels of trust among migrant women were higher than among UK-born women, suggesting an acculturation process does occur (Berry, 1997). Here, it is necessary to note that when speaking about the police in Pakistan, women mainly spoke about the authorities being corrupt and punishing the abused rather than the abuser.

Bradford and others (2017) stated that it seemed almost certain that when migrants make a comparison between the British police and the police in their country of origin, given the nature of policing in many parts of the world, the British police may appear more professional, effective and better intentioned than would otherwise be the case. This was also identified in this study; however, it was not only the migrant women who had negatively commented about the Pakistani police. For example, Sofia (B7y), a British-born woman abused and abandoned in Pakistan, approached the police in Pakistan, hoping they

would help her escape her abusive partner. Instead, the police took Sofia back to her abuser and informed her affinal family about what she had disclosed to the police. Sofia explains:

> *I told them that my husband raped me, that he beat me up, and you know they do not treat me well, that I am like a slave to them, that am from the UK, and I want to go back home. But they took me back to my in-laws and said to them this is what your daughter in-law is saying this is the situation and they left. It was like they were not helpful it was like I did not matter* (Sofia-B7y).

Both Sofia and Shagifta (P12y) labelled the Pakistani police as 'corrupt', Sofia stated that the police cared more about the head of the family rather than the individual in need. Shagufta and Zara (P5m) both spoke about the differences been the police services in both countries. Shagufta, when comparing the UK authorities to the Pakistani authorities, stated that: *I have noticed that this country (UK) is true, Pakistan its corrupt people will hide things for money* (Shagufta-P12y). Zara stated that in Pakistan, even if you are the victim, the police will arrest you and sometimes physically abuse you for disclosing DA, however, she adds that:

> *Here (UK), they (police) are friendly they talk to you and only act actions against you if you have made a mistake (*Zara-P5m).

This study identifies that services in both countries lack the ability to fully protect Pakistani women who escape abuse. Those who escape in the UK may not get the help they need due to the cultural differences, and those who escape in Pakistan are punished for disclosing abuse due to family honour and shaming the family, kin group and tribe. As a result, many women are pressured to stay with their abuser due to the uncertainty of what may happen if they do leave.

As shown in this study, for many Pakistani women, the notions of honour and shame may be deployed to prevent women from leaving and to stigmatise women who do manage to leave their abusive relationship. Additionally, migrant Pakistani women's experience of

abuse may be different due to cultural factors, problems with language and immigration status can strain women from coming forward and disclosing abuse. Where the immigration status of women is dependent on their husbands, the power imbalances within marriage are further weighed against women; leaving the abusive relationship can mean deportation, and abusers feed on this threat to maintain power over the abused women.

7.2.3. Conclusion

Many women in this study spoke about not wanting to report the abuse and hoped that, at some stage, their relationship would rekindle. This is due to the stigma associated with leaving a marriage, where the blame often falls on the abused women for not trying to make it work. Many women who participated in this study feared further abuse from the affinal family if they were sent back to Pakistan, they often spoke about not being accepted by the community if they ever went back. It is equally important to note that quite often, there is a stereotypical view of South Asian women and their willingness to approach services. Therefore, research on South Asian women and their experience of abuse primarily focuses on the women and their culture rather than any inadequacy in service response.

Anitha (2008) identified the work of the Fawcett Society, which researched the service provided to victims of DA. The study concluded that, on average, a woman facing DA had to make 11 contacts with agencies before getting the help she needed. However, for women from BME communities, this rises to 17 (Brittain et al., 2005). It, therefore, becomes necessary to address service providers and their response to ethnic minority women who have been or are victims of DA. The next chapter discusses how the culture of silence combined with a Eurocentric curriculum neglects forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to. Chapter eight explains how Western society not only overlooks specific forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to, but it also fails to recognise women who are at higher risk.

Chapter Eight: Discussion

"Raising a daughter is like watering a shade-giving tree in someone else's courtyard" (Jeffery et al, 1989, p. 23). This analogy sheds light as to why Pakistani girls from a young age are kept under close surveillance. Not only is the young girl given the responsibility of upholding the family's honour, but she is also a temporary resident in her natal home. The natal family become responsible for preparing the young girl for her life in her permanent home, her affinal home. This then gives permission to the natal family to shape their young daughter, making her 'marriage material'. Therefore, parents tend to take excessive care of their daughters, who are constantly reminded that their primary purpose is to become a 'good' daughter first and then 'good' wives, daughters-in-law and mothers (Ghosh, 2004). The aim of this chapter is to capture intersectional elements which contribute towards the silencing of Pakistani women. Intersectionality not only allows us to see why Pakistani women's experiences are different to their white counterparts, but it also demonstrates why Pakistani women are not equally represented to white women and how the overpowering voices of Western women have led to the silencing of WOC.

8.1 The conspiracy of silence

I never expected to lose my own voice, especially when my intentions were to be the voice for the voiceless. I am not silenced, nor am I silent, so why do I feel mute when questioning the existing discourse? Where the West tends to silence other women by describing them as victims living under a dominant patriarchy. This denies women from their own memory because their history and lived experiences are being rewritten by someone else (West). But losing their memories means that they also lose themselves; coming forward into a world that has already told their story for them, the fear of silence becomes much stronger. My feeling of muteness came with confusion. Am I creating a space to rewrite about the culture of silence, or am I writing about women's journeys into silence? Either way, I understand that speaking alone is not enough to be heard; the complex process of being

heard is also something which needs to be addressed. If the recipient of the voices is unappreciated, unwelcoming, and unwanted, then who do the silenced speak to and for what reasons do they speak?

My findings emphasise that Pakistani women are often silenced due to their community norms – what can be described as a culture of silence (Jangbar, 2022). Being raised to believe that your worth is dependent upon the approval of others, many women become hyper-focused on the way others engage with them. Everything from the way a person looks at them talks to them or about them may become a fixation that prevents them from being present and authentic in their interactions. Worrying about how others portray them, some women hide their abuse. Some women do this by protecting themselves for the sanctity of marriage, the stigma of divorce, being accused of dishonouring the family, or the fear of being judged by their community. They also do not want to look like a traitor to their community. Iqra talks about the power men hold in silencing women. She explains how damaging being divorced is, and she elaborates by adding that men use the threat of divorce to silence women and to show them that without a husband, they are powerless. Iqra offers these reflections:

Men having the power of divorcing you, knowing our culture does not accept divorced women. It is shamed upon; they consider you as damaged goods (Iqra P10y).

For Pakistani women, having a broken marriage is self-damaging. Instead of leaving their abuser, they would rather wait, and hope things get better. Women are often told to have sabr – no matter what the hardship. Sabr is an Arabic word which translates as 'patience'. But sabr means much more than just patience. It is self-control, mercy, tolerance, endurance, perseverance and much more**.** Having patience is also part of the Islamic faith, the Qur'an mentions that "only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without Hisaab (without limit, calculation, and estimation)" (Qur'an, 39:10). This teaches that during and after hardship if one remains spiritually steadfast and by continuing to do good, they will be rewarded. The concept of sabr is not specific to one scenario it applies to everyday life. For example, if you are unwell, patience will regain your health, or if you

have lost a loved one, patience will fill the void. By applying sabr when you are abused, some may believe that having sabr with their abuser may eventually stop the abuse. In doing so, some women may stay silent and pray for their suffrage to be over; others may ask for forgiveness. An example of this is seen in Najma's case:

> *Despite all that (cheating and abuse) I used to ask for forgiveness and try sorting things out* (Najma- P5y).

The question to ask here is, how much sabr are women willing to have? Is it enough to silence them for it to affect their state of mind, enough to endure physical abuse? Zara, for example, explains that she put up with her abusive partner, however, once the abuse started affecting her pregnancy, she decided to leave:

> *When it was on me, I bared it, but it was affecting the baby a lot* (Zara P5m).

Those who have spoken are often misunderstood and unsupported, not only by their families and community but also by authorities.

Women in this study – Zainab (B4y) and Iqra (P10y) – spoke about feeling judged by the authorities, insisting they needed to speak to someone who shared the same culture as them. Iqra explains:

> *Its then I realized that I need some Asian person to talk to, someone I can speak my own language, and ask what is happening. Someone that understands my culture, because English people are very different* (Iqra, p10y).

The sense of not belonging and the existing stereotyping contribute towards the silencing of women; this reflects how silence and disempowerment are linked. One of the traditional ways to subjugate any community or group is to ensure that their voices or a message in any form remain unheard by others. For women, this is even more intense because long-term patriarchal practices normalise women's silence in the eyes of men, women, and society. When women who are seeking help feel a sense of inferiority, they may close off and remain silent. But then the question remains: When will their stories be

told? These are the stories of the women we all know who travelled across foreign seas trading in their ambition to raise dynasties: the bride who met her husband on her wedding day and promised her daughter to never do the same, silently grieving a life unlived. There is also the story of the young girl who begs for further education but is shut down at every opportunity. Another story is about a woman who has been trained to please everyone in her life, including those whom she has not yet met (husband and in-laws), only to eat on the kitchen floor. And there is the story about the woman who has no right over her own body, who is told what to wear and how to act.

When analysing the conspiracy of silence, it is often naively thought that Pakistani women are voiceless due to their culture of silence. This is true, and it is something which has been captured in this study. But we also need to consider other sources of silencing which fall outside the cultural explanation of voiceless women. For example, we only really hear about the honour culture when a woman falls victim to honour killing, such as Shafilea Ahmed, Benaz Mahmod, and Samia Shahid. However, prior to the act of honour killing, women suffer from other forms of honour-related abuse, which are often ignored.

This can range from being forced into marriage, being pressured to follow a firm dress code or being refused access to education or work. This is not because the women who are suffering have nothing to say, but rather, they hold no public authority to use their voices and no space to speak. This is mainly due to the lack of representation, isolated experiences with histories and ancestral narratives omitted from mainstream discourse (Mirza, 2015). The false universalising that emerges from within White feminism, institutional racism and the white curriculum play a significant role in the silencing, marginalisation, alienation, and exclusion of WOC (Elhinnawy, 2022). There seems to be a continuing line of struggle for silenced voices, and yet Toni Morrison provides a positive perspective on how silenced women can respond: “Our silence has been long and deep ... we have always been spoken for. Or we have been spoken to. Or we have appeared as figures suggesting sensuality. Today, we are taking back our narrative and telling our story” (Morrison, 1994: XX).

The reality is that the narratives are still finding their way into the mainstream, and there are yet many untold stories that have not found their place in Western society. Although I am creating that space here, I think the real question that needs to be asked is whether political leaders, policymakers, academics and other influential figures in the West have the intellectual resources to identify, transform and come to terms with the historical effects and traces of racism that are invested in the Western society, institutions and in the knowledge production process. If the answer is no, then my thesis will just be another plea for help, abandoned on a library bookshelf, collecting dust and the women in my study will be once again ignored and silenced. No matter how loud the women's voices are in my thesis, the sad reality is that WOC continually confronts systemic educational policies and practices that result in the silencing of their voices.

Currently, in the UK, policies utilise a colour-blind approach to repress communities of colour while maintaining Western society's thoughts and experiences. An example of this is seen in the Eurocentric curriculum, where a lack of diversity is found in the teaching, reading and overall content of education. One of the major issues I have always had with our curriculum is the lack of knowledge provided to people of colour for their own safety. For example, the UK is a multicultural nation, and if we are aware of threats such as FGM, forced marriage and honour killings, then why are these major life-threatening topics avoided in schools? My research has raised a red flag for British-born women, more specifically young girls aged 15, leaving secondary school. Away from the eyes of the educational institution, these young girls are vulnerable to forced marriages.

In the UK, parents are legally responsible for making sure that their children go to school. If a child does not attend school, the parents can get fined up to £2,500 or be prosecuted. However, after secondary school (age 15/16), there are no legal obligations for any further education. This means that parents are no longer held accountable for their children's absence in further education. My study identified two British-born women (Sadia and Sofia) - who were lured into marriages which became forced marriages. Understandably, we blame the Pakistani culture for forced and early marriages, but perhaps the West needs to also take some accountability. If we know that some WOC are prone to become victims

of early and forced marriage, why is this not built into the curriculum? Dyer (2015) similarly argues that it is not uncommon for families to withdraw their children from school and college and imprison them in the family home or elsewhere, leading to a forced marriage. It is outside of the scope of this thesis, but this also affects women from other minoritized backgrounds, including Travellers and Gypsy young women.

Raising awareness at very early stages can prevent the victimisation of young women. For example, in some instances, arranged marriages can have elements of being forced, which are rarely recognised. Literature has previously identified the blurring between arranged and forced marriages (Anitha & Gill, 2009). With little to no life experience, some young girls may agree to marriage as they have the 'desire to please parents who exert emotional pressure, this pressure is itself experienced as coercion' (Siddique, 2002, p. 3). The first step towards helping a potential victim is to equip them with the right knowledge, for example using the curriculum to inform young people about forced marriage, how to recognise it, and ways to access services. I say the first step because after refusing a forced marriage, abuse can escalate.

For example, once a woman refuses a forced marriage and/or has involved authorities, she becomes vulnerable to HBA, and her family, extended family, and community may go to considerable lengths to gain control over her life by emotionally and/or physically abusing her; attempting to kill her as she has dishonoured the family; she may be neglected by her family, friends and community leaving her alone to defend for herself.

This is something I have witnessed. My best friend from high school met a boy, and her family disapproved of her relationship and, therefore, took her to Pakistan and got her married. Once she returned to the UK, she decided to run away from home. I remember her calling me and saying, 'Ruby, I have packed my bags, and I am leaving tonight, I will call you when I get there (her boyfriend's house)'. The next morning, the whole community finds out that she has left home and dishonoured her family. My family and community told me not to talk to her if she called as she was a bad influence and is living the Western life. To be honest, she never called. It has been 15 years since I see her sisters and her

mum, but we never talk about her, as if she is a forbidden topic. It can be argued that forced marriages are life-destroying, yet no one is fighting for such topics to be built into our curriculum. Currently, other topics on minority identities are being built into the curriculum. For example, through the UK government's statutory guidelines for relationship and sex education in schools (Department for Education, 2019), the government expects all pupils to have been taught about LGBTQ+ minorities as part of the curriculum. (GOV, 2021). Some of the reasons for this are to show young children that LGBTQ+ people exist and that it is legal to be LGBTQ+ and to frame the experiences of individuals with minority identities. For example, LGBTQ+ people have and still do face a range of negativity and abuse both in society and in school, and these can impact their ability to thrive within educational environments and lead to mental ill health (Meyer, 2003). I agree that all people should be respected, and their experiences should be shared. So why are the WOC, and their intersectional experiences ignored? These are also minority identities; they also experience negativity, and their experiences can also impact their ability to thrive within educational environments and lead to mental ill health (Meyer, 2003).

The reality is that WOC are not a priority for the Eurocentric curriculum because it does not affect Western society, and it's a 'them' problem. Whereas LGBTQ+ is generally considered Eurocentric, often, again, with problematic consequences for minoritized individuals. With a Eurocentric curriculum focusing on Western culture and history, the wider view of the world is excluded. In other words, many students from schools, colleges and universities lack knowledge of the world and are only exposed to figures and ideas from the West. This is something I experienced during my time lecturing at Salford University. In a seminar on Feminism, many students found the concept of honour interesting; at the same time, they were oblivious to the fact that the honour culture still exists today, across the world and in the UK. Paulo Freire notes that there are two stages in the teaching of the oppressed. The first stage is the awakening stage, and the second is educating the oppressors. In this case, the oppressor is the Western society, which is not willing to listen to WOC. However, to 'develop pedagogies for oppressed populations, we

must first recognise the racist systems in which we operate' (Freire, 1995). The lack of knowledge of other cultures sums up what Bell Hooks (1994) theorised about Western education that encourages empowerment and intellectual advantages, it is also a colonial strategy that aims to neglect colonial traditions and override them with Western ideologies. This is evident mostly in the lack of intersectionality in the modules offered at most educational intuitions. The continuing absence of WOC from mainstream Western life means that Western society is lacking basic knowledge about these women. A society with little knowledge is unable to serve, protect and save women accordingly. This, most vividly, occurs in how we know about honour only because we hear about honour killings. Similarly, we know about forced marriage simply because most honour killings occur because the victim did not want to marry or was forced into a marriage. What we fail to recognise are forms of abuse which are hidden.

8.2 The Most Hidden Experiences.

Pakistani women's experience of spousal abuse lies with their insecure immigration status and living in an extended patriarchal affinal household (Anitha, 2010; Abraham, 2000; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Although I explore affinal kin abuse and the issue of TMA with immigration status in greater detail in chapter four. I want to explore this further here. Especially because Pakistani women's experience of spousal abuse is easily influenced by affinal kin and international spaces.

In her marital home, a woman becomes a wife and a daughter-in-law, she holds multiple roles and responsibilities. The marital home can usually consist of numerous relationships: husband, father and mother-in-law, their married and unmarried sons and daughters and their children. Once married, a woman must adjust and identify her own interests and ways with those of her husband's family (Dyson & Moore, 1983, p. 44). Gender hierarchy is constant throughout the life of a Pakistani woman. However, women are not powerless amongst themselves in the marital home. For example, senior daughters-in-law can exert control and dominate younger daughters-in-law. Jeffery and Jeffery (1996) have suggested

that the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship can lead to tension, hostility and control. According to Mand (2008), a woman's status in her marital home is not static but alters throughout the different stages of her marital life. For example, the subordinate new bride position will eventually change, usually by having a son (Shaw, 2001). Eventually, the position of a subordinate daughter-in-law will shift to that of a powerful mother-in-law. This also clarifies the preference of sons, which not only raises women's status within the household but also ensures their lifelong survival status in a patrilineal and patrilocal kinship system (Mirza, 2015).

The basic status difference between men and women in a kin-based society is that women are never given the power to hold their own identity, they are either identified by their father and/or their husband's name (Daum, 1974). A son is given superiority as he is believed to be a permanent member of the kin who has the potential to continue and strengthen the kin line.

Whereas a daughter and her position are temporary, she is destined to get married and enter the kin line of her husband's family (marital home), giving her secondary status in the family (Dube, 1997). A daughter transfers to another home upon marriage is seen as inevitable. Therefore, her membership within her father's agnatic unit is neither permanent nor complete. Her rights to maintenance and residence must necessarily be transferred from her natal family to her marital family.

A sub-theme arose from the interviewees' experiences of 'affinal kin- the oppression of in-married women' abuse is abuse by 'mother-in-law'. Although my findings clearly show female affinal kin involvement in spousal abuse (ear-filling and domestic servitude). Mother-in-law both directly and indirectly encouraged spousal abuse. Primarily because the mother-in-law fears that the alpha female position is at risk if the new daughter-in-law gains independence and falls outside of the idea of matriarchy. Matriarchy is a social system in which the mother or a female elder has absolute authority over the family group, by extension, one or more women.

Meanwhile, outside of the household, the patriarchal structure remains firm. In an affinal home, the new bride is often considered inferior to other women already living in the home. It is the new bride who needs to adjust to her new family; she needs to learn to serve her husband as well as her family. Not only is the husband managing the family's hierarchy, but his mother is also somewhat in charge of the females in the home. In such hierarchies' men can be protected from criticism, even in the case of spousal abuse. A woman may be told to follow her husband's orders if she wants to live an easy life. Refusing can lead to abuse, which, according to the affinal family, is justified. Ali and others (2011: 53) state: "If men have no fear of reprisals from other family members, then they will have the confidence to continue to do so [abuse their wives], and in front of them".

Like Stark's (2013) coercive control model, my study has captured the indirect involvement of the mother-in-law, which controls and regulates the daughter-in-law's life. As highlighted in chapter four, domestic servitude, dowry abuse and ear filling have all been trigger factors which have contributed towards spousal and/or affinal kin abuse.

Acts of domestic servitude are acts which are not necessarily mediated by male control but rather for the mother-in-law's self-interest, feeding into the matriarchy structure. This control becomes necessary for the mother-in-law to maintain a joint household. This study shows that domestic servitude not only caused physical and emotional exhaustion but also instigated spousal abuse and discord: for example, when a mother-in-law overwhelms the new bride with house chorus, the new bride becomes too exhausted to spend time with her husband, this can become a cause for marital discord. Most importantly, abuse stemmed from kinship structures and relationships and are not represented in the mainstream literature of DA. Therefore, specific tactics of DA by kinship relations are aspects of abuse that do not receive attention from government policy and practice, making it more difficult to recognise and identify them as abusive by service providers and by the women experiencing it. The absence of kinship abuse in the understanding of DA means that Pakistani women's experience of abuse is only partly recognised, confining women's experience to intimate relationships and nuclear households (Gangoli, 2011).

What we fail to identify is that when you have an alpha male, an alpha female may also exist in the same structure. In this case, the alpha female is the mother-in-law, whose instigation and perpetration of family abuse against the daughter-in-law is rarely captured. Mirza (2015) states that due to the nature of this relationship and the extended family structures and relationships within which women are rooted, the power dynamics are far more complex with abuse by the mother-in-law. Rew, Gangoli and Gill (2013) argue that abuse by the mother-in-law must be explored and understood within Stark's (2013) 'coercive control model'. Although Stark (2013) was built around women as victims and men as perpetrators, the structural root of women's vulnerability and inequality can still be applied to cases of women's violence against other women. Like Stark's model, many exclude family relations; to understand Pakistani women's experiences of DA, the family must be recognised as a potential source within which women can experience multiple forms of abuse by multiple perpetrators.

Once this is recognised, the following steps can be taken to bring this matter to mainstream society: giving space to service providers and policymakers to explore and understand how affinal relations can oppress, instigate, and abuse women. The complex nature of kin structure needs to be understood in teams of how and why women can be constrained and abused by their affinal families. It is also necessary to avoid all stereotype assumptions. For example, not all affinal kin relations instigate abuse, and not all mothers-in-law take the alpha role. On the other hand, you can find that in some families, the father-in-law, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are abusive towards the new bride, and the mother-in-law is the protector. Here, training and education is necessary as it will help to provide a tailored service for Pakistani women who are in need.

It is interesting to note that all five women (Shagufta, Zara, Iqra, Zainab and Ojala) who experienced abuse by their mother-in-law explained that 'ear-filling' was used as a tool of coercion, control and intimidation utilised by the mother-in-law to sustain spousal abuse, distanced their husbands as perpetrators of the abuse. Although the husbands abused the women, the women's accounts neglect to hold their husbands equally as responsible as the mother-in-law. Instead, the women's interpretation of the abuse inflicted by the

husband is somewhat justified. They indicate that the mother-in-law used her son as a *tool* to 'control' them, implying that the mother-in-law holds the sole responsibility of the abuse inflicted on them. It is important to note, that the mother-in-law is someone who plays an active role in her daughter-in-law's life, from choosing and accepting the bride to bringing her home and helping her settle. The overarching power of the mother-in-law is visible. The power struggle begins when the mother wants control of her son and the new bride. When something goes wrong or does not fit the mother-in-law's narrative of how things should be, both the mother and daughter-in-law may turn on and blame each other. This takes the attention away from the husband/son. This does not mean that the husband is less of a perpetrator. Instead, it shows that having multiple perpetrators can allow some perpetrators to distance themselves from the abuse. Further research is needed to understand why women distance their husbands from abuse when other affinal family members are involved and how the mothers-in-law may be figures who maintain the patriarchal order they benefit from as mothers of sons.

In the case of transnational marriages, abandonment of wives across national borders is embedded within a pattern of DA and coercive control over the woman. However, in the West, abandonment through marriage is not considered a form of DA and is very rarely recognised. Typically, TMA is often associated with British national or British resident spouses who purposefully abandon their undesirable partner in their countries of origin. The abandoned partner is then frequently subjected to abuse: domestic servitude; social stigma associated with separation and divorce; women's vulnerability within the natal, who may be reluctant to keep them after divorce; and their affinal family where they will fall victim to domestic servitude. Women like Shagufta (P-12y) who are often abandoned with their children or separated from them, their rights are violated on multiple levels through their immigration status and right to protection and support. Firstly, men who abandon their wives in their home country and then file for divorce in the UK make it difficult for the wife to fight for her rights or even participate in any legal proceedings. This gap has given space for British nationals to take advantage of their partners from other countries, in this case, Pakistan (Anitha, S. et al, 2016, 2018; Patel, P. et al, 2016). As

detailed in chapter four, Pragna Patel, the Director of Southall Black Sisters, has delineated three forms of abandonment:

1) Women who migrate to the UK after marriage are ousted or forced to flee within the UK due to abuse;
2) Women who migrate to the UK after marriage are later deceived into visiting their country of origin and abandoned there, while the British husband returns to the UK and revokes their visa;
3) After marriage women are left in their country of origin with their in-law's, they are never sponsored by their husbands (cf. Anitha et al, 2018).

All three forms of abandonment can relevantly apply to migrant women who have married a British National. The greatest limitation, however, which this study has identified is the abandonment of British Pakistani women in Pakistan. Two British-born women in this study, Sadia (B3y) and Sofia (B7y), were deceived into visiting Pakistan.

On arrival, they were both forced/pressured into marriage and were unable to return to the UK (see Chapter Four for more details). Their perpetrators were their husbands, natal and affinal families. Both women were isolated with their identification documents being confiscated, unable to leave their homes in the village, Sadia and Sofia were unable to get the help they needed. My argument here is that it is so easy for Pakistani families to abandon their daughters in Pakistan. One of the reasons why some families are so confident when carrying this act out is due to the lack of care and awareness shown by the British authorities and services. For example, as mentioned previously (conspiracy of silence), after leaving secondary school, parents no longer hold the legal obligation to send their children to college or work. Therefore, if there is a girl who is 16 years of age and does not enrol into college or if she does but then drops out of college, no one will question her absence; no one will check where she is. If anything, her seat will become available for the next student.

Again, this is something I have witnessed. It was my first year at Burnley College (2008), and I had become really close to one girl; for the first three months of college, we spent a

lot of time together. During the Christmas holidays, her phone was off, so we had no contact. After the holidays, she never came to college; for weeks, her absence was not questioned, and if anyone (tutors) asked where she was, we (me and my other friends) would say, 'We don't know'. Her name was removed from the college register, and just like that, she never existed in the classroom. It was the summer of 2009 when I heard from her via phone, she told me that her father made her go to Pakistan and that her family pressured her into getting married to her cousin. She told me that she had to stay in Pakistan for five months with her affinal family. What surprised me the most was not the fact that she was pressured into marriage but rather how easy it was for a young woman to disappear, with no one investigating the woman's absence. To this day, I think if only we had some form of a system which could help us identify women who have left the UK and not returned, if only we could find out if these absent women are ok.

This can save so many women; Sofia (B7y), who was abandoned in Pakistan for seven years, put this forward as a recommendation. I asked her what advice she would like to give to women in similar situations as her, her reply was as follows:

> *They forced me to marry him at 15. Then they left me in Pakistan for 7 years… I would say call the British embassy, I know getting hold of a phone, can be hard and you may not have internet, but if you are worried, have their number on a paper before you leave the UK because you never know when you will need it. I wish I had their number. I would have left sooner, I wasted seven- eight years of my life. Also, I think there should be some routine checks in place on people who leave the county for such a long time. I mean, if someone checked on me, they would have found out that I was left in Pakistan. Just because I am an adult does not mean I can help myself. So maybe the government should put some sort of check in place to find out why the person has not come back. These people may need help that's why they are missing for such a long time* (SofiaB7y).

As presented in chapter four, British-born women who are abandoned in Pakistan become vulnerable- not only are their rights taken away from them, but both Sofia (B7y) and Sadia (B3y) were verbally abused and taunted for money. One of the main distinguishing

features of the Pakistani culture is 'patrilineal descent, patrilocal residence, inheritance and succession practices that exclude women' (Jejeebhoy and Sathar, 2001: 687). Women under this system of patrilineal kinship are viewed as second-class citizens (Khan, 1998, Dube, 1997) and are considered the property of men. Their identity is constituted in terms of their relation to men, making them dependent on men for their security. And yet, British born women are made to marry their relatives from Pakistan and eventually, the new husband joins the wife in Britain and/or the British born wife is expected to fund the affinal family in Pakistan. Evidence of this is shown in Sofia and Sadia's case:

> *They started demanding money, and they kept saying to me, ring your dad because he promised about the money* (Sofia: B7y). *So, my sister used to send me money from the UK to basically support him* (Sadia B3y)

In both cases, it was evident that the husband and/or affinal family expected the British-born woman to fund the living expenses of the family left in Pakistan. Typically, this constant demand for money carries on once the Pakistani husband reaches the UK. He and his wife are expected to send money to Pakistan either monthly or weekly to support the family left behind. Although this aspect of a British-born Pakistani woman's life was not captured in this study, it is something which can lead to emotional and financial abuse within the UK home. For example, if a British born woman and her migrant husband are working to buy a home or car, pay bills or are just trying to raise their children, sending money to Pakistan can become hard. It may mean that one partner must work more hours, which is physically demanding and takes away family time in the UK. This can also mean that the couple may struggle financially to pay their bills in the UK, which can eventually lead to debt collection and bad credit. Previous research has identified two key economic incentives for kin marriages which are property/fortune and dowry. Marriage of a daughter to close kin keeps the family property within the kin group, and wealth can be distributed within the family (Agarwal, 1994). But this does not explain the complexity of patrilocal residence when a Pakistani national husband leaves his family to join his British wife.

8.3 The displacement of honour.

In a Pakistani family, shame is wrongly displaced. Shame and dishonour should not be a burden placed on young women. It should not be the length of the daughter's dress or the occupation she chooses. Shame is the family's choice, not the young daughter's reasonability. Honour, modesty and lack of education are used to control women; it shapes their self-esteem, so they do not have the confidence, nor the freedom to do what they want. Instead, these burdens leave women with no option but to comply. Although my PhD shows how Pakistani women's identities are shaped, shaped to be honourable and modest, their identities are already shaped to fit their family's needs, the women have the burden to grow into this readymade identity, with the expectation to avoid any act which can dishonour the family.

Here, I aim to discuss how honour and modesty play an important role in shaping women's identity. However, I would like to go further and explain why Pakistani families feel the need to control their women. Why is shaping their identities so important? And why have Pakistanis built their community around 'what will people say'.

Honour and modesty are not a virtue; both concepts are used as tools to keep women in their patriarchy-ordained roles, compromising their progress in the male-dominated world and locked into a passive role when it comes to sexual desire. Upholding the family honour and modesty is clearly a gendered notion. The word modesty means both self-effacing and sexually chaste, neither of which are inherently virtuous, but both of which are applied to women more than men. As shown in my findings, women from a very young age are shaped to uphold the family's honour. Modesty is one way of upholding that honour, it is deeply baked into this idea that men belong in public and women belong in the household. The classical idea of virtue is about winning honour in the sphere of men in the world. There is a very deep sense in which men seek honour among other men and kin groups in public, and women do not belong to that and are not part of that, rather they the once who have upheld this honour by staying away from the public eye, obeying their natal family before marriage and their affinal family after marriage. A Pakistani woman's

childhood is spent under their father's control, her youth is bonded to her brother, community and other kin members, and her adulthood is in the service of her husband and affinal family.

Both honour and modesty ask women to remain silent and hidden. In order to maintain this control, some Pakistani families choose to take their daughters out of education, fearing that education would give their daughter a voice, a vocal woman is not only seen as a troublemaker but is also labelled as a woman who is going against the power structure; women who are educated become aware of their rights, as a result they may become reluctant to follow their cultural norms (kinship marriage, following codes of honour). Education is widely used as an indicator of the status of women and is seen in more recent literature as an agent to empower women by widening their knowledge and skills.

Education not only helps in bringing awareness, in getting opportunities, in knowing the world but also helps in empowerment (Ashraf et al. 2020). Therefore, it was interesting for me to note that in Pakistan, education has no legal barrios, nor is it compulsory or free, not even at the primary level (Dean, 2005). One consequence of this is that many girls never enter the education system due to the struggle of gender inequality, which makes it extremely difficult for women to obtain an education. This lowers Pakistani women's status as Education is considered a key to success. In other words, an educated woman is seen as someone who cannot be tamed by patriarchy, some families fear this as they believe that an educated daughter may be difficult to marry. This is mainly for two reasons: education has made her less traditional, or an affinal family would prefer a daughter-in-law who has no profession, leaving her with no option but to stay at home and service her affinal family.

Some women are also under pressure to perform the related definition of modesty, meaning moderate or qualified, they are shaped to be careful not to offend anyone with their behaviour or their dress code. Women are reminded to be cautious of how their behaviour could be misinterpreted. For example, being so happy, loud, and free can give the impression that the woman is not modest enough and is likely to be shameful. Therefore, women are expected to be dull, mindless bodies with no voice and covered

with loose garments. It is important to note that none of the women in my study were made to wear a hijab[6], niqab[7] or burka[8]. Instead, they were made to wear their traditional Pakistani clothes (salwar kameez), families were not concerned about the Islamic aspect of covering. Rather, they were more focused on how to stop their daughters from dressing in Western clothing.

This shows that modesty for the Pakistani families was not something they followed due to religious beliefs. Instead, it was something they forced on their daughters to feed their own Pakistani cultural needs and to stop any form of influence from the Western culture.

As a British Pakistani woman, I would like to share some of my own experiences regarding modest dressing. My family have never asked me to act or dress in any way. However, it is interesting to note that I yet feel the need to adjust my actions and dress code to fit my surroundings. It is fair to say that I knew what was expected from me. For example, I would dress in salwar kameez when visiting some family members and when in college/ university, I dress in my Western clothes. Then there are times when I have a 'free choice'. I use the words 'free choice' because although I have never been told how to dress, I knew how I needed to act and what I needed to wear to fit in. So, I am made to adjust myself to feel like I belong, or I am a part of. With 'free choice', I have a choice to wear what I want, there are no restrictions or obligations to feel the need to belong or be a part of. I can either wear Western or Eastern clothes and the entire decision is based on me rather than being influenced by my surroundings. From the women in this study who are forced to be modest and honourable to women in a similar position as me who can detach themselves from cultural norms, I found that there is one common ground that Pakistani women, no matter what their background and upbringing, are either physically or psychologically taught to behave and act in a certain way, some women are abused to follow the rules

[6] The hijab is a headscarf, this is an obligation for all Muslim women.

[7] The niqab is a veil for the face that leaves the area around the eyes clear

[8] The burka is the most concealing of all Islamic veils. It is a one-piece veil that covers the face and body, often leaving just a mesh screen to see through.

whilst others learn the behaviour by watching other Pakistani women, by shadowing women in their own family.

Modesty, when forced, is synonymous with control, chastity, repression, submission, imprisonment, and obedience to men. We hear a lot about the South Asian cultures and how they oppress women. But we never hear about the oppression and where it has stemmed from. Why are Pakistani women's behaviour both in Pakistan and in the UK shaped in similar ways: to be inferior to men, obey the code of honour, be modest, marry within the kin group; avoid any act which can bring shame on the family. I found that a major purpose of shaping Pakistani women's identities was to avoid the influence of Western culture. The Western world has had a negative impact on Pakistani culture, from Edward Said's Orientalism to Homi Bhabha's mimicry, hybridity and the third space; this study shows that the West disturbed a nation which already had its own identity, language and customs. During the British Raj in the Indian Sub-continent, the British made the colonialised nation feel inferior, uncivilised, and in need of help. Similarly, Pakistanis who had migrated to the UK oscillate between Westernisation and the upholding of their own cultural heritage. Their lifestyles largely borrow from their previous British rules, who portrayed themselves as the civilized, superior other, Said refers to this as 'Orientalism'. The Orient exists for the West and is constructed by and in relation to the West. It is a mirror image of what is inferior and alien (Other) to the West. The West made the Orient people believe that they were different to their British rulers. Therefore, they needed to change to be great because their identity and culture alone were not good enough. It is this disruption the Pakistani societies are yet overcoming, their attempt to erase anything Western and replace it with their original ethnicity, this attempt to regain their original traditions and norms left families with no choice but to use women as puppets to regain control over their nation, identity, culture. Their main aim has been to protect their families from any influence from their Western surroundings and any traditions which had been imposed on the South Asian people during the British Raj. The world has been divided into two parts: the East and the West or the Occident and the Orient or the Civilised and the Uncivilised. Çağrı Tuğrul Mart and others (2010) in 'Criticism on Edward

Said's Orientalism' argue that this division is totally an artificial boundary, and it was laid based on the concept of them and us or theirs and ours.

However, my findings show otherwise, the division, although manmade, has left a lasting effect on Pakistanis who remained in Pakistan and Pakistanis who settled in the UK. An example of this is shown when the West sets out to 'fix' the Eastern culture is described as exotic, backward, uncivilized, and at times dangerous, and therefore in need of Western intervention or rescue. The British encouraged others to mimic Western life; this included education, language, and clothing. According to Bhabha the problem for colonial discourse is that it wants to create submissive subjects to 'mimic' the colonizer. Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which appropriates the Other as it visualises power. However, mimicry also means that the Eastern begin normalising the colonial state or subject, then begin to alienate their own language, traditions, and cultural norms. Although during the British Raj mimicry was common and accepted, when British-born Pakistanis began to normalise their Western teaching and surroundings, the Pakistani society became obsessed with retaining traits of their Pakistani culture. The Pakistani identity, which was 'taken for granted' in the home country during the British Raj, is renegotiated, reconstructed, and reinterpreted in a somewhat more aggressive manner.

In the narratives of my participants, it was observed that for first and second-generation Pakistanis living in the UK, events and discourse pertaining to Pakistan and Pakistani culture are very important. Their situations can be explained in terms of high ethnic identity versus low integration, as they retain their ethnic identity and adhere to the norms and values of their native country. Although most now are British citizens - a key factor in the social construction of inter-ethnic solidarity and social integration, they still feel more Pakistani than British. This is primarily because the first and second generations of Pakistanis have aggressively forced the Pakistani culture on the younger generations. In particular, women are seen as the prime source of keeping the Pakistani identity and traditions alive, making them vulnerable to abuse if they are acting too Westernized, something which their ancestors were engorged to do. Pakistani families become

desperate to reclaim their identities in their Western surroundings, one of the ways to do this was to protect the women from mimicking the Western way of life.

As found in my thesis today, mimicking is shameful; women are restricted, they are told how to act and how to dress, and they are restricted from education due to the fear that education can make women powerful. Other families deny education as they believe that an education in the West would expose their daughters to Western culture; this would include having male classmates, having sexual relations, and wearing Western clothes. Education was seen as a threat to tradition. Pakistanis felt that sending their daughters to college would not only expose them to the Western culture but would also make women more aware of their rights, meaning their silence would be broken. Fearing this, some families chose to marry their daughters in the hopes of retaining their culture and minimising the influence of the Western surroundings.

Although this study shows that some families are reluctant to educate their daughters, it also shows families who allow their daughters to go to college and university. The other side to the reluctance is encouragement. Some families encouraged their daughters to study because education was taken away from the older generation. The first generation in the UK was too busy settling; the men were working to feed their families, and the women were at home keeping the Pakistani identity alive, leaving no room for education. Some did not speak English, and others were restricted from leaving the house. These parents wanted a better life for their children, but after experiencing the hardship of settlement, these parents decided that their children should receive the education they were refused or were unable to achieve. For some mothers, migrating to the UK meant staying with their affinal family where they took on the role of a 'good daughter-in-law' serving the family and childbearing being her main role. Some of these women wanted a better future for their daughters; this meant educating the young girls in the hopes that they would get a good job. These mothers thought an educated daughter would somewhat be excused by her affinal family when it comes to being a good traditional daughter-in-law; she would be excused from staying at home and wasting her life away by serving her affinal family. However, as shown in this study, this did not work out, daughters

who were educated were taunted by their affinal family. They were constantly reminded that their education was a waste and that they were not good enough to be a good wife and/or daughter-in-law.

Some of the common taunts were, ' What is the point of being educated if you cannot cook?' The affinal family blamed education when the new daughter-in-law was unable to complete home chores or when the daughter-in-law decided to raise her voice.

One of the central findings made in my study relates to the critical role of gender in the formation of identity in the migration context. It is the control of women's bodies and their expectation to perform certain gender roles that are at the heart of the maintenance of Pakistani identity for migrant communities. Critical to any understanding of diaspora formation is the way in which identities, often taken for granted and assumed static, become challenged and thrown into flux. Women are shaped to belong to their Pakistani kin group; they are made to protect their family honour, made to dress to protect themselves from shame, and refused education due to the fear of what women may be capable of once they are given a voice. Alternatively, women who were born in the UK went to a Western school; they were exposed to Western culture, but they never truly allowed the opportunity to fit in with their Western surroundings. Their Western surroundings often reminded them that they were different, and their Pakistani families never truly allowed the women to experience the Western culture. As shown in the findings of my PhD, some families were reluctant to send their daughters to college, fearing that their daughters may form sexual relationships; to control this, the families forced their daughters into marriage. Others refused to allow their daughters to wear Western clothes as modesty was honourable, and any Western clothing would bring shame on the family.

Pakistani women are oppressed by two cultures, the West and the East. They are either too Western to be accepted by their Pakistani community or too Eastern to be accepted by their Western surroundings, creating a third space, a place where hybrid identifications are possible, a place where dialogues between cultures evolve. As mentioned previously, Bhabha has developed this concept of hybridity from literary and cultural theory to

describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity (Bhabha, 1994; Bhabha, 1996).

Like Orientalism, hybridity is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonised within a singular universal framework but then fails to produce something familiar but new. Although Pakistani migrants are an element of the third space, Pakistani women are further oppressed and marginalised, leaving them no room to move within the third space. Their attempt to transverse both cultures and to translate, negotiate and mediate affinity and difference within a dynamic of exchange and inclusion makes them further marginalised by the West and their Eastern Pakistani families. In this study, the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges; rather, hybridity is the 'Third Space', which enables other positions to emerge. The main position which emerged here is that of women who were silenced and made to enter the Third Space and women who were further silenced by reshaping their identity. Women were restricted from freedom and worked on protecting their family's honour by being refused education and instructed on how to act and what to wear.

The Pakistani society confronts two important issues. The first is the maintenance and development of one's ethnic distinctiveness in society, and it must be determined whether one's own cultural identity and customs are of value and should be retained. The other involves the desirability of inter-ethnic contact, determining whether relations with the mainstream society are of value and practical and should be sought. My study shows that whilst a Pakistani family works on maintaining their Pakistani culture during their settlement in the UK, women are used as an anchor to strengthen the Pakistani family's identity in their Western surroundings. This is done in one of two ways: first, they are expected to be honourable and modest and second, to marry someone within the same kin group, as this not only upholds the family's honour but also strengthens their ethnic attachments. Like women who are born in Pakistan, they are expected to remain hidden from the outside world until they are married and are trained to become good wives by completing daily chores at home, learning how to obey their male relatives, and always

serving the family. The honour of the family and the tribe become the women's sole expectation and reasonability. Anything she does and wears is monitored, and if she behaves in a way that threatens the family's honour, she becomes vulnerable to abuse. This weakens women's place in the household, giving them a secondary position.

Pakistani society is a Patriarchal society with patrilocal family domination (a pattern of marriage in which the wife settles in the husband's home or community), furthering the women's inferior position in the family structure. The shifting from a natal to a marital home does not allow women to settle and gain empowerment within their material home as controllers of resources or decision-makers. This is because women within the marital home become the responsibility of the male members and the head of the family rather than the bearer of responsibility of the family. As a result, a newly web woman is not assigned much power and control over resources and people, nor are they quickly trusted for family decision-making. Thus, women again find themselves deprived of the control and power necessary to be assigned to the headship of the family as a group (Tabassum, 2016). As a result, women have low decision-making authority for their own life decisions and overall low participation in the decision-making at family, community and state levels. Due to their controlled mobility, lack of education and decision-making authority, most Pakistani women are not able to develop their social capital and human potential to a maximum degree. This may explain why some women, later as mothers-in-law create a matriarchy structure at home. This structure gives the women a form of power and control, which they have longed for as young women and daughters-in-law. However, this control can become oppressive towards other women in the household, leading to abuse (see Chapters Four and Five).

Alternatively, today, women can go beyond communities' expectations of them, but for some, patriarchy creates obstacles to moving forward in society. This is mainly because patriarchy has allowed us to give a secondary status to women and the root cause of women's subordination. Sultana (2012) states that a patriarchal society gives absolute priority to men whilst limiting women's human rights.

8.4 Leaving the abuse behind

For women who can, there are many ways which can help them leave an abusive relationship; women can flee their homes, ask family or friends for help, and ask help from the GP, police and/or other authorities, including DA services. However, institutional racism can influence the way in which a woman of colour asks for help. For example, institutional racism within the criminal justice system and the police force is well documented (Bowling & Phillips, 2002). It is often documented that people of colour are more likely to be arrested by the police as compared to white people. "In comparison to the white group – [arrest rates are] twice as high for Black and Mixed ethnic women and were three times higher for men" (Lammy Review, 2017, p. 5).

Police brutality, before and during the recent movement of Black Lives Matter, has further emphasised the already existing systemic inequalities people of colour face in the West. This can stop many women from reporting their partner to the police, fearing that the police brutality they have often been told about will be the cause of harming their partner. Other women may fear the police, believing that they are racist. Research conducted by Safelives (2015) has also shown that people of colour are often apprehensive about disclosing the abuse due to "specific issues related to racism, including stereotypes about refugees and migrants" (2015). This is a common tactic used on migrant women, who are so familiar with the corruption of Pakistani police that they believe that the UK police will be similar, especially with a. weak immigration status. Some women are told that if they go to the police, they will be sent back to Pakistan. This then leaves women silenced when reporting their abuse. Maria (B6y) adds that:

> *Authorities need to understand that many Pakistani women, including me, would not report abuse because we do not want to get our family in trouble we only want to get away from the trouble* (Maria- B6y).

Whilst people of colour are subjected to over-policing according to certain crime types. The weak relationship between the police and people of colour has contributed towards the underreporting and policing of DA.

The underreporting of crime means that some WOC either stay silent or self-report to DA services (Imkaan, 2020). Belur (2008) adds that the under-policing of DA is also due to cultural sensitivity. Mistrust of the police has been intensified by practices such as failing to understand specific crime types HBA or providing a translator who does not share the same ethnic background as the victim, therefore failing to capture the true experiences of the victim.

The effects of institutional racism have also taken its toll on services such as DA agencies, health care professionals and social services. For example, Izzidein (2008) reports that 'stereotyping and some racist attitudes to be operating at three levels: among (other) service users, among the workers, and at the state level (for example through immigration policies that prevent women from accessing services or public funds)' (Izzidein, 2020). My study documents some similar experiences, but mainly towards the police who made assumptions regarding Zainab, she adds:

> *I hate the police they were so horrible and started making things up like, so you ran away with a boy? You are getting forced into marriage…* (Zainab-B4y).

Having a stereotypical assumption towards a potential victim not only creates a negative barrier but also makes the victim feel judged, embarrassed, and somewhat hostile towards the police. WOC and their interaction with the police is something which needs to be reviewed and rebuilt. If women cannot trust the police, their interactions include stereotyping when women will never feel safe, valued, and satisfied with the service provided by the police. this constant distrust between WOC and the police may mean that many women try getting help from informal sources of support and may only turn to the police when their lives are in danger (Imkaan, 2020). Nevertheless, many women, especially those from the honour culture, will remain hidden and silent. The notion of protecting the family's honour and community restricts some women from disclosing abuse. As mentioned previously, honour is misplaced in women; it is this misplacement which puts pressure on women to endure the abuse.

Pakistani women's experience of spousal abuse may show some similarities to the experiences of their white counterparts. However, this study has identified additional forms of abuse Pakistani women are prone to. Pakistani women's journey out of abuse and the reasons for staying and/or leaving differs from their white counterparts. This can be explained through the concept of intersectionality, which identified that Pakistani women's lives, upbringing, expectations, and culture, including abuse, are different to their white counterparts as Pakistani women are faced with further barriers due to their race. (Crenshaw, 1991). Different experiences of abuse mean different forms of help are needed; a more tailored service provision needs to be available. This study has identified (Chapter 4) services for failed Pakistani women; now, this does not necessarily mean that these services do not work for other women; it just means that the services were not equipped to deal with WOC. Iqra (P10y) and Zainab-(B4y) share their experiences:

> *You hear people say why doesn't she just leave, but just leaving, for us Pakistan people mean relying on services because that's all you have. But services are shit there they say we accept all, but they don't even understand our culture, not understanding our culture means they do not get our situation…. services need to understand culture, and they need to understand honour and family ties. To be able to understand us you can't help us if you do not understand us, our history, or our family ties* (Zainab-B4y).
>
> *First, no matter what the agency, child services, police or whatever, if they know a woman is Asian, is Indian is, Pakistani is Bengali, the first thing they should do is give that woman a person who speaks their language whether or not they know English or not, because that person will understand the culture, they understand the background and sometimes when you express something in English it is not the same when you say it in your own language the impact is different. The communication is different* (IqraP10y).

To provide the best possible help for DA victims, it is important to take intersectionality into account. An intersectional lens reminds us that oppression looks different to each person; therefore, their experiences are unique. This study shows that the UK still has a long way to go when understanding, tackling and supporting WOC.

Services responding to DA and its victims need to first challenge institutional racism; this will provide a space for WOC to sprack and be listened to, training on how to work with WOC, and start representing WOC. DA cannot be tackled until we address inequality because institutional racism and structural inequality will continue to be perpetuated if we do not create a space for WOC to be heard; policymakers will continue hiding silenced women and emphasise the more dominant race/group. In doing so, we continue to marginalise, alienate, and silence WOC.

The thing which worries me the most about the whole journey out of DA is that for Pakistani women, after leaving an abusive relationship and getting the help they need (if they choose to get help). It is at this stage that Pakistani women will face more obstacles. I would perhaps refer to this state as the suffrage stage. This is because for Pakistani women to leave, an abusive relationship may mean that they have been disowned by their natal family and community, as Zainab explains:

> *I must live with the fact that I may never see my parents again.* (Zainab, B4y)

Knowing that you may never see your family again is devastating for one. But when you are raised in a patriarchal society, you have always carried your father's name; people recognise you because of your father. As soon as you leave that family, you're also leaving behind your identity. How does one move on with an incomplete identity? Zainab provides a detailed account of how hard her life would be without having a family and a community:

> *I know I will never find a life partner no one will want to marry me because I do not have a family. I know no family (Pakistani family) will take me on I know no family is going to accept me because I am just a runaway to them… It is hard being from this culture and not having a family, you need a family, it is your identity. I know English people think honour and shame is bullshit, but for us, for me, it is my identity. Who is going to accept me. When you meet other Pakistani people, they ask where you are from. When they ask you that they mean where are you from in Pakistan, what am I meant to say? Am from XYZ, but I left home, so now I am from nowhere I have no father to give me a name.*

> *This what it is: you leave home, you lose honour, family, identity and family name and status. You hear people say why doesn't she just leave, but just leaving for us, Pakistan people mean relying on services because that's all you have. But services are shit there they say we accept all, but they don't even understand our culture, not understanding our culture means they do not get our situation (*Zainab, B4y).

For those Pakistani women who have had the courage to leave but have not been fortunate enough to have their family's support, these are the women who need our help. It is these women who are further isolated, suffering because they had to leave everything they had known. This is not to say that all Pakistani families disown their daughters. This is not the case this study has also documented (chapter four) women whose families have supported them during and after their abusive relationships. However, what I found interesting was that British-born women suffer more after leaving their abusive relationships. The migrant women are not expected to go back to Pakistan and have been less likely to be abandoned by their natal families in Pakistan. Evidence of this is shown in Nazneen's (P4y) case, who emphasises that her family was supporting her during the whole process, and eventually, she will be going back to Pakistan to visit her parents:

> *My family is supportive mashallah, so many people think that in this situation we have lost all our respect this and that (*Nazmeen-P4y).

All migrant women in this study stayed in the UK after they had left their abusive partners. Some stayed in the UK as they were unable to face the stigma of a divorced wife if they went back to Pakistan. Others remained in the UK simply because they knew they had a better feature if they stayed. I found that the migrant women had an easier 'suffrage' process as compared to the British born women. This is because after leaving the relationship, migrant women received a lot of help from DA services who specialised in working with WOC. Women spoke about having confidence again, being able to learn new things which were essential for them to move forward and, in general, making new friends:

> *'I like it at Humraaz (DA service), I have made friends, staff stay in contact with me* (Bushra-P2y).

Migrant women have the chance to make new friends, learn new things, find new homes and receive help from job centres. However, this is harder for British-born women who already have a life in the UK. Therefore, they have nothing new to learn or nothing new to adapt to. Instead, they must be torn away from the only thing they know- their family, friends and community. For many British Pakistani women, reporting abuse meant losing contact with their natal family. This did not apply to migrant women, who, in fact, used their natal family as a major support system. However, for some, natal family support can encourage women to leave their abusive relationships. It is also important to recall that, in many cases, it is the natal family that introduces gender roles and inequality to their children. Where girls are born into an inferior position with gender roles, making them responsible for household chores, housekeeping, and upholding the family's honour. The natal family, in some respects, is reasonable for raising women who accept abuse and feel like they must stay to uphold their natal family's honour. This not only creates weak women but also encourages women to remain silent and accept the abuse. Especially when some Pakistani parents support abuse by advising their daughters to remain in an abusive relationship. I have heard some parents tell their daughters to find ways to adjust and accommodate the marriage and give the abusive partner some time to change. Why should an abusive person be given time to stop abusing your daughter? Other parents may tell their daughters that once they have children, the abuse will stop. Why should your daughter have children with an abusive person, no child should be around an abuser. Marriage should not be seen as a social obligation, but Pakistani parents worry more about their honour than their own daughters. A divorced daughter is better than an abused or dead daughter. This study is the first step towards giving a voice to Pakistani women who not only share their lived experiences of abuse but also show us how the Pakistani culture and intersectionality shape these women's experience of abuse.

In this section, I explained that migrant women had an easier ‘suffrage’ process as compared to British-born women. This is based on the resettlement of women after leaving their abusive relationships; for many women, the resettling period is somewhat guided by DA services. However, this study fails to capture women’s experience in the labour market. For example, this study shows that a British-born woman may find it more

difficult to rebuild relations with her natal family and the Pakistani community in the UK. However, a British-born woman is at an advantage when it comes to accessing the workforce, educational opportunities, communicating with others in English, and understanding Western surroundings. She understands her rights and can read and write in English. Whereas a migrant Pakistani woman, although she might have a good relationship with her natal family, she must build a new life in the UK with very little to no knowledge about her surroundings. With the guidance of by and for services, migrant women can adapt to their Western surroundings. The services work with the women to help them understand basic skills which contribute towards their daily lives. This will include but is not limited to learning the English language, educational opportunities, applying for appropriate funds, creating a CV, and entering the workforce.

Migrant women are disproportionately employed in gendered roles involving care, domestic work, and cleaning, which are likely to be unregulated, deskilling, isolating, and lacking decent work conditions (McDowell et al., 2009; Kofman, 2012). Due to intersectional disadvantages and discrimination on account of gender, immigration status, and migration history, migrant women may find it hard to access the labour market (Rydzik et al., 2017). Since 2012, a wider range of migrants have also been subjected to the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' Condition (NRPF), which prevents access to mainstream welfare benefits. An inability to access welfare support can pressure migrant workers to remain in exploitative situations, which some abusive employers are aware of and use to exercise power. NRPF traps many with caring responsibilities—especially single mothers—in unemployment, underemployment and/ or badly paid work, leaving many concentrated in low-paid sectors like cleaning and care and precarious arrangements such as zero-hours contracts. Janta et al. (2011) add that migrant women are often associated with workplaces that have exploitative practices, poor working conditions, long and irregular hours, flexible contracts, including zero-hour contracts and high labour turnover.

Although we are aware that many migrant women are disproportionately over-represented in low-skilled, low-paid, low-status occupations and under-represented in skilled, senior and managerial positions (Guerrier and Adib, 2000b), entering the

workforce is extremely important for migrant women who have survived an abusive relationship where financial abuse is used as a form of coercive control. Financial control, where the abuser has control over the family finances, either takes money from the victim or leaves her without any financial resources to meet her and her children's needs. For victim-survivors, entering the workforce becomes an important part of regaining their independence. Financial independence provides a safety net and freedom to make choices that align with their values and goals. It enables them to pursue their passions and enjoy greater independence in other areas of their lives.

8.5 Conclusion

The patriarchal society and the honour culture have been used to abuse and control Pakistani women. The nature of patriarchy and its relationship to other forms of oppression, such as structural racism, colonialism, and the failure of White feminism who, marginalise and silence Pakistani women, have all contributed towards the shaping of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse whilst living in the UK. The oppression of Pakistani women is not only rooted in the patriarchy but also in the discrimination and abuse motivated by racism. The Western society, the colonial past and the white curriculum have encouraged harmful racial stereotypes about Pakistani women and their culture. These stereotypes have not only provided a misrepresentation of Pakistani women but have also left them alone and helpless in Western society, which has often neglected their needs. The Western assumption that South Asian women are oppressed due to their culture is highly problematic because it renders invisible policies that have made leaving abusive relationships more difficult. For example, Western society has often presented forced marriage as a 'their' problem, leaving victims of forced marriage unprotected and alone.

This ongoing oppression has had a multiple impact on Pakistani women's experience of abuse. This study highlights some crucial questions: Does the UK government and the Western society have a clear understanding of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse inflicted by their spouse, natal and affinal families? Why do the white curriculum and the

UK government allow forms of abuse such as HBA and forced marriage to fall outside the knowledge production process of DA? Is the UK government more concerned with controlling the British borders as opposed to protecting vulnerable women? With regard to creating knowledge and understanding of what constitutes an effective response to abuse against Pakistani women, researchers have highlighted the importance of applying intersectionality to the experiences of marginalised women (Crenshaw, 1991; McCall 2005).

Intersectionality has partially enhanced our understanding of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse. However, little has been done to translate this into practice. To dismantle the white curriculum and recognise structural racism, understanding intersectionality is essential, especially when prioritising and centring the experiences of Pakistani women. To address Pakistani women's vulnerabilities, we must recognize the unique barriers that these women face, as they are subject to multiple layers of oppression and abuse by their families and by the state.

The following chapter concludes this study. It provides an overview of the limitations and a direction for further research. The recommendations for further research are based on enhancing Western societies' knowledge about Pakistani women, their culture, the effects of immigration statuses, and the forms of abuse these women are vulnerable to.

Part 3: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

The mainstream DA literature is concerned with gender inequality, demonstrating ways in which men use control in intimate relationships. This study shows that Pakistani women's experiences of DA is stemmed from the kinship structure and the notion of honour and shame, which is underrepresented in the wider literature on DA. Investigating DA through the lens of Pakistani women, I have been able to capture forms of abuse between both intermate partners and abuse conflicted by family members. This has included but has not been limited to abuse inflicted by the mother-in-law which includes indirect acts of abuse such as being overworked, constant 'ear-filling', control of marital relations, and transnational marriage abandonment. The process of abandoning a woman follows a pattern of DA and coercive control and may involve early and forced marriage, where young girls are taken out of education and made to enter wedlock for family honour and kinship connection or to prevent a young woman from getting influenced by Western culture. Such perpetrators and forms of abuse are not recognised in Western society, therefore falling outside the mainstream understanding of DA.

This study contributes towards a range of fields. It first rectifies the White feminist and the government's teaching that DA is an incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, and violent behaviour perpetrated by an intimate partner. This study has proven that Pakistani women are not just vulnerable to abuse inflicted by their intimate partner but can also experience multiple forms of abuse by multiple perpetrators. This includes affinal and natal kin members and the wider community. The field of postcolonialism can also benefit from this study, as it has not only given voice to those once muted but also brought to light power struggles between the West and the East.

After evaluating women's weak immigration status and the effects of being abandoned in transnational spaces, this study provides a foundation for further investigation of abuse in international spaces. The findings of the study are significant and can be used to develop appropriate strategies to enhance understanding of the
Pakistani community and cultural norms. The study significantly contributes to the body of knowledge concerned with DA by providing an in-depth understanding of kinship and honour and how they contribute to Pakistani women's experience of DA.

9.1 Implications for DA service providers

This study has demonstrated the dangers associated with White feminism's assumption that all women share similar experiences of DA and, therefore, require the same responses to tackle DA. While DA impacts the lives of women, Western societies do not tend to treat all victims of DA equally. Social biases of WOC have an influence on how society perceives victims and survivors of DA; stereotypes often create barriers for victims seeking help. Women in this study reported feeling *judged by the police* (Zainab-B4y) due to the *lack of understanding of culture and family honour* (Zainab-B4y), with *the police being more interested in getting him (the abuser) punished* (Iqra-P10y). I want to emphasise Iqra's statement that *no matter what the agency, if they (services) know a woman is Asian, Indian, Pakistani, or Bengali* (Iqra-P10y) they should be given someone from the service who speaks the same language and understands the culture. Services should assign victims to staff who are able to provide the current support and advice to victims.

WOC often feel misrepresented and misunderstood, their culture and language are not prioritised by the government, authorities, and mainstream women's services. An example of this is seen in the term 'honour', where many people in the West often avoid the issue of honour, the honour code and HBA, mainly because this is deemed as the 'others' problem. On the other hand, those who argue that there is no honour in honour killing is killing.

I argue two main points: one, that 'honour killing' and 'honour' crime exists as a specific form of violence against women, having characteristics that warrant its classification as a unique category of violence. Second, I show that while 'honour' is recognized as necessary factor in many non-Western contexts, there is a trend among advocacy organizations West to avoid, ignore, or rebuke the term - 'so-called honour' - as a misleading label that is racist, xenophobic, and/or harmful to certain minority ethnic groups. The term is to an extent rejected by transnational and postcolonial feminists, and Hannana Siddiqui of Southall Black Sisters argues using the term 'honour' is a misnomer: "the crimes themselves are dishonourable: they are merely justified by the perpetrator, and the wider community, in the name of honour" (RWA, 2003: 6). In this sense 'honour' crimes are essentially a justification for perpetrators. Although I agree that the act of abuse or killing is not honourable, I also believe that it is important to recognise that some ethnic groups and communities do have specific religious and cultural traditions which they may themselves label as 'honour'. For many Pakistani women, their own expectation to uphold honour also makes them vulnerable to abuse. I have taken a postcolonial approach and trying to think of the problem from an insider perspective, where being honourable in the way we (especially Pakistani women) dress and act has been important for the families, who would do anything to avoid dishonour and shame, I recognise the impact of internalised cultural codes. Therefore, rather than continuing the debate whether we use the term or not, I believe it is more important to understand the culture of honour, how and why it is so important for certain groups, and how it can lead to abuse. This, in fact, will help services to identify women who are prone to becoming victims of crimes that are at once like and distinct from those carrying the label of domestic abuse. Trying to understand honour can protect potential victims.

To study Pakistani women and their journey out of DA, this study considers multiculturalism, gender equality, racism and other forms of intersectionality which shape women's experiences as a victim and survivors of DA. This conclusion highlights some crucial questions. Do people in the UK have a basic understanding of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse? Is the UK government more concerned with creating a well-structured 'white curriculum' rather than protecting young women? Is the UK government focused too much on controlling the borders of the UK rather than protecting vulnerable

migrant women, along the way failing to recognise British nationals held captive abroad? Using an intersectional approach, this paper has examined the complex power structures created when marginalised women are muted and ignored by the government and mainstream society due to their race and when they are further silenced by their own community due to their gender.

An intersectional approach has identified three faces of oppression first, they are raised and shaped to become a good wife and daughter-in-law, leaving them powerless against their cultural expectations. Second, Pakistani women are vulnerable to exploitation, marginalisation, and powerlessness while living in the UK. Third, Pakistani women who experience DA are often exploited in marriage. This study demonstrates how some women from Pakistan migrate to the UK after marriage, only to be treated as a housemaids. Christine Delphy (1984) describes marriage as a class relation in which women's labour benefits men. Here, the exploitation exists not because women do work for their in-laws, but rather that they are pressured to play the role of a good wife/ daughter-in-law because they are particularly dependent on their husbands and in-laws. They are dependent because staying means upholding the natal family honour and/or dependant due to their weak immigration status. It is the woman who is responsible for being good, honourable and in service to the family, but it is the man who exploits her to raise his status in the community.

Women, therefore, become hopeless and powerless, especially due to the way in which the government handles exploited women. The question to ask here is that if an abused Pakistani woman wanted to leave her abusive relationship, could she survive economically away from the close-knit Pakistani community and marital relationship? What are her job prospects? What are her housing options? The UK government response that is rooted in the right to exit is not a realistic choice for migrant women who are living in fear of abuse and do not see leaving their families and living outside of the community as an option. Migrant Pakistani women find themselves suffering, whether that is due to the right to leave- which is difficult due to the stigma of divorce, or the right to stay, which is not safe due to the continued abuse from the affinal family.

This demonstrates that the UK government's immigration policies equip perpetrators with a powerful tool of oppression. Iqra (P10y) mentions that services should consider how will the UK government support her if, as a migrant woman, she leaves an abusive relationship. She clarifies that the UK government advises women to leave abusive relationships but provides limited/delayed support:

> *Before making a woman suffer, you should think what will her financial help be and what will her mental help be because women are already in such a vulnerable position, and they are telling you that you have to tell, then it is a Destitution Domestic Violence (DDV) matter, if there is no DDV you cannot get financial help, they might as well bring a rope to kill you* (Iqra, P10y).

Furthermore, after identifying two transnational abandonment cases of British-born Pakistani women, the exclusion of British-born women from the literature is worrying; the lack of knowledge provided to the wider society only puts Pakistani women more at risk with very little opportunity to receive the right possible support. Transnational abandonment is an area that needs considerable exploration and research as there is a danger that the abuse and pressure faced by British-born Pakistani women will remain hidden, creating a deception that only Pakistani-born women are vulnerable to abuse in transnational spaces.

The UK government's understanding of Pakistani women's experiences of abuse avoids intersectionality. It fails to recognise unique forms of abuse, such as affinal kin abuse, dowry abuse, transnational abandonment, and factors that maintain women in abusive relationships, such as honour or weak immigration status. The UK government not only overlooks the obstacles that operate against Pakistani women but also continues to implement policies and curricula which neglect the safety of WOC more widely. The government is not solely responsible for advising women to leave their abusive relationships but also has the potential to facilitate specific contexts that can reduce women's vulnerability. This, however, cannot be achieved without acknowledging intersectionality.

The UK government needs to take an intersectional approach, which would enable them to better understand how one's identity can have a great influence on one's journey. Government officials need to take into consideration race, gender, language, culture and how this person or group is positioned in larger societal contexts. This will then create a foundation of awareness to better understand the barriers that WOC face at home and when seeking help from the authorities. Applying an intersectional approach would encourage DA services to tailor their support to WOC, something all the women in this study would find helpful. Many women in this study found appropriate support from Humraaz, a DA service specialising in helping ethnic minority women, more specifically South Asian women. Shagufta (P12y) adds that if a woman of colour *does not know the country or the language, what are you meant to do?* Shagufta-P12y. This is when organisations such as Humraaz have a positive impact on women's journeys out of DA. Both Zara and Najma vocalise their experience:

> *When I came here (Humraaz), I thanked God. I said Alhamdulillah (praise be to God), Allah (God) has kept my respect, it's really good here… it's like a family, the staff cooperate so much… I cannot imagine coming this far without them* (Zara-P5m).
>
> *Humraaz helped me so much I am happy here they have supported me a lot. The manager was good she looks after you, listens and then walks with you, she has so much love and care in her, she does so much for every woman and children* (NajmaP5y).

However, specialist services are the ones which are most at risk. This is mainly because the UK government often sends mixed signals. On the one hand, creating new laws on forced marriage, piloting Claire's Law, and acknowledging coercive control as a form of DA. On the other hand, numerous specialist women's DA services face a funding crisis, with "funding cuts and poor commissioning decisions failing to keep them secur*e"* (McCarthy et al., 2022, p. 1). This undermines any chance of progress for WOC. The neglect of WOC is persistent from the outset, with little to no attention given to their unique experiences.

This study helps us understand that we first need to identify and learn about different cultural values. It is these values which lead to specific forms of abuse. To facilitate any change, we first need to identify and understand how they influence the behaviours of victims and survivors of DA and to what extent their families shape their experiences of abuse. We need to understand the importance of kinship, the requirement of migration, the value of the affinal family and the duty towards the natal family, as well as the impact of honour and the implications of living in a Western society where the Western culture dominates the others. Additionally, the notion of a 'global sisterhood' needs to be reconsidered, Western feminists often debate that non-Western women are oppressed due to their religion and culture. What really needs to be considered is that some women may find the Western culture oppressive and consider their own culture as liberating. Before describing a culture or religion as oppressive, we need to ask ourselves how the 'other' woman views her own life. Telling this Pakistani woman that her culture is oppressive when she may find the Western culture humiliating, being told that she is oppressed, but she could not feel more liberated when she doesn't expose herself to millions of strangers online, she doesn't drink, she doesn't feel the need to justify her existence and prove that she is better than what the society is painting her as. For this Pakistani woman, being home with the family she created who love her is enough for her to feel free. Therefore, forms of Western feminism can be seen as being perhaps too desperate to prove to the world that they are speaking for all women.

9.2 Limitations of this study

This study holds two major limitations. Firstly, my aim is to give a voice to those women who are rarely heard. Although I have done this, I have only covered one ethnic minority group in a specific geographical context. This study has not considered other marginalised groups who may also have unique experiences of DA and are prone to forms of abuse (e.g., female genital mutilation, gender-based abortion, and the obligation of marrying your rapist). Therefore, it is important to remember that every woman's voice is different and unique to her intersectional factors.

Secondly, my study is heavily focused on Pakistani women as victims of abuse, completely disregarding the idea that Pakistani men are also victims of kinship and honour-related abuse. For example, Pakistani men can also be forced into marriage, they can be pressured to act more masculine and taunted if they are unable to protect their family's honour. One explanation for the transnational marriage abandonment of Pakistani women may be that a British national man is forced to marry someone from Pakistan. After the wedding, the man may arrive in the UK, not sponsor his new bride and abandon her in Pakistan. In the eyes of the authorities and many academics, this man is accused of abandonment when, in fact, he is a victim of forced marriage. However, the accusation of transnational marriage abandonment does not provide the space for this man to become a victim. This study has often linked honour to women. But when a man is unable to maintain the family honour, he may also become vulnerable to abuse perpetrated by his family and/or community. There are many reasons why Pakistani men do not come forward and admit that they are abused. One of the main reasons will be honour and shame. In both societies (UK and Pakistan), we have created the idea of masculinity, that men must be men and provide for the family, men are not allowed to show emotions, they wear the 'pants' in a relationship, being 'The man of the house'. This, coupled with the Pakistani culture and its history of migration, makes many men feel as though they need to take control of their family's legacies and not insult their family's journey into the UK; men may shy away from issues such as DA. This means that often, men feel that they are unable to come forward about what they face daily.

When both genders are at an equal risk of abuse, it becomes more important and urgent for there to be an open opportunity for young Pakistani people to seek help through a supportive environment where they can disclose any potential risk of abuse. It is equally important to recognise that young men should also be educated about different forms of abuse they are vulnerable to, such as honour-related abuse and forced marriages. Just as this study is important in terms of giving a voice to Pakistani women, future research should also consider Pakistani male victims of DA men are also subjected to the cultural norms of practised misogyny.

9.3 Direction for future research

1. The conceptual question surrounding the categorisation of honour-based abuse (HBA) needs to be addressed. Is HBA a subspecies of DV? Or does HBA fall within the broad spectrum of DA. But if it does, then why do we need to give it a different category? These are some of the questions which need clarifying. Western scholars are too afraid and reluctant to investigate, analyse and research HBA. They fear researching something that they are unfamiliar with. But they continue to ask: Why can we not place HBA and DA in one category? Allowing HBA to be subsumed under the DA framework means existing resources are pooled and integrated, but then women who need tailored support are neglected and unable to recognise dangers, which means leaving vulnerable women at risk, the very thing one should be attempting to prevent.

2. Abusers use women's insecure immigration status to coerce and threaten them with deportation if they go to the police. Authorities should consider women's safety before their status. There needs to be additional studies which guide the authorities in creating a safe space between the police and immigration enforcement, accompanied by safe reporting mechanisms for migrant women.

3. Research regarding transnational marriage abandonment has often associated itself with migrant women. However, this study has documented British-born women who were also victims of abandonment, which provides a new insight into transnational abandonment and abuse of British nationals in international spaces.

4. Due to the patriarchal society, Pakistani men are often overlooked as victims of DA. Men from marginalised groups are very rarely studied. Therefore, it is important that Pakistani male victims are not seen as a single group but rather as individuals with their own unique experiences.

There are many grey areas which can be addressed in further research. However, I believe the six mentioned above should be the main priorities for clarification, further investigation, and awareness. During my PhD, I noted four potential research topics which would benefit the field of DA and Pakistani women:

1. The blurred line between HBA and DA.
2. White and Postcolonial feminism- the question of voice.
3. Still settling Pakistani migrants and their issues 4. Male victims of transnational marriage abandonment.
5. The effects of patriarchy on Pakistani men.
6. Dowry-related acid attacks and suicide victims.

This study has made it clear that scholars across the globe and disciplines are rarely communicating or theorising with each other (Moosavi, 2022; Shannon et al, 2020). To address the West's failure to identify forms of abuse Pakistani women are vulnerable to, decolonising the curriculum with its main forces being intersectionality that addresses systems of patriarchy, capitalism, sexism, and racism is necessary (Hind, 2023). Decolonising is not simple and needs to integrate with other initiatives and movements struggling to address and dismantle these intersecting systems of inequality and oppression of 'other' women.

9.4 Final thoughts

I wanted to take this opportunity to add my own final thoughts to all those families who once migrated to the West, to those families who want to embed their cultural traditions upon the younger generation and to those families who use their children as a tool to uphold honour. Do not raise your children, especially your daughters, with the thought of giving them away. Otherwise, you will be raising a daughter who is shaped to service another family (affinal family). She is not your unwanted burden of honour that you must raise and then let go when the fear of honour gets the better of you – she is your child, a human, with her own identity and her own wishes – listen to her.

You did not birth her to feed the generations of traditions created by your ancestors—let her use you and your experiences to overcome harmful barrios. Allow her to grow into her own person and not someone shaped to uphold your honour. Letting her grow means she will be able to embrace both Pakistani and Western cultures.

To the West – we often talk about equality, but men and women are not equal, men and men are not equal, and women and women are not equal. Individuals are not equal. Therefore, how can a collection of individuals (Western women) be equal to another collection of individuals
(Pakistani women). This study has often spoken about equality between Western women and WOC, the West has criticized the patriarchal structure Pakistani women are made to follow. However, inequality is embedded in Western society, where superiority and inferiority in positioning exist in everyday life. Looking at the workplace alone, you're never equal to your boss. Because if you were equal, there would be no one following each other's instructions and keeping things in order. Similarly, White feminists have taken it upon themselves to hold a superior position and speak for all other women, portraying a fake image that all women are equal and, therefore, share the same experiences.

I am not equal to a white woman who has never experienced intersectional disadvantages. Nor am I like a Pakistani woman who has migrated to the UK through marriage. I am also different to a British-born woman who feels oppressed due to the Pakistani culture. Although we share the same gender, we are all different. I enjoy my Pakistani culture, I embrace my Pakistani roots, and at the same time, I enjoy being British. I take advantage of being from two cultures and being able to communicate in English, Punjabi and Urdu. The whole idea that my culture is oppressive has come from Western society; they tell me I am oppressed even though I feel comfortable embracing my Pakistani culture.

Its tiring being a British Pakistani woman – my whole life (31 years), my ethnic group has been labelled as being uncivilised, judged because of its traditions and never fully accepted in the West. It is tiring being told which traditions are ok to follow and which traditions are oppressive. It is time for White feminists to recognise that WOF are different.

But being different does not mean that they are inferior and, therefore, need silencing. It just means that WOC faces different obstacles and requires different means to overcome intersectional disadvantages and forms of oppression. White feminists need to neglect the idea of a ‘sisterhood’ and instead provide space for all women to speak, be accepted and be heard.

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APPENDIX 1: Information for Participants, Call for Participants

University of Cumbria

Pakistani women living in Lancashire, UK, and their journey out of violence.

Research Information Sheet.

Introduction of this research: I, Ruby Iqbal, a PhD student from the University of Cumbria invite any Pakistani women living in Lancashire, UK, who have survived domestic abuse to participate in my research. I feel it is important to readdress any gap in service provision in order to better acknowledge Pakistani women's experiences of abuse. My study aims to document the vulnerability of these women living in Lancashire by evaluating their journey out of abuse.

Why is this research important? The scholarly neglect of Pakistani women's experience of abuse has left a gap in the literature which needs readdressing. To make the voices of Pakistani women heard and to improve services provision, it is necessary to identify limitations and barriers Pakistani women both victims and survivors of abuse face when living in the UK.

What will happen during this research? A one-to-one interview will be conducted between you and me. This interview will be carried out at one of the chosen service providers' branches which will be a safe and controlled environment. This interview will aim to document your journey of abuse and how you were able to escape the relationship.

Your rights as a participant: If you decide to participate in this research, you do not have to answer all of the questions. You can choose to end the interview at any time or withdraw from the study. In which case the information collected from you will be destroyed. A short report of the findings will be offered to you once completed.

Confidentiality: Your identity will remain anonymous throughout the study.

If you wish to participate, please contact me on: ruby.iqbal@uni.cumbria.ac.uk showing your interest in participating. Once you have decided to participate more information regarding the procedures will be forwarded to you along with a short questionnaire and a consent form.

Preston Domestic Violence Services

Helpline: 01772 201601
Email: enquiries@pdvs.org.uk

Harv Domestic Violence Team

Helpline: 01254 879855

Email:info@harvoutreach.org.uk

Humraaz

Helpline: 01254 53807 / 674312

The WISH centre

Email: info@humraaz.org.uk Helpline: 01254 260465/ 55111

Humraaz provides specialist support too Black and Minority Ethnic women who are experiencing Domestic Abuse.

Email: info@bddwa.org.uk

For further information and enquires please contact me on: ruby.iqbal@uni.cumbria.ac.uk

For complaints, please contact the research supervisor Dr Nicoletta Policek: nicoletta.policek@cumbria.ac.uk

For a more formal complaint please contact Professor Diane Cox, Director of Research & Head of the Graduate School at University of Cumbria, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 3JD:

+44 (0)1524 590853 diane.cox@cumbria.ac.uk Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX 2: Participant Cover Sheet

Participant Cover Sheet

Country of Birth: Pakistan ☐ UK ☐ Other _____

What is your age? _____

If not born in the UK, how many years have you lived in the UK? _____

What is your religion? Islam

Educational status: Un-educated ☐ Schooling ☐ College ☐ Graduated ☐

Employment status: Employed ☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed ☐

Language: English ☐ Urdu ☐ Punjabi ☐ Other_____

Marital Status: Single ☐ Married ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced ☐

Separated ☐ Other_____

Number of children_____

For how many years did you experience abuse? _____

How long has it been since you left the abusive relationship? _____

Has leaving the abusive relationship, changed your living situation? Please specify.

APPENDIX 3: Participant Consent Form

Pakistani women living in Lancashire, UK, and their journey of violence.

Participant Consent Form

The purpose of this form is to provide you with the opportunity to decide whether to participate in this study. I am asking you to agree to participating in a personal interview about your experience and journey out of violence as a Pakistani woman living in the UK. Once you have granted your consent, a time and date which is convenient for you will be arranged for you and me to meet.

Have you read and understood the information sheet about this study? YES ☐ NO☐

Do you understand that your participation is voluntary and that you may refuse to answer specific questions and are free to withdraw from this study at any time? YES ☐ NO ☐

Your responses will be anonymized. Do you give permission for the researcher to quote your anonymous responses? YES ☐ NO ☐

Do you feel that you have been able to ask questions and that you had enough information?
YES ☐ NO ☐

Confirmation and consent

I confirm that I have willingly agreed to participate in Ruby Iqbal's research. I have received information about the research and what my participation involves. I understand what the research is about, and I agree to the use of the findings as described above.

I give/ do not give permission for the interview to be recorded. I understand that the recording will only be accessible for the researcher alone and destroyed at a later date. I also understand that I can withdraw from this research at any time.

Participant signature: _____ **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

If you do not wish your name to be registered on the form, but wish to consent please tick this box ☐

Researcher ONLY:

Researcher signature: _____**Name:** Ruby Iqbal **Date:** _____

APPENDIX 4: Participant data

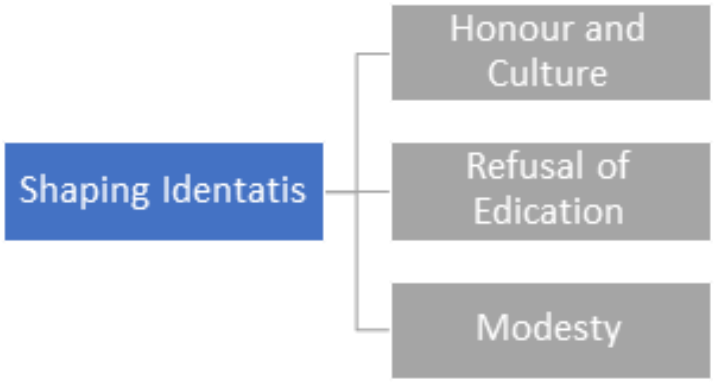
Participants	Country of Birth	Age	Time in the UK	Religion	Educational Status	Employment Status	Language	Marital Status	No of Children	Years of Abuse	Leaving the Abusive Relationship
1	Pakistan	35	17 Years	Islam	Schooling PK	Unemployed	U/P	M/S	2	2 Years	1 Year
2	Pakistan	23	1 Year	Islam	College PK	Unemployed	U	M/S	1	5 Months	1 Month
3	Pakistan	30	1 Year	Islam	Graduated PK	Unemployed	E/U/B	M/S	Pregnant	10 Years	1 Month
4	Pakistan	24	2 Years	Islam	Graduated PK	Unemployed	U	D	1	4 Years	1 Year
5	Pakistan	28	5 Years	Islam	Schooling PK	Unemployed	U	M/S	3	2 Years	9 Months
6	Pakistan	29	6/5 Years	Islam	College PK	Unemployed	U	M/S	2	5 Years	7 Months
7	Pakistan	32	1 ½ Year	Islam	Uneducated	Unemployed	P	M/S	0	6 Months	14 Months
8	UK	23	N/A	Islam	College	Unemployed	E/P	D	0	10 Months	1 Year 11 Months
9	UK	21	N/A	Islam	College	Employed	E/U	M/S	0	4 Years	1 Year
10	UK	25	N/A	Islam	College	Employed	E	M/S	0	7 Years	3 Years
11	UK	25	N/A	Islam	College	Employment	E/U/P	M/S	0	3 Years	8 Years (11 Y since interview)
12	UK	27	N/A	Islam	Graduated	Self-employed	E/U/P	D	0	5 Years	9 Months
13	UK	29	N/A	Islam	Graduated	Employed	E/P	M/S	2	6 Years	5 Years
14	UK	24	N/A	Islam	Graduated	Employed	E/P	M/S	0	6 Years	<1 Year

Key:

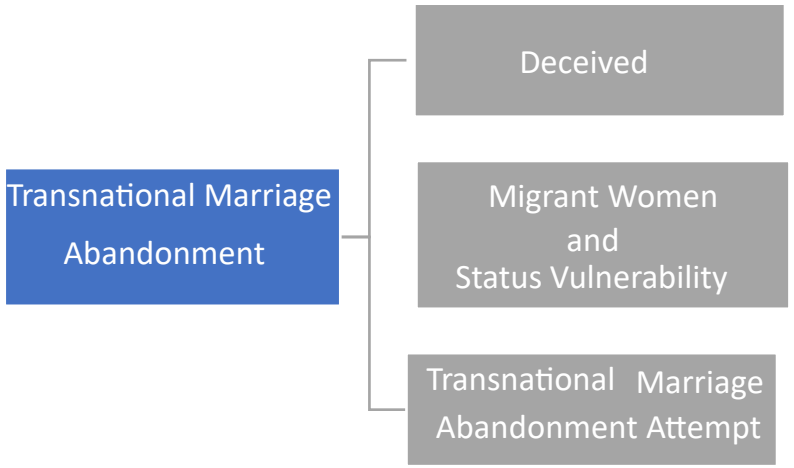
U- Urdu
P- Punjabi
E- English
B- Balochi
M/S- Married but Separated
D- Divorced PK- Pakistan

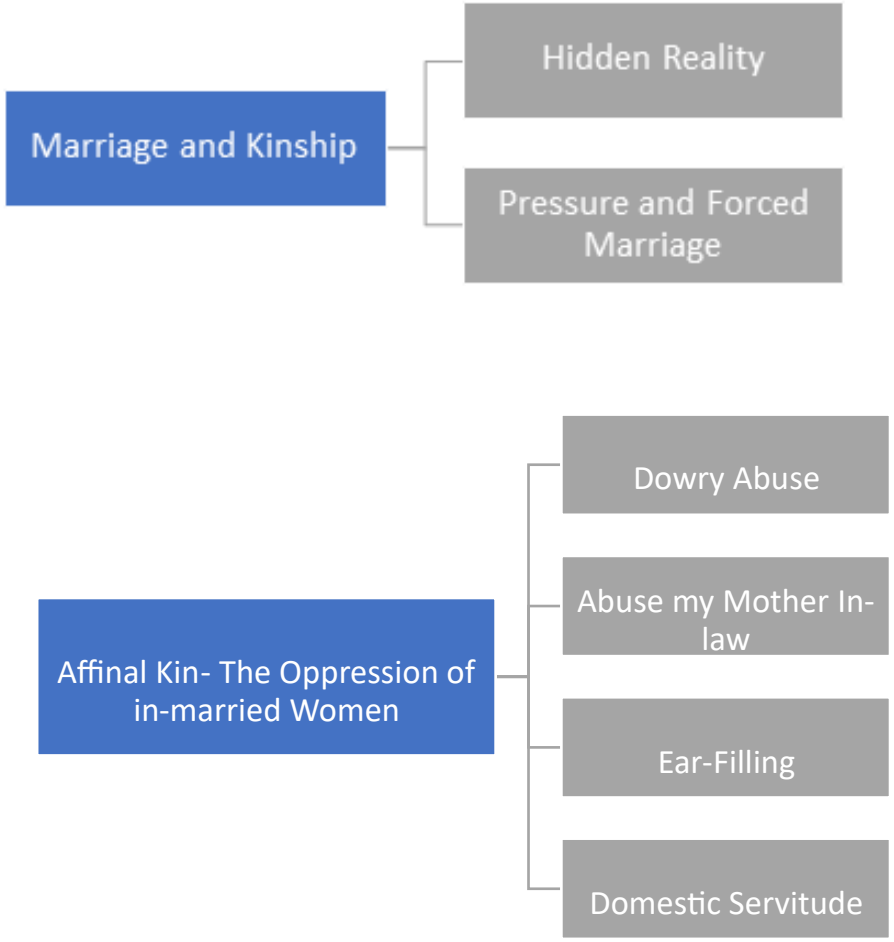
APPENDIX 5: Schematics of themes

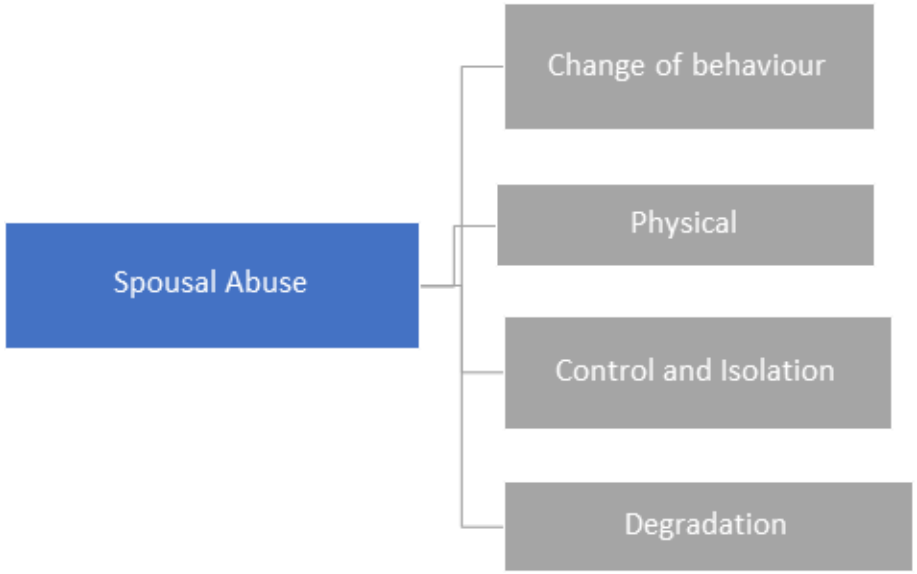
2. Burden of Expectations.



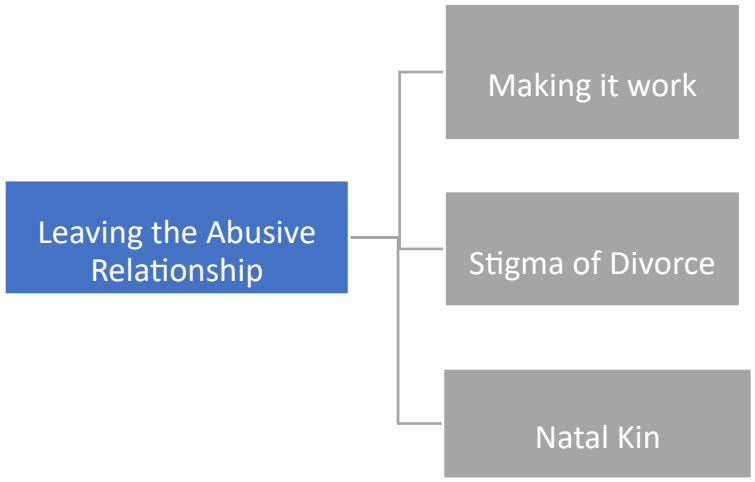
3. Forms of Abuse.

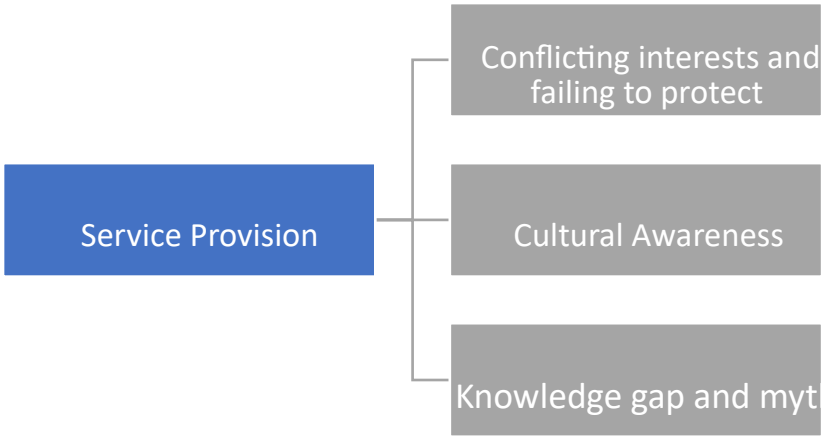



Marriage and Kinship
Hidden Reality
Pressure and Forced Marriage
Affinal Kin- The Oppression of in-married Women
Dowry Abuse
Abuse my Mother In-law
Ear-Filling
Domestic Servitude


Spousal Abuse
Change of behaviour
Physical
Control and Isolation
Degradation

4. Support


Leaving the Abusive Relationship
Making it work
Stigma of Divorce
Natal Kin


Service Provision
Conflicting interests and failing to protect
Cultural Awareness
Knowledge gap and myt