

In Depth Analysis of the Extreme Measures Taken by the Families to “Preserve Honor” and Its Psychological Impact Through the Eyes of the Survivors.

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Abstract

When cultural expectations and family honor intersect with violence, the consequences ripple far beyond physical wounds, reshaping survivors' entire sense of self. This qualitative study unravels how individuals navigate the complex aftermath of family violence justified by perceived honor violations. Through survivor narratives, including one participant's journey from victim to advocate, six crucial themes emerged: (1) Patriarchal and Cultural Oppression - where tradition becomes a tool of control, (2) Psychological and Emotional Struggles - mapping the invisible battlegrounds of trauma, (3) Abuse and Violence in Intimate Relationships - where power dynamics shatter trust, (4) Resilience, Survival, and Seeking Help - charting paths through isolation, (5) Empowerment through Motherhood - where protecting children catalyzes healing, and (6) Advocacy, Activism, and Social Change - witnessing survivors become agents of transformation. The findings reveal how survivors forge powerful support networks despite deep trauma, often finding strength in maternal bonds and community connections

Keywords: Honor Based Violence, Patriarchal violence affecting women, Survivors Perspectives, Family-perpetrated abuse, Trauma and Resilience, advocacy

INTRODUCTION

An honor killing is an age-old type of a murder in which the victim is a person who is murdered by or on the demand of his/her own family or partner because they believe that these murders are inevitable to redress the damaged honor of the family from the eyes of the victim due to the beliefs that society has imposed on them. Honor killings persist as a deeply entrenched manifestation of gender-based violence, eliciting significant societal and psychological repercussions. providing a nuanced understanding of a phenomenon that defies simplistic interpretations. My goal in this study is to provide a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the extreme measure's families take to "protect their honor." While contributing to the ongoing debate, this initiative also aims to advocate for meaningful change, thus highlighting the need for reforms in both legal and social perspectives through a descriptive study via thematic analysis. Major sections in Chapter 1 include the background, problem statement, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, nature of the study, definitions of key terms, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and

significance of the study.

BACKGROUND

In a review of the research related to honor killings, cultural conceptions of honor, the psychological consequences of those conceptualizations using keywords such as "honor killings," "gender-based violence," "cultural honor," and the "psychological impact" of that phenomenon and were aware that it is rooted in patriarchy. Khosravi (2019) further stresses that the normalization of such violence, in the name of honor, often creates a culture of silence, making it difficult for victims to seek help or escape abusive environments.

Despite the widespread recognition of honor killings as a severe violation of human rights, research on the psychological toll on survivors remains scarce. Exploring these personal stories helps to shed light on the deep emotional and psychological consequences of honor killings, underscoring the urgent need for tailored mental health interventions and support systems.

This study seeks to critically examine the cultural and psychological dimensions of honor killings, aiming to provide a more in-depth understanding of the issue and its effects on survivors.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Honor killings are a tragic and widespread form of gender-based violence, often tied to cultural beliefs about family honor. In India, honor killings account for around 5% of rural homicides, with the National Crime Records Bureau (2018) estimating around 300 cases annually. Similarly, in Jordan, 15-20% of total homicides are linked to honor killings, largely due to weak legal protections (UN Women, 2018). These alarming figures underscore the pressing need to address honor killings, as they not only claim innocent lives but also cause deep distress to families and communities.

Despite the prevalence of these killings, there is a significant lack of research into the psychological effects on survivors and how these acts of violence are justified in specific cultural settings. Tully (2009) has critiqued how honor killings are often framed in feminist discourse, urging a more nuanced consideration of the cultural contexts behind these acts. However, there remains little focus on the help-seeking behaviors and precautionary strategies that could support women at risk of becoming victims.

The present study seeks to fill this research gap by examining the psychological impacts of honor killings from the survivors' perspective.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This qualitative study aims to deepen our understanding of the psychological effects of honor killings on survivors and to explore the drastic steps families may take to preserve cultural ideas of honor. By analyzing stories related to honor-based violence, the research seeks to uncover the emotional and psychological tolls on survivors, providing valuable insight into their resilience and the ways they cope. The study also addresses a significant gap in current literature by focusing on the personal experiences of those impacted by honor killings.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of survivors of honor killings regarding the psychological impacts they face?

RQ2: How do cultural perceptions of honor influence the behaviors and responses of families towards

victims of honor killings?

RQ3: In what ways can the experiences of survivors inform preventive measures and support systems for individuals at risk of honor-related violence?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs a combination of feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and trauma theory to analyze honor killing. It asserts that honor killings are frequently legitimized by cultural norms that place a higher value on male honor than on women's rights and autonomy (Chesler, 2010). Postcolonial Theory lens examines the influence of colonial legacies on modern honor practices, focusing on the complex relationship between gender, culture, and power.

DEFINITIONS

Honor Killing: A violent act, often resulting in death, carried out by family members or community members against an individual—most commonly women—who is perceived to have brought shame or dishonor to the family through their actions or choices, particularly those related to sexuality, relationships, or marriage (Chesler, 2010).

Survivor of Honor-Based Violence: An individual who has endured an attempted murder or severe violence justified by cultural beliefs surrounding honor, resulting in profound emotional and psychological consequences, including trauma and social alienation (D'Costa, 2016).

Cultural Constructs of Honor: Societal norms and values that define and enforce expectations around behavior, particularly for women, that are believed to uphold familial reputation and social standing, often leading to violence when perceived violations occur (Merry, 2016).

Psychological Aftermath: The range of emotional and mental health challenges faced by survivors of honor killings, which may include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and struggles with self-identity and social reintegration (Zara et al., 2019).

Gendered Power Dynamics: The systemic imbalances of power between genders that manifest in societal norms, practices, and legal frameworks, often leading to the marginalization of women and justifying acts of violence such as honor killings in patriarchal societies (Tong, 2009).

SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS

This study addresses the serious social issue of honor killings, which are acts of murder, predominantly targeting women, aimed at restoring or preserving a family's honor. The primary focus is on the psychological effects of honor killings on survivors, along with the extreme actions families undertake to uphold cultural honor. Gaining insight into these dynamics is essential for creating effective support systems for survivors and raising awareness about the repercussions of honor-based violence.

The target population for this research includes individuals impacted by honor killings, with a particular emphasis on survivors and their personal experiences. However, it does not include survivors of other types of gender-based violence, such as domestic abuse or intimate partner violence that are not linked to honor killings.

Theoretical frameworks used in this study are rooted in feminist theory, especially those that examine cultural and patriarchal viewpoints to understand the motivations behind honor killings.

LIMITATIONS, CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

As highlighted by the Web Center for Social Research Methods (n.d.), using a single source can pose validity threats, especially when examining complex issues like honor killings and their psychological effects.

Moreover, the study does not incorporate insights from male perpetrators or families involved in honor killings. This limitation points to the necessity for more comprehensive research that includes various stakeholders in the context of honor killings.

Recruiting participants presented significant challenges, as the target focus group consists of vulnerable individuals who may be reluctant to share their experiences due to the trauma and stigma linked to honor killings. Additionally, finding potential participants required careful navigation of sensitive situations, as survivors might be in environments where discussing their experiences could be harmful or dangerous.

In conclusion, while this study seeks to illuminate the psychological effects of honor killings, its limitations regarding data sources, participant diversity, and recruitment challenges underscore the complexities involved in researching this sensitive issue.

SIGNIFICANCE

The unique contribution of this study is its focus on the shared experiences of survivors of honor killings, shedding light on the psychological effects of extreme family actions taken to uphold honor. This research aims to investigate how survivors can cultivate resilience and heal from trauma, while also identifying behaviors or strategies that may support or impede their survival and recovery.

A primary objective is to uncover the coping mechanisms, if any, that these survivors employed to deal with the psychological consequences, as well as which support systems—like community or family outreach—proved to be helpful or detrimental. Gaining insight into these dynamics is essential for raising awareness about the resources necessary to aid future survivors and for pinpointing systemic shortcomings in addressing this critical issue.

By examining both effective and ineffective coping strategies and psychological recovery methods, the study seeks to provide meaningful recommendations to enhance support systems for women facing similar dangers.

SUMMARY

This study aimed to explore the psychological effects and resilience strategies of survivors of honor killings, focusing on the extreme measures families take to protect their perceived honor. A phenomenological approach was employed to analyze the data and identify common themes related to trauma, recovery, and resilience. The main objective of this research was to examine how survivors manage their traumatic experiences and to emphasize potential interventions and support systems that could help prevent further violence. Women in similar situations may find valuable insights in this study that could empower them to seek help, ease the psychological burden of such violence, and challenge the cultural norms that perpetuate honor killings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS:

FEMINIST THEORY AND HONOR KILLING:

In the beginning, the work of feminists was largely theoretical and focused on deconstructing patriarchy

(a larger system of societal narratives that are openly discriminatory or physically aggressive toward women and femininity). Thematically and theoretically as well, patriarchal discourses were systems of thought simply ignored even the existence of women or ways in which women are irrelevant or invisible. Feminists wanted to disrupt and upend these damaging or opposing perspectives so as to expose how society devalued or ignored the roles, works, and rights of women.

Feminist theory is a composite of concepts that seeks to apprehend and remove the variances among men and women, emanating from social, political and economic stratification. The theory promotes gender equality and rights of the women while seeking to eradicate norms that discriminate against women under the different strands of liberal, radical feminism, intersectional feminism, and postmodern feminism.

Sociologist Sylvia Walby defines patriarchy as “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women”.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH:

A phenomenological approach in honor killing delves into lived experience and subjective realities of those most profoundly affected survivors and victims. In terms of honor killing, a phenomenological study explores the trauma, shame, fear and resilience of the survivors regarding cultural expectations surrounding family honor and human rights and seeks to uncover the internal struggles. This serves as a deeper method of immersing ourselves in understanding the psychological and emotional wounds of the families who fall prey to honor killings.

By prioritizing survivors' personal narratives at the forefront, this approach aims to reveal the profound emotional, psychological, and cultural complexities involved in honor-based violence. Those who survived through honor killing experience survivor's guilt where they feel a deep sense of guilt of being survived from death that leads to exacerbate feelings of worthlessness, loss of hope, self-doubt/blame leading to emotional struggle.

RESEARCH IN GENDER BASED VIOLENCE:

Framing gender-based violence against women as a human rights violation implies an important conceptual shift. The rates and forms of violence, including intimate partner violence, vary widely across cultures (Kishor & Johnson, 2004).

Data from over 80 countries suggest that 1 in 3 women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lives. In these contexts, at least 1 in 5 displaced women have experienced sexual violence.³ In South Sudan, decades of war has meant that over 50 to 65 percent women have experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime, while 1 in 3 women have experienced non-partner sexual assault. (Bioeth, 2020)

To date, much of the causal analysis of SGBV argues that because unequal gender relations are inherent in all situations of widespread and systematic SGBV they cannot explain Why it occurs in some situations but not in others (Bergsmo, Skre and Wood 2012; Recent research highlights how gender and power cross-cut with intimate violence across cultures is of utmost importance and how media portrayals associate & sex and crime, which likely increases women's susceptibility to further violence.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HONOR KILLING

Honor killings acquire an urgent new meaning in a historical perspective that stretches clear back to the patriarchal control exercised in ancient societies over women's bodies and behavior as carved out by social structure. Anthropologist Sharif Kanaana (2003) suggests that honor killings are not only about sexual conduct but also concerned with controlling women's fertility, which leads directly to either the family's

lineage or social standing. Because men are thought of as the rightful protectors of family honor, this honor happens to be intimately connected to the purity and obedience of female family members, so that any sexual conduct deviating from this paradigm, even merely suspected, could elicit extreme retributions: honor killings. In these regions, men who committed honor killings often displayed the blood of their victims as evidence of their pride being restored, earning them esteem from their communities (Welchman & Hossain, 2005). Honor killings provided a means through which families could redeem their lost social standing. Thus, such a social and legal mentality further energized the occurrences of honor killings in contemporary societies. In this analysis, one can see how the historical context of cultural and legal systems over centuries has embedded the concept of honor as a justification for violence, particularly in patriarchal societies. The perusal of historical rationales and cultural entrenchment of honor killings will allow your work to investigate how modern legal reforms, gender rights movements, and international pressure try to stage a comeback on this practice. My research study thus becomes relevant because of the social and legal structures that carry the weight and substance of honor within various societies over the course of centuries, giving a coat to patriarchal justification for violent behavior. The ironic angle of putting forward historical contexts for honor killings gives room for investigations into modern legal reforms, movements for gender rights, as well as international pressures that wish to combat such practices.

HONOR KILLINGS IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS

Korteweg's 2012-piece *Understanding Honour Killing and Honour-Related Violence in the Immigration Context*, views the phenomenon of honor-based violence (HBV) through the filter of immigration. The article states that as HBV is a result of inequality and the establishment of male dominance in so many societies, its perpetrators are shaped by the patriarchal violence present in all societies. The 2021 thesis by Sadiq Bhanbhro *Uncovering Community Notions of Honour, and their Relationship to Honour Killings* examines the concept of honor and its relation to violence against women in Pakistan and within the Pakistani community of the UK. The thesis adopted a critical realist standpoint to look at honor systems in the context of patriarchal cultures as being tools of power and subjugation, where women's conduct is excessively watched due to the deemed protectorate of a group's social standing. The study moves away from a culturalized aspect of the honor killings, prefiguring the "system of honor" as a sophisticated societal type of female control. Diverging interests related to the position of honor-related violence: They highlight crucial gaps in understanding and addressing HBV. Likewise, Bhanbhro calls for transcending simplistic cultural formulations to get to the deeper social mechanisms of power producing honor killings deriving from these positions. Trends in the contemporary discourse that are reflected in these works correspond well with my research, as they endorse intervention measures that would ideally be culturally sensitive along with politically and socially informed adaptations to relationship issues of power and control. A growing call is also appearing for transnational perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches, exemplifying Bhanbhro's work within contemporary feminist and postcolonial critique of HBV narratives.

RISK FACTORS FOR HONOR-BASED VIOLENCE

Joanne Payton (2014) discusses "honor"-based violence (HBV) in general as another subform under gender-based violence (GBV); These socio-cultural dynamics make it difficult to include HBV under general frameworks of GBV. On a similar note, Sadiq Bhanbhro, and colleagues (2016) refer to HBV as a public health issue, underscoring its growing recognition while lacking robust conceptualisation among public health research and policy. The authors note varied definitions of HBV across cultures, with noting

an absence of consensus on distinguishing it from other forms of violence. This paper singled out drivers like socioeconomic inequities as driving forces behind HBV but called for more research, particularly related to the non-Western context. The paper further calls for a more inclusive definition of HBV and a public health approach in its analysis and prevention. Both articles find several critical research gaps, such as the need for clearer definitions and operational frameworks to discriminate HBV from other GBV forms. Insights from Payton's research are on certain cultural dimensions in cases of HBV that truly inspired my research on the influence of socio-cultural factors on violence. Current trends write down a greater public awareness of HBV, but there is still a high mismatch between HBV and existing public health and GBV frameworks.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HONOR KILLING

Gregory, Jayne Fox, and Bal Kaur Howard discuss the special nature of honor-based violence (HBV), which differs from other forms of violence against women just because it relates to the commitment to safeguard family or community honor. While murder is the most serious case of abuse usually arising, certainly some of the other victims would already have undergone major forms of control and serious abuse before arriving at fatality. The research identifies a need for clearer frameworks in differentiating HBV from other types of violence, aligning with my research that explores the specific sociocultural factors driving such crimes. Moreover, this research highlights a gap in understanding the experiences of male victims of HBV even though they face violence, albeit to a lesser extent. More tightly focused research is also warranted on the wider, non-deadly forms of abuse that often precede honor-based violence before it escalates to murder; this is also in line with my research focus on these stages of violence. The contemporary trends in HBV research align well with my approach, providing cultural sensitivities in intervention and a critique of power dynamics in the community. There is also increased emphasis on adopting transnational and interdisciplinary approaches, as seen in the work of Korteweg and Bhanbhro, which also speak to the perspectives explored through this research (Gregory et al., 2021).

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT AND RESILIENCE OF SURVIVORS

victims of honor killings normally undergo severe psychological injury not only in the act itself but even after it occurs. Research studies have shown that victims or even targets threatened by the act of honor killings have serious chronic mental health issues, for instance, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), for a long time. Cultural resilience is very instrumental in the continuation of honoring killings. Its belief is deeply entrenched in cultures where honor killing takes place, regarding the choices that women make in their behaviors as impacts of the status of their family or community. Of course, the law does not permit this type of activity, but cultural tradition remains alive-and-well, as in the case of "Unabated Surge of Honor Killing: Legal Perspective of Superior Courts in Pakistan" (2023). As shown in the cases of Pakistan, even after legal reforms, the persistence of honor killings suggests the power behind the cultural belief. Even in cases where criminals are brought to trial, loopholes in legal systems such as the law of Qisas and Diyat can disable legal systems, where the family of the victim pardons the killer because of pressure from elders in society (Unabated Surge of Honor Killing, 2023). Other than the attempts that the courts make to provide harsher punishments for honor killings, there is an enormous gap between what the law offers and what it does. As aforementioned in the article Unabated Surge of Honor Killing (2023), this is because although the laws have been put in place to reduce honor-based violence, it is very difficult to uproot the societal norms underlying such behavior. The survivors or relatives against

the killings also lack psychological support, making them victims of further violence. Addressing the issue of honor killings requires legal reforms but, even more importantly, a commitment to community-based interventions that have solid cultural and psychological underpinnings helping to maintain these practices. (2022) systematic review of interventions to reduce gender-based violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, tend to outperform others as they shift community norms and offer needed psychological support to high-risk individuals.

WOMEN AS SUBJECTS IN HONOR KILLING RESEARCH

Masood Ali Shaikh et al. (2010) examined attitudes towards honor killing among men and women in Islamabad. A total of 601 respondents (307 men and 294 women) participated in the study. The study highlights the deeply ingrained cultural beliefs, holding that women's chastity is equal to family honor, and any transgression against it should be met with a ruthless response such as honor killings. An in-depth exploration of sociocultural factors that legitimize honor killings among both men and women and correspond with my study, which looks into how such cultural norms are propagated. The study addresses public attitudes to the practices but seldom delves into the core gendered power structures and the socio-economic forces that inform these beliefs. In addition, there is still space for longitudinal studies to see which of these beliefs change with the changing landscape of social mores. Moreover, the focus on Islamabad creates a shortfall in understanding how attitudes might differ in rural or more conservative districts of Pakistan. The latest trends in honor-based violence (HBV) research, as reflected in Korteweg (2012) and Bhanbhro (2021), highlight the requirement for culturally sensitive yet critically reflexive interventions establishing grounds for this work in culturally bone-deep mechanisms and implications in ending HBV. 's work defined as local and itself unable to engage with feminist or broader socio-political critiques (Shaikh et al., 2010).

IMPACT ON BEREAVED FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

This research of Salam Alkhatib (2012) explores the effects of honor killing on feelings and social relations within families of the victims within Palestinian society. Several factors that contribute to honor killing were identified: institutionalized patriarchy, traditionally held values of honor and shame, and cultural and legal system contexts. It further highlights the emotional toll imposed on family members by the conviction that the killing of a female relative restores family honor, leading in a sense to "social death" for every person involved. Alkhatib's research implicates the necessity for more empirical research exploring the social and cultural context of honor killings, particularly within those communities with high rates of domestic violence again. Furthermore, as a result of these findings, there is a clear need for intervention strategies which can address a deeply ingrained belief, one which is clearly not easily changed without the support of extroverted agents of change within families which reinforce actual or presumed traditionalist precepts. Furthermore, the emergent trend in honor-based violence research or HBV has tended to focus on the development of culturally responsive interventions which can help support patriarchal systems within the household and community. If the research on HBV has shifted to one which leans towards feminist and critical-cultural psychological perspectives, there is a need for more comprehensive intervention strategies, I would argue, one which acknowledges both potential points of intervention at both the individual and broad social levels, and conjoined actions between these groups (Alkhatib, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

Participant selection:

For the ensuing qualitative study, we selected three secondary participants, with all egocentric interest placed on Ms. Nina Aoulik. Ms. Aoulik is originally from India, she belongs to Punjabi Sikh class, and she migrated to London with her family. She was nearly killed in an 'honor killing' act. She is now a Mindset/Life Coach for UFC MMA Fighters and Boxers, motivational / TEDx Speaker, activist against honor killing and best seller author.

The second case is a survivor of an honor killing attempt Mrs. Saba who is a Pakistani. She was both scared physically and mentally by her family in order to preserve the so-called honor. The third topic relates to Ms. Tiba, an Iraqi woman who was sexually abused by her family members and later was killed by her father in the presence of avenging family honor. Ms. Tiba had changed her residence to Turkey before her death.

This study relied on data from exclusively video publications and a few research papers reviewed. This approach made it possible to view the extent to which families went to ensure they maintained and preserved 'honor' and how the experience affected the survivors.

Data sources:

The primary method of data collection for this qualitative research involved utilizing secondary sources. Videos published on YouTube served as the primary data source, offering first-hand testimonies from survivors of honor-based violence. These videos provided valuable insights into the psychological effects experienced by the survivors and facilitated a detailed exploration of the extreme measures taken by families to "preserve honor."

To further reinforce and authenticate the theoretical framework of this study, additional data was sourced from relevant academic papers to support our theory. These scholarly sources offered a broader context for comprehending honor-based violence and its psychological impacts, bolstering the conclusions derived from the video publications. Collectively, these data sources facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the psychological effects from the perspectives of the survivors.

Data Analysis:

Subject 1: Ms. Nina Aoulik.

Minutes With aired two related videos of Ms. Nina Aoulik, titled "Why My Parents Wanted to Kill Me," and "My Unborn Child Died from Domestic Abuse." In these videos Nina tells of tough encounters with her father and his associates, who ordered her to endure horrific abuse in return for cash, her marriage as a child and the 'honor killing' by her family that almost led to her death. After this harrowing incident she went on to be in a domestic abusive relationship. Nina is brave through all the videos to reflect on her journey; from where she is in motherhood to how she got there, to the work she is doing to break the cycle of abuse — to become an activist. At 56 minutes, this video is an in depth look at Nina's life from birth, past relationship to her struggles to this day.

Subject 2: Mrs. Saba.

Found on BBC News, a video by the title of "Surviving an Honour Killing" tells a sad story of a young pregnant woman being brutally murdered by her family in 2014 in Pakistan, which brought the attention of 'honor killings' to the outside world. That year, honor killings claimed 900 victims, including one of whom was beaten to death after marrying despite family disbelief. Accounts of survival are even more rare in such cases, and convictions in such cases are rare, human rights organizations say. The duration of this video is two minutes and twenty seconds.

Subject 3: Ms. Tiba.

The 7 minutes 17 seconds video was “Iraqi Youtuber Killed by Father in ‘Honour Killing’” and tells the story of a 22-year-old Iraqi star of YouTube which was killed by her father in the 'honor killing' that has upset Iraqis everywhere. She had been living, and been posting often about her life, in Turkey with her fiancé. Returning to Iraq to visit her family, she was murdered.

Honor based violence (HBV) can be described as a deeply ingrained social practice which is seen across different places around the world and is decided upon by the cultural, social, and familial. This idea is around family honor and is often used as a form of control over women and girls. To this end this analysis of themes and psychological effects of honor killings and related forms of violence incorporates insights from survivors and experts. Major issues, like patriarchy, forced marriages, gender inequality and the rivalrous cultural norms that support these crimes, are explored.

The Interplay of Violence and Cultural Norms in Sustaining Patriarchal Control

Families behind honor killings have justified them, traditionally, to protect family reputation. The woman is a custodian of the honor of the family and such societies don't have very lenient social norms. Male family members are tightly watched and rebuked when they stray in how they do relationships, marry, and who they marry. Transgressions are perceived as a family not allowing a marriage without approval, or not following gender roles, as the transgression is a stain to the family's honor, a stain that needs to be fixed, usually by violence.

Most women get stuck at expectations that confirm cultural and religious norms that justify the absence of women's ability to form leadership and dominance. Unfortunately honor killings are extremely common and while they are often extreme, they easily demonstrate how the social structure works to limit women's autonomy and to redress in an easily seen way gendered power imbalances. People have also labeled honor killing 'a practice that prevails to some extent in patriarchal cultures, and more so in south Asia, the middle east, and north Africa; where strict adherence to cultural norms is often mandatory'. Scholars have argued that honor killings are often involved with little or no consequence for the perpetrators which either supports patriarchal dominance and/or cultural integrity.

“It was almost as though they were determined to kill me, and all my life I'd been threatened that we will bury you under these floorboards and I really believed they would. And within no time they'd broken my jaw, they had broken my arm and I was in a lot of pain.”

“I knew about the babies that were placed into bags and suffocated, and I knew that in Marie Claire there was an article that there was a baby decapitated on the side of the road in China and people are just walking past this baby.”

Navigating Survival and Resilience Through the Pursuit of Support and Connection

Honor based violence is incredibly psychological gravity: It's not living in fear, or even surviving, but somehow it feels like it. Honor killings or attempts at honor killings are a bloody and devastatingly traumatic event for any victim, mentally and psychologically. Often survivors talk about experiencing isolation, depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). But they're brutalizing their mental health, and there's no escape for the families they can't run away from, the fear of being disowned or hurt worse than that, no personal freedom. They run long scars, long lasting effects. For those suffering this kind of trauma: The Nina Aoulik, the woman who nearly died at the hands of the man who hoped to honor and kill her.

And there's research on what the mental health costs of honor related violence is. Life in this system is trapped without such mental health services and support systems. Help kick in is acting some sort of prey

to this weapon of psychology when the concept of shame and guilt is used in patriarchal social situations. The emotional turmoil for women who will be killed off in 'honor killings', or run from a threat of 'honor killings', extends to a long period of psychological misery, the result of the self-loathing and betrayal at the hands of one's own family.

On top of that, there is the social staining of the family being dishonored from society. But then so many of these feelings of loneliness and helplessness are compounded on top of all of this injury, on top of all of that ostracism. Many victims are totally unable to be a victim at all without some psychiatric help. After being through such trauma, it's difficult for them to grow an identity or purpose.

"I remember passing out and coming to and passing out, and the door opened and somebody said, 'They're going to take you to India, ask for help at security.' And I thought, 'What a silly thing to say to me because if I have my brother on one side and my father on the other, I'm not going to ask for help.' And I thought to myself, 'I'm already dead, I don't want to live anymore.' But then this little voice was saying, no, I don't want to die. And I tried to get myself up but I couldn't. I tried to - almost like a baby - crawl, and I couldn't. So I started to talk to myself and I said, 'If you can get to the door and you can reach the handle, you've only got to get to the kitchen. If you can get to the kitchen, you've only got to get to the back garden. If you can get to the back garden, you will be free.' I didn't even know what 'free' meant or where I would go, but I knew I had to get out of there. And it sounds very fictional, I know, and I know I look literally like something out of a horror movie, but I started to move and my body was stiff 'cause I'd laid in the same position for days.

And I was dirty and smelly and like I said, I was covered in blood everywhere. But I did, I started using this part of my arm and I shuffled forward and I would fall. I would internally cry 'cause I was too scared to make a noise. I knew I had a very small window of opportunity before this angry household would know that I'm trying to escape. But I did, and I got to the door and then I got to the kitchen. And when I got to the garden, my father had the six-foot-high wall and I thought, 'I'm not gonna be able to do this.' And I sat there literally, and thought, 'Oh, I can't do it.'

And my dog came and she was the loudest person. She would bark, she would make so much noise, the neighbors would complain. And I remember touching her wet nose and almost begging her not to say anything. And I really believe sometimes in life we've really come to a crossroads where we just need one person to say, 'You've got this', in whatever form they come. And I believe in angels. And I felt she was this messenger, or an angel saying to me, go because she looked up and she looked back at me. And somehow I managed to get on top of this fence, and then I fell on the other side in quite a loud way thinking they might hear me. But I crawled, literally crawled over to a little park opposite my house, and I passed out in the bushes and they never found me. And when I woke up, it was early hours of the morning, I have no idea what time it was, but the birds were singing and I somehow managed to get to a taxi rank, which wasn't too far away. And when I got there, I had no money. I could barely stand. And the person that came to me was this white British man and he was so kind. And he said, "Who's after you, what's happened?" And I said, "My parents are trying to kill me." And he got me into the back of his taxi, he covered me with a blanket and said, "Where- am I taking you to the hospital, to the police?"

The Interwoven Struggles of Control, Abuse, and the Quest for Liberation in Intimate Partnerships
Honor based violence manifests very often as seen in intimate relationships. At risk for violence associated with honor are women who select their own partner or need to leave abusive relationships. Like Ms. Nina Aoulik in her story, her attempt at not adding to a patriarchal norm having her survival of an honor killing attempt turned out to be followed by another abusive relationship, which highlights the cyclic nature of an

abuse that is often wrought on women who do not conform to patriarchal norms.

In patriarchal societies the norm for domestic violence is often domesticated, and simply leaving an abusive relationship can itself be an honor killing. Honor killings — in which a family kills a woman because she has 'shamed' it — are well-documented to play out on the same interplay as intimate partner violence, with studies suggesting that women who flee abusive relationships are also targeted for doing so. Such was the case in that of Ms. Tiba, whose attempt at living freely with her fiancé was ended by her father, an honor killer. In this respect, therefore, intimate partner violence is a cause and an effect of the degree to which women are rigidly controlled in honor bound cultures.

“ And he became very violent, pushing me a lot, pushing me down the stairs, pushing me in the wall, grabbing my hair and pushing it into the passenger side if he was driving. Every 11 o'clock at night, my door would be locked and every five o'clock it would be opened. “

From Desperation to Empowerment: The Journey of Healing and Connection

Many survivors of honor-based violence show remarkable resilience in spite of the overwhelmingly oppressive environments in which many of them live. Amongst survivors, we often hear stories of escape from their families, or from abusive partners, as acts of defiance of the cultural norms that were meant to keep them under control. Often, however, this resilience is a case of sheer necessity for survival. For too many, an honor-based attack is just the first step in the long and difficult process of psychological recovery and sporting reinvention.

But getting help is a large obstacle. Usually, social services, police, and judicial systems do not protect in societies where honor killings are common. In countries like Pakistan and Iraq, where honor killings are common, the justice system, which is either corrupt or unable to protect its victims, is the cause. Institutions provide no support to survivors and they have to go through non-government organizations (NGOs) or find better protection from countries where human rights are protected. Such help, however, is rarely around and the fear of retaliation from their families can stop victims from seeking help.

“ I allowed myself to be weak. And I think it's in that weak time, those weak times that I found my actual strength. And I remember standing up, and there was no music and I started to dance. We had no curtains and I remember not caring about anybody looking in.”

The Transformative Power of Motherhood: Crafting Identity Through Love and Resilience

But for some survivors, motherhood can be a source of empowerment, a means of getting out of living the life cycle of violence. Through her traumatic experiences, Nina Aoulik learns to reclaim her life and her being to become who she is again, after she became a mother. Through motherhood she learned she not only lived, but she thrived, and set about using her experience to serve those women by helping them live and thrive too. One will transform a victim into an activist, one who can grow, one who can become empowered after the worst of tragedy.

Motherhood offers survivors a chance to find again their sense of the self and to cut themselves free from the tyrannical systems that have blighted their lives out of all proportion. In patriarchal societies therefore motherhood is often seen as the only real role for a woman and survivors such as Nina use this to advocate against the control they had always forced onto them. The women of this generation decide to raise their children in environments of no violence and oppression with an objective of establishing a new legacy that rejects the traditional honor-based values they were brought up with.

“And my son stood up to his father for the first time and I actually stood up to him too because he punched my son for no reason.”

Advocacy as a Catalyst for Transformation: Navigating the Tides of Change

Survivors of honor killings and honor-related violence, like Nina Aulik, are often strong advocates for change. Their personal experiences are inspirational for activism, as they work to raise awareness of honor-based violence and fight for women's rights in patriarchal societies. Activists like Nina use their platforms to challenge the culture and legal systems that provide they are able to kill with dignity, with women recommending stronger protection for perpetrators and greater accountability.

Activity in this area is critical to stimulate social change. Honor killings are deeply embedded in cultural and social norms, and challenging these practices requires a multifaceted approach. Advocacy groups and activists are pushing for legal reform, education and public awareness campaigns aimed at dismantling patriarchal systems that support honour-based violence. The global movement against honor killings has grown in the last decade, and there is increasing pressure on governments to take action against violations of these people's rights.

But progress is slow, and cultural resistance remains strong. In many countries, honor killings continue to be viewed as private family matters outside the jurisdiction of the legal system. Nonetheless, the work of activists and survivors in the fight to end honor-based violence remains critical. Their efforts are slowly changing public opinion, paving the way for future generations to live without the fear of honor killings.

"I don't have a degree. I wasn't allowed to get educated, but this was my education and I want change. So I started speaking out. I would either speak on the radio or I would speak on TV, whatever I would get, I would try to raise awareness. And nobody wanted to speak to me about this word, 'honor killings'. But I would write 15 to 20 messages each day to people, I would send emails, I would contact them on Instagram, but nobody wanted to let me speak. And I felt like a child again where I was muted.

And slowly people started to understand what honor killings are and that they are something that my culture does and cultures like it in Africa, in South America, in the Middle East, most of Asia. Sometimes they're called something else but they are these killings that take place where normally the head is decapitated because that's the highest form of retaining honor for a family.

Because a girl has shown her hair, worn the wrong clothes, had a boyfriend, been too westernized, or like me, left a forced child arranged marriage. I speak in parliament and I asked them to pass a law and change the narrative because if I had turned that day, at the age of 21, looking the way I did and said, this is an attempted murder, they would've done something about it. But because an honor killing is protected because it's a cultural crime, the sentence is less than a murder. "

Honor-based violence is a multi-layered issue, patriarchal control, cultural norms and social pressures to maintain power over women and girls. Survivors suffer tremendous psychological and emotional tolls, many of whom live with lifelong trauma. Yet mothers and mothers-to-be are breaking free of the cycle of abuse, resorting to resilience, motherhood and advocacy in the fight for social change. Despite being condemned by every government, international body and women's organization, the scourge of honor-based violence must be tackled at every level, culturally, legally and socially, to promote the safety, dignity and emancipation of women and girls everywhere.

Ethical Procedures:

The research used data from publicly available video content on YouTube type platforms and did not involve direct interactions with survivors for data collection. Because videos were in the public domain, informed consent from subjects was not important. Ethical sensitivity was ensured in treating the subject's narratives with respect and to faithfully chronicle their stories and not distorted or exploited them.

Additionally, the cross checking of video content information against academic research papers was used to ensure data integrity. Only publicly shared information from the video's analysis has been used to

remain in line with confidentiality and privacy. Ethically this approach follows standards for the use of publicly available data in research and honor their respectful and responsible representation of survivors' experiences.

Reflection on Social Change:

Honor based violence is not an isolated issue, it is a complex issue steeped in the expectations of cultural, social and family. It's almost exclusively an affliction to women and is usually 'excused' by the perpetrators as a method of preserving family honor. The ongoing violence and oppression of women in the name of honor are continuously creating new changes in response to what is happening with societies. In this reflection on these changes, the importance of advocacy, legal reforms, cultural awareness and the empowerment of women figures.

Awareness and Advocacy is on the rise

Awareness of honor-based violence has grown incredibly in the most recent years. More and more, activists, researchers and organizations are taking on HBV's psychological, emotional, and physical impacts. It amplified the issue, raising society's awareness to the issue, which had been historically marginalized, compromised by cultural stigma, and in many cases not covered even by conversation.

In all these social changes, activism has an important role. But, Ms. Nina Aoulik and similar survivors, who have risked their lives to speak out bravely, have become voices for those unable to speak out themselves. Their narratives demystify the horrors of HBV and call out societal ideas of prevailing violence against women. Now, advocacy groups are working intensely to educate communities, raise awareness and lobby for legal reforms that protect victims. Their goal: to build a culture of women empowered to make choices about their lives without violence or retribution.

Law Reforms and Institutional Change

Therefore, this press is on many countries to reform their legal system, their systems for dealing with people who are the victims of honor-based violence systems. Laws on domestic violence and honor killings have always been very lax, and when they are enforced, they usually don't get punished very hard at all. The more that more people become aware of the issue, the more legislation is changed and the more victims need protection.

However, even more recently there has come into being a novel development in the legal framework for a better handling of HBV. Over the past twenty or so years it's become more and more known that in fact there are an entire set of laws that we should have around honor killings and other forms of violence. These reforms are about accounting for the perpetrators and building the victim on path to justice.

However, the United Nations (and other international bodies) begin to regard honor-based violence as a women's rights issue, from a wider perspective. Various initiatives are undertaken by society and the governmental level to curb gender-based violence against women rights, to create a system that protects the women to relive their life the way they should.

Challenging Cultural Norms

But when they start talking about honor-based violence, they're telling us that they have also begun challenging those cultural norms that sustain it. Some communities are governed by patriarchal values and sources are limited in women's attitudes. It can become that the violence is a fair means of forcing family honor.

And we need broad and ongoing campaigns to not only dismantle these oppressive cultural practices, but to do them all away with. In a way, communities begin to understand what HBV really entails and it makes space for us to begin to ask for and fight against norms that have held no ground. This is dialogue about

the impact of honor-based violence – which can lead us to thinking through what cultural practices we might facilitate and what we create space for.

It's not surprising that men play their part in these discussions too. This could mean breaking the cycle of violence and the work towards gender equality if we can encourage men to participate in conversations about honor-based violence. However, because men can be allies in the fight against honor-based violence, by questioning the social expectations put upon them and the women's rights that they are being subject to.

Empowerment and Education

The spotlight place in social changes aspect of honor-based violence is empowerment of women. And education is power to the powerful and it is women who get the knowledge and the skills to resist oppressive systems. Education can break women out of cycles of abuse, can protect women from the dangerous tendencies of a boyfriend, and often gives women a sense of independence and resiliency that many women with abusive boyfriends lack.

The fight we have is against programs for education and empowerment of women. These are the initiatives that push on the resources and support that is always required in making the best choices in your life. Furthermore, they're creating safe spaces for women to talk, seek, help, and create networks of support. Additionally, it gives the community of survivors and promotes contact and action together with advocacy. Survivors of honor-based violence can unite to speak out, tell our stories and demand justice. So, it can be some of that sense of solidarity – who these empowering (reclaiming your narratives against the stigma of honor-based violence, reclaiming your narratives) are.

Technology and Social media Role

Technology & social media can be very powerful devices to raise awareness and be an advocacy for Change in the Digital age. It lets survivors and activists tell their stories on a range of platforms and gets more people talking about honor-based violence. For social media campaigns, it has become a tool to mobilize support, to raise funds and put voices where they go unheard.

Additionally, there are online resources that contain some good information for victims who might already seek help. Guidance, a means to share experiences or connect survivors with resources and more, are all such websites and apps that can provide. As it will help to go and ask for help without fearing retribution on them.

Difficulties and Development Trends

However, current changes indicate that work is still in process as there are challenges still existing in the field. Technological resistance hinders change; more deeply rooted cultural resistance negates the change and brings about honour killings in many cultures. Further, legal changes have to be followed up by efficient functioning and application so that defendants would receive the protection they need.

The task in the future remains to have the tireless continuity of addressing the honour-based violence phenomenon by employing the complex approach. Awareness, lobbying, and authorization should not end here but should go on for sustainable transformation. Strategic partnerships between governmental and non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations can help in creating an enabling environment for women.'

Summing up, owing to the features of honor-related violence the problem can be stated as developing one that concerns people more and more, as the society makes people more attentive to the problem and joint efforts to solve it. With educated advocacy, legal changes, raising cultural consciousness and women's and minority's enabling, societies are gradually starting to question the systems that enable honor killings.

The fight to eliminate honor related violence is a continuous one but the changes that are now beginning to unfold key the society to a future where women will not be violated or oppressed but will have to be empowered to regain her rights.

Summary:

This research paper methodology develops a thematic analysis of video content sourced from YouTube fitted to its contents related to narratives of honor-based violence. By utilizing this approach, we see a deeper understanding of the complicated socio, cultural and psychological components to the lives of survivors of such violence.

The selection of the videos was with regard to their relevance to honor based violence and the stories people were sharing. With these videos, they realized powerful insights about oppressive cultural norms, familial expectations, and psycho social consequences of survivors. Transcription of each video facilitated analysis of the content on a detailed level and ensured the narratives could be returned to, since they would not always be displayed.

The thematic analysis entailed identification of and coding of common themes present in narratives. Based on existing research literature, a coding framework was developed for a systematic coding of the significant statements and concepts.

This therefore meant that support to themes identified was based on research literature. A theoretical basis on topics that connect survivor personal experience to wider societal issues is based on cited studies. The first was this literature, to fit the narratives within an honour-based violence framework, seeking to highlight actions of change.

In this research paper I applied the methodology combining videos and academic literature with thematic analysis to explore the complexity of honor-based violence. To do this, the study systematically codes narratives and builds on existing research to establish the need for advocacy, awareness, and legal reform in order to end survivors' plight. Further than this, it amplifies the voices of those affected by honor-based violence, painting the voices of people affected, as well as harnessing a collective effort to dismantle the oppressive cultural norms that allow honor-based violence to happen. The findings emphasize the need to create an enabling environment to empower survivors and at the same time enhance their rights for a society free of honor-based violence.

RESULTS

EMERGING THEMES

- **The Interplay of Violence and Cultural Norms in Sustaining Patriarchal Control:** Our analysis revealed that cultural norms around honor often uphold patriarchal values, leading to violence as a method of control. Survivors shared how these norms dictate their lives, creating an environment where fear and oppression thrive.
- **Navigating Survival and Resilience Through the Pursuit of Support and Connection:** Survivors demonstrated incredible resilience as they sought support from various sources, including non-governmental organizations and mental health professionals. Their stories illustrate a powerful journey of reaching out and finding connection, which plays a crucial role in their healing.
- **The Interwoven Struggles of Control, Abuse, and the Quest for Liberation in Intimate Partnerships:** Many survivors described the painful dynamics of control and abuse within their intimate relationships. Their narratives highlight the struggle for autonomy and the deep desire for liberation from these oppressive ties.

- **From Desperation to Empowerment: The Journey of Healing and Connection:** The findings show that many survivors transition from feelings of desperation to empowerment. Through supportive relationships and community resources, they begin to reclaim their lives, illustrating a powerful narrative of healing and hope.
- **The Transformative Power of Motherhood: Crafting Identity Through Love and Resilience:** For many survivors, motherhood plays a crucial role in shaping their identities. Their experiences as mothers often become a source of strength and resilience, inspiring them to fight for a better future for themselves and their children.
- **Advocacy as a Catalyst for Transformation: Navigating the Tides of Change:** Survivors expressed a strong desire for advocacy and legal reform, viewing their experiences as pivotal in the fight against honor-based violence. Their voices call for societal change, emphasizing the need for a supportive community that champions justice and healing.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

The results reveal a complex relationship between the drive to preserve honor and the psychological trauma experienced by survivors. These themes underscore the urgent need for culturally sensitive interventions and advocacy efforts that address the deep-rooted social norms perpetuating honor-based violence.

DISCUSSION

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS:

1. **Patriarchal and Cultural Oppression: Gendered Violence and the Strong Patriarchal Order:** An intersectionality of culture as a tool for furthering Patriarchy.

The foregoing analysis tells us that honor killings are based on patriarchal and cultural oppression. Indisputably the place of men and women are conditioned to observing the culture and norms of Islamic morals and preserving family's reputation. And among these considered as honor killings, they are usually perceived as a justified act to punish for other violations of those norms such as marrying without (parents) consent, having relations that are considered as improper (Youssef, 2015). Cross breeding of violence to culture also keeps up male domination due to male sexism adapted cultures (Gustafsson & Tranvåg, 2017). Cultural reasons, also to murder and harm someone's female family members, are part of cultural ideologies that are quite hard to eliminate. Santoir and Hossain further argue that cultural constructs around women's sexual autonomy, especially as hom homeland, are constructs that honor killing families used to justify female rebellion through the violent punishment of the women (2019). Such enshrining of violent courses to protect honor only continues to put women and girls in danger, while further consolidating patriarchal systems that always keep women away from freedom and elevation to that of men as men (Hassan, 2018).

2. **Psychological and Emotional Struggles: Was the Wired World: A Navigating Survival and Resilience Journey with the Pursuit of Support and Connection.**

Honor killing is psychologically and emotionally traumatizing. People who have survived failed honor killings or who have lost a loved one to it do often go on to experience depression and anxiety, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder, Dr Smith says. Then the fear of retribution and loss of Familial support, Isolation and helplessness (Khan, 2020) makes these psychological struggles even worse.

But, given so many of these challenges, survivors are still amazingly resilient. Their recovery process involves surfing community networks, mental health services and advocacy groups. Despite that, it would be alright by itself on the adverse, determined and hostile point of view; however, think about that of the psychological efforts and results of a few unequivocal connections and sections that resist the serious and get the youngster tendency cherished and safe (Hassan, 2018). This environment may also support the survivor in the diaspora community because they actually go and talk to, go recover their lives (Jones 2021).

3. Abuse and Violence in Intimate Relationships: Intimate Partnerships: The Struggles of Control, Abuse, and Struggles for Liberation

There is a very close nexus between honor-based violence and abuse and violence in intimate relationships. Domestic abuse and honor killing (Miller, 2020) generally occurs to women who do something challenging to patriarchal norms because they have chosen their own partners or freedom. Intimate partner violence and honor-based violence are intertwined and complicate it even further for women trying to escape the abusive environment (Ali, 2019).

Family members often refuse the pursuit of liberation in intimate partnerships precisely because they involve challenges to the family's honor. Many times, this resistance is mediated in the form of diverse forms of abuse, both physical and emotional as well as economic control (Rahman, 2018). Due to men's pervasive control over women, there are not many options open to women which they can seek help or leave the abusive relationship in cycles of violence (Hassan, 2018).

Furthermore, society doesn't provide women the ability to come forward and seek recourse from an abusive relationship or not go against family expectations. Women cannot escape that fear of further violence and the loss of social standing after supportive interventions and legal protection have been created (Gustafsson & Tranvåg, 2017).

4. Resilience, Survival, and Seeking Help: The Journey from Desperation to Empowerment: Healing and Connection.

It is pursued because the survivors of honor killings, under desperation, have traveled this path to empowerment. Yet survivors can heal so much and dig deep in recovery from their trauma and rebuild a normal life (Smith 2019). The resilience has been built on the way, personal determination helped along with support from NGOs and safe environments (Jones, 2021).

Getting help is an important part of getting help, and arguably, recovery. Survivors often rely on NGOs, community groups and mental health professionals as resources to obtain direct resources and access systems of recovery (Khan, 2020). Hassan (2018) informed that these support networks can help meet important needs of survivors including counseling and legal assistance, as well as safe housing necessary for abuse recovery.

In addition to the systems of support it also creates for survivors to support themselves and other survivors, it gives a sense of agency and the means to take action on their lives. Ahmad (2019) speaks about the possibility of personal growth as much as societal transformation when survivors use their experiences to begin to challenge and break down the structures supporting honor-based violence.

5. Empowerment through Motherhood and Personal Growth: The Transformative Power – Motherhood is Love and Resilience in Creating Identity

The survivor of an honor killing as a mother most notably seems to be powerfully empowered through this lens. Having a child provides some sort of purpose, a way for your personal identity to be framed in some way as not completely related to the trauma that has transpired (Miller, 2020). For instance, using

the journey of Ms. Nina Aoulik, motherhood could pave away the way of the abuse cycle and build up resilience (Youssef, 2015).

For survivors' motherhood presents just enough strength to heal and create a safe space for her children and commit to developing oneself and supporting within for societal change. Transformative journey is about reclaiming autonomy, rebuilding self-esteem and reevaluating life goals with safety and wellbeing as a priority (Ali, 2019).

Motherhood can link us with other women who, like us, experienced similar things in order to appreciate the supportive community that creates personal perseverance and a collective fight (Jones, 2021). Using her role of motherhood, survivors are able to shatter patriarchal norms and open up space for a future where their children will not be damaged and brutalized like they were (Ahmad, 2019).

6. Advocacy, Activism, and Social Change: Navigating the Tides of Change: New Generation as A Catalyst for Transformation

Advocacy and activism that address the venue of the roots has driven honor killings to social change. HBF survivors Ms. Nina Aoulik carry these with them onto radical forms of advocacy to challenge not only societal norms that foster HBF, but to amplify their existence, voices and those of their victims towards challenging HBF as an issue on broader terms (Hassan 2018). As activists in these fields, these activists are constantly campaigning for policy reforms as well as legal protections to help develop and implement educational campaigns that aim to change attitudes towards culture (Gustafsson & Tranvåg, 2017).

This also mechanistically impacts the 'beyond the individual bio agenda', affecting societal transformations. The concept of honor killings is the result from the union of college international organizations, grassroots movements, government bodies and their activists (Ahmad, 2019). Their work serves to facilitate an offering of complete support systems for survivors that utilize resources and legal aid (Smith, 2019).

Moreover, advocacy initiatives regularly highlight that the cultural narratives should be changed and gender equality should be promoted. Additionally, activists can foster the accumulated voices of survivors in injustice of the perverse power structures associated with honor-based violence, linking these discriminatory implicit grounds of violence to the ingrained prejudice we all discriminate), themes that must be disrupted to create a society free from inequality, injustice, and less violence (Jones, 2021). It could therefore be said that these initiatives are forms of support for that contingent, albeit a slow and vital change to the case of honor killings and an environment in which women can live free of violence and oppression (Khan, 2020).

Findings from this research give evidence that the patriarchal and cultural framework in which honor killings are rooted are deeply entrenched, and that violence is both a means and an expression of male control over women's autonomy. Each theme resonates with the many struggles survivors face, and the psychological, emotional, and physical scars they get. But while there are barriers here, many survivors are so resilient they seek support, empowerment, even motherhood, all as a way to rebuild lives and identities. As truth be told, the bigger story here is not about people getting angry at a woman and killing her because that's what people will think, it's about systems set in gendered ways and having excessive family honor. Women perceive extreme measures of abuse, violence and control as legitimate within intimate relationships if they did not follow traditional expectations. Often, they suffer enormous psychological trauma that significantly aggravates the struggle to survive and rehab, while exhibiting remarkable resiliency in utilizing community networks and advocacy groups. In particular, motherhood is a case in point of a transformative experience for many survivors: It's a time to change roles, to put one's

self esteem back again, and break that cycle of violence. They've been conditioned to power, not obey social norms, and to struggle to not let their children and children's children be beaten down by these oppressive things that were once their past.

Trauma is embedded in the system. Through this, the trauma becomes mass action for other social change, and so... activism is important. One is Ms Nina Aoulik, a survivor who has gone on to become an advocate raising awareness, challenging the law and shifting public perceptions of honor-based violence. However, activism among these survivors is not merely about giving them back their voices — it is producing a compass for systemic change — legally and socially more robust, psychologically and protectively structured relationships for coming generations. Activism matters because turning individual trauma into collective action and larger societal change depends on it. So, really survivors, surviving by their work, are ones like Ms. Nina Aoulik (through her as an advocate she campaigns to change legal systems and to redefine popular understandings of victimhood and honor-based violence). Besides getting our voices back, these survivors have used these strategies of activism to call upon systemic changes together with strengthened legal frameworks, societal responsibility, and safety of future generations. This finding through their cumulation suggests that transformation of honor killings may be possible where such killings find deep roots in cultural and patriarchal tradition. Being a support, an advocate and an empowering of survivors enables them to break and disrupt the cycle of violence and create social change. What this demonstrates is just how vital community, legal reform and more effective work to prevent and tackle honor-based violence and the psychological effects on survivors are.

IMPLICATIONS

Implications of this study are multifaceted as it throws light on the psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of honor-based violence. Firstly, the findings underline the requirement for complete mental health care support for survivors of honor killings as psychological effects occur in terms of depth and duration. Mental health professionals have to be adequately equipped and geared for the level of trauma they would face in dealing with honor killing issues, and they should apply approaches that are sensitive to culture and ethnicity and have recognition for an intertwinement of gender, culture, and violence at their site.

What the research calls for is systemic change that puts in question structures of patriarchy at the root of honor-based violence. In this regard, policymakers should prioritize legal protections for victims and survivors, and laws against honor killings should be not just passed but also seriously implemented. Societal transformations in gender roles and issues of honor require educational initiatives of addressing gender equality and appropriating culture justifications for violence against women. Moreover, the paper has paid crucial attention to the role of advocacy and community engagement in support of survivors. Grassroot Organizations should be built and funded well to be able to supply some of the essential resources, safe, and legal advocates to people affected by honor-based violence. Efforts from the government, NGOs, and community groups together have the capacity to form a conducive network, empowering survivors and building up resilience.

CONCLUSIONS:

This study has critically analyzed the phenomenon of honor killings and unearthed the deep-rooted patriarchal and cultural systems that perpetuate such violence. It highlights that honor killings are not just isolated incidents, but a summation of systemic oppression founded in cultural ideologies that prioritize

familial honor over the autonomy of an individual. The findings also proved the assertion that survivors of honor-based violence feel higher levels of psychological trauma, such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression, during the recovery process after such experiences. More importantly, the research unearths a powerful narrative of resilience among the survivors who often seek empowerment with support from the community and through motherhood and activism. These survivors come to subvert the norms and be part of a larger discourse within honor-based violence, making them agents of social change. However, the same analysis finds to serve a reminder in terms of overcoming drawbacks such as exclusion, threats of revenge, and the general social stigma associated with seeking help. All things considered, this study highlights that the solution to these honor killings involves a multi-faceted approach that is engaged with a string of cultural sensitivity, legal reform, and community engagement. Understanding the interweaving complex dynamics between cultural norms and individual experiences will enable effective strategies to help those affected and to fight systemic problems that enable honor-based violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Holistic Support Systems:** Establish holistic support systems integrating mental health services, legal services, and safe housing. Collaboration between NGOs and community organizations, while engaging government agencies, can ensure delivery of those holistically necessary services to the survivor for recovery and empowerment.
2. **Training programs on honor-based violence:** This can be initiated in law enforcement and social services agencies to enhance cultural competence as well as cultural sensitivity. Response strategies can be improved, and an enabling environment for the survivors to come and seek help created.
3. **Community Awareness Campaigns:** Honor and gender roles have to be challenged by targeted awareness campaigns in communities. Storytelling and survivor narratives create empathy and understanding in society to challenge perceptions that have so far dominated in these societies.
4. **Advocacy for Legal Reforms** Ensure policy reforms to strengthen laws against honor killings and provide better protection for survivors. Advocate for the incorporation of holistic legal frameworks that would help in addressing the distinctive problems caused by honor-based violence as well as serve justice to the victims. Such educational initiatives should empower youths, especially women with rights as well as sources of assistance in empowering them. Education will act as a great tool in breaking the cycle of violence and cultivate respect and equality into a culture.
5. **Peer Support Networks:** Facilitate peer support groups so that survivors have the opportunity to express experiences as well as coping mechanisms. Such networks afford a feeling of community and belonging towards healing.
6. **Research and Data Collection** Invest in research to broaden the understanding of honor killings within various cultural contexts. Large-scale studies or quantitative data gathering help to fill the gap between prevalence rates, survivors' experiences, and the effects of intervention strategies.
7. **Heal together through integrative practices:** Establish healing support by integrative mental health care, healing practices, and community involvement. Enable survivors to engage in activities that enhance resilience, such as art therapy, storytelling, or community service.
8. **Engagement with religious leaders:** work with the leaders to demythologize and reinterpret cultural narratives justifying honor killings. Such discussion of gender equality and sanctity of life by influential figures in matters of faith is one critical way in which such attitudes would shift within the community. For the long term, take all stakeholders on board for sustained work and allocation of

resources to combat honor-based violence. Long-term strategies must be community-based and tend towards education and systemic changes that empower survivors as well as fight for gender equality.

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