

Izzat, Intersectionality, and Educational Journeys: Hearing the Voices of British Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani (BIP) Heritage Women.

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Abstract:

This qualitative research, situated within the interpretivist paradigm, draws on educational journey narratives of 31 British women of Bangladeshi (10), Indian (11) and Pakistani (10) (BIP) heritage. It aims to give space to the individual voices of women who have been homogenised, marginalised, and often silenced, within the educational mainframe. All the women whose stories form this thesis had some of their compulsory education within the U.K. As BIP heritage, my own story is included. The narratives were explored using a combined grounded theory, and Bronfenbrenner model (1979) approach which allowed for multiple and layered themes to emerge.

Through unstructured interviews the women explained the complex ways in which they negotiate identity and belonging within 'white' eurocentric educational institutions, whilst operating within the patriarchal confines of izzat (loosely translated as honour). Izzat was enforced through the watchful gaze of the baradari (community) and equally, alongside socio –economic status, impacted on how education for girls was viewed, and enabled by families. Education led to the two trajectories of employment and marriage; all three of which, were influenced by the four pillars (agency, attitude, access and knowledge). Educational success enabled better marriage prospects, and I argue is an integral part of the dowry ('wealth' given by bride's family to the groom's family).

Previous research has used intersectionality to understand disadvantage, such as institutionalised racism and sexism. However using izzat as a facet of intersectionality, to inform understanding of the context within which BIP heritage female students may be operating is new. I argue izzat should be used as a lens to enable practitioners to have more nuanced pastoral conversations. This thesis makes a unique contribution to knowledge and to the educational studies field as it offers valuable insights into how izzat weaves with other dimensions adding to the marginalisation of BIP women.

Contents

<u>The thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award.....</u>	<u>i</u>
<u>of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Portsmouth.....</u>	<u>i</u>
<u>Abstract:</u>	<u>ii</u>
<u>Declaration.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>A List of Figures</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Abbreviations used</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Acknowledgements.....</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>The Narrators: A Quick Overview</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>1 Chapter One: Introduction</u>	<u>- 1 -</u>
a. <u>Positioning the Thesis</u>	<u>- 1 -</u>
b. <u>Research Focus and Questions.....</u>	<u>- 5 -</u>
c. <u>Originality of the Research.....</u>	<u>- 6 -</u>
d. <u>Why Educational Journeys.....</u>	<u>- 7 -</u>
e. <u>Unpacking Izzat.....</u>	<u>- 10 -</u>
f. <u>The Beginning of the Story.....</u>	<u>- 13 -</u>
i. <u>Key Moments</u>	<u>- 14 -</u>
g. <u>Summary of Narratives and Signposting to the Chapters</u>	<u>- 17 -</u>
<u>2 Chapter Two: Contextualising and Core Concepts</u>	<u>- 22 -</u>
a. <u>My Term ‘BIP’</u>	<u>- 22 -</u>
b. <u>History: BIPs and Britain</u>	<u>- 23 -</u>
c. <u>Socio-Economic Intersections.....</u>	<u>- 26 -</u>
d. <u>Racism</u>	<u>- 29 -</u>
i. <u>Impact of Racism on the Lives of the Women.....</u>	<u>- 30 -</u>
e. <u>The Four Pillars.....</u>	<u>- 33 -</u>

I.	Agency.....	- 33 -
II.	Access	- 36 -
III.	Attitude	- 37 -
IV.	Knowledge.....	- 38 -
f.	<u>Summary.....</u>	<u>- 39 -</u>
3	<u>Chapter Three: Research Methodology</u>	<u>- 40 -</u>
a.	<u>Epistemological Stance, Ontological Positioning and Truth</u>	<u>- 40 -</u>
b.	<u>Theoretical Perspective.....</u>	<u>- 41 -</u>
I.	Positioning, Insiders and Outsiders, and Power	- 42 -
II.	Voice.....	- 45 -
III.	Bias and Reflexivity	- 46 -
c.	<u>Research Design.....</u>	<u>- 48 -</u>
I.	Feminism	- 48 -
II.	Biography, Autobiography and Autoethnography	- 50 -
III.	Intersectionality.....	- 51 -
d.	<u>Methods</u>	<u>- 53 -</u>
I.	Sample Procedure and Collection	- 53 -
II.	Grounded Theory.....	- 55 -
III.	Interviews	- 56 -
IV.	Narrative	- 57 -
V.	Emergence of My Conceptual Framework: Analysis of My Data .	- 58 -
e.	<u>Ethics, Confidentiality and Integrity</u>	<u>- 64 -</u>
f.	<u>Summary.....</u>	<u>- 67 -</u>
4	<u>Chapter Four: An Izzat Lens, the Four Pillars, and</u>	
	<u>Expressions of Identity</u>	<u>- 68 -</u>
a.	<u>Gender Issues.....</u>	<u>- 68 -</u>
I.	Izzat: Policing Behaviour, Conformity and Being ‘Good’	- 71 -
b.	<u>Identity and Belonging.....</u>	<u>- 75 -</u>

c.	<u>Language and Identity Positioning</u>	- 83 -
d.	<u>Izzat, Religion and Dress</u>	- 84 -
e.	<u>Summary.....</u>	- 92 -
5	<u>Chapter Five: An Izzat Lens, the Four Pillars and the Intersections between Family and Education</u>	- 93 -
a.	<u>Family Structures</u>	- 93 -
I.	<u>Sacrifice and Intergenerational Ties</u>	- 97 -
b.	<u>Aspiration or Actuality: Parental Attitudes towards Education.....</u>	- 98 -
c.	<u>Parental Knowledge of Education and the Educational System.....</u>	- 103 -
d.	<u>Trailblazing for Sibling Agency.....</u>	- 107 -
e.	<u>Summary.....</u>	- 109 -
6	<u>Chapter Six: Izzat, Marriage, Employment and Education.....</u>	- 110 -
a.	<u>The Marriage and Employment Trajectories</u>	- 110 -
b.	<u>Dowries</u>	- 111 -
c.	<u>Izzat and Education.....</u>	- 112 -
I.	<u>Secondary Education and the Izzat Lens.....</u>	- 113 -
II.	<u>Choice of University, Subject and the Izzat Lens.....</u>	- 114 -
d.	<u>Izzat and Marriage</u>	- 117 -
I.	<u>Education as Izzat Currency</u>	- 121 -
e.	<u>Izzat and Employment.....</u>	- 124 -
f.	<u>Empowerment, Control, and Independence</u>	- 127 -
g.	<u>Summary.....</u>	- 128 -
7	<u>Chapter Seven: Izzat and the Shaping of Educational Experience</u>	- 129 -
a.	<u>Prescribed Narratives.....</u>	- 129 -
b.	<u>Access and Barriers: Dialogue of Dis/Advantage.....</u>	- 131 -
I.	<u>Hindering Access by Gatekeepers.....</u>	- 136 -

c.	<u>Minority Ethnic Teachers</u>	- 139 -
d.	<u>Institutional Mindsets (Limitations and Ceilings)</u>	- 142 -
e.	<u>Setting and Streaming</u>	- 145 -
f.	<u>Transference of Knowledge</u>	- 148 -
g.	<u>Summary</u>	- 153 -
8	<u>Chapter Eight: Conclusion</u>	- 154 -
a.	<u>Summary of Research and Major Findings: Research Question 1 (What do these particular women remember as defining moments in their educational journeys?)</u>	- 155 -
b.	<u>Theoretical Implications: Research Question 2. (In which ways does izzat intersect with other structural factors and identity categories to impact BIP heritage women’s educational journeys?)</u>	- 158 -
c.	<u>Implications for Policy and Practice: Research Question 3. (What, if anything, can educational institutions learn from these voices about how to improve outcomes for all BIP heritage women?)</u>	- 160 -
d.	<u>Future Research</u>	- 163 -
9	<u>References</u>	- 165 -
10	<u>Appendices</u>	- 188 -
a.	<u>Bios of the women</u>	- 189 -
b.	<u>Glossary</u>	- 196 -
c.	<u>UPR16</u>	- 198 -
d.	<u>Research journey</u>	- 199 -
e.	<u>Intersectional Inclusion Lens Tool</u>	- 200 -
f.	<u>Invitation letter</u>	- 201 -
g.	<u>Information sheet</u>	- 202 -
h.	<u>Consent form</u>	- 204 -
i.	<u>Ethical Approval</u>	- 205 -

Declaration

'Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award'.

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A List of Figures

Chapter Number	List of figures	Title	Page Numbers
Three	Figure 1	Relational map	P59
Three	Figure 2	Concentric circles map	P59
Three	Figure 3	Circles of influence	p61
Three	Figure 4	Bronfenbrenner influenced circles	p61
Three	Figure 5	The 4 pillars	p62
Three	Figure 6	The conceptual framework	p63

Abbreviations used

- Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani (BIP)
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)
- Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
- Curriculum vitae (CV)
- Department for Education (DFE)
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
- Higher Education (HE)
- Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
- Higher Education Institute (HEI)
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- United Kingdom (UK)

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Lastly... **Neanon** – we started this madness together, thanks for telling me constantly that I could do it!

The Narrators: A Quick Overview

Name	Heritage	Age	Generation	Employment status
Roseen	Bangladeshi	43	1 st	Professional
Rodela	Bangladeshi	24	2 nd	Professional
Megh	Bangladeshi	37	2 nd	Professional
Palki	Bangladeshi	29	1 st	Professional
Raheena	Bangladeshi	36	1 st	Professional
Firoja	Bangladeshi	34	2 nd	Professional
Sadia	Bangladeshi	22	1 st	Undergrad Student
Aadhya	Bangladeshi	37	1 st	Housewife
Hridi	Bangladeshi	22	2 nd	Undergrad Student
Taani	Bangladeshi	19	2 nd	Undergrad Student
Asha	Indian	58	1 st	Professional
Sabar	Indian	45	1 st	Professional
Tej	Indian	51	1 st	Professional & postgrad student
Jaanki	Indian	31	2 nd	PhD student
Jeevan	Indian	20	2 nd	Undergrad Student
Prem	Indian	28	2 nd	Professional
Randeep	Indian	49	2 nd	Professional
Karjol	Indian	33	2 nd	Professional & Self-employed
Ganga	Indian	19	2 nd	Undergrad Student
Tarsem	Indian	24	2 nd	Postgrad Student
Radwa	Pakistani	34	3 rd	Housewife
Samira	Pakistani	21	2 nd	Undergrad Student
Amal	Pakistani	43	2 nd	Professional/PhD student
Sarah	Pakistani	46	1 st	Semi - Professional
Inaya	Pakistani	19	2 nd	Undergrad student
Nargis	Pakistani	48	1 st	Self employed
Noor	Pakistani	44	2 nd	Professional
Hafsa	Pakistani	35	2 nd	Professional
Zahra	Pakistani	22	2 nd	Housewife
Sabira	Pakistani	21	2 nd	Undergrad Student

1 Chapter One: Introduction

a. Positioning the Thesis

This thesis presents the educational journeys of thirty-one British Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani (BIP) (my coined term) heritage women. Through their stories there emerges a number of important experiences and reflections that carry significance for the educational attainment and expectations of BIP heritage girls and women, now and into the future. As such, this thesis is intended to pay closer and more nuanced attention to the lessons that emerge, and to consider how pedagogical practice may better respond to the struggles and challenges that women in these groupings face. I am committed to presenting the life experiences of my participants as sensitively and accurately as possible, not least because I am myself part of my data set. I adopt an autoethnographical approach, including my personal narratives that I drew on first in order to shape my approach to interviewing other women. The technique used to gather and analyse the data was unstructured interviews, specifically narratives, which were decoded using grounded theory. This thesis is not intended to make a theoretical contribution, but it does draw on a number of key frameworks, including intersectionality, to support the analysis. Combining intersectionality with a grounded approach, I was able to identify from my data set the impact that izzat has in shaping the experiences, limitations, and challenges facing myself and each of the women with whom I spoke. My contribution then, is seen not just in the new in-depth data but in the presentation of izzat as a lens through which to understand the complex educational journeys of women from BIP backgrounds. I posit the use of an izzat-informed lens that looks beyond positioning BIP heritage women with a deficit model, and that also allows for a more nuanced understanding of lived experiences.

Methodologically, I begin with my identity as a learner, which was shaped within the parameters of my Indian heritage, which in turn was shaped by izzat. As evidenced throughout this research, izzat is a very complex system of unwritten rules, regulations and surveillance systems operated by the baradari (brotherhood/ community), and also embedded within cultural expectations that dictate how life should be lived. Wilson (1978) suggests that izzat translates roughly as family honour, or sometimes as self-respect, and occasionally “just plain male ego” (p5), whilst Viridi (2013) states that izzat is an Urdu word that loosely refers to honour, respect and reputation. My journey was against a backdrop of academic and media discussions about children who were failing in the British education system. As I had been one of those children who had been ‘positioned’ to fail, I have reflected on why I did not. I have systematically recalled memories pivotal in some way to my experiences as a learner. I wanted to know whether there was any similarity between my journey and those of other BIP women.

As a professional who works within education, I acknowledge the activist element of this research. In my case, this is a strong desire for educational institutions to change the way BIP heritage women are viewed and interacted with. McTaggart (1994) suggests that action research and research activism is a practice-based tool for change, usually at a local level. Moreover, he states that action research starts with a need to change something and is a “form of self –reflective enquiry” (p317). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) propose that action research can be used in almost any setting where a problem involving people, tasks and procedures needs a solution, or where some change of feature results in a more desirable outcome. Furthermore, they suggest that amongst the uses for action research, issues involving attitudes and values can be tackled. 31 women including myself recounted their narratives of their experiences of successfully navigating through an educational system that had, on many levels, already set them up to fail. Success for many simply meant that they completed at least to the end of secondary school.

Yuval-Davis (1994) argues that the positioning of BIP heritage women is racist because it implies that there is a better reality for them, one that is more ‘liberal’ and that should, therefore, be welcomed as enlightenment by these women (Haw, 1998). This is a reductionist narrative set for, rather than by, BIP heritage women, and which I argue is filtered through two lenses: one that is izzat informed and one that is eurocentric. (The term popularised by Said (1978), who argues that western discourse attributes inferiority to anything not European). This filtering process impacts on the development of agency and social and cultural capital, and also serves only to marginalise women who are already operating ‘on the fringe’. Furthermore, it impacts on how BIP heritage women are viewed in educational, media, and political discourse. Moreover, these ‘prescribed narratives’ (or stories imposed) or identities are at odds with how the women view themselves and more importantly how they want others to view them. This, in conjunction with the way in which homogenous categorisation is applied subconsciously within the education system, is unhelpful in two ways. Firstly, it promotes negative and racist stereotypes that limit teachers’ expectations for this group of women, and also, in some cases, limit what students themselves might want. Secondly this cultural commentary both within and outside of the groups themselves is visibly played out through women’s bodies, an example here being that of the burkha. Externally it has been used to symbolise the repression of Muslim women (Revell, 2012), but often the dialogue does not extend to the women who openly ‘choose’ to wear it as a symbol of identity and modesty, something further discussed in chapter 4. Meticulous examination of my data shows that the voices of the women highlight challenges that the two lenses place upon them and their journey in an educational system entrenched with white privilege. McIntosh (1986) suggests that white privilege

is “an invisible package of unearned assets” (p378) gained through being white. This is done in overt and covert ways, such as placing ceilings and boundaries, homogenizing heritage and experiences, and a providing insufficient or inadequate careers advice. These caps and ceilings are reinforced through barriers such as setting, streaming and selective schooling. These challenges are enacted both by the men in women’s lives and by older women who reinforce izzat-defined structures in the absence of men. A significant number of the narrators in this thesis are silenced by, and through, lines of male authority that the educational system replicates or reinforces. Equally, the women themselves are complicit with both lenses, but in subtle, nuanced ways that are embedded through the way they view the world in which they operate.

A dichotomy exists with regards to how, on the one hand, the eurocentric lens frames BIP heritage women, and how the izzat lens limits and defines the construction of self and autonomy for these women. The complexity of this is tricky to understand or make sense of for those who live within it, let alone for those who have no real lived experience and understanding of the nuanced holds of izzat. Thus BIP heritage women are caught between two viewpoints that want to define them, and it is exactly this kind of continuous, complex negotiation that Ahmad (2001) highlights when she states: “young South Asian Muslim women are continually negotiating and renegotiating their cultural, religious and personal identities and ... these processes operate in complex and sometimes contradictory ways” (p137). The ways in which access and educational capital are negotiated, often in different, creative ways when not available through parents, or when denied by gate keepers to the educational system, is evidenced in the narratives in chapters 4 -7.

Whilst izzat influences the life stories, as well as being the backdrop for the educational journeys, additional regard has to be paid to the expected trajectories of these journeys: marriage and employment respectively, as the ‘destinations’ of educational success. Educational outcomes that included getting a degree were seen as positive by the narrators from all three heritages, but in different ways and for differing reasons. Moreover, education was a tool of empowerment, which specifically gave voice to some of the women, enabling them to negotiate not just better jobs, but better futures in terms of marriage prospects. This, I argue, is about how a good education, and particularly a degree, has become an element of the dowry, which Tomalin (2009) defines as inheritance given as a gift upon marriage. As this is an original contribution, it is discussed more fully in chapter 6, alongside a deconstruction of the marriage, employment, and education triangle, specifically in terms of voice and ownership for the women.

Through the creation of a conceptual framework in chapter 3, I pictorially foreground four central concepts that interlace educational outcomes for these women. These four

pillars, as I have termed them, are agency, access, attitude, and knowledge. It was evident that whilst existing as discrete entities, the pillars overlap and intersect across each other with regards to how much influence they exert on the journeys. Equally, the four pillars also intersect with other factors, such as izzat, gender, socioeconomic status and racism. Intersectionality is, as Olive (2011) explains, “a systematic” way of examining and “deconstruct[ing] the interrelations among gender, sex, race, class, ethnicity and sexuality” (p19). Thus an intersectional approach will allow for the eliciting of complexities, nuances and contradictions in terms of the agency of the women themselves, specifically in terms of how they negotiate the systems and barriers they often face. Chapter 3 has a wider discussion on intersectionality.

Belonging, experiences of exclusion and marginalisation operate on a number of fronts: within the three communities themselves, between the heritages, and also in relation to other heritages; these fronts frequently surface in the narratives. This is particularly in the way these factors are negotiated in different settings and contexts. A further complexity here is that whilst different, the three groupings do share a cultural history, as they are all, pre-partition, from the landmass known as India. Thus the cultural confines within which the women function, do have similarities. Moreover, within these groups (Bengali, Indian, and Pakistani) differences of religion, caste and class apply. Furthermore, izzat intersects through and across comprehensions of identity which is ensconced in how the women are seen to behave, and so the idea of ‘being good’ surfaces numerous times and across all three heritages. Status is gained through being ‘good’ and especially if this is witnessed by the baradari. This is about conforming to the gendered expectations of the izzat lens, and specifically about policing and enforcing the purity, and so marriageability, of the women. Notions of being good is closely examined within chapter 4.

The influence of the izzat lens can be seen very clearly within how in their narratives the women frame their relationships with parents and different members of their families. According to Knipe (2016), “multi-family households still only represented a very small proportion (1.2%) of all households in 2016”, but the majority of narrators in this research did live in an extended family. Family and family networks were seen by many of the narrators as pivotal to their lives. Thus the interconnectivity between the generations and also between the baradari impacts not only on how education is viewed but also on how far and in which circumstances. Family influence is explored more fully within chapter 5.

In this introduction, I now move to offer more details on my intentions for this research, and specifically three key questions I sought to answer. Consideration is then given to the originality of this research. Next, I present an overview of the relevance of education as a vehicle for change. I undertake a closer examination of the concept of

izzat. Thereafter, I reflect upon my journey, both as a participant and as an educational professional, to isolate factors that enabled me to flourish academically. These reflections supported the development of my research approach. I will offer a summary of the themes emerging from the narratives I collected, as well as outlining the structure for the rest of the thesis.

b. Research Focus and Questions

Sikes (2012, p123) suggests the three most important things for a researcher to do explicitly are to make clear firstly, what the intentions of the research are, secondly, why they intend to do the research, and thirdly, how they intend to proceed with the research. Thus having explained how and why this thesis came into being, the discussion moves broadly to consider the intentions, originality and research aims, and the key questions.

Books that give guidance about writing a thesis often refer to an epiphany moment, a point at which the writer realises what the data is *actually* telling them. I had made an assumption on first engagement with the narratives that this thesis was about cultural mediation and the role education played in the construction of identity for a particular group of women. This was actually a rather simplistic understanding of the stories being told. Frequent re-engagement with the narratives began to highlight that one particular concept was framing everything else, irrespective of what was being said, or even not said, by the women. Izzat consistently sets the parameters both of, and for, the educational narratives of the women in this thesis, which on the surface appeared to be solely about employment and marriage trajectories, but in fact went much deeper into personhood and a collective cultural identity. Yet, despite framing the lives of women of all three heritages in different ways, izzat is a concept about which very little has been written, and especially with regards to the complex and covert ways in which it impacts on the educational journeys of British BIP heritage women. Thus this concept and its impact is central to this thesis, especially as it is a lens through which the journeys are examined and so will be fully explored throughout the different chapters, particularly with regards to how it weaves through other elements which impact on the women's lives. It should also be acknowledged that whilst the notion of 'culture' is problematic because it can be reductive and thus produce static ideas about a homogenised norm, it is frequently presented within the narratives of the women in this research. Thus it is closely examined throughout the thesis.

Hence the intention of this qualitative thesis is twofold. Firstly, it examines the impact of 'izzat' on the educational journey of this group of 31 British BIP heritage women, inclusive of myself. Secondly, it unpicks the complex ways in which these BIP heritage

women negotiate identity and belonging within educational institutions but still within the realms of izzat. Three questions which guided my research were:

- What do these particular women remember as defining moments in their educational journeys?
- In what ways does izzat intersect with other structural factors and identity categories to impact BIP heritage women's educational journeys?
- What, if anything, can educational institutions learn from these voices about how to improve outcomes for all BIP heritage women?

c. Originality of the Research

Judgments about the impact of marginalisation of different communities have been made (Wilson, 1978; Basit, 1997a; Dwyer, 1999; Bagguley & Hussain, 2007; Bhopal & Preston, 2012), and specifically with regards to how this feeds into experiences of schooling/education and wider societal labelling (Brah & Minhas, 1985; Abbas, 2002b; Crozier & Davies, 2008; Hamilton & Riordan, 2016). What has limited exploration in the literature, however, is how BIP heritage women face multi-level, and multi layered, intersecting oppression and suppression in both overt and covert ways and on several fronts. Educators often assign to BIP heritage women an image and rhetoric that focusses on negativity and victimisation, which in turn impact on the ceilings placed upon these women. This is unhelpful in the following two ways. Firstly, it prevents better platforms from being created for these women to achieve their ambitions. Secondly, discussion rarely surfaces around BIP heritage women who adopt 'too much' autonomous agency, and so can be rendered outsiders and even excluded from their own cultural heritage. This is because they dare to transgress the boundaries set by a multi-layered and nebulous structure that creates a framework within which whole communities operate. Anyone who chooses not to operate within this structure is either deemed as being immoral or labelled 'too western', having lost their values. My data shows that these people, particularly women, are seen by the community that polices the system as having uncertain identity or being unknown.

Furthermore, izzat is not discussed because it feeds into the image that is already readily attributed to these women, one of subservience and victimhood (Watson, 2000). However, its role as a contributing factor cannot be denied. Hence BIP heritage women are caught between a rock and a hard place, where if they do successfully navigate the quagmire that is the educational system, they still have to contend with the izzat lens which suggests women can become 'too' educated and so must, therefore, be excluded in case they 'taint' other women (Ahmad, 2001). This is particularly true in terms of marriage opportunities, where BIP heritage women on completion of a degree are seen by many within the baradari to be denying traditional roots (Bhopal, 1997:

Ahmad, 2001) if they do not comply with the patriarchal norms that exist within their cultural 'box'. The box in this instance pertains to a set of pre-given boundaries drawn to curtail a women's agency and autonomy. A women can only have as much freedom as is directed by, or structured within, the realms of izzat. This then raises questions around the concept of 'liberation'. The term liberation is often used to denote a negative image of feminism, such as the burning of bras. However, I suggest liberation is about voice.

This research contributes to existing knowledge firstly by hearing the voices of women who have to try and negotiate an identity that enables autonomy and agency, against substantive marginalisation from both their own communities, educational establishments and wider society, and which seeks to homogenise them. Agency is defined by Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, and Paloniemi (2013) as "having an influence on one's own life situation" (p46), and is further explored in chapter 3. The complexity of this negotiation includes having to navigate through life within the realms of izzat. Thus, secondly, this thesis intends to contribute to scholarly knowledge by forging an understanding of izzat and its nuanced impact on the educational journey of British BIP heritage women. Finally, in order to bridge the gap between a theoretical understanding of izzat and actual practice, an argument is made for the inclusion of izzat as a lens to an intersectional tool through which educators both understand and build their pedagogical relationships with BIP heritage female students. Research has previously looked at institutionalised racism (Penketh, 2000; Tate & Page, 2018) and sexism (Taylor, Smith, Welch, & Hardin, 2018), but not through an izzat-informed lens; hence, my approach is new. It is hoped this new approach will develop wider sensitivity to the context within which BIP heritage female students may be operating. This tool could be used by educational settings and professionals to enhance practice, shape conversations and map out potential hurdles when working with girls/women of BIP heritage, particularly within a pastoral system that is both inclusive and sensitive to the barriers faced by this group of women.

d. Why Educational Journeys

The transformational power of education is often voiced by educationalists as being pivotal to improving life outcomes (Lymperopoulou & Parameshwaran, 2014), and education can be a vehicle for change on so many levels, from personal growth to a country's gross domestic product. Equity of access and opportunities for this transformation to occur has been continually debated by scholars and politicians, with blame for 'failure' frequently located with those who have 'failed' (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000). Walters (2012) argues that ethnic grouping impacts on an individual's educational outcomes, and Woodfield (2014) develops this argument by suggesting

that students with particular characteristics, such as being from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) or particular socio-economic backgrounds, and studying either at their local Higher Education Institute (HEI) or studying part time made them more at risk of lower attainment or non-completion. Woodfield (2014) further suggests that “most groups of BME students are more likely than white students to withdraw for academic failure reasons” (p7), the exception to this being Indian heritage students. Whilst Woodfield raises this point, she gives no rationale for why.

Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran (2014) state that younger BIP heritage individuals are better educationally qualified than their older counterparts. The greatest educational attainment was seen within the Indian heritage group, where only 5% of 16-24 had no qualifications compared to nearly a third within the 50-64 age bracket.

Khambhaita (2014) argues that the term “pioneers” (p1019) can be given to a significant number of BIP heritage women, since they are often not only the first women in their family, but also in their local communities, to go into Higher Education (HE). In contrast, Singh Raud (1999) looking at the experiences specifically of young Indian heritage women found that 79% of his respondents had members of the family who had either been to University or were at present at University. These figures highlight the necessity to look more closely at the figures for different heritage groups.

Bagguley and Hussain (2007a) convey that BIP heritage women’s participation in HE varies depending on where the parents originate, and the social class and also the educational background of the parents. They do however, go onto say “women in all three [BIP] groups have increased their participation in HE more rapidly than white women since the early 1990s” (p2). They give no explanation as to why this may be. Moreover, Khambhaita (2014) suggests that “Asian students often articulated familial, cultural and social rules in relation to their educational decisions” (p1019) and that choices are frequently made through extensive discussions and negotiations with extended family. Additionally 53.9% of Indian women under 30 have degrees in comparison to 29.7% of white women, 25.6% of Pakistani women and 15.5% of Bangladeshi women, all in the same age group (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007). Whilst this figure does include Indian migrant students, it does highlight a large discrepancy between the different BIP heritages. These figures are expanded by Lymperopoulou and Parameshwaran (2014), who stress that in the UK between 1991 and 2011, whilst there was a generic gain in educational attainment, the best improvements were seen within ethnic minority groups who were more likely to have degree level qualifications than white British people. Moreover, the census figures (for male and female combined) from both 2001 and 2011 indicate that Indians have higher attainment than their white, Pakistani or Bangladeshi counterparts. Interestingly, the number of Asians generally without qualifications has nearly halved (8% as opposed to 15%) within a

generation (thus the 16-24 versus the 25 to 49 age group). Or to put it another way, between 1991 and 2011, the number of Indians and Pakistanis with degree level qualifications saw an increase of 27%, and 18% respectively. Whilst both Bangladeshis (19%) and Pakistanis (16%) saw a decrease in the number of those without qualifications, the figures are still problematic. The Bangladeshi figures can be somewhat explained through later migration, but why are the Pakistani figures so low? Clearly external factors are impacting here and as educators it would be useful to understand what those might be.

The literature and official statistics often lump these very different BIP heritage women together under the broad category of 'Asian', yet the educational outcomes are very different for each heritage. This theme of heritage impacting on attainment is echoed throughout the literature (Tomlinson, 1983; Singh Raud, 1997a; Haque, 2000; Mirza, 2006; Richardson, 2008; Singh, 2011), and in some instances heritage in combination with class (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). Whilst this area of study has a growing bank of research, there is a significant lack of empirical exploration into individual BIP heritage women's experiences and perspectives. Instead of pinning the responsibility on diverse heritages themselves, and locating blame with the young person, the curriculum, and its' designers and deliverers' need to be examined. This will be further discussed in chapter 7.

40 years ago, Wilson (1978) suggested that there was evidence that strongly indicated that the attitudes of South Asian parents to the education and subsequent careers of their daughters varies greatly depending upon their religious and socio-economic backgrounds. There is not enough rigorous research that has examined this. However, it is useful to separate out the religious from the socio-economic because both of these factors in relation to families do impact on the educational outcomes of young BIP heritage women, as either separate, or intersecting entities. All of the women in this thesis acknowledged the value of education, regardless of class, religion and heritage. However, although they could see the value of it, one interesting component was the difference in terms of how they viewed the journey itself, how they viewed how far that journey should go, and the limitations that part of their gender identity that is culturally constructed, in particular, put on their expected outcomes. Therefore, whilst there were differing factors in terms of their experiences and achievements, all of the journeys were impacted by gendered expectations in relation to izzat. This impact was seen in a number of ways including through geographical location so for example Londoners having the opportunity to attend a range of universities whilst those living with family in smaller towns may not.

e. Unpacking Izzat

Within this thesis, I demonstrate how izzat impacts on the lives of the women in this research in complex and nuanced ways and particularly through the surveillance of the community 'gaze'. Furthermore, I argue that whilst there is a difference in how izzat imprints on the women from each heritage, it influences not just the educational journey itself but also the outcome of that journey. Feldman (2010) notes that both shame and honour evoke rules and moral codes that create normative boundaries particularly for women. Furthermore, this is then sanctioned through "religious or moral codes" (p306). Siddiqi (2005) explains that the word 'lojja –sharam' is often interpreted as shame but is actually more than that. It is the embodiment of "good conduct", and "modesty" (p291) that indicates the essence of a good woman. Gangoli, Chantler, Hester, and Singleton (2011) claim that all societies have honour systems in order to enable them to function cohesively. Moreover, they argue that "where the concept of honour is accepted by ethnic white British communities, it is seen as a positive trait, and where it is associated with minoritised communities, it has negative connotations" (p33). Whilst a racialized interpretation of the term honour is useful to raise, I suggest a challenge to the translation of izzat as 'honour', because it detracts from the gendered, insidious and nebulous aspects of it. Equally, the interpretation perpetuates an essentialistic application of the eurocentric filter to BIP heritage women.

Izzat is about policing and surveillance and detracts from the positive elements of the collectivist nature of BIP communities. It is useful to acknowledge that all cultures have elements of individualism and collectivism, and to recognise that cultures are not completely discreet entities but that they are intermeshed and influenced by each other, especially in the context of a very multi-cultural Britain. Mesquita (2001) posits that, broadly speaking, there is a difference between individualistic and collective elements concerning the impact of emotions such as honour, pride and shame. In individualistic it is about the self, but the collective is about the impact on others. Mesquita (2001) further suggests that this is partly because there is a greater sense of interconnectivity within the collectivist elements of cultures.

However, this is only part of the story. This accountability to or interconnectivity with others also means that there are gendered norms, expectations and limitations placed on relationships, particularly with regards to the intersections of power. Izzat not only restricts the autonomy of women; as the carrier, a woman can "singularly jeopardize the standing and fortunes" (Bhardwaj, 2001, p56) of her family and so must act accordingly to ensure close family members are seen to be 'honourable'. Chakravarti (2005) suggests that "individual families can gain or lose "honour" through money and power" (p310). Moreover, Viridi (2013) argues that notions of "honour and shame are culturally constructed, defined and demonstrated in all societies to varying degrees"

and that they form the “moral fabric of societies” which in turn regulates behaviour, and which ultimately “accompan[ies] migrants as cultural and legal baggage” (p111). Whist Viridi makes a good point about these moral codes migrating with the BIP diaspora, what has not been emphasised is the very clear distinction between the difference in repercussions for men and women. Bastia (2013) acknowledges that migration does not alleviate inequality but that it actually “reproduces unequal structures of caste, gender and class” (p4). This is particularly pertinent to how both caste and class impact on how women experience izzat. Feldman (2010) draws attention to the fact that honour (and shame) perpetuate differences particularly through reinforcing privilege and class hierarchies.

Ultimately, whatever the definition, whilst izzat appears to be a very simple concept about boundaries that decree how both men and women should live, it is far more complex and nuanced. It not only oppresses women but defines them in relation to the men in their lives, and ensures they carry the greatest impact of it. Wilson (1978) suggests that BIP women have been oppressed because they retain order and are the “link between economic survival and the meaning of life, between economic security and emotional security” (p4). Equally Pettigrew (1981) notes that within BIP societies, the standing of the family within the community is dependent “on the behaviour and conduct of its women” (p64). Viridi (2013) points out that izzat is embedded in the personal law systems of the Indian subcontinent, which predate the British Raj, Toor (2009) suggests notions and conventions of ‘honour’ and ‘shame’ are profoundly entrenched within BIP societies. They have multiple purposes “as mechanisms of social control”, “to govern morality and to ensure the continuance of cultural and social conformity” (p242). However, what Toor fails to acknowledge is that it is morality intersecting with gender. It is about a binary set of values based on gendered expectations that are played out through possession of women’s bodies and women’s rights. Furthermore, the baradari has become the ‘community gaze’ which in turn polices and reinforces this polarised value system, one which, as Bhardwaj (2001) notes, has the “power to include and ostracize” (p56).

Lindisfarne (1998) argues that notions such as honour and shame are socially defined and must be researched ethnographically in order to fully appreciate not only who controls them but “for what purpose” (p246). This, she posits, is about power and “gendered differences between people” (p247), and it is only through controlling the ‘purity’ and sexuality of the women in his network that a man can retain his ‘honour’ in the eyes of the society in which he functions. Whilst there is slight variation in what these “honour codes” are, they are, ultimately, “always based upon the regulation of the woman’s independence and freedom of movement” (Dyer, 2015, p10). Gilbert et al. (2007) highlight that controlling the movements of BIP women ensures that no shame

(dishonour) is brought upon her family. Thus “the family honour must be preserved at all costs: family interests take precedence over individual interests” (Gill, 2008, p247). This ‘family’ honour never really ‘belongs’ to the woman, but is simply a system that dictates the rules about how she should behave in order to protect the honour of the patriarchs, and is something that her body is prisoner to. She is merely the custodian of it for the patriarchs in her life, whether it is her father, her brothers, her husband, or her sons. Haq (2013) posits that from an early age, girls are taught to follow and obey “pita, pati, putra” (p173), which means father, husband, and sons. A woman is most affected by this notion, but it belongs to the male, and he is given the right culturally, by other males, to take her life if that code is violated. Therefore, usage of words such as honour and killing together give further value to two beliefs: that a woman is a possession like any other material thing and that a male is perfectly entitled to pursue violence to safeguard that possession. Moreover, women are “silence[d] if they seek support or challenge such oppressions” because that in turn brings “further shame and dishonour to the family and community” (Bhardwaj, 2001, p56). Feldman (2010) stresses that women are often “driven to suicide by constant beating and harassment” (p311).

What is very evident is that this harmful practice of (dis)honourable violence, and killings, is increasing both in the United Kingdom (UK) soil and in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. The Human Right’s Commission of Pakistan’s Annual report (2015) states a rise of nearly 40% in honour based murders in Pakistan in five years, and the Honour based Violence Awareness network (2016) suggesting approximate figures of 1000 murders per year in both India and Pakistan. Whilst numbers for Bangladesh are difficult to ascertain, Feldman (2010) stresses that cases of violence against women, including public humiliation such as stoning or flogging, is on the rise.

An overall figure of 29 honour based murders between the years 2010 and 2014 within the UK has been reported. However, it has been acknowledged that the figure is likely to be significantly higher (Dyer, 2015). Khan, Saleem, and Lowe (2018) suggest a figure of 2,823 cases of honour-based violence reported to 39 police forces in the UK. Dyer (2015) also makes the point that males can be victims of ‘honour’ killings in that men have also been killed, usually by the family of their partners. I posit these incidents are still about ‘male’ honour, because if the members of a family feel they have been wronged either through the abuse or a marriage breakdown of a sister or daughter, possibly related to dowry, then the males in that woman’s family often resort to violence because their ‘name’ has been dishonoured.

f. The Beginning of the Story

During my compulsory education, I was a member of several groups thought to be at risk of poor academic achievement: first generation British immigrant, Indian heritage, English as an additional language, working class, female, brought up in an inner city 'sink' school location, in poverty, and in extremely overcrowded accommodation. My mother had never been to school, having been brought up in an environment that refused to let a girl be educated if it meant she had to travel to the next village, and my father had to leave education very early in order to provide for his sisters' dowries. Thus, statistically, I should never have gone to university, or have succeeded in an educational system in which many others with whom I shared the above mentioned commonalities, did not.

Whilst I had a very culturally traditional upbringing, in many ways my parents were very forward thinking with regards to education for girls for that era, the mid 60s, and that particular cultural and socio-economic background. Throughout my childhood, both my parents continually voiced the idea that education was the key to a more economically secure life than they had had. From an early age, it was apparent to me that there was an expectation regarding education for all the children, including the girls, in my family. It was expected that we would go to college and, hopefully, if we worked hard enough, to university. Even though I was 'only' a girl, they voiced the importance of 'apne pare the kharayna' (standing on my own two feet and not being reliant on anyone else). A good education would allow that. This was remarkable against the backdrop of my female cousins and female peers in my neighbourhood, being married off once they reached the age of 15. The rationale being, as was known by all within the community, to preserve family izzat. Girls had to be kept pure until marriage and the older the girls got, the more likely the risk of 'corruption'.

My father arrived in Britain late 1963 and my mother followed early 1965, with my three older brothers, and me as a babe in arms. As poor immigrants, all six of us lived in one rented room, within a three bedroom house that was home to four different families. When I was five we moved to our own house. By then, my sister had been born. We let out two of the three bedrooms in our terraced house and my father worked three jobs. Neither of my parents demonstrated a love of reading, nor modelled good learning habits, highlighted by educational specialists, including my future self, for the creation of an environment conducive for learning readiness. The point of all this 'history' is that my parents did not have either the capacity or time to do what educationalists suggest are necessary to enable children to 'succeed' in formal education. Nonetheless my siblings and I did succeed if one measures success through degree attainment and employment.

Recalling a memory, which I subsequently called 'study periods', highlighted my father's stance on education. The memory is as follows:

Study Periods:

"As a teenager, I was very messy. I shared a bedroom with my sister and we had different ends of the room. However, in the middle of the room we had a table. This table had been bought because I had asked my father for somewhere quiet to study. I had learnt very early on that if it involved studying, I could ask and I would get it (if it fitted within the remit of what my father considered to be educational; so not 'novels' but text books). This particular day, whilst writing a science project, I threw books onto the floor as I finished with them. My side of the floor already had other articles such as clothes. My sister complained to my parents about the mess and my father had come upstairs to see. As he was telling me off, I got up and walked across the room. I stepped on a book, and then kicked it out of the way. My father walked up to me and slapped me. He started shouting that I had no respect because I had kicked the book. He said how dare I be so disrespectful to knowledge. I remember feeling very shocked because he did not get cross very often at that point and not really conceiving what I had done that was so wrong".

I have all sorts of feelings, thoughts and emotions when I review this memory. I feel no anger towards my father about the violence, merely an acceptance; he did it out of misguided love and belief. Yet that episode of physical abuse collides both with my values about violence against children, and equally with my professional, behaviour specialist 'hat'. There are many pivotal moments within my educational journey, but I made the decision to use the first few memories that came. I initially thought of incidents, then filled in the detail from memory. I then gave each one a title that captured the essence of the content. I critically deconstructed the memories with two key questions in mind. Firstly, what does the recollection pattern tell me about the memories and about myself, and secondly, how have these memories shaped my understanding of izzat, my expectations and my relationships with others who played a role in my educational journey and development? I then used the discussion to foreground the content of chapters 2 -8, showing how izzat permeates facets of the lives of the women featured in this study, both overtly and covertly.

I. Key Moments

i. Interview with a Careers Officer.

"I was 15, and attended a mandatory careers interview at school in the careers room. I can still see the scenario very clearly in my mind's eye; To my 15 year old self the careers officer seemed quite old (but was probably only about 30) and a 'typical white woman' in my, then, eyes. She was wearing a skirt, makeup, and had blue eyes and blonde hair. She sat behind the desk and did not smile, or look at me, as she said hello. She asked my name and ticked me off her list. She then asked for my plans after leaving school. I told her I wanted to go to university to read English. She then looked up and

said to me 'why?' I replied that I loved reading and I wanted to be a journalist. She paused and then told me that Indian girls do not study English literature at University; it would be a waste of time and money as I would only end up getting an arranged marriage. She continued that not only would I struggle to cope at university, but that I would not be allowed to do anything with the degree by my family. I was dumbfounded; those words shattered my whole world in an instance. I remember feeling physically sick and not being able to focus on anything for the rest of the day. I was devastated. If this 'official' had said so then maybe it was true. Perhaps I was not capable of studying at that level.

When I got home my mum asked me what was wrong, and I told her. She was furious and told me that I had to do it and when I got my degree, to go back to school and fling it in the woman's face. She reiterated that a person can do anything that they put their mind to; all they needed was 'himat'-strength and belief."

ii. Saturday Library Visits.

"I idolised my brother who is two years older than me, and I remember from a very early age (I could not have been more than 4 or 5) being taken by him to the local library (which was about two miles away). It was always my brother, his friend, and me. We would get to the library when it opened at 9.30am. The librarian would read to me, and my brother and his friend would also read to me. I was lucky enough for this to be my routine every Saturday morning (unless we went to visit relatives) and although I do not remember learning to read, I do remember working my way around the library, reading everything I could lay my hands on. We would stay there for what felt like hours, but was probably just one or two. I loved it and the stories and being lost in a different world. Those books gave me a world that was both alien and beautiful, but so very far removed from my reality. I went to that library until I was about 13 and then my brother no longer wanted to go and so I was not allowed to go."

iii. Honest Miss...I Do Have 34 Brothers and 15 Sisters.

"Whilst in infant school we were asked about how many brothers and sisters we had. I put my hand up and said I had 34 brothers and 15 sisters. I can remember the teacher telling me not to be so silly. Of course I did not have that many. I remember feeling very upset that she thought I was lying and also very confused because she did not believe me. My cousin and I discussed it on the way home. We were still none the wiser and it was not until I came across the word 'cousin' much later, that I understood what the problem was. As Panjabi Sikhs we did not have access to the word cousin because we only use the word brother or sister."

iv. All Indians Are Good At Maths.

"At Junior School I really enjoyed maths and found it rather easy. This was partly due to the mathematical 'drilling' we had to 'endure' at home on a daily basis, first at the hands of my eldest brother, and then my father. We would have to line up- the four of us: my brother, me, my sister, and my younger brother, and recite whichever multiplication table we were working on. We would have to do division and long division at the weekend. Hence at school, maths was a doddle. My friend Kuldip and I used to try to be the first ones to finish the problems from the board, so that we could be 'rewarded' by tidying up Mr Frank's stock cupboard. When I got to secondary school, it was a whole different maths system. One I had no prior access to; my dad's knowledge was no longer of value to me and no-one was able to support my learning at home. This meant that I was experiencing failure in this subject for the first time; I had real struggles with some aspects of the mathematics curriculum. When I said to the teacher that I did not understand, he shouted at me across the room and in front of the whole class: 'you're

Indian; you should be good at maths.' I felt completely humiliated. That was one of the first times I felt that not only had I let myself down but also my fellow Indians. Maybe I wasn't a real Indian. I no longer asked for help but struggled and believed that I was a failure and letting my whole family (and heritage) down. To this day, I am apologetic about my fluency in maths."

v. Sue's the Name, Fitting In's the Game.

"I used to walk to Junior School with my cousin every day. It was not a long walk, and often on the road that the school was on, we would see a little old lady in her front garden. We would say hello to her and after a while we started stopping and talking to her. She was lovely and asked our names. She couldn't say my name or my cousin name. So she said 'I know, I will call you Sue and May.' So she did, and after a while it became second nature to respond to the name Sue. She introduced me to her family as Sue and very soon after that when I met any new white people, I also called myself Sue. This pattern continued into secondary school where teachers would often say Sukhbinder...I can't possibly remember/say that, what's the shortened version? It was much easier to say Sue than the pet name Ghuddi that my family used, because then I would have to explain why I had two very different names. I wanted to fit in; I wanted to be the same as the majority of the people I was in contact with at that secondary school. At first it was out of a desire to please, but then it came to be out of frustration at people making fun of my full name. Sue became Su, as I convinced myself that Sue without the E was closer to my given name of Sukhbinder. This name which was 'accessible' for some white people continued until I was 22. The younger me had hated feeling different, but the 22 year old with a broken (traditional) marriage behind her, and living in halls with a mixture of cultural backgrounds didn't care."

vi. Self-Worth:

"During our childhood my brother (who is two years older) was always seen as the bright one out of us both. Either our parents or our oldest brother always verbalised that he was the clever one and I was a follower. He was, and is, quite a character, very articulate and able to weave the most incredible tales. I adored him and simply accepted him as my intellectual superior. I followed him to secondary school and he told me about how the classes were banded by ability: 'D' (top), 'N' (middle), 'M' (bottom) and finally 'J' for the SEN. He told me I would be in one of the 'M' classes because he was in the 'N' and he was cleverer than me. He met me at break and was obviously pleased to have me at the school. He asked which class I had been put into and I said 1N1. He said that after the 6 week exams I would be moved to the 'M' classes. I accepted this as fact. I was moved after 6 weeks but to the 'D' band which was a shock for everyone in my family, including me. I spent my entire secondary school career feeling like a fraud and thinking that they would move me down. My brother was brighter than me, we all knew that, so why was I in a higher banding?"

vii. Lifelong Learning, Learning for Life.

"Doing A-levels was the first time I realised I enjoyed learning. While my peers complained about the books we had to read for English, I loved that I could legitimately read novels. At that point I still believed education was text books and novels were leisure. To be able to combine both was a really useful learning experience for me. It was an awakening that highlighted that I enjoyed being taught and, more importantly, that I enjoyed learning. Going to university further emphasised that. I began to read things that interested me, that were by people who had a heritage similar to mine. I no longer was operating simply in a white domain. I started reading black authors, and feminist literature and for the first time I felt a sense of identity and liking for who I was and not who others wanted me to be."

g. Summary of Narratives and Signposting to the Chapters

Reflecting on the memories and then critically dismantling them has been a useful process because it has allowed me to see themes emerge from the strands of different memories. Each of these themes, alongside those from the women's narratives, was used to develop focus for the chapters; however, they are briefly considered here, in relation to my memories. The themes apart from izzat include identity, belonging, power politics, role models, racism, memory, subjectivity, the transformation process, and resilience. A number of the memories are contradictory and sometimes conflicting. What I mean is that recounting these memories has made me concede that my value system is flexible. The four memories that keenly demonstrate this are: 'interview with a careers office', 'library visits', 'all Indians are good at maths', and 'study periods'. At the time, I was very angry about not being allowed to go to the library on my own. Yet I had forgotten that until I started pondering on why I stopped going. Thus the flexibility in my value system is that I was able to let go of my anger in that situation, but was not able to remove the negativity about the careers interview. The more I dismantled, the clearer it became: two different lenses were clashing. Firstly, the izzat lens through which my family world was governed, and secondly, the eurocentric lens which was shaping the outer world of which education is a part. Family izzat, how I conducted myself, and my actions reflecting on my family: these were all messages that I was constantly fed, and they became second nature; I accepted that which I could not change. Therefore, since it was my father who prevented me from going to the Library, I just blended it out as another rule. However, the careers officer was an outsider, and so, subconsciously, I knew that the same izzat rules did not apply.

Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis (2002) argue that 'one of the cornerstones of feminist theory, in all its varieties, has been its challenge to positivist notions of objectivity and truth' (p315). They further argue that social positioning is key when recounting events and opinions. We are the sum total of everything we see, hear, feel, experience, and witness: "the culmination of a life" (Abrams, 2010, p33). Therefore, it only stands to reason that this 'standpoint' or viewing platform would constantly change. However, as McCall (2005) stresses, "the intersection of identities takes place through the articulation of a single dimension of each category" (p1781), hence my taxonomy as a British Indian, middle class, middle aged, cross-cultural, heterosexual academic may place me at the intersection of all of these categories, but in reality would only reflect a single dimension of each. Ultimately, how I view myself is not necessarily how others view me, and therefore, the 'others' in my recounts will have their own internalising of the events I narrate. Borland (2006) emphasizes that "a personal narrative [is] a meaning – constructing activity on two levels simultaneously" (p310). Firstly, the interaction between the subject and the event being narrated, and secondly, about the reflection on the

experience and a mindfulness of the audience. This resonates with the way I chose to present the memories in chronological order rather than in the order in which they came to me. The need for order is interesting to consider, as it will most certainly have influenced the way in which I recount the whole memory, and the scene I am presenting to the audience.

Hoffman and Hoffman (2008) cite experiments from the 1950s that revealed that respondents often recall their own version of events as an accurate record, rather than recount the 'correct' version even if that is shared time and time again. They also cite Neisser (1982) as suggesting that memory is employed to define, confirm and ultimately retain our version of what we have experienced. These experiences filter through, and sometimes constitute, the lens through which we see the world. The process of recollection clarified to me that as a British Indian heritage woman, the lens through which I view the world is likely to have aspects which are interchangeable and interwoven with the other women in this thesis. To put it another way, as someone who sits within the group being studied, there is an inevitable shared paradigm with a number of the narrators. Positioning is further dismantled in chapter 3.

Names are important to our sense of self. As a woman, I have no ownership over my surname, as it is a patriarchal, loaded entity, with ownership coming from either my father or husband. However, my first name, despite being given to me, is the only identifier I have that belongs to me solely. Hence, viewing the memory about my name through a non-ethnocentric lens, it is apparent that there is a form of cultural racism that assigns value based on a "dominant white discourse" (Wemyss, 2009, p13) that still beats in the heart of our establishments. This was true when I was going through the education system and is still true today. Garner (2010) highlights that racism is no longer a single-tiered event, but that sophisticated nuances have evolved. Basit, McNamara, Roberts, Carrington, Maguire, and Woodrow (2007) argue that there are many facets to racism and the way in which it presents, and these can range from blatant to masked, indirect to direct, unintentional to intentional, and personalised to institutional. Moreover, they note an array of ways in which it is carried out, from verbal to physical abuse, to preventing, to deliberately sabotaging progression, and by not intervening but simply overlooking when input was needed. Chapter 2 contextualises core concepts around key dimensions of intersectionality that frame izzat, namely socio-economic factors such as class and also race (racism). Observations are noted that are central to understanding the lived experiences of the women, and equally pertinent for the rationale of choosing education as the vehicle for change.

As a young, Indian-heritage woman, I knew, and was frustrated by, the gendered differences in expectations with regards to what I could and could not do. What the memory 'self-worth' highlights is just how integrally these differences fed into my identity

as a learner and the ceilings I placed upon myself, as a result of internalising these confines. Contradictorily, my mother's belief that I could do anything I chose to do, as long as I had 'himat', demonstrates the power of self-esteem, and, moreover, the role adults play in shaping outcomes for young people, and the importance of resilience. Doherty and Hughes (2009) state that the term 'self-esteem' is about evaluating a comparison of ourselves in relation to others. Siraj-Blatchford (1994) notes that for a child to develop positive self-esteem, they need to feel accepted, and seen as being worthy of investment. Self-esteem is needed if resilience, or the ability to cope with change without breaking (Webb, 2013), is going to be developed. This is crucial because resilience plays a pivotal role in an individual's ability to be an effective learner, and also in terms of coping with change and adversity.

Thus, within chapter 4, I return to the intersecting layers of identity, equality and belonging, contextualising not only how these are constructed, but also how they are navigated by the women in the study. Moreover, issues of control and the power to encourage conformity, explicitly in relation to izzat and gender disparity, are examined, as are the physical markers of religious and 'cultural' dress adherence. Central to the construct of identity is also the concept of belonging. This has been at the forefront of current debate around academic achievement (Mountford-Zimdars et al., 2015; Neave, 2015). I changed my name in order to become part of the dominant discourse. I did not truly have a sense of belonging within education until I went to university and was given permission to view material that did not overtly 'ethnicise' me. Mirza (2009, p5) uses this term 'ethnicised' as a signifier of power, and argues that women of colour are made the 'other' through language constructed to marginalise them. Furthermore, Watson (2000) draws attention to the fact that British schools tend to have a strong ethnocentric bias which is culturally white and has white "intellectual supremacy as reflected both consciously and unconsciously in styles of teaching, teaching materials... and labelling children on basis of ethnic background" (p53).

Kegan (1994) states that change can only take place once new knowledge and skills are accepted. In addition to this, there must be a desire on the part of the individual to change "the whole way they understand themselves, their world, and the relationship between the two" (p275). However, Kegan's theory presupposes some sense of intentionality, and my argument would be that transformations occur both intentionally and unintentionally. My first catalyst was the library. If I had not accessed those books, I am not sure my desire to learn would have been kindled. This experience started my change process. However, as well as being positive, it was also negative, because it widened the gulf between me and my extended family. Ultimately, it also changed my social class. The role of class in this discussion is worthy of note, as it is a shifting

paradigm; I started my educational journey as working class but am now firmly middle class.

Whilst my father had high regard for education, there were always parameters, as the library visits memory demonstrates. This is in keeping with a number of the other narrators' parents, and fathers in particular. Education was seen as a positive because it was seen as building izzat because the families were seen as being 'liberal' by the baradari, but also through the eurocentric lens, because they have allowed their daughters to have an education. However, the journey had to be undertaken within differing boundaries, all of which had izzat laced through them. Within chapter 5, I deconstruct the layers of influence that izzat exudes at the intersection with intergenerational family and education, and particularly how parental knowledge impacts on accessing education. As an educator within the primary system, I learnt the language of mathematics, but could see how different it was to the way my father taught. Thus: was my father's mathematical knowledge really no longer useful? Or did I reject it because I was in a predominantly white school and the way in which I was being taught was different to how my father presented numerical knowledge? I was operating in a different sphere to my parents, and the system devalued what they had to offer. Robinson and Jones Diaz (2006) state that what is reflected in the classroom, and thus what is taught in the curriculum and is regarded as 'official knowledge,' is "bound up with struggles and history of class, race, ethnicity, gender ,sexuality and religious relations" (p50). Ultimately, the power relations are stacked in favour of the dominant and privileged sections of society, which when I was going through the school system certainly was not people from my class or cultural heritage.

Abrams (2010, p35) proposes that the idea of the self is 'often seen as a modern Western concept'. However, as a young person from a non- western heritage, I must have had a concept of self, or the career's interview and the maths teacher episode would not have impacted or been the important, self-defining moments for me that they were. The recollection pattern of my memories suggests these were the most pivotal moments in understanding how I was seen by those in positions of power, and how my abilities were benchmarked, because of my heritage. This essentialistic ideal, of reducing a person to a set of believed characteristics or truths, is neither helpful nor conducive to creating whole notions of self. The careers officer did not see the Sukhbinder who was well liked, who had plenty of friends, and lived quite a distance away from the school, but a Sukhbinder who was first and foremost an 'Indian' girl who supposedly already had a future mapped out. She was viewing me through a eurocentric lens and giving me a narrative. This prescribed narrative is not unique to me and my experience of the educational system; it has been highlighted in numerous studies which have documented how teachers may hold lower expectations for South

Asian girls, who are seen as 'oppressed victims' of their 'culture' (Basit, 1997b; Shain, 2003). Chapter 7 unpacks how the izzat and eurocentric lenses shape educational experiences.

Finally chapter 8 concludes with a discussion of issues raised, and a summary of the main findings of this research. Recommendations for both the educational establishment and education professionals are made. I finish this thesis with suggestions for further research that would enable a wider evidence base to be built, in order to change ineffective practice regarding outcomes for this group of women who so often are denied an individual voice.

2 Chapter Two: Contextualising and Core Concepts

This chapter is not a traditional literature review, but rather aims to provide important socio-historical context for my research, as well as introduce the four key concepts which, alongside izzat and intersectionality, I have used to interpret my data. I give a rationale for my coined term 'BIP'. Next, I present a brief historical synopsis to frame the complexity of the diasporic relationship between BIP heritages and Britain. Additionally, there is a theorising of socio-economic contexts and racism as two key elements that intersect with the izzat lens. Finally, I critically scrutinize the role of four key concepts that emerged as significant for interpreting my data, and which frame experiences and shape the educational outcomes for these particular women, specifically agency, access, attitudes, and knowledge.

a. My Term 'BIP'

Mirza (2009) draws attention to the way in which generically blanket terms such as 'black' or 'Asian' are often used to describe the experiences of a large section of the population who are different in multiple ways, such as age, socio-economic background, class/caste status, sexuality, disability, religion or culture. Equally, as Kim (2014) emphasises, "the notion of a cohesive, British Asian 'community' in itself ignores the deep national, regional, religious and class divisions that must be acknowledged within Asian diasporic cultures" (p637). Not only are the communities different, they are also divided and often at odds with each other. This common labelling and homogenising of experience is particularly pertinent to educational institutions, especially when educational statistics and data are being scrutinized. Young people who may be born and bred in Britain are given a label that not only groups their experiences as a collective but also denotes them as outsiders within Britain. Although I had issue with this labelling of widely differing experiences under one banner, that of a generic homogenised group called 'Asians', I too, had done so. Hence, in order to be true to the voices and experiences of the women in this study, the original title of "Asian women: aspiration and achievement" was rethought. I decided that the term Asian would not be used unless it was a direct quote or a paraphrasing of someone else's opinions. My term 'BIP' (for Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) heritage will be used to refer to the women when discussing collective issues or experiences. However, when addressing specific individual heritage issues (for example Bangladeshi, Indian or Pakistani), the particular term will be used. I acknowledge that the term BIP could also be deemed to be homogenising and eurocentric rather than being reflective of the discrete identities of the communities. Equally I am mindful of Wemyss' (2009) point that there are differences within the heritages themselves. However, this term is simply being used to fill a void for a collective label for collective issues. Equally voices will be

presented as individual if there are no commonalities with anyone else. If one of the narrators within this thesis uses a collective indicator such as Asian, or if another source uses a specific term, then to be true to the voice that is how it will be presented.

b. History: BIPs and Britain

An awareness of the diasporic history of BIP heritage women is central to this thesis, because despite moving halfway across the globe, there is still some sense of a cultural identity. This shared cultural identity is partially why the term BIP is useful to use when discussing collective issues. Equally this impacts on the stories they impart about themselves, the stories told about them, and the stories within which they operate. Equally, within these stories, izzat continues to play a part and, post-migration, enables a system of maintained cultural boundaries. For a number of the women, the journey from the country of origin is not one they have made themselves, because they are not first generation immigrants. Nevertheless, izzat still impacts on their lives because of the complex ways in which BIP extended family units function, something further explored in chapter 5. Hence it is useful to know where the journeys may have started for some of these women, or their families, and also the sorts of reasons for the movement.

Diasporic communities tend to occur for an assortment of reasons and this also applies to BIP migration to Britain, which is not a recent phenomenon. Visram (1986) states that the Indian subcontinent was a wealth of spices, textiles and luxury goods that Europeans coveted and traded in for over 10,000 years. She further clarifies that although small in number, there were established Asian communities in Britain long before the Second World War. These communities were made up of either the upper classes, or sailors (lascars), or indeed those who were brought to Britain as slaves or servants, Ayahs (the Asian nanny) being a prime example. Hoque (2015) highlights that even as far back as Tudor and Stuart times, there is proof of Muslims in Britain. The colonial relationship between the Indian subcontinent and the UK, starting with the East India Company in the 1600s and ending with partition in 1947, meant that “two million Indians served in the Indian Army during World War II and 24,000 died in the war” (Peach, 2006, p135). It was, however, only through the mass male migration of the 1950, and 1960s because of the (post)colonial relationship between these countries, and as a direct response to the labour shortage in Britain after the Second World War, that vast waves of movement happened. As Brah (1996) stresses, “if once the colonies had been a source of cheap raw materials, now they became a source of cheap labour” (p21). The shortages in the labour force were primarily in the roles that were unskilled and involved unsociable hours and poor wages, primarily jobs that white workers refused to do (Brah 1996).

The 1948 Nationality Act gave all British Empire subjects (both former and current) the right to live and work in Britain, but 14 years later, under the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the numbers of migrants began to be capped. The 1971 Immigration Act effectively revoked previous immigration legislation and established a rhetoric that was stronger in control mechanisms. This directly impacted on BIP women, because as the men became more settled, they had begun to send for their families, with Indian and Pakistani families reuniting in the 1960s and early 1970s, and then later in the 1970s and 1980s for Bangladeshi families. Thus, larger communities started being formed, with families from 'back home' settling in close proximity to each other. Peach (2006, p136) highlights that much of the South Asian migration to Britain was from a small number of locations and furthermore, that these settlement patterns were recreated with multiple family groups, or *baradaris*, living together. Equally of note, Brah (1999) argues that a sense of identity and community was forged through observing traditions, festivals and practices from their homelands. Whilst the gaze of the *baradari* and the hold of *izzat* was a predominantly restrictive element within the lives of many of the women, there was equally, certainly historically for some of the older women, an element of learning from each other. As everyone in the community was new to the British system and ways of doing things, there was an element of comradeship in sharing knowledge, because they were all outsiders together. With stricter immigration controls came more stringent enforcement, where women waiting to join husbands were 'interviewed' in order to prove legitimate right of abode. Parmar (1982) argues that this policy, alongside that of examinations of women wanting to join their fiancées' in Britain, to see if they were virgins, amounted to racist violence. Furthermore, she stresses that the tests were "racist and sexist assumptions" based on a stereotype that claimed that "Asian women from the subcontinent are always virgins" (p245). This was detrimental to the women in more than one way. If found not to be a virgin, it would impact on her *izzat* and that of the family, perhaps even lead to her marriage breaking down. Arguably, however, the largest impact of this legislation was that of othering these women: BIP heritage women being viewed through a particular lens whether or not they wanted to be. This idea of a predetermined story, or 'prescribed narrative', is discussed in more depth in chapter 7. To many first generation BIPs their 'visit' or journey to Britain was envisioned to be only a short-term action. They would earn money and subsequently return 'home'. Thus, many of these immigrants put up with discrimination and suffering because they saw them as temporary (Bhachu, 1991). As Stock (2010, p24) posits, at the very heart of this journey there is the image of 'home' remembered. Thus 'home' has become a romanticised ideal because these women only remember things in terms of what

Rushdie (1983) refers to as a “fragmentary broken mirror” (p43). This mirror is built up from a mosaic of memories that have more than a hint of nostalgia. These pieces of the mosaic come together in a system of signs, and a system that has no real significance to second and subsequent generations in Britain. The home that the first generation nostalgically recall is not the place it was when they left; however, it is enshrined in a time vacuum and is forever an imaginary ideal that all have to live up to. The first generation remember the India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh of their youth, and some refuse to accept that things ‘back home’ have changed. Intergenerational tensions are played out because young people’s lives in these countries of origin, like the rest of the world, have been impacted by globalisation and technology. However, first generational nostalgia and value systems are constantly fed by Bollywood (Indian’s primary film industry), which perpetuates ideals of womanhood and social hierarchical order. Meera Syal, an India heritage British actress, recalling how she spent a large proportion of her life trying to be ‘a good Indian woman’, one who refrained from ‘bad’ western habits involving drinking, smoking or having affairs, highlights the fiction of this nostalgic vision:

“Then you visit India (Delhi or Bombay) and everybody’s dating and drinking. And still they consider themselves 100 per cent Indian because they live there. They know who they are”. (Mackenzie, 1996, p71)

This difference between first and subsequent generations is not just about memories of home, but also the very notion of what, or where, home actually is. ‘Belonging’ is further explored in chapter 5.

Stock (2010, p24) discusses diasporic experiences in terms of first generational memories of migrating to a ‘new home’ and the comparison with subsequent generations for whom there never has been any other home. The Swann report (1985) began the dialogue of the appropriateness of referring to minority ethnic people as immigrants, since significant numbers were born and brought up within Britain. The report stressed that “they belong here; they are here to stay and to play their part in the life of their country” (p8). Yet 33 years since the report, subsequent generations within communities that are visibly different are still viewed, by some, through a racist lens and allocated an identity of being foreign, based on skin colour rather than place of birth; a brown-skinned person cannot be English. Holding a British passport does not give them the right to ‘belong’ to Britain. This highlights the eurocentric lens with which people of BIP heritage are often viewed and othered. Wade (2014) suggests that this ideology was constructed by dominant European nations at the time of colonialism. Furthermore, that order was

“conceptually organized in accordance with European notions of who was civilized (and Christian) and who was savage (and pagan or infidel), notions that later developed into theories about human evolution, in which European societies figured as superior.” (p591)

This theme, of othering and lack of belonging based on colour, emerged not only from the voices of the BIP heritage women in this thesis; it is also something that has been discussed widely in the literature (Weiner, 1985; Wemyss, 2009; Modood, 2010; Race, 2015). However, more limited within the literature is the notion that worth based on colour evolved not only because of a system created and given credence by both people and institutions, such as those involving education, but also, and just as importantly, by belief sets held, in a subconscious way, by BIP heritage communities themselves. Whilst migration has enabled the emergence of amalgamated cultures, there is a great social and political division which has bred mistrust, lack of equity of opportunity, and socio-cultural panic, particularly centred on religion and gender (Keddie, 2011). This polarisation of communities has steadily divided individuals, and alongside this, there is the emergence of perceived ‘good’ and ‘bad’ ethnic minorities, which is drawn primarily on religious and integratory lines.

c. Socio-Economic Intersections

There are multiple facets to the way in which class intersects with other factors to impact on the educational journeys of this group of women. This is particularly evidenced through socio-economic impact, specifically, poverty. Poverty is discussed theoretically here, and its impact is demonstrated throughout the thesis. The knowledge acquired as part of being/or gaining middle class status which then informs the izzat lens towards education, is discussed fully within chapter 7. Arguably, in the 21st century in a multicultural UK, cultural mediation, or understanding their own place within different communities, will play a part in the lives of many minority ethnic people. These people have roots in other countries, but have only called Britain ‘home’. This cultural mediation is not within a silo but is itself impacted by a number of economic and social issues such as housing, employment and poverty. Harrison and Phillips (2010) suggest that historically, “minority ethnic households often ended up in inferior dwellings or areas” (p20) because of little choice in the housing stock. Recent migrants would generally move into areas with others of a similar heritage and also areas that had been “abandoned by white households moving to the suburbs” (p20). Whilst this picture of deprivation continues for a large number of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage families, there is a pronounced difference for Indian heritage households, in that some are moving into high status neighbourhoods and traditionally non-Asian “white areas” (p28).

Hence data such as that from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2016), which highlights disparity in outcomes for families primarily dependent on their heritage, needs to be critically examined, in order to shed light on the extent to which there is a causal relationship between women with a BIP heritage and the level of success of their educational journey. This is particularly pertinent to those from a Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage who are working class. The same data is particularly stark in relation to comparisons between BIP heritage people and those who are white. When examining those who were more likely to be living in poverty, the EHRC (2016) suggest figures of 35.7% of minority ethnic people, compared to 17.2% of white people. The figures are further broken down into 24.6% for Indian heritage and 43.9% for Pakistani/Bangladeshi heritage. However, when looking specifically at children living in poverty, Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage households had particularly high rates (41.9%) compared with white households (24.5%). The data is also extremely troublesome when considering families living in overcrowded accommodation in England (for example 30.9% of Pakistani/ Bangladeshi heritage and 21.1% of Indian heritage, compared to 8.3% of white). Poverty and living in overcrowded conditions were not the only discrepancies highlighted by EHRC (2016) data. Between 2011 and 2014, the percentage of BIP heritage workers in low-paid jobs increased by 12.7%, in comparison to only an increase of 1.8% for white workers. Furthermore, unemployment rates for Pakistani/Bangladeshi heritage were 17.3%, and for Indian heritage were 9.2%, in comparison to 6.3% for white people. Moreover analysis of this data indicates that working class Muslim women had the worst employment outcomes. However, this data requires closer critique. Firstly, an examination centred on why the Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritages are clumped together. Secondly, when considering employment outcomes, individuals themselves need to be taken into account. Whilst the data posits that Muslim women have poorer employment outcomes, to truly understand the complexity of this situation, credence must be paid to *izzat* and the role this plays concerning what BIP heritage women, particularly within the realms of employment, are 'allowed' to do within patriarchal confines. This deeper and more informed consideration will be undertaken within chapter 6.

Whitebread and Bingham (2012) confirm that poverty affects a significant number of all children in the UK, and the Child Poverty Action Group (2017) places the figure at four million. This in turn impacts on what is referred to as children's learning 'readiness' (Mashburn & Pianta, 2010). Education has been seen by many governments as a vital tool to reduce disadvantage and to tackle unequal social access. Furthermore, as Leach (2011) informs, the best way to help parents into paid work, and also to tackle poverty and disadvantage, is to provide good early childcare. However, Moss (2013) firmly claims that education is not a magic key, and that change can only take place if

governments firstly tackle entrenched disparities within society that cause problems of access. To this end, interventions such as the introduction of Sure Start Children's Centres in 1997 "serving the 30% most deprived communities" (House of Commons, 2010) were put in place. However, it should be noted that they were cut by subsequent governments. Despite this, the reality is that those most in need, such as families experiencing worklessness, and some BIP heritage communities, are not fully accessing the support; this is true even after the tightening of the remit to target support by the then coalition government in 2011 (Lord, Southcott, & Sharp, 2011). This lack of access to this type of intervention comes as a result of many factors, which include lack of knowledge regarding what is available and, equally, how to access it, but my data suggests there is also some reticence about putting children into school too early.

Abbas (2007) stresses that ethnic minorities from poorer inner-city areas are "potentially less likely to be seen as desirable 'commodities' by teachers" (p87) and, of equal note, the geographical area itself is at increased risk of "segregation as white parents choose to remove their children" (p87) from schools that have a larger cohort of ethnic minorities. This, he argues, results in the marginalisation and disadvantage of many Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage parents, culminating in lower levels of cultural capital. Ultimately, this impacts on not only the development of agency, but also the expression of it. Caul (2015) states that the highest infant mortality rates in the UK are amongst those who are of Pakistani heritage. This is followed closely by Bangladeshi heritage babies. She suggests a link with multiple disadvantage, including living in an area of high deprivation. This cycle of deprivation, which is reinforced by figures from the Cabinet Office (2017) that show that about 3 in every 10 Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage people live in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods, means that it is very hard for families to escape the impact of poverty on their ability to access and indeed breach the class divide.

Analysis by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016) suggests that children from poorer families living in poorer areas start to fall academically behind their peers before the age of five. This is reinforced by data from Cabinet Office (2017) that highlights that children of Pakistani heritage in particular lag behind other children when they come to school. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, an assessment completed by the end of the first year of school, suggests that in percentage terms, 59% of Pakistani heritage, 62% of Bangladeshi heritage, and 73% of Indian heritage children, compared to 70% of White British children, meet the expected standards in development. Furthermore, data, again from the Department for Education (DFE) (2016), highlights the difference in achievement of A* -C in GCSE results for Maths and English. The figures again indicate that Pakistani heritage children are falling behind with only 58%

achieving this. The data is more positive for Bangladeshi heritage children who have 67%, which is above the figures for White British children at 63%. The figures for Indian heritage for this same metric are significantly better, at 77%. Berry and Loke (2011) highlight that Bangladeshi and Pakistani applicants to HE, in comparison to both other minority ethnic groups and white entrants, tend to come from low-participation areas. A link between low participation and poorer neighbourhoods maybe pertinent when accounting for the fact that approximately 25% of Bangladeshi, and 18% of Pakistani household income came from benefits and tax credits (Cabinet Office, 2017). Basit (2012) stresses that university fees alongside other costs mean that any aspiration for gaining social mobility is decreased for working class, minority ethnic youths. Whilst some of this discrepancy in achievement can be explained by issues of poverty, an intersectional approach regarding multiple disadvantages that then cumulate in lack of access needs to be adopted to fully comprehend the true picture.

d. Racism

1985 saw the Swann committee publish its report *Education for All*, which highlighted that major changes needed to be made within the education system. The report stressed that the issue was not about how to educate ethnic minority children, but how to educate every child about living in a society that was both multiracial and multicultural. It further stressed that racism, in all of its guises, should be challenged. That was over thirty years ago, and yet the debate, and issue, continues. Thus I explore racism, as a construct that both directly and indirectly impacts the lives of the women in this study, from the way they are presented, to their experiences in an educational system that is built on the premise of white privilege and executed by a predominantly white workforce. There are different expressions of racism, and this feeds into a wider discussion, undertaken within chapter 4, about ideals of nationalism and identity. The notion that racism can create difference and hierarchies, and thus impact on life chances, constitutes this subsection of this chapter.

Wade (2014, p589) states that the meaning of the word 'race' has changed, and what is meant by it now is not what it denoted 50, 100, or 500 years ago. He further stresses that the notion of race "starts to emerge at the historical moment when Europeans encounter and colonize other geographical areas of the world" (p591). Berman and Paradies (2010) stress that racism is a "combination of prejudice and power" (p216). Basit et al. (2007) argue that "it can be a consequence of malice, jealousy, frustration, ignorance and lack of knowledge, or merely apathy" (p280). Bonilla-Silva (1997) depicts racism as: "a social system" which places people in "racial categories, which involves some form of hierarchy" (p469) that also creates inequality in life chances. Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami (2010) note three core components to racism: a social acceptance that people can be compartmentalised through perceived racial

features; that those features enable placement on human race hierarchies; and that racism beyond simple prejudices translates into social power structures that create advantage, but at the expense of another group through culturally accepted “social norms, policies, and laws.” (p312). Berman and Paradies (2010) argue that oppression has always been “intrinsically linked to the phenomenon of privilege” (p216). They further explain that as well as hindering minority ethnic groups, racism equally enables groups such as whites to amass privilege and advantages that have not been earned.

I. Impact of Racism on the Lives of the Women

Poteat & Spanierman (2012 p759) postulate that modern racism has evolved from strong and blatant expressions into a more subtle form of prejudice. They go on to argue that “modern racism attitudes assert that racial discrimination no longer occurs in contemporary society”. This is a very common sentiment and the argument that society has evolved from the ‘dark’ days of racism is a ‘double-edged sword’. Modood (2010) develops this point, suggesting that racism is a concept that has evolved. He posits that racism has passed through phases and gives the example of the “colour-racism of the 1950s” morphing into the “cultural-racism in the 1990s” (p37). This form of racism is a more emblematic one, whereby a whole faction of society is given a set of traits and characteristics that are deemed to be undesirable, and so those fitting the traits are othered.

Racism was frequently cited by many of the women whilst narrating their stories. They voiced that racism had affected their lives in some way or another. It was disproportionately more the Pakistani heritage and Bangladeshi heritage women who cited racism when talking about white people. Their experiences were varied, as were their perceptions of those experiences. Sadia, for example, did not even use the word racism, but referred to it as ‘**snide comments**’. This link was made in her subsequent comments. Leonardo and Grubb (2014) argue that the school curriculum does not simply reflect race creation, but is a concrete part of creating race. They suggest that this is because race-making is about “learned social relations”, which in turn means that “as a “social construction”, race is ultimately not about people’s biological or genetic make-up, but how physical markers, for example the colour of a person’s skin, are used to decide “something about human worth, intelligence, and respect.” (p17). Jones (1999) cites interviews with trainee teachers within the UK in which they suggest a lack of racism because they did not notice colour. This ‘colour blind’ approach, Jones argues, is in itself a form of racism, because there is a lack of acknowledgement of the child’s cultural heritage. Jones’ point is valid because in a multicultural and multifaith society, it is simplistic to assume that there is any uniformity in the beliefs and practices of different cultures simply because they share a skin tone. However, it is also

problematic because colour blind racism also presumes this uniformity for people with different skin tones. Furthermore, Knowles and Ridley (2005, p1) highlight that racism is seen in mainly white communities as something that means people are treated differently because of the colour of their skin. They argue that other forms of racism such as “simplistic or patronising attitudes” are equally “damaging”. They further highlight that a “one size fits all” approach are equally damaging, as they prevent children from acknowledging and expressing all aspects of their heritage. Thus there is a fine line to trend between homogenising groups and understanding the nuanced experiences and impact of racism on people’s lives. This homogenisation is one of the key issues in the lives of the women in this thesis.

Within the educational system, there is often more preoccupation with the labelling of an incident than with its intent and fallout. Yet a racist incident can lead an individual to feel marginalised or excluded, and these feelings are compounded when it is experienced in childhood. Pearce (2014, p388) cites the BBC (2012) as stating that numbers of logged racist incidents in schools increased between 2007 and 2010, some areas reporting an increase of 40%. Pearce (2014, p389) further highlights that some popular media perpetuates an ill-informed discourse which tends to lack understanding about the purpose of logging incidents, and they only label extreme and violent acts as racism, “rather than [understanding it as] a subtle and pervasive feature of our social structures”. Troyna and Hatcher (1992) suggest that racist name-calling amongst children can be broken down into two elements. These elements are “hot and nonstrategic” whereby racist name calling is done in the “heat” of the moment and “regretted” almost immediately, and “strategic and cold” whereby it is used “as a routine part of their repertoire of interactional strategies” (p116). An example of how insidious this type of racism can be is demonstrated by Jeevan:

I used to get called like Paki and you know just like, like little comments that would make me feel really bad. It was just like students in the same year as me. But like, our school as teachers didn't really do much about it. I think they used, they used to like sit you down and talk to you, but I think it just caused it to go a little bit more as well. They used to keep doing it constantly so...

For Jeevan there was a sense that the teachers made the situation worse rather than better, because rather than addressing the situation holistically, with everyone involved, they singled out Jeevan to be spoken to. Equally for Rodela, racism became a part of her daily life:

There were only about five Asians in my school. It was just the thing to be racist and after a while you just cope with it. It doesn't bother you after a while.

Rodela blames the racism on the fact that there were only a handful of ‘Asians’ in her school. She accepted the racism as a part of life because of the lack of numbers of

others who looked like her. Thus, by 'just' coping with it, she almost accepts responsibility for it happening. Taani states a similar sentiment:

Obviously you tend to get the odd few racist comments but I tend to ignore them. I wouldn't take it to heart.

Taani's words are nonchalant on the surface, that is, the idea of something said in a probably hurtful manner not actually being hurtful. However, perhaps what she means is that she has become fairly desensitized to it, so she is able to distance herself from the words themselves. This distancing of self from the full intent of the words is not uncommon. This can apply equally to perpetrators; for example, I have had students admit to using the term 'paki shop' without understanding fully, or perhaps not acknowledging the loaded intention. This is a point that Jaanki discusses:

Just little kids, yeah they don't even know their alphabet or nothing about life and for them to turn around and say these things like "oie you paki" it really offends me yeah cos. first of all I'm not one, and even if I was one, they shouldn't say it like that. It just makes you want turn around and slap them and I'm not even a violent person.....Two old ladies walking along in front of me and one turns to the other one and says don't go in there, that's a paki shop. That's where kids get it. They're supposed to learn [good things] from the old people.

For Jaanki, the words are problematic, and she has not become desensitized to them. She is upset on a number of levels. Firstly, that she is denoted as being a 'paki' when she has a non-Pakistani heritage. Secondly, for her, the shock factor is that intergenerational angle; older people should be both wiser themselves and sources of wisdom, something particularly pertinent to the structure of izzat which suggests respect for elders, but also that, in turn, elders teach wisdom.

Noor suggests that level of education also makes a difference to whether people are prone to racism. She voices:

I'm very lucky that they've never had that [racism] problem. But again I think because of the people that they've mixed with, educated people, who are not ignorant who... so they've never been put in that position where they've had to experience abuse or racism or... So um, so I've been quite lucky in that way but it's all down to education again.

Noor associates racism with a lack of education, and specifically in this case a classist lens. This is highlighted through her suggestion that one of the reasons for putting both of her children through private school was to prevent contact with those who are 'ignorant'. Furthermore, Noor says:

"Thankfully, she doesn't look Asian, my daughter doesn't look Asian because she's so fair, and she has very light coloured hair, so she doesn't look Asian, so I've never really had that problem for her."

Noor's comments raise a number of points. Firstly, that she herself has experienced racism. Secondly, in an effort to ensure that her children do not experience what she

did, she utilises the knowledge she has. In her eyes, it is “ignorant” or non-educated people who perpetuate racism, and they are usually of lower classes. So by putting her children into establishments that are deemed to be for the children of either wealthy or better-educated individuals, she is minimizing risk. Finally, Noor evokes ‘unwitting racism’ (Archer & Francis, 2005) herself, by suggesting that because her daughter is fair and does not look ‘Asian’, there is something to be ‘thankful’ for, the assumption being that being fair, and thus closer to white, is better because you can then ‘fit in’ and so avoid any issues. The importance of the shade of one’s skin and its impact on self- and others’ perceptions is also mentioned by Asha, who says:

“The other thing that we (sisters) used to, sort of, say to ourselves or amongst ourselves was, like, ‘Oh, OK, we’re really lucky, actually (surprise), because God made us just the right colour.’ Like, so, the black people are, sort of, overdone, in a way...and white people are underdone...”

Whilst this is on some level a more positive representation because instead of presenting herself, and others like her, as deficient she is arguing that everyone else is, it is still a hierarchy based on skin tone. As an inverse of this, racism for some of the Indian heritage women centred on the idea of being seen to be a different colour on the ‘inside’ by your own ‘baradari’. This concept of ‘coconutism’ is discussed in chapter 4.

e. The Four Pillars

This section of the chapter considers four pillars that intersect and influence the educational trajectories of marriage and employment for the women within this thesis. These four pillars are themselves culturally and socially constructed. Each pillar is in itself a mixture of non-isolatable factors which influence and inform others so that there is an intricate interwoven intersecting tapestry, which in turn adds another layer of complexity when trying to decipher the exact extent of influence of individual pillars. Therefore, I consider each of the pillars in turn, exploring what they represent, whilst being mindful of the Bronfenbrenner model’s (1979) suggested layers of influence. By applying an izzat lens to the process, I unravel the multiple strands that the women in this study have to navigate. Equally, there is a consideration of how each of the pillars relates to the educational trajectories of marriage and employment. The four pillars are theorised here, and also applied to the discussions in chapters 4 to 7.

I. Agency

Biesta and Tedder (2006) state that, within sociology, there is a great deal of discussion and angst associated with the actual meaning of the terms ‘agency’ and ‘social structure’, and a lack of shared understanding of exactly what they represent. However, as an educationalist, I take agency to mean an individual’s possession of the ability to act independently and make choices. Social structure, for the purpose of this

thesis, comprises those elements that impinge on the individual's ability to make those choices and decisions, such as izzat and the correlating, intersecting factors of family, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, colour and culture. It is acknowledged that everyone's agency has restrictions, and all choices and actions (even when seemingly independent and free) take place within a social and cultural context. However, pertinent to this group of women is that izzat directly correlates with how agency is permitted and shaped in relation to the men in their lives. Moreover, this is distilled through a eurocentric lens by western educationists to propagate the image of the 'ethnicised' passive woman. This in turn impacts on the ideal of education as a vehicle to enable agency development (Biesta & Tedder 2006). The narrators in this research discussed their levels of autonomy and how much control they felt they had to determine their educational journey and its outcomes with regards to either marriage or employment. I suggest that agency was restricted by izzat both overtly and covertly: overtly through the patriarchal gaze of the baradari, but covertly through the essentialistic actions of the educational establishment.

Agency is often conceptualised as three strands: individual, proxy, and collective (Hewson, 2010). Individual agency tends to be seen as located within the person, proxy agency tends to be on behalf of the individual, and collective agency can be about people acting together. Interestingly, Hogan (2005) makes the point that agency for a child is often positioned externally rather than internally, because children are deemed to be dependent and "passive" (p27). This positioning of agency could be extended from children to BIP heritage women too. This is because of the structure of izzat, which could be seen as male agency determining female agency, and which can result in women being infantilized in society, particularly inside those parts of it where izzat operates. This is especially pertinent in terms of self-determination, as women are expected to behave in a certain way by not just the baradari but also by some in the educational community. Thus the lenses (of izzat and eurocentricism) constructs them in particular ways and means that they have to navigate representations and assumptions that are different to how they see themselves. However, agency can be seen through their ability to act as agents to enable either siblings or their own children to be able to have more agency earlier than they themselves had. This is in line with what Anitha and Gill (2011) argue are the heterogeneous ways in which minority ethnic women challenge confining circumstances.

Jahan (2011) states that despite being tied, both religiously and culturally, to the label and influence of gender, and to an immigrant identity, BIP heritage, and particularly Bangladeshi heritage women, should be seen as agents who have endeavoured to transform oppressive social norms, whilst at the same time conforming to them. She explains further that:

“Agency in their narratives is not a simple matter of resistance or choice. It is rather about the strategies that women all over the world use to lead their lives in their own ways. In their view, these women are not victims of Bangladeshi patriarchal ideology and of Muslim religion, but agents who transform the social norms oppressive to them”. (p380).

This, Jahan argues, is about women having agency to live tactically within set parameters, rather than simply contravening them. She draws on the work of Bhabha (1994) who discusses something called “migrant ‘agency’”, a space between marginalised migrant cultures and colonisers. This is a space where the marginalised can speak up to the oppressor. However, this is an incomplete explanation that is misguided because it is based on binaries; it is not simply about one type of oppression. Thus I argue that whilst this notion of ‘speaking back’ could be applicable to some of the BIP heritage women narrating their stories in this thesis, it is not the case for all, particularly those who have fewer educational qualifications, or those who have limited interaction with any community other than the community that their heritage ascribes them to. Furthermore, a reductionist approach which argues that a binary exists between migrant and ‘coloniser’ is counterproductive. Using an intersectional approach, I show that the reality is that it is more than simply about being marginalised by a single dominant structure but by being disadvantaged on multiple platforms. For some of the women in this thesis, particularly those with limited educational qualifications, there are very few spaces in contemporary British society that they are allowed legitimately to occupy. Equally, their voices are not heard by educationalists and policy makers, and the opportunities for them to create a sense of autonomy, one that is independent of the family unit, are limited. Brah (1996) suggests that ‘structure, culture and agency’ are linked and are ‘mutually inscribing formations’ (p443). By this, Brah is suggesting that culture is not a fixed notion but actually a process, and it is through this process that both meaning and understanding is drawn. This explains how BIP women continuously occupy numerous positions from which they then navigate and ultimately articulate their identity.

What Brah and Jahan have not affirmed is that izzat is not just about male dominance, but is a whole system of oppression of which male hierarchy is only one element. Izzat is not only a socio- cultural system but also the lens through which the world and everything in it is constructed. This system of oppression is built into the gaze of the community and thus curtails the ability to be able to have a voice on issues that are meaningful with regards to the development and enhancement of agency. Women are ‘allowed’ to make choices but within parameters, or as I have coined it, liberation but within a box.

Lack of voice, in combination with other factors of oppression may account for official data which shows that the proportion of adults in England at risk of poor mental health

was higher amongst Pakistani/Bangladeshi heritage respondents than either Indian heritage or white respondents. More alarming was that the higher rate for Pakistani/Bangladeshi heritage people was primarily amongst women, 28.2% of whom were at risk of poor mental health, compared with 17.4% of white women. The figures indicated a percentage rise between 2008 and 2012 for Pakistani/Bangladeshi women by 6.5%, whereas there was a decrease in the figure for Indian heritage women by - 1.7% (EHRC, 2016.) Whilst there are many factors that influence the onset of mental health issues, arguably lack of agency in combination with other factors such as the environment within which people live, levels of disposable income, educational levels and positive relationships within families and communities do impact; however, a lack of research makes it difficult to draw conclusive evidence either way.

II. Access

Access for the purpose of this thesis is much richer than simply 'getting into', it is more about the multifaceted elements that prevent individuals from gaining the full benefit of education and educational opportunities. Access to and achievement within education can be seen on many different levels; however, issues of access are not restricted to just compulsory schooling, but also to post-16 and higher education. It could be argued that compulsory education (such as primary and secondary) at the very least should create automatic access to achievement; however, this is not necessarily the case, despite research suggesting that starting school at an early age, as in the UK system, can dramatically decrease the impact of poverty (Sharp, 2002). However, in order for the effect of education to make a difference to outcomes, education has to be accessible to all. There is an issue of inclusion and exclusion both in overt and covert ways and from a number of sources that include the family, the baradari and educational establishments. Although it has to be acknowledged that class does play a role within access issues, it is also about perceptions of different heritages, and particularly those with strong religious affiliations. Ultimately, if there is a sense of being prevented from achieving, or if indeed the structures within education prevent people from achieving, then clearly access is an issue.

Platt (2007) argues that a lack of access feeds into the cycle of poor educational achievement, which in turn means poorer paid jobs, or worklessness and poverty. Indeed, this lack of access, or to put it another way, exclusion from the mainstream, results in some being insiders and some being outsiders. Moreover, lack of access is directly related to a lack of knowledge of how institutions function, and equally it manifests in a multitude of ways both overt and covert. These range from limited access to services, through a lack of knowledge of the system, to a lack of access to additional support. The impact of this includes: racism; limited life opportunities and

expectations; engagement with the content of the curriculum; degree classifications; and lack of or limited employment possibilities. Lack of access is experienced by all three BIP heritages. However, there are differences between the heritages with regards to the severity of the impact, and this is a direct result of the intersections with class and religion. This intersection particularly for the Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women who wear a hijab, means that they experience the most overt forms of exclusion because they are visibly seen as different. However, for the Indian heritage women, the emphasis is on the sophisticated nuances, or to put it another way, the covert elements, such as not having access to quality careers or educational progression routes advice.

Discrepancy of access is also seen in a comparison of numbers of BIP heritage students in Russell group universities with post-92 ones. Significantly more BME students 'chose' to attend a post-92 university, which is usually in their locality, than an 'elite' one (Sims, 2007; Bhopal, 2015). The Elevations Network (2012) suggests that 40% of BME university students go to Russell Group universities, and 60% go to post-92s. (They do not clarify whether international students were used in the data set.) Equally notable is the fact that the bulk of the 40% Russell group universities attended by BME students are based in London based (Miller, 2016). The Russell Group (2015) lays the blame at the feet of the communities themselves, arguing that the numbers are small because they have a smaller 'pool' to draw from, as the number of BME students with higher results at 'A' level are limited. They argue that in order to improve access to "leading" (p2) universities, the attainment gap created before university should be addressed. However, because of the number of intersecting barriers as demonstrated throughout this thesis, the reality of access for many Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage young women is that they will, most likely, only be able to attend their local higher education establishment. The purpose of higher education is ultimately viewed by many in the BIP communities as a means to getting a particular job or better marriage prospects, and so where you go is less important. However, with gaining educational capital or knowledge, particularly for the Indian heritage women, there is an evolvement with regards to status linked to which university you attend.

III. Attitude

Parental attitude towards education, and belief in the transformative power of it can be significant for academic success (Fuligni, 1997; Spera, Wentzel, & Matto, 2009). Carter-Wall and Whitfield (2012) found that parents who lacked the practical knowledge to support their children, or who had "negative attitudes" (p6) impacted on the children's attitude towards education. Thus this pillar is a composite of a number of

elements. It is not just about how the women expressed ideas about themselves in relation to agency, autonomy, or aspiration, but also about what they deem their identity to be, and how that is constructed within the limitations of izzat. Furthermore, it is about their own attitudes towards education, and the attitudes that have framed their educational journeys: those attitudes of the key influencers at a micro-level, such as parents, friends and teachers, and the macro-level influencers, such as the baradari. This is particularly pertinent when examining the role of attitude towards education for/of girls, and whether there should be a ceiling placed on that. This feeds into the attitude towards not only how far girls should be educated, but also in which locality, and which subjects should be studied if moving to further and higher education. Clearly then, attitude as a pillar cuts across the others, because an influencer can make or break the success of an educational journey. Furthermore, when the attitude of a parent, gatekeeper, or baradari does not coincide with the attitude of the BIP heritage woman concerned, there is greater scope for conflict or a sense of loss of autonomy, or agency. Ultimately, this attitude impacted on not only how far they, the women, were allowed to be educated but also how much they actually got out of their education. Severiens and Wolff (2008) postulate that feeling some sense of cohesion within the learning environment and with peers and teachers, means that individuals are more likely to complete their studies with positive outcomes. In other words, 'those who feel at home' (Severiens and Wolff, 2008, p254) will reap positive outcomes. However this feeling of belonging only occurs if an individual feels that they have enough knowledge to be able to fully fit in and utilise opportunities.

IV. Knowledge

My data suggests that whilst achievement is partly explained by feeling comfortable and able to fit in, it is also about how education, the educational system and roles and responsibilities, are viewed, shared, understood and utilised by the women, parents, the baradari and the educational settings themselves. Accordingly, knowledge is a key concept because its impact is manifold. A lack of knowledge can mean that there is isolation from the different elements of the system (in this case the wider educational system including policies and procedures), and equally the system itself does not provide enough overt access, (and so knowledge of) for groups that are operating on the fringe. Educational attainment data is in the public domain, but as Francis, Skelton, and Read (2012) suggest, unless parents have "sufficient cultural and financial capital" (p2) to understand the plethora of statistics, and equally have knowledge of how to decode them, having the data does not make a difference. Research by Carter-Wall and Whitfield (2012) found that parents from lower socio- economic backgrounds especially, had limited knowledge because of poor access to appropriate support, advice and information. Since knowledge is often acquired through action, as in

experiencing something and learning from it, or through a scaffolded approach which involves elements of guidance from and collaboration with a more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978), the cycle of deprivation is not broken.

A knowledge of systems and how they operate allows for the development of cultural capital, which is gaining understanding about information, which in turn allows for access and ultimately allows the development of insider knowledge. Ultimately, this insider knowledge in turn enables social mobility, and the ability to extend the barriers for the inclusion of siblings, wider family and even their own children. This pillar, similarly to the others, is about whether the women and /or influencers have sufficient knowledge about and understanding of the educational system. Equally, it is about whether the parents have knowledge regarding their expected role, by the educational establishment, in terms of educational support. Clearly, knowledge about the system and how it works gives an advantage to those that can utilise that. It is very apparent how the complexity of the intersections of class, ethnicity, racism and culture fit within this discussion. Whilst other factors make the experience difficult and may possibly demotivate the women, it is knowledge that gives the women access to at least begin the journey.

f. Summary

I have provided a socio-historical overview which demonstrates the importance to my research of understanding the context of migratory journeys. I gave a rationale for my coined term 'BIP' whilst acknowledging that it too could be used in a reductionist way. I theorised both the socio-economic parameters and racism as two key elements that intersect with izzat to impact on the quality of the educational journey for this group of women. I introduced agency, access, attitude and knowledge as four key concepts which, alongside izzat and intersectionality, I use to interpret my data. These four core concepts work both separately and together to intersect and inform the two trajectories of educational achievement which are marriage and employment. Moreover, the pillars are also intersected with other key elements, such as socio-economic status and racism, both of which have been critically dismantled in relation to the social group in question. The next chapter contextualises the research methodology.

3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology

In this chapter, I explain how this research was conceived, and the complexities of designing and conducting it. I state my epistemological stance, and then explain my philosophical and theoretical perspective. This explanation includes a substantial discussion of the role played by voice. I give a rationale for the suitability of my methodological approach. A discussion of my research methods follows, inclusive of the development of the conceptual framework that is my main analytical tool, in line with Ravitch and Riggan (2017). A pictorial representation of my conceptual framework, a tool to make sense of the context within which the women's journeys were undertaken, went through several iterations, and the process is explained in detail because it was the mechanism I used to fully understand not only how themes were emerging from the data but also how my understanding of those themes was developing. The chapter concludes with a discussion on ethics, confidentiality and the notion of integrity. Denscombe (2014) argues that the fundamental principle of any research should be that the participants are not harmed in any way by taking part. Since the BIP heritage women have to negotiate a space in a life where izzat is omnipresent, all three of these notions are overarching, and so require due attention.

a. Epistemological Stance, Ontological Positioning and Truth

As noted, this thesis focuses on the experiences of members of three particular groups that are not always visible, not only within British society, but also to the communities or baradari within which they sit. Moreover, it is about untangling the layers of assumptions that have shaped the various lenses, particularly izzat, through which they are seen both internally (within their communities) and externally (by the general public and particularly educational establishments). My view of reality, or my ontological stance, is that there is not a single, universal truth. Therefore, there is no notion here of a single, universal 'truth' being uncovered. I am giving voice to experiences, not seeking truth, since the truths are multiple and personalised. This stance informs my constructivist epistemological positioning. As Crotty (1998) suggests "constructionism claims that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (p43). Whilst there is the 'truth' of the impact of izzat on their educational journeys, it is subtle and different for each of the women and at different stages of their lives and journeys. Giorgio (2009) stressed that "one's retelling of the narrative offers a certain assertion of authority over the experience" (p157) and thus there will be several versions of the 'truth': the narrator's truth, the researcher's truth, and also the truth of the reader of the thesis. Ultimately this thesis is about 'voice': how

I can respectfully hear their voices whilst ensuring that I do not speak on behalf of these women.

As this research is “about individuals and how those individuals see the (and operate within that) world” (Newby, 2010, p509), a phenomenographical stance needed to be considered. Trigwell (2006) explains that phenomenography is a “second order approach” (p370), meaning that the researcher creates a description of a phenomenon after it has been described by the person who experienced it. Bamwesiga, Fejes and Dahlgren (2013) stress that “individuals vary with regard to how they experience, conceptualise, understand, perceive and apprehend various phenomena in the surrounding world” (p340). Thus, if phenomenography is the way different individuals view their world, and also how they conceptualise and make sense of different phenomena around them (rather than studying the phenomena itself), then it stands to reason, from an ontological perspective, that the phenomena and those experiencing the phenomena are not separate entities. However, a limitation of this approach for the purpose of this research is that it ultimately seeks not to present the “richness of individual experience” but instead desires to collate experiences under a limited number of categories.

My experience of my educational journey is unique and cannot be used to describe anyone else’s journey, and likewise, the way the narrators experienced the phenomenon of their educational journey is unique to each of them. But there will be some similarities because the journeys have common elements. This is discussed by Gray (2014, p20), who examines the constructivist stance that suggests “subjects construct their own meaning in different ways” and that this can even be in relation to “the same phenomenon”, so that, essentially, “multiple contradictory but equally valid accounts of the world can exist”. Furthermore, as Trigwell (2006) acknowledges, “the researcher may not agree (or even feel comfortable) with the described experience of the phenomenon, but they are recorded and included as a valid experience” (p370).

b. Theoretical Perspective

A positivist approach suggests facts and statistical knowledge (Vargai-Dobai, 2012) and patterns, regularities, causes and consequences that can be observed and predicted (Patton, 2002; Denscombe, 2014). However, this research is situated within the interpretivist paradigm, and is a small scale qualitative study based on how the narrators construct their reality. Moreover, it is about the richness of language and dialogue. Davies and Hughes (2014) postulate the interpretivist approach stems from an ontological assumption that there are many ways of understanding the world. This then translates into the idea that reality is very much a subjective concept: the uniqueness of each human experience but also that reality and the recollection of past

realities is very subjective, but as Bold (2012) stresses it is also a process by which individuals can enable sensemaking processes to take place.

Postmodernism challenges the possibility of an absolute truth and rejects singular explanations (Newby, 2014). In addition, as Newby highlights that the world is multi-layered and people “can play several, sometimes conflicting, roles, and that all understanding of action is affected by the context in which the action occurs” (p44). Interestingly, because the post-modernist lens suggests that there are no absolute truths, using this lens to examine educational settings sheds light on homogenising assumptions that can then reinforce barriers that BIP heritage women already experience because of izzat. Therefore, I am using a postmodern lens firstly to highlight the essentialising within the educational system, and secondly, to investigate how that in turn allows for a reductive approach towards what the system refers to as ‘Asian’ women.

I. Positioning, Insiders and Outsiders, and Power

Letherby (2003) argues that understanding how research is conceived and positioned is just as critical as the research itself; nor should it be hidden for fear of it threatening the “status of the knowledge presented” (p3). This resonates because I as researcher am central to this exploration. Thus, whilst Punch (2014) may highlight that people “seldom step back and focus” (p4) explicitly on the actual importance of research, this does not hold true in this instance. I would argue that a key component of this research is an examination of the positioning of the study, and of the researcher. Therefore, a reflexive approach is taken. White (2009) states that research does not, and indeed should not, take place in a vacuum. Clearly, this implies awareness by the researcher of where the research fits into the broader picture and indeed whether it is simply a repetition of something done elsewhere. This is critical for the authenticity of this research, particularly if it is to inform practice and influence the way women of BIP heritages are viewed within educational establishments.

There is a shared space between myself and a number of the narrators and this has to be acknowledged. Ackerley and True (2010, p137) argue that ethical research requires the researcher to consider their “own situatedness”, or, in other words, their own positioning. My professional life, and political motivation to widen participation, has to be acknowledged, because they too impact on how I position myself and how I am seen by others. I realised through significant deliberation that not only should my personal recollections be a part of this thesis, but that it was important to explore the notion of my positioning as a researcher who was also present within the work. Berger (2001, p506) postulates openness by the researcher about their own story, enabling others to be comfortable sharing their narratives. I made the decision to separate my stories from those of the other women within this thesis. I did not see myself as another

participant but as the catalyst who set the research in motion. It was not until I was listening to the women that I began to hear the similarities between our journeys, despite timeline and geographical differences. Although I had made the decision not to 'build a conversation' about shared experiences, I found it very difficult to stay out and not 'over' share my experiences. However, having made the decision that I was creating a space for their voices, I felt it was imperative that I kept my presence to a minimum. Equally, I have reflected on my own responses to what the narrators voiced in terms of similarity or difference to my personal experiences.

Corbin, Dwyer and Buckle (2009) advocate, irrespective of research methodology, addressing the affiliation of the group being studied, because "the researcher plays such a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis" (p55). The literature (Mirza, 1995; O'Reilly, 2009; Arthur, Waring, Coe & Hedges, 2012; Denscombe 2014) has an extensive discussion on a particular aspect of positioning that is of key significance to this thesis, the notion of being either an 'insider' or an 'outsider'. Rubin (2012, p304) states that, traditionally, there has been a dichotomous view of the relationship between the researcher and researched. In essence, an insider is a member of the group being studied and an outsider is not. Ganga & Scott (2006) argue that insider status is conferred if there is some shared cultural, ethnic, religious, or language heritage between the participant(s) and researcher.

Initially, I had thought that my insider positioning would carry some benefit, with regards not only to accessing women to narrate their stories, but also in how freely those stories would be told. Moreover, I thought my first-hand knowledge and experience of izzat would enable the women to consider me a BIP heritage woman like them. However, this proved not necessarily to be the case; the experiences were not always positive, and rather than being viewed as an insider, it was on occasion quite the opposite. I was viewed as being an outsider because of my surname. I had married out of the community and one narrator told me I was "**lucky**" because I did not have to deal with the issues that "**they**" had to deal with. She reinforced this by saying that because I lived in a "**white**" area, did not go to the temple, and had "**a big job**", I did not have to worry about what people said. Ganga and Scott (2006) suggest that "interviewing within one's own cultural community as an insider" creates "a degree of social proximity that, paradoxically, increases awareness amongst both researcher and participant of the social divisions that structure the interaction between them" (p2). This situating of me outside of the experiences that she and others had confronted felt disenfranchising for myself. Interestingly, inside the discipline of international and comparative education, possibly as a result of shifting diasporas and the increasingly global nature of human identities, there is an emerging desire to question the rigidity of the polarised concept of 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. Milligan (2014, p240) argues for such

questioning, saying that the position of a researcher can easily change between the two identities as a response to the situation or context in which they may find themselves. McNess, Arthur and Crossley (2015) stress that the entrenched, dualist positioning of insider or outsider negates the complexity of what is occurring. Moreover, they argue that there has to be acknowledgement that “neither the researcher nor the subjects of analysis are fixed, stable and coherent, but constantly shifting, incomplete, fragmented and contradictory in relation to both collective and personal existence” (p298). Similarly, Mirza (1995) found, whilst researching within a community with which she identified, that she was the subject of close scrutiny within the communities to which she had thought she belonged. As an educated professional, living on her own and without a man, her taxonomy propelled her from ‘insider’ to ‘outsider’, and most importantly it happened without her knowledge or desire. This suggests that not only does izzat affect the lives of the women narrating their stories, it also affects the research process itself through impact on how BIP-‘insider’ researchers’ are seen by the baradari, including other women. As well as being located as an outsider by the BIP heritage women she interviewed, Mirza also found this viewpoint shared by the gatekeepers, one of whom suggested that she was more like them because she was so ‘western’.

This rhetoric is not unusual. Personal experience has taught me that appearing ‘western’ in sound, dress and ‘behaviour’ enables acceptance as an insider by some white people. This is thought-provoking in the context of this thesis because many of the subjects who do gain agency through education additionally find that their status as insiders (in BIP-heritage groups) is compromised. Whilst on a simplistic level it could be said that higher education causes this movement out of the insider mode in this community, the reality is that by gaining agency, they are inadvertently challenging the balance of power and patriarchal order and are transgressing the boundaries of izzat. Such women are seen as “deculturalised, inauthentic, westernised and alienated from an appreciation of their own culture” (Loomba, 1993, p215). Exclusion from being an authentic insider’ does not finish there. I have been called a ‘coconut’, a ‘paki’, and ‘exotic’. All of these are commentaries about difference, insider – outsider status, and are imposed signifiers of belonging.

Yuval Davis (2010) highlights positioning in relation to belonging and, specifically, the politics of belonging. This is based on not only stories we tell about ourselves but is also used to locate power. Jones (2006) explains that “positions of power and control are constructed and reconstructed through the interactions of the people involved” (p170). This was evident in my case. I was ‘allowed’ insider status in some aspects and by some women, through the usage of inclusive terms and language such as “**apne**”(meaning ours or belonging to the same group) (Asha), “**you know how our lot**

are” (Jaanki) and **“you know what it’s like”** (Sarah). Close analysis as an insider allowed me to frame my understanding of what was being said by the narrators, and what was being left out. This was evident in relation to the usage of terms such as ‘educated’ which as an insider, I knew meant having an undergrad degree as a minimum. Listening carefully I experienced a flexible identity’ (moving to and fro between ‘in’ and ‘out’). The language that was used indicated that I was only an insider when either a point was being made indirectly about izzat, or when the positioning dynamic changed, and white people were positioned as outsiders, for example **“they don’t understand what we go through”** (Radwa). These two ‘conditions’ that gifted insider status to me and which governed the use or not of ‘including’ language, seemed to be points of easy ‘connection’ or ‘bridging’ with me for the women who used the terms.

The impact of power on the research process cannot be overstated. As O’Leary (2014) notes, a person’s taxonomy impacts on both how she or he is seen by others and that person’s your vision of the world. O’Reilly (2009, p112) contends that the outsider is uninvolved and so can be more free of bias and able to question what the insider would regard as ‘normal’ practice, however Denscombe (2014) stresses that being an insider brings with it insider knowledge. Rather than being useful, this could create a “blind spot” (p91) whereby the researcher is unable to see clearly as they are too close to the issue. Equally, it should also be noted that one could be completely blinded by a singular goal, which might get in the way of listening to what the narrators are actually saying. Ultimately, in this research, the power dynamic, or to be more specific my perception of it, which may or may not resemble that of the particular narrator, seemed to shift between myself and the narrator, based on what the narrator chose to share, and how they chose to share it.

II. Voice

Lather (2009) suggests that in order to move away from objectivist thought, we need to be centred on empathy, voice and authenticity. McGee Calvert and Jean (1992) argue that

“until women are fully empowered on a personal level, until they have a voice, until they know how they are different, until they know what cultural and social expectations they carry and how they carry them in a personal way, they cannot be equal partners in any dialogue about the future shape of society or the organisations within it”. (p86).

They stress that having a privileged standpoint or being part of a group whose voice is heard, then it is easy to reject the idea that others do not have the same platform. As Mazzei and Jackson (2009) claim, there is no single voice, just as for interpretivists there is no single truth. They also show that there is a body of research that challenges the notion of giving voice to participants being authentic research. A key consideration

for me as a researcher looking at an area that is personal to me is to ensure that I do not claim that my experiences are also those of the other narrators. As Mazzei (2009) points out

“we seek the familiar voice that does not cause trouble and that is easily translatable. We seek a voice that maps onto our ways of knowing, understanding, and interpreting” (p48).

This is extended by St. Pierre (2009) who maintains there is a conflation of speech with voice. Hence it is imperative that a distinction is made between what is said, what has been voiced, and what has been heard. As the person transcribing the narrative, and using extracts within the thesis, I decided what to keep in and what to discard thereby making further judgements about the validity of the voices.

A further consideration is that of silences and pauses. Reay (1996) discusses how sometimes women, in particular, chose to stay silent rather than make the mistake of saying the “wrong thing” (p448). Mazzei (2009) argues that it is very difficult to hear voices that in the past were silent and ignored. This is because it is a different way of listening and one we are not used to. In order to do so effectively, she advocates a different approach to listening and interviewing, which involves listening for the pauses, and then asking questions that are prompted by those pauses. Through theorising voice my intention changed from the women having to narrate their stories within the confines of my framework, to giving them the platform to be able to narrate their stories as they viewed them, in that moment in time. This then drew out differences between them, and also enabled their voices to have greater clarity and bring to the foreground their own unique perspectives.

Whilst the women may have chosen what they shared with me because, even though I had promised anonymity, the narration given would have been mindful of the audience reading the thesis, the reality is that they were not in the ultimate position of power. Nevertheless, it could be argued that they chose what they shared and thus also inadvertently shaped the research outcomes. This is a point expanded by Tsalach (2013, p75 citing Bourdieu, 1984) who argues that the space between speech and silence can be seen as a power field, and “those who enter the field are located within the existing power structure that determines whether they will receive the right to speak”, and indeed what can or cannot be said. Thus as Abbas (2006, p323) highlights, issues of power, control, and legitimate voices being heard came to the foreground.

III. Bias and Reflexivity

Vargai-Dobai (2012) argues that neutrality suggests that the person conducting the research is “able to distance herself from the subjects” that she has scrutinized during the process itself. Patton (2002) observes that a researcher who demonstrates

neutrality is one who has “no axe to grind, no theory to prove, and no predetermined results to support” (p51). Instead, he suggests the researcher should commit to understanding “the world as it unfolds” whilst being honest “to complexities and multiple perspectives as they emerge” (p51), in this case from listening to the narrators’ stories. Oral history is, as Abrams (2010, p6) suggests, “a subjective methodology, celebrating its orality, recognising that memory stories are contingent and often fluid”. Sangster (2013, p64 citing Hamilton, 1994) discusses the subjective nature of recall, arguing that some memories are “an organised structure of forgetting” which Sangster then asserts as “individuals coping with a subsequent history that was painful or discomforting”. It could be suggested that the recounts that the women in this study narrated had already, prior to the research, been sanitised or altered in other ways. Furthermore, whilst my own experiences to date have shaped not only my identity but also the lens through which I view my world, the same is true for the other narrators in this thesis. As a research activist, I feel my bias does not need to be hidden. Rather, by acknowledging it, it becomes transparent. However, an example of where my own bias did have to be carefully handled was when views were expressed by narrators that I found challenging. In those instances, I chose not to verbally acknowledge what was being said, but simply nodded to confirm that I was listening. An example of this was when a participant expressed what I considered stereotyping. I chose not to unpack that with her at that moment in time because she was making a point that was not connected with the remark, and so I did not want to disrupt the flow of her speech. Abbas (2006) suggests that

“where the ethnicity between researcher and researched is similar, being conscious of the factors of reflexivity in the researcher, but also the researched, is fundamental to success, especially in terms that are assessed by the wider social science community” (p329).

By this, Abbas is inferring that without understanding or indeed acknowledging the relationship (and space) between the researcher and the participant, and vice versa, meaningful communication cannot take place. Hesse-Biber (2014, p3) writes that reflexivity is a useful tool for researchers to be able to account for their own biases and also to be able to account for the impact that bias might have on the data. Thus, by including my own story, I am attempting to not only be reflexive, but also, as Hesse-Biber suggests, to recognise, examine and understand how my own social background, location and assumptions may possibly impact on the research process itself. The previous paragraph gives an example of that. O’Leary (2014, p307) made the very valid observation that as humans it is impossible not to make judgements or to analyse whilst listening to people’s stories. She further states that a management tool for this may be to list all assumptions and preconceived notions before starting the analysis, in

order for the biases to come to the surface. I found this notion very difficult because although I was able to think through assumptions, I was not really aware of how they would impact or surface once the women started talking. Equally whilst this is interesting, how should one account for the bias that the BIP heritage women may or may not have? More importantly, should that matter, since they are sharing their version of the story as it was at moment in time? I would argue it is the latter. Thus I am presenting words used by individuals in a particular moment and recorded and analysed by another particular person in a particular moment, with no attempt to find what is somehow objectively 'true', and so that same notion of 'bias' is in fact conceptually irrelevant here.

c. Research Design

Having presented my epistemological stance, I present a rationale for the choices of methods. I do this by considering case studies and then discussing three areas: feminism; biography, autobiography and autoethnography; intersectionality. Within this discussion, I explain the influence of these three core ideas on the development of my research. My original intention was to use a case study, and, specifically, an individual life histories approach as a methodology, as it requires an in-depth approach and would allow me to 'shine a light' on the unique experiences of each woman, who, as Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018, p376) suggest, are of course "real people in real situations". Thomas (2011) proposes that the case study is an approach rather than a methodology, and claims that, generally, case studies provide an opportunity to obtain a "rich picture with many kinds of insights coming from different angles" (p21). For this project's design, I had thought to use a focused, semi-structured interview approach, which would have given me the flexibility to probe further. Silverman (2001, citing Punch 1998), highlights that the general objective is to develop as full an understanding of the case as possible. He stresses that through shrewd usage of sampling, some generalisation can be gained. This can then develop an understanding of whether a wider phenomenon is at work. However, I decided against this, because I did not want to look for generalisations, as it was important for me to present each story as it was given. Having said that, the data itself did ultimately reveal apparent similarities in the experiences of the women.

I. Feminism

Hesse- Biber (2014) highlights that "feminist researchers use gender as a lens through which to focus on social issues" (p3). However, it is important to stress that not all research by women, or on women, is feminist research. Furthermore, Archer (2002) makes clear that men can conduct feminist research if they so wish. Equally, it must be

noted that there is not simply one form of feminism, but a number of feminist perspectives, and that therefore, any knowledge incurred from one standpoint alone cannot be seen to be complete picture. Sangster (1994) states that feminist research questions ask “why and how women explain, rationalise and make sense of their past”, and that it “offers insight into the social and material framework within which they operated” and ultimately about the “perceived choices and cultural patterns” faced, and the “complex relationship between individual consciousness and culture” (p6). Effectively, feminist research is mindful of gendered power in some way. Hesse-Biber (2014, p3) further stresses that, often, feminist research is that which focuses on issues faced by women, their voices and their “lived experiences”. Consequently, my understanding of the subsuming nature and presence of izzat made me realise that this research was not simply about educational journeys in isolation, but about the way these journeys were ‘allowed’ to be, but always within the patriarchal confines of izzat, as well as the, sometimes, racist lens of a predominately white educational system. Equally, there is an activist element to my work; it is about hearing voice in order to change perceptions at the levels of both the baradari and education professionals. Thus, as individual women, the complexities of their lives “allows for a more complicated and nuanced understanding” of ideas of “female subjectivity” (in this case meaning an individual self’s perspective) as a whole, rather than simply focussing on a “single axis of oppression” (Yu, 2011, p880). .

This research is from a feminist perspective because as McCann and Kim (2013) suggest, feminism is resistance to systems that seek to undermine the position of women within society. As a mother of a daughter, and an advocate for equal opportunities, I feel there is no other desirable choice but to take this position. However, I do not view myself as a post-colonial feminist. Post- colonialism, for me, simply denotes passage of time rather than any real attitudinal shift. McClintock (1994) argues that post-colonialism, like colonialism is based on binaries and the addition of the word ‘post’ simply allows for colonialism to be “the determining marker of history” (p255). British society is still entrenched in covert indicators of colonialism, especially as a system of oppression and domination, whereby social and ethnic hierarchies are still present. In terms of positioning, the British, the Indian, and the woman elements all force me to be an outsider at some point and so an intersectional approach enables a more nuanced stance. I am partially eurocentric because I too, as a British educationalist, have to operate within that sphere.

As an educationalist and as a feminist, my focus is on how and why BIP heritage women are marginalised in Britain specifically. Narayan (1989) discusses the complexities of being a feminist and an Indian national living in the United States, and how she found herself “torn between the desire to communicate with honesty the

miseries and oppression” that her own “culture confers on its women, and the fear that this communication is going to reinforce, however unconsciously, western prejudices about the “superiority” of western culture” (p372 – 373). This is even more so when looking at the experiences of women who are British born and bred and who hold another heritage, rather than simply living within a country for a short time period, like Narayan. As an Indian living abroad, Narayan still has the opportunity to distance herself from ‘western prejudices’, as she calls them. However, for the British women in this research, that is not possible. This belief set saturates the British education system and the ideology of the establishment where these women live, learn and work. In this research I did not want to engage with a negative stereotyped eurocentric version of ‘reality’ for women who were not white British, and did want to flag up how this lens has impacted on the lives of the narrators. It was very critical to my approach to tread a very delicate line between highlighting how izzat restricts BIP heritage women, whilst also evidencing the inadequacies of the educational system in failing to understand the challenges that many BIP heritage women face.

II. Biography, Autobiography and Autoethnography

Whilst this research draws on a wide range of interdisciplinary theories, a biographical approach was adopted because, as previously noted, the research was motivated by my own journey. Humphreys (2005) suggests that personal presence in the work enhances rather than diminish its authenticity. Merrill and West (2009) state that biographical research highlights the distinctiveness of people’s lives, but allows for patterns to be drawn. Therefore, this approach enables me to ensure the uniqueness of the women is retained. Furthermore, Tedder (2012) advocates that this stance sits astride many academic disciplines, however the most distinct attribute of this type of research is that it explores the way people “make sense of their lives through the collection, analysis, and representation of data about individual experiences of life” (p322).

Bochner (2000) makes the important point that “too often, personal narratives are demeaned as some sort of victim art or confessional”. Furthermore, he argues by reacting too quickly in a negative way to the use of such narratives, we miss how they can be “a source of empowerment” (p. 271). As a researcher, it was interesting to see my lived experience of izzat and education replicated in the data, moreover presenting other women with similar challenges and restraints. Letherby (2003) argues that the ‘Auto/Biography’ approach is about sociological sense-making of the self – “one’s own history, development and biography – and in locating oneself in social structures, to understand those structures and extrapolate from this to try and understand and respect others’ experiences, feelings and social locations.” (p1). This sense-making is

absolutely key to my challenge to essentialistic interpretations, both in scholarship and in educational settings, of the women who are narrating their stories. Pace (2012) highlights that autoethnography is a qualitative method that involves blending the elements of both ethnography and autobiography, and states that “autoethnographers reflexively explore their personal experiences and their interactions with others as a way of achieving wider cultural, political or social understanding” (p2). Ellis and Bochner (2000) define autoethnography as a genre of autobiographical writing that intertwines the cultural and the personal on numerous platforms. Tedlock (2005) explains that autoethnography is research that attempts to bring together “public and private realms” by linking the inward gaze “autobiographical impulse” with the outward gaze “ethnographic impulse” (p467). Pratt (1996) stresses that an autoethnographic text enables people to “describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (p28). Furthermore, Giorgio (2009, p153) ascertains that a writer adopting an autoethnographical stance is looking to “reveal other truths as well as one’s own”. She further maintains that we actually regain control over our own lives by acknowledging and sharing those truths. Spry (2001, p713) suggested that dialogue is key within the autoethnographical approach because it allows for the “self” and “other” to have increased mutual understanding and insights. Roth (2009) clarifies that through the process of self-analysis, an autoethnographical approach also enables the researcher to make social commentary about the time that is being recounted. Thus, the story is not simply an autobiography, but is also writing about a group which also includes the researcher. In other words, the researcher is able to make observations that have relevance beyond just their own life story. This process of projecting beyond also prevents this approach from becoming too much of a ‘navel-gazing’ exercise for the benefit of the author and not anyone else. By including my own narrative in the thesis, I am declaring my positioning and adding a layer of transparency. Equally, in an attempt to separate myself as a narrator, from a researcher with previous research in a related area, I have not acknowledge the source quoted as being mine but simply that of another researcher.

III. Intersectionality

The women in this thesis have to navigate within and through a complex system of power and identities. Consequently, the need to adopt an intersectional approach when examining the narratives is great, and is the key analytical approach I used to draw out similarities and differences between the narrators. The term intersectionality was first coined by Crenshaw in 1989. Intersectionality is a term that allows a single phrase to encapsulate and “make visible the multiple positioning that constitutes everyday life and the power relations that are central to it” (Phoenix, 2006, p187). Khambhaita (2014) argues that intersectionality has been gaining momentum as a useful tool to

both consider and scrutinise “multiple positioning” (p1023). Equally of note, structures of power and oppression are interlaced through multiple areas, including race, class and gender, and an intersectional approach allows for sophisticated nuances of advantage and disadvantage to be more closely examined. It is a lens that suggests all aspects of identities need to be considered in order to accurately contemplate how “the social world is constructed” (p1245) for individuals (Crenshaw, 1991). This approach also signals that it is the multiple facets of these identities that matter, rather than one element being more dominant within the power hierarchy. In other words, systems of oppression tend to be interrelated and symbiotic. Moreover, it is very difficult to separate each strand and try to apportion a measurement of hindrance. Accordingly, the layers of intersection between a particular heritage, a particular class, a particular gender, and izzat all interweave to create disadvantage. Brah (1993) does not deny gender power politics, but suggests that it is located within an extensive social structure. Brah’s argument is further developed by Ahmad (2003a), who suggests that discovering and understanding how “gender, ‘race’, ethnicity, class and religion” both “intersect and interact with internal dimensions of the ‘self’ at any given moment are crucial challenges” (p138). Furthermore, Phoenix and Pattynama (2006) state that an intersectional approach “foregrounds a richer and more complex ontology than approaches that attempt to reduce people to one category at a time. It also points to the need for multiplex epistemologies” (p.187).

Yuval Davis (2006) stresses the way in which different people encounter in their everyday lives inclusion/exclusion, advantage/disadvantage, aspirations, and identities, is not comparable, but instead is based on “social divisions” (p195) on three levels. Firstly, there is the way they view themselves and the communities in which they operate secondly, there is the way in which they view others, either attitudinally or through prejudices, and finally, there is the way they are projected in different media, such as images, language, ideologies and legislation. This is particularly pertinent to the women within in thesis because, as previously stated, being of BIP heritage ‘dredges up’ imagery that is peddled as the reality of all women in this category. Corus and Saatcioglu (2015) highlight that an intersectional approach can allow for overt attention on not just groups themselves, but also the cross sections of “diversity within groups and differences across groups” (p415). Moreover, they stress that it allows for focus on “various interacting identity axes as well as social and structural dynamics that affect well-being” (p415). This assumption ties in with how the multiple identities of the women in this thesis are defined and redefined within the framework of izzat, and eurocentrism, as well as trying to navigate towards ‘successful’ educational outcomes. Education, and in particular educational chances, attainment and success, should be viewed through an intersectional approach, because of the complexity involved (Bhopal and Preston, 2012).

Furthermore, Bhopal and Preston (2012) stress that intersectionality must be seen as an active process rather than one which is fixed, because the arena is forever changing. This can be evidenced through issues such as religion, and particularly the portrayal of Islamic communities in some populist media. This taints the skewed lens through which these communities are viewed, and are thus disadvantaged. Equally applicable within this are the institutional processes that work collaboratively, albeit unwittingly, to exclude rather than include BIP heritage women. For example, data from The Crown Prosecution Service (2008) representing victims of domestic violence or rape suggested that BIP heritage women were amongst the lowest numbers to experience this, with 87% of all reported cases being white British (as opposed to 4.6% Asian). Whilst acknowledging the age of the data set, it does demonstrate that the shame (and thus impacting on family izzat) of admitting to such an awful occurrence is often deemed to be worse than just pretending it didn't happen. Thus these women are rendered voiceless on two accounts, both as victims of the crime itself, but also as women unable to seek justice because that would imply an acknowledgement of occurrence. Thus the perpetrators are further enabled because if the women will not speak out then they cannot involve external agencies. This is also a bone of contention as the system often will not intervene for fear of being labelled racist and meddling in 'cultural issues' (Gilligan & Akhtar, 2006). Key intersections most relevant to my data set were: gender, class, religion, and ethnicity/heritage (race). However, all of these were primarily informed by the izzat lens, within not just the family but also the baradari and educational establishments. This is further discussed within chapters 4 -7.

d. Methods

Crotty (1998) explains that methods are the specifics of gathering and examining the information related to the core questions of the research. Thus, in this subsection, the discussion focusses on 'how' the data was gathered and analysed. There is an exploration of the sample procedure and collection, followed by an explanation of the use of the term 'narrators' for the women in the study. Finally, there is a discussion of grounded theory, interviews and narratives.

I. Sample Procedure and Collection

Sample respondents should meet the requirement of the research (Newby, 2010); thus, the only parameter needed was that the women came from a BIP heritage and had experienced some compulsory education within this country. This would automatically rule out international students since they would only have higher education as education experience within this country. The intention was not to have an exactly

representative sample of every socio-economic category within the broader remit of being a BIP heritage woman. The only other factor (apart from being from a BIP heritage) that was informed my sample selection criteria was age. It seemed important to me to have a sample with as wide an age grouping as possible, in order to get some breadth of cross generational experience. The initial sample size was three women in each BIP heritage category plus my own story. As Denscombe (2014) stresses, in research which intends to delve deeply and adopts a “cumulative approach” (p40), the sample size is added to until enough data has been gathered. I decided to let the data guide the issue of whether there was enough rich material to draw on. However, it was evident early on that this number did not give the cross generational flavour that had been hoped for. So, this was achieved by both being selective (by rejecting new potential sample members if their heritage type and age bracket was already fully represented at the time of their potential recruitment) and by increasing the sample size to ten in each heritage, plus my own narrative. Interestingly, whilst I was gathering potential BIP heritage narrators, there were a number of responses from gatekeepers to make a request or a referral to the ‘international office’, the assumption being made that BIP heritage was synonymous with international student status. This error of assuming that BIP heritage people automatically fell within the international category is not an uncommon one, and Hamilton, Hudson, and Sims- Schouten (2012) suggest that this is particularly an issue for British higher education, where many academics conflate the two categories of international and British BIP heritage students. Moreover, Hamilton and Riordan (2016) stress that “this failure to distinguish between these two categories means that students who may identify themselves as British are often put into the same taxonomy as those who do not regard Britain as home” (p186). In order to have as broad a socio-economic, and educational level, cross section as possible, I decided to not limit the search to one arena, or from one method of recruitment. To this end, the ways in which the women were found were varied. I approached Student Unions in different universities to access students. I emailed other lecturers both in the home university and in other institutions in the south of England either as potential participants or to act as introductory agents to BIP heritage women that they might know. Community groups, charities, and council outreach services were emailed. Friends, family and colleagues were asked if they personally knew any BIP heritage women, and asked if they could act as brokers. As some of these women were previously known to me, it should be noted that issues around objectivity and bias were relevant (as discussed previously). I also approached students in the library and women in gudwaras [Sikh temples], a method that Sarantakos (2013, p177) defines as “accidental sampling”. The snowballing technique (Gomm, 2008) was also used, whereby the women who responded positively were asked if they knew of any other

women who might be prepared to be involved. Khambhaita (2014) states that this was a useful method when trying to recruit participants who are difficult to find, as social networks can be positively exploited. Snowballing was not particularly fruitful with regards to Pakistani heritage women, but was useful to access Bangladeshi and Indian heritage women. Interestingly both Bangladeshi and Indian heritage women were making their own suggestions about others that I should talk to, but the majority of the Pakistani heritage women were very keen to know that there would not be any identifying markers in the thesis that could be linked back to them.

The difficulty in finding Pakistani heritage women was a surprise, as I had originally assumed that Bangladeshi heritage women would be the most difficult to source. This assumption had been based on the length of time the communities had been living in Britain; since women in the Bangladeshi community were the most recent immigrants in the three categories, I thought that they would be hardest to access. However, this was not the case. I had thought that the levels of scrutiny that Islamic communities face, and the levels of institutional surveillance of Muslim communities (Hoque, 2015), could be a potential factor in not gaining access, but discounted this, since this argument could equally apply to Bangladeshi heritage women.

Much consideration was given to which 'label' or identifying terminology to use for the women who shared their stories. My initial thought was to use the terms 'respondent' and 'participant' interchangeably; however, upon closer scrutiny, and wider reading, I decided that the word 'participant' was not suitable, because that term suggests that the women were active members of the entire research process. Clearly, this was not the case, since I had constructed the research and 'selected' the women. Ultimately, I had set the rules, and the BIP heritage women were simply narrating their journeys. Similarly, the term 'respondent' felt too one-dimensional, in that the dialogue between the researcher and 'researchee' was not a question and answer session; the women did not simply 'respond' to questions, and arguably I disrupt this notion by including myself in the data set. The term 'subject' was avoided as it implies that the women themselves are in some way being closely scrutinised, and that is not the purpose of this research. The term 'informant' was not used because it suggests that there is a single truth that will be uncovered, and as has been said from the outset, there is not a single truth, but multiple versions of 'truth'. Ultimately the term that was settled on is 'narrators', as the women are narrating key moments or experiences that were pivotal in their educational journeys.

II. Grounded Theory

Corbin and Strauss (2015) argue that research is undertaken in order to "make a difference through insights and understandings" (p4) arrived at through the research. Grounded theory allows for sensemaking to take place as new connections are

unveiled, and for understanding to be revised and developed. In addition, there is in grounded theory a cyclical approach between the collection of the data and analysis (Corbin and Strauss, 2015). Moreover, they suggest that theory emerges from the data. Charmaz (2014) argues that “we are part of the world we study, the data we collect, and the analysis we produce” is constructed “through our past and present involvement and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (p17). This was key for this research.

Grounded theory sits very firmly within methodologies that are inductive, in that the researcher has an open mind and allows themselves to see what theory emerges from the data. However, Denscombe (2014, p108) emphasises that “an open mind is not a blank mind”. By this, he is clarifying that whilst there is knowledge of the area, that knowledge does not dictate the approach taken in analysing the data. More specifically, he states that the researcher “avoids using previous theories and concepts to make sense of the data and thus is open to discovering new factors of relevance to an explanation of that area”. Thus within this research the importance of moving away from previous explanations of educational success and indeed the prescribed narratives attributed to BIP heritage women meant that it was clear there was an alignment between this research and grounded theory.

III. Interviews

Aurini, Heath and Howells (2016) note there is a range of interview methods, from a model that is “friendly conversation” to “closed, fixed–response” interviewing (p81). They advocate a guiding interview method as particularly useful for narratives. So I decided that a conventional question and answer interview was not really suitable for this research, because as Nunkoosing (2005, p699) suggests, there are issues to do with power and the positioning of that power between the researcher and the researched with which I was not comfortable. Face to face interviews were chosen over other forms because I felt that I would be able to read body language. Equally, I wanted to keep an eye on the time as I felt the women would be more willing to participate if there was a time limit. Lastly, I thought that I would be able to both clarify and rephrase prompts.

Charmaz (2014) cautions that learning when to speak, how to encourage and how to listen well are all useful in the creation of rich data. She suggests the use of “intensive interviewing”, which she defines as “a gently guided, one-sided conversation that explores research participants’ perspectives on their personal experience” (p56). This in turn creates an unobstructed space that allows the narrator to “describe and reflect upon his or her experiences in ways that seldom occur in everyday life” (p58). I knew that body language and facial expressions would be useful tools enabling me to know when to probe and when to rephrase. I was also mindful of the fact that the version of

the story given at that moment in time is only a snapshot of reality and this did raise questions for me around the relationship of reality with memory and recollection. With all this in mind, an unstructured, intensive interview process was used. This was the most suitable for drawing out a narrative from the data and to identify areas to broadly focus on (Wengraf, 2001).

As stated previously, the research began with me recalling key memories related to education, giving them a title, and then going back over the memory and filling in the detail. This strategy worked really well for me and so I decided that it might be a suitable way of asking the women to also recall their memories. The women were asked in advance of the interviews to use the triggers of thinking of five to ten pivotal memories in their educational experiences. However, this proved extremely difficult to follow through. Once the women starting talking, there was a natural progression within the narrative, and after trying unsuccessfully with the first three women to keep the framework, it was abandoned for the rest of the narratives. Instead, as stated earlier in this chapter, I simply allowed for the women to take control of the way in which their story developed, and did not impose the triggers on them, essentially giving them the space to use their own voice and own triggers. It also meant that the narrators were able to frame their own 'handles' on which to 'hang' their memories. Being able to narrate their stories as they viewed them in that moment in time drew out differences between them, and also enabled their voices to have greater clarity and bring to the foreground their unique perspectives.

I acknowledge that just because my method of recollection was more structured did not mean that it was of any more value. Perhaps the instructions I gave were not clear enough, or perhaps the desired recollection system said more about my need for control and order than about the richness of what was being said. Ultimately it was far more important to hear the stories being told, and to give the women voice than to over-focus on the ways in which the women chose to do so.

IV. Narrative

Abrams (2010) postulates that

“Almost all oral histories, or at least those testimonies elicited in informal, semi- or unstructured interviews as opposed to a formal question- and-answer format will demonstrate narrative features. The story told will be arranged and dramatised in a narrative form with a variety of elements such as reported speech, diversions, commentary, reflection, and so on.” (p21)

Adams (2008) presents narratives as a sense-making tool, that is, something that allows us to make sense of our lives. This is a point expanded by Abrams (2010), who additionally argues that narrative allows for understanding the world and then sharing that sense-making with others. White (1980) stresses that narrative is used to

“translate knowing into telling” (p5), something that resonated very soundly with me. Ultimately, as Yu (2011) advocates, “the personal mode” offers the opportunity to “reconceptualise the personal that engages with and subverts the dominant ideology of our time”, and moreover in this new space

“personal narratives, even if not directly connected to calls for action, can be used in ways to foster, rather than contain, complexity. Personal narratives allow for more complicated understandings of feminist identity, community, and history” (p887).

Initially, in the hope of making the women feel more comfortable sharing their stories, the intention was to share my own educational journey narrative with them, before they were asked to share theirs, because as Bruley (2006) maintains, the building of a relationship of trust and rapport is crucial. However, after reading Birks and Mills (2011), who make the very valid point that when undertaking research from an interpretivist stance, the researcher’s own history can subconsciously influence the research, this idea was reconsidered. As MacFarlane (2009) states, when a researcher listens to personal recounts it can be very difficult not to be drawn into a relationship, and to remain either neutral or detached. The minimization of influence or prejudice seemed important at that time because of the notions of bias that were evoked by the reading that I had undertaken. However, as the stories emerged, it became apparent that the women were quite happy sharing their truths once they had started talking. Talking and sharing seemed almost cathartic and thus resonated with what Richardson (1994) highlights: “it is through telling our stories that we create ourselves, validate our identity, and give meaning to our pain” (p77). So it was with the narrations of the women. Moreover, as previously stated, the culturally inclusive language used by some of the women actually invited me into their narrative. Ultimately, as Bruner (1993 cited by Sikes 2012) states, how a life is told or depicted is not necessarily how the life was lived. Thus, the ways in which these 31 individual women experienced the impact of izzat on their educational journeys will be varied, pertinent to them and not necessarily universal in lived experiences or indeed in outcomes.

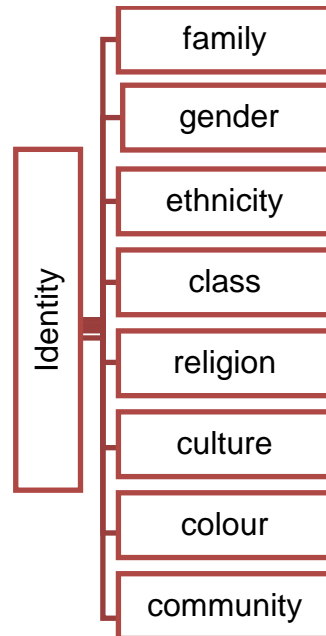
V. Emergence of My Conceptual Framework: Analysis of My Data

Originally, I had not intended to use grounded theory, thinking that my approach did not sit comfortably within the grounded theory method of decoding, and that it was not my intention to “discover a new theory” (Sarantakos 2013, p371). However, the deductive changed very strongly to being inductive where the theory that emerged was not one that was anticipated in any shape or form. Hence a grounded approach was adopted so themes emerged as I read and reread and went through the research process. Once the transcripts had been prepared, the intention was to look for key themes

identified from the literature, similarly to what Newby (2014, p489) referred to as a content analysis approach. Kumar (2014, p297) states that the term 'coding' is seen as more suitable for purposes of adding statistical value systems to data, as in quantitative research methods. He argues that for the purposes of "descriptive information", the process is known as "content analysis". However, Punch (2014, p173) argues that it is very difficult to pin down exactly what the process of analysing qualitative data is. He further states that coding is used to simply get the analysis going, and that coding works alongside the process of 'memoing', which he describes as recording ideas that have emerged from the coding stage. Davies and Hughes (2014, p210) stress that the researcher needs to be aware of which method of coding is best to use for their own research, and whether it is simple words or repeated phrases that are then used to create a framework.

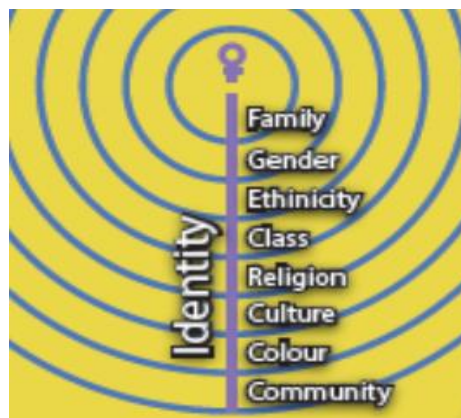
Kumar (2014, p318) suggests that content analysis within a qualitative framework involves four key steps. Firstly, it is necessary to identify the main themes, then to assign codes to the main themes, thirdly to assemble the responses under those themes, and then finally to integrate the responses and themes into the body of the writing. Hence, for this research, key words (or groups of words) as (core) codes were used to pull together and structure the discussion in the original chapters of my first draft. This broadly deductive stance was adopted whereby I had some sense of what the data might say after having done wider reading. The original themes that emerged from my reading, and an initial cross-correlatory examination of the data, plus my own reflections, indicated that key themes were those of family, identity, and educational experiences within the establishments themselves. Indeed, on the surface, the 31 women, and I include myself within this, seemed to be voicing views predominately about these three themes. However, closer interrogation of the data, staying with the notion of allowing the data to speak for itself (Strauss and Corbin, 2008), changed this completely. I realised what I had been writing about in first draft analysis was not what the data was actually saying. Further critical engagement with my data painted a different picture. I realised I focused only on the *descriptions* of everyday life, rather than digging deeper and really hearing/listening to 'the why and the how'. In other words, I did not read and critically reflect simultaneously on why my narrators had the experiences they did. Thus, I pictorially worked through, trying to create an image that would represent what the data was actually saying and that would also demonstrate the relationship between different concepts and how they influenced each other. There were key words that were being used multiply by the women when they were narrating their stories. These words were occurring in relation to the women themselves, and that could be collated under one generic term, which I did. For example, I collated the words girls, women, female, sisters, and mothers under the

blanket term 'gender', though acknowledge that gender is wider than these words alone. Using the same process, I created the following summary words: family, ethnicity, class, religion, culture, colour, community, identity. Realising that these words all related to notions of identity and how identity is constructed, I began creating a map of how they related to each other:



(Figure 1)

The problem with this first attempt was that it was too linear and did not show how the different elements intersected or how they influenced each other. This initial attempt led me to consider using concentric circles to make that clearer:

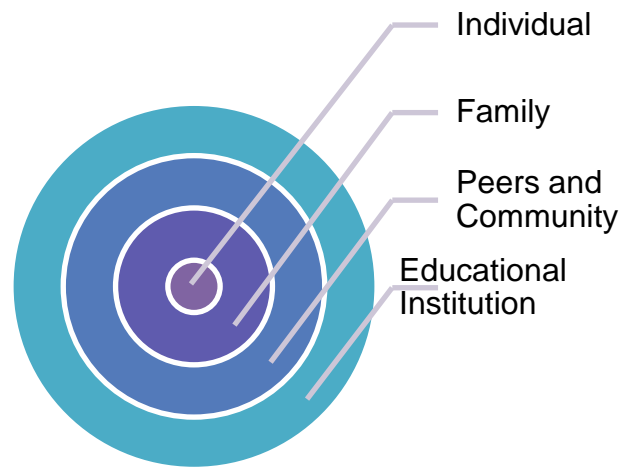


(Figure 2)

This still felt incomplete as it did not fully demonstrate the interconnectivity between the different elements and so I decided to use Bronfenbrenner's model (1979) to explore how these words might interconnect, intersect and relate to each other in light of the

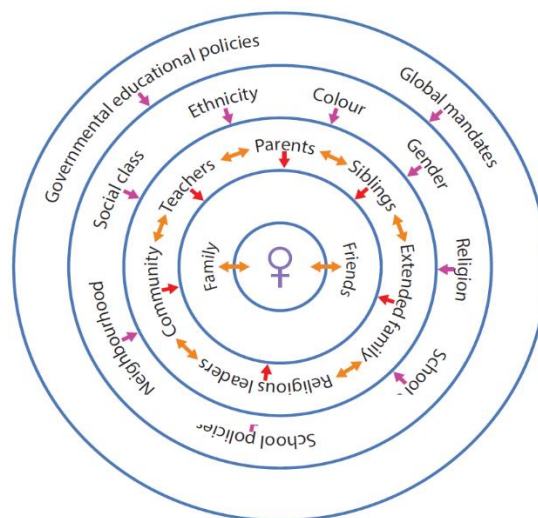
women's narratives. Bronfenbrenner's model is made up of five concentric circles, and is particularly popular with educationalists for understanding how children's social and emotional development is affected through multi-level impact and influence from their environment. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggests this can happen without the individual even being present at the occurrence, for example a parent losing their job. Bronfenbrenner originally labelled these circles or levels as: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The central circle is the individual. The microsystem is the closest level of influence, the level with which the individual has regular direct contact, and this system is two way, in that the levels of influence work both ways, from the individual to the connections within that system and vice versa. The mesosystem is where and how the elements of influence within the individual's microsystem impact and relate to each other which in turn have an effect on the individual. For example whether the individual's parents, in line with the rest of their extended family, chose to send their daughter to a faith based school. This layer is interesting because it can be a negative or a positive, or even both at the same time but in different ways, dependent on whether the elements are working together or against each other with regards to the individual at the heart of the system. Examples of this could be firstly, around the choice element, in who makes a choice on the child's behalf, and to what end. Secondly, the attendance could either be positive in that it reinforces a religious belief set or it could be negative in that it inadvertently alienates the individual from others who do not hold that same belief set. Finally it could be both in that it is a positive for the parent who makes the choice but maybe a negative for the child. With regards to some of the women's narratives, it highlights lack of autonomous choice by the women when they were children, and could be seen as the impact of a conservative education system, which is significant in terms of gender roles and izzat. Within the exosystem, the individual is not a contributory member, but decisions are made, or events occur, that do impact on them, such as the example given earlier of a parent losing their job, or their being born a woman. The last layer of influence or impact is the macrosystem, which refers to the wider system within which the individual has to function. This layer can also be both negative and positive, in that educational policies designed by the government around achievement should allow for better outcomes for all children but if they simply serve to label those children then they have only compounded the issues faced by those children.

To begin with, I mapped out how I perceived the circles of influence:



(Figure 3)

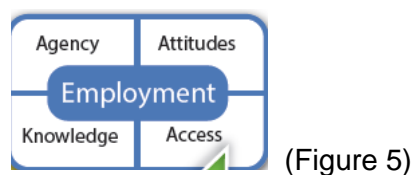
I then went back to the data and looked to see the context in which those key words appeared, so for example whether it was in relation to the women themselves, their family, the community or an educational establishment. This then led to me mapping the information within a Bronfenbrenner inspired model, which I felt better encompassed the levels of influence in the educational journeys of the women. Whilst I was mindful of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological system, I needed the model to reflect what my own data was saying, and the way it was saying it, in a way that was more intersectional, and so I added arrows to denote that difference, as seen below:



(Figure 4)

Further scrutiny of the narratives of the women suggested two, or possibly three eventual outcomes from educational journeys: they lead to a suitable marriage, or suitable employment, or both. It became increasingly obvious that whilst the outcome of educational diligence would be one of these three outcomes, the outcomes themselves were encased within discrete parameters, or concepts, which intersected with other themes, but also across each other. To put it simply, both marriage and

employment were operating within four broad areas, or pillars, which were also culturally and socially constructed. Thus, whilst marriage might mean different things to the different women in this research, it still existed within the parameters of these four pillars. A Bronfenbrenner inspired model allowed me to sift through different layers to create a sense of cohesion. This presented in the following ways. Firstly, how the women felt about themselves and what they were allowed and not allowed to do. Secondly about what knowledge they, or their parents had, and how that made a difference to their outcomes. Thirdly about the attitudes of not just their parents, but also the women's attitudes towards subjects and other people, the attitudes of the establishment towards and about them. Finally about the expected outcomes for them from the different levels of influence. I originally settled on four terms: 'agency', 'knowledge', 'attitudes', and 'expectations', which I felt encapsulated these beliefs. However, additional data examination meant these terms were further honed, in order to make sure they reflected accurately what they were encompassing. Thus, the four pillars, as I termed them because conceptually they felt solid and encapsulated the essence of the term, became 'agency', 'knowledge', 'attitudes', and 'access'. 'Access' was a clearer representation than 'expectation' because this pillar was about whether the individuals were allowed access, rather than what access they were expecting.

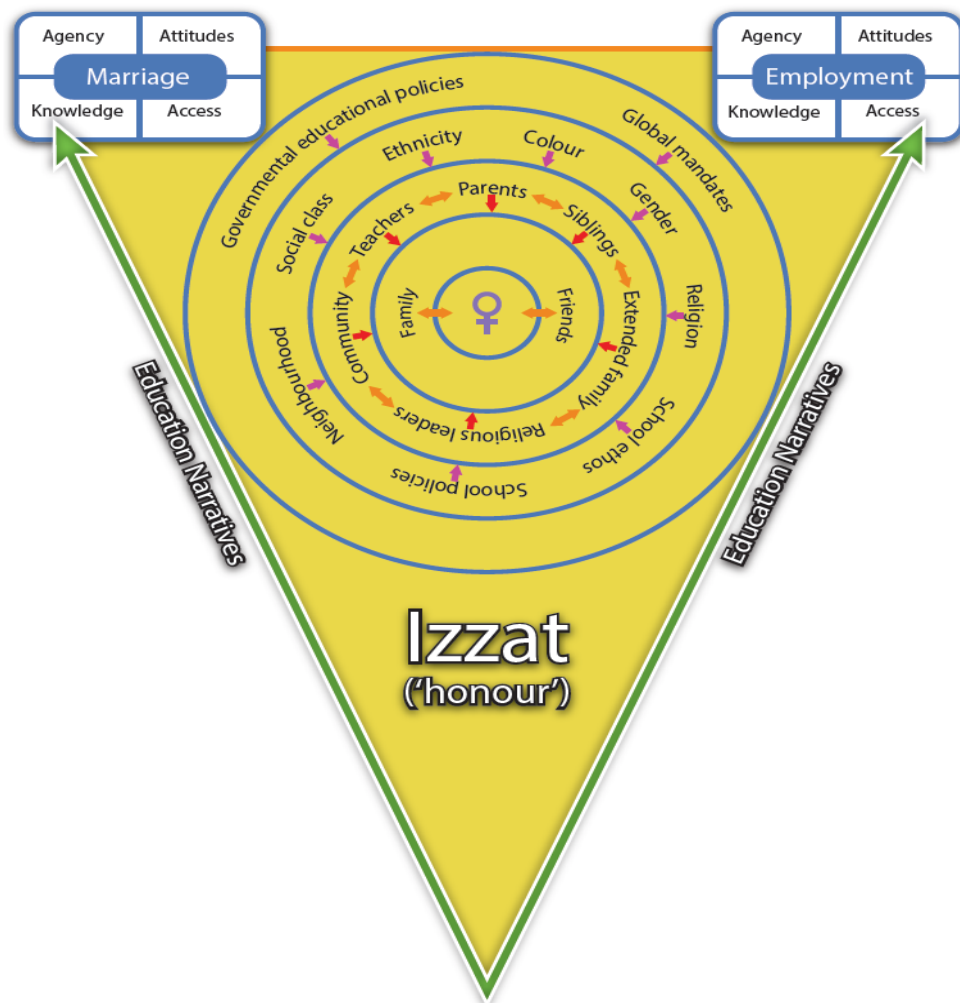


(Figure 5)

The four pillars, without exception, cut across each other and every layer of influence or impact in the lives of the women in this thesis. By that I mean, within themselves, within their families, within the communities in which they have to operate, and within education sphere. This influence not only shaped their educational journeys but also the experiences they had as a result of that journey. This influence will be examined more critically in chapters 4 to 7.

In addition to the four pillars, it emerged that everything, including the multiple intersections of identity, was always prefaced by izzat. Izzat, either intentionally or unconsciously, framed the lives of all of the BIP heritage women to a greater or lesser extent. Izzat was the thread that clearly bound this group of women within the realms of a patriarchal system, and this one core concept framed everything else, and particularly so with regards to their educational journeys. To borrow what Harris (2011) states about the past being ever-present with us and “still operating in the present, either as a legacy or as a set of practices that are followed” (p726): this is certainly true

for the concept of izzat. Therefore, the conceptual framework presented below was created with izzat as a backdrop to everything else.



e. Ethics, Confidentiality and Integrity

Membership of the Humanities Faculty Ethics Committee enabled me to have insights into what needed to be considered, and after a long discussion with the Chair of the Committee, rigorous paperwork was formulated and submitted for consideration. During this period, I refrained from being an active member of the committee, and I was not, obviously, involved in the reviewing of my own work, and it received a favourable outcome. The ethical approval is included in the appendices. However, as MacFarlane (2009) indicates, this approval is never the end of ethical considerations. He stresses that ethics committees simply sanction or give permission to proceed and have the sole role of gatekeepers to the process of research, rather than being what he termed “ethical mentors or guides” (p3). He claims that this process is not conducive to holistic, ethical conduct on the part of the gatekeepers, because once the actual research is

being conducted in the field, there are likely to be instances whereby ethical dilemmas have to be faced, and there is a lack of tangible support at that moment in time.

Denscombe (2014) maintains that the researcher must at all times ensure that they act professionally and with integrity. This is also the opinion of MacFarlane (2009), who postulates that, often, ethical approaches are about avoiding unethical stances or about staying within regulations. He stresses that we need to look beyond rules and regulations to notions of integrity. He unpicks this by advocating notions of researcher 'virtues', some of which he states are "courage, respectfulness, resoluteness, sincerity, humility, and reflexivity" (p5). Bell (2014, p74) also discusses the wider remit of ethics: integrity and the relationship between ethics and morality, specifically, the relationship between right and wrong and understanding what one 'ought' to do. Furthermore, Bell (2014, p80 citing Iphofen 2009) argues that within social research, ethical practice should concern not just being a "good researcher" but also being a "good human being".

Newby (2010) states that "consideration of ethical issues has to be embedded in the whole process of research" (p49), which in Denscombe's (2014) opinion means that ethical considerations are a code of conduct to which the researcher should adhere, and most importantly that the participant should be no worse off after the research than they were before it. Flick (2014) highlights that researchers need to respect participants but also demonstrate that they are avoiding potentially harmful practices, by taking into account the needs and interests of the participants. Gray (2014 p91) further stresses the need initially to conduct a risk assessment to ascertain whether the participant would be put under any 'psychological stress', 'legal liabilities', or be at risk of being ostracised by peers or others. He argues that it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that they have considered what action they would take to prevent this from occurring or to minimise the risks of such events happening. I had considered this and had thought I would stop the interview process and refer to appropriate support services.

Ethical research in the broadest sense, for me, was about trying to ensure that the women were not harmed (including by me), and that their dignity, rights, safety and wellbeing was ensured as much as humanly possible; however, in the telling of life stories there is the possibility of unintentional harm. This possibility, in the instance of this research, might be that a memory previously suppressed may come to the foreground and cause the narrator some degree of discomfort or even anxiety. This did in fact happen during one of the interviews, when one of the BIP heritage woman became very distressed when recalling her mother's treatment of her. I suggested stopping the narration, and signposted her to various forums that would be able to provide her with counselling. However, she did not want to stop, and emphatically

stated that recalling the obstacles actually gave her more determination to succeed in life. So whilst it could be argued that the ethical stance would have been to have stop altogether, in that particular situation, it seemed and seems more ethical to let her continue. The narrator's insistence meant that the ethical consideration was taken out of my hands, and the power to continue was owned by the narrator because she was aware of what the remaining conversation would entail. She knew that there would be a further possibility of being upset, but clearly wanted to have the conversation anyway. I told the women that they did not have to answer anything that made them feel uncomfortable or uneasy because it would have been unethical to have pushed or delved any deeper than they were willingly to disclose.

Sarantakos (2013) argues that an ethical stance involves the avoidance of deliberate deception, and clarity on behalf of the respondent regarding the process and purpose of the research, and about their role within it. Furthermore, she argues, it is about trust, and the participant feeling able to contribute to the research without fear, prejudice or repercussion. Gray (2014) states that the researcher should ensure that informed consent is obtained. I did this through sharing an information sheet about the research, which informed the women about the purpose of the thesis, their rights regarding the thesis, their right to withdraw up until the point of writing, and that the data would be recorded and stored securely up to the point of transcribing. They also had the contact details of my first supervisor, who they could be contacted in the event of any complaints or conflicts. Additionally, they were asked to read the information and, formally, for their consent. Whilst some were happy signing the form, others (mainly those from a Pakistani heritage) were not, and so, in that instance, I asked for verbal consent, before proceeding with the interview on the digital recording.

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) suggest that qualitative data "often contains personal or sensitive matters" (p542), and so there may be a possibility of identification, as well as issues concerning confidentiality and privacy. For a number of the women, particularly within the younger age group across all three heritage groups, this was an issue. Two questions that regularly surfaced were "will you use my name in the writing?" and "will people be able to work out who I am from the information in your writing?" I strongly believe that confidentiality and anonymity are essential components of an ethical code of conduct, and in this instance, the narrators' need to feel protected from open scrutiny. It cannot be overstated how important it is to ensure that there was no way of tracking back to discover the true identity of these BIP heritage women. Names or any other identity markers could create significant issues for them, as some of these women were extremely vulnerable in terms of the way *izzat* was operated within their families and communities. Hence I made the decision to present the biographies in a way that would not allow for any identification. I grouped the professions together under

one umbrella heading and did the same with religions. I did however include religions on the biographies of the women who were happy for me to do so. I decided to present a quick 'narrator' reference overview at the beginning of the thesis and then put a more detailed one within the appendices. Interestingly, two of the young women were keen to discuss izzat and family expectation almost straight away, but they did not want to be recorded; however, they were happy for me to make verbatim notes on what was said and to be able to report it. This again highlighted to me just how sensitive these subjects are, and especially to the women who were still very closely linked to their parents. This will be discussed more fully in chapters 4 to 7.

f. Summary

This chapter has illustrated the methodological journey that was undertaken. My epistemological stance is constructivist, as the main fabric of this study is about how BIP heritage women construct, understand, reflect on and narrate their specific experiences. This was unpacked through a consideration of notions of truth. The alignment within an interpretivist paradigm was explained through my need to give some ownership to the narrators for their own stories and more fundamentally, my interpretivist stance is necessitated by the fact that I believe we construct our realities. Discussion centred on the choice of narrative with an autoethnographical approach. A rationale for the inclusion of my narrative was given, and my positioning was scrutinized. I provided an account of how my conceptual framework emerged through meticulous reading and rereading of the women's narratives until themes began to surface. This grounded theory approach allowed the data to speak, which was important, as this research was always deemed to be about voices being heard. I then identified how the deepening of my understanding of my data enabled the evolution of my conceptual framework, which was then represented in pictorial form. The phases involving gathering and unpacking the narratives was explored, as were issues of ethics and confidentiality. A diagram of my methodological journey is included in the appendices. In the next chapter, I specifically address how the izzat lens, framed inside the four pillars, impacts on identity.

4 **Chapter Four: An Izzat Lens, the Four Pillars, and Expressions of Identity**

In this chapter, I show how the intersecting layers of identity are impacted by the gaze of the baradari. Using an izzat lens, I scrutinize gender, belonging, language and religion, through the four pillars. I start with a critical exploration of identity and move onto boundaries created by gender disparity, and how they are used to police behaviour, and assert conformity through the idea of being 'good', particularly in relation to education. Next, there is an exploration of notions of 'belonging', within a historical contextualisation of Britishness, and a discussion of what it means to be either 'English' or 'British'. Finally, there is a critical appraisal of how language and religion can be positioned to create difference.

Parekh (2007) defines identity socially, as the way in which an individual constructs themselves in relation to others. This point is further stressed by Abrams (2010), who states that

“instead of being born with an essence that determines our identity, it is now widely viewed that we construct our identity, our sense of self, or who we are, within and in relation to our social and cultural environment” (p36).

Brah (2007) adds that identity is constantly evolving and changing. Yuval Davis (2010) posits that people construct narratives about their identity to tell both themselves and others about who and how they would like to be. (A necessary consequence of that definition is who they are *not* and what they *should* be.) Juang and Syed (2010) suggest that a family context, which allows both experiences and information pertaining to heritage, is critical for young people to both develop and sustain a sense of ethnic identity. However, this is not necessarily going to “instil a sense of commitment” (p351) to that identity, because that only happens when young people associate with similar heritage peers or “[engage] directly in cultural practices” (p351). Hall (2000, p17) argues that identities are constantly shifting and changing and re-emerging as new and different because they “are constructed within, not outside, discourse” and are influenced by “historical and institutional” factors, and most importantly by power and notions of “difference and exclusion”. He goes onto say (p19) that we embrace the cumulative ‘identity’ that most closely resembles the ‘suture’ or ‘intersection’ of our location at given points. Thus, identity is not a constant, but a shifting signifier. Moreover, the many interfaces of identity for this group of women were always within the praxis of izzat.

a. Gender Issues

It was evident across all of the BIP women’s experiences that there is great disparity in the way women and men in their worlds are regarded and treated. This was not just

restricted to any one particular heritage. Niaz (2004) highlights that this is partly based on the unequal worth of men and women, with males deemed to be more valuable. Within Sikh communities, for example, Ladoo (sweetmeats) are distributed to the community when a boy is born, but not for a girl. This practice of valuing boys above girls is rooted within the cultural norms that give credence to patriarchal rights, and it is characteristic of all BIP communities. Preference for boys is primarily related to the fact that girls are regarded as 'paree', meaning that they do not belong to their immediate family, but to the family that they will go to after marriage. This difference is reinforced by dowry practices and the practicalities of generational support. If girls move away to their in-laws then they cannot look after their own parents in old age. The house of the future in-laws is seen as the real home and until then girls are seen as 'outsiders within' (Mohammad, 2015). This is true for all three of the heritages examined in this thesis. This social norm is evidenced in traditional folk songs, in Bollywood films, and through individuals' personal experience of how girls are spoken about in family gatherings. As Tarsem explains: "**When it comes to marriage then you leave home, and not before**". This idea was also voiced by Jeevan, who said that it was harder being a girl for a number of reasons, one of which was that they would not carry the family name forward, and so consequently they have to "**move on and leave their family behind and go to a new family.**"

Asha recalls when her younger sister was born and the reaction of her extended family:

My Bhowaji [father's sister] ... [was] saying arrh, kuri hore argeya [oh dear, another girl has arrived], you know, and, do you know what, I remember sitting..., in the garden,...crying, 'cos everybody else around me was crying, that...that we had another baby sister.

Asha continues by saying she also experienced this devaluing of girls as an adult when her second child, another girl, was born: "**my massar [mother's sister's husband] came to see me when Xxx was born, he came in and said, 'Oh, another Ghuddi argeya [doll/girl has come], oh, never mind.**"

Aadhya's narrative about her youngest sister's conception and birth also strongly demonstrates the preference for boys over girls:

They seem to think that sun shines out of boys, and especially in my family where there was had been three girls, no before my brother there were five girls, so every time my mum had another girl there was more arguments, there was a lot of domestic violence in our family, my dad would start beating my mum up and shouting and swearing. Because she'd had another girl, and he didn't want a girl he wanted a boy, and then they kept trying they kept trying they kept trying until Xxx was born, so for them that was the be all and end all, they've had a boy that's great. So then when my mum got pregnant with my younger sister, my mum, my dad didn't want her he wanted her aborted, you know when he found out she was a girl, he didn't want her at all.

Using an izzat lens, the subtext is that having girls 'lowers a man's head' (the words in Panjabi are 'seerh nechae karna') because he will have to provide for them rather than them providing for him. Moreover, it demonstrates that he has absolute power over her body. This undervaluation and devaluation of the life of a woman is a strong thread through many of the narratives. Palki talks about the fact that boys are

wrapped in cotton wool, they can't think for themselves, like they're made to think that they're the king of their kingdom, then they go out into the real world and they can't match any expectation. Whereas as a girl you have no expectation, you're constantly told that you can't do things, so you try really hard and I was determined that I was going to be different.

Palki was able to channel the way she felt to produce better outcomes for herself. Interestingly, a number of the Indian heritage women suggested that the disparity between boys and girls did not extend to education; Prem said:

There were things that girls could do and things that the boys could do. Cleaning was a girl thing. But education was something both boys and girls could do.

...and Asha:

I'm not sure it was usual for all families (that all the girls and boys went to school), but it certainly was in our family, 'cos I think, from a very early age, I remember education as being of great value.

However, for many of the women, gender disparity because of the hold of izzat meant that they were prevented from doing things which might give them greater autonomy. A number of the women used the word 'trust'. For example, Rodela says:

The thing was, my mum never used to let me out and I used to think that was so unfair. It was so unfair, because I felt like she couldn't trust me. I was never allowed out. My brothers were allowed, well, to be honest with you, they... boys and girls are always seen differently in our culture, I think. I think my mum was able to, sort of, er, it wasn't more trust, but it was almost like they're, they're boys, they can probably deal with anything, whereas she was more worried about me. But I just think that's a load of crap.

The baradari's potential view of Rodela was the driving element in her not being allowed out. This difference in boundaries created by applying the izzat lens is also replayed in the attitudes of some of the boys within the communities. This is mentioned by Prem: "[a British city] **boys are just about their fancy cars and old fashioned attitudes.**" The fact that she picks out a particular city suggests that she recognises a greater sense of parochialism in places that had greater concentrations of BIP heritages. Furthermore, this kind of male 'showing off' to the baradari means that these boys buy into 'old fashioned attitudes' that are embedded within izzat.

I. Izzat: Policing Behaviour, Conformity and Being 'Good'

It was clear that the majority of the women learned about izzat and their bond to their family from an early age, and that this was often packaged as responsibility and upholding the position of the family within the baradari. Whilst there was some overlap between all three heritages, there were also subtle differences in how it was framed. Such differences crossed different classes and migrational generations. Many of the women talked about this way of packaging izzat, such as Palki, who said **"I always knew what my responsibilities were from a young age"** and Prem, who said **"I thought about my family's position"**. Also present was the idea that there were community eyes everywhere, which meant the women have to be careful about how they behave, as Randeep explained: **"There's Asians everywhere and everyone knows each other and it wouldn't be very good for the family reputation...."** This idea that a woman's complete family is judged by what she does, and the way she behaves both inside and outside her home, is very much about power. What is said within the community about a woman can not only tarnish her reputation, but, more importantly, it can make her 'unmarriageable', as she might no longer be 'pure'. This was true for Rodela, whose father died when she was young, meaning her mother had to take on the patriarchal role with regards to izzat. Rodela described wanting to go to college and study, but the college she wanted to go to was quite far away. That meant she had to take public transport, which she did with a school friend who happened to be a boy:

The community people that, obviously, she [her mum] was friends with were like, "Oh my God, your daughter's going the wrong way (shocked)! You need to take her back home and get her married". Erm... and my mum did. My mum took me back to Bangladesh and she got me engaged and I absolutely begged my mum not to do that. She did it anyway.

The fact that Rodela's mum enforced family honour (as perceived by the baradari) at the cost of Rodela's happiness typifies the lens that women are viewed through in the context of izzat. The fact that Rodela was in the company of a male, who was not an immediate family member, meant that she was no longer a 'good' girl. Thus, she had to be contained, and the only way to do that was to 'allow' her to be in the legitimate company of a male; one who was her keeper (i.e. a husband). Such 'community policing' is not always done in overt ways, as with Rodela, but also be covertly. The covert policing happens through notions of 'being good'. Through baradari and family surveillance, behaviour is monitored in order to ensure that women operate within the boundaries that izzat has created for them. Being good is packaged as behaving as an ideal BIP woman, one who is mindful of her family izzat and so behaves accordingly because of the omnipotent presence of the baradari. This is evident in what was said

by Taani: **“My dad is quite known in the community so we know we have to behave in a certain way”** and by Jeevan:

My mum just stressed to me that ‘you’re going to University and I want you to be a good girl and just remember that your family’s reputation is at stake if you do anything wrong. People will judge us by the way you behave. Our baradari are everywhere’.

The relationship between women and their parents, and the notion of being a ‘good’ girl, and being ‘trusted’ (to make good choices) was one that surfaced frequently:

Rodela: **I know at the back of my mind that really I’m a good child.**

Raheena: **always be good**

Jeevan: **Look, you’re going to University, I want you to be a good girl.**

Sabar: **If I thought I’d disappointed my parents in any way, shape or form,...I would be, you know, I would be devastated [devastatingly]! I would be just like, oh my God, what can I do to make this better [worriedly]?**

Prem: **I’m more up front, I will say what I feel, and in Indian terms that’s wrong because if you’re a good girl you will show people like your sauss [mother in law] and sisters in law that you can take anything they say and not answer back.**

Prem acknowledges the positioning hierarchy imposed by marriage for women across all three heritages. Equally, there was a collective understanding of what it meant to be ‘good’, meaning that they were sensible, knew their responsibilities and their ‘limits’ in terms of what they could and could not do. Zahra, for example, said:

I don’t really care about the izzat thing, cos. maybe I know at the back of my mind that really I’m a good child and I don’t do anything bad or anything and they’ve got nothing to worry about.

The fact Zahra is having to preface that she does not do anything ‘bad’ and is a ‘good’ child means that she does actually operate within the boundaries drawn up for her by izzat, and some of that is about her sensitivity about how her family are viewed within the community. This is echoed by Karjol who said **“I have had izzat mentioned to me, but not a lot because I’ve always been really mature.”** By being ‘mature’, she is sensible enough to do the ‘right’ thing which is to be a ‘good’ girl. Prem also talked about her behaviour reflecting on how her family are perceived. She talked about how she operated within her hometown because of her family:

I wasn’t a bad girl, I didn’t do anything bad....can’t do anything stupid in [home town] because I’ve got older brothers, they’re going to go mental, it’s not going to look good on them, it’s not going to look good on my parents.

Thus her behaviour is not just about her and consequences for her, but about consequences for her whole family, because people will judge her family on her

behaviour, *not* her brothers'. This discrepancy between the sexes, which then clearly demarcates the reach of izzat, is further clarified by Prem:

My brothers were allowed to go out; they were allowed to come in whenever. They would just do their own thing from about college time. Yeah, clubbing hanging and stuff.

She goes onto say:

I wasn't really allowed to go out through school/through college, um when I mean out, I mean out late at night. When I went to [university] and I came back after a year, I think my parents were a lot more chilled, so I used to go out to student events and they never said anything to be honest.

However, she then expands by saying:

My brother would always pick me up so, whether it was at three o'clock in the morning, four o'clock in the morning. I was really lucky and as a result I didn't take the mick.

From this, it is clear that her brother had taken on the role of enforcing boundaries. Prem talks about the fact that he **"was allowed to come in whenever"** but as a girl Prem had to be protected and therefore, had to be picked up. This notion of being 'good' is still indicated by the comment "I didn't take the mick". Moreover, it also shows how to some extent the women are also judging themselves through izzat, and self-policing their behaviour to conform. Prem also talked about how her brother told her before she went to uni to:

not be one of those girls who are sick [through drinking] unable to walk, just standing in a heap". And I've always kept that through to now. Because he was kind of giving me that freedom to be myself, but giving me that little bit of a boundary, going 'just don't do that', you know 'just be a bit sensible'. And I'm glad he said that to me, because I go out, I come in at whatever hour, but never in that state.

There are three significant issues evident in Prem's comments, above. Firstly, there is a discrepancy in the treatment by her parents of Prem and her brothers. This gender bias is very much about izzat and conformity to the expectations of the community gaze. Secondly, Prem feels grateful in what she perceives as being 'allowed' to have a similar level of autonomy to her brothers, and finally that her brothers, also within the remit of izzat, felt they were allowed to 'police' her behaviour. However, the greatest policing of behaviour came from an awareness or mindfulness of what people (so baradari) would say. Aadhya stresses just how important this element of policing was and is in her life:

for my mum that [izzat] was the main, the be end you know of everything, it's like what will people say, don't do that, what will people say, don't go there, what will people say, don't talk to that person, what will people say, don't wear this, don't wear that, don't do this, don't do that, it was our whole life is/was

dictated by what will people say, you know no matter how miserable you may be it doesn't matter as long as people don't say anything bad about you.

For Aadhya the most frustrating element of this was that she felt that the wider community would judge her and that the reach of izzat seriously curtailed how she lived her life:

They're going to say bad things about you anyway. It doesn't matter, you know they, they make up stories, they say they see us doing this and that when we're nowhere near that place. It's like people have nothing better to do, you know, but she's [her mum] dictated our whole life through what will people say, you know, we weren't allowed to mix with our relatives; weren't allowed to go to parties; weren't allowed to go to weddings and things... Oh no, you know it's shameful, people are going to see you out and they're going to, you know, say bad things about you and stuff.

Living within this izzat-induced existence clearly impacted negatively on Aadhya's wellbeing: she revealed that she had suffered several mental health breakdowns. She identified learning, and particularly reading, as a way of dealing with her emotional state. She says **"I loved reading... I guess it's the eagerness to learn, it's the, um, escapism I suppose, you know, you sort of forget all your worries and just read really."** So whilst her mother did not value education for girls, for Aadhya it was a way of coping with the stress of living within the confines of izzat. This was also true for both Palki and Megh, who both stressed the relevance of the perceptions of the community with regards to what they were and were not allowed to do:

The neighbours would, like, say to my mum 'oh I saw your daughter in town with a boy'. She [her mum] was, like 'you know what, I want you guys to live your life and as long as you, you know, never embarrass me, but just make me proud with your education'.

Palki's mum frames her expectation of behaviour that will not bring shame on her (perhaps because as a single parent she is acting in a pseudo male role) and more importantly she stresses that she is allowing post-compulsory education to happen but that she wants it to be used to bring positive benefits to the family in terms of social community standing. This is also the case with Megh:

My dad said 'okay you want to go to college, I don't have a problem with that, but I don't want someone knocking on my door'. 'Cause people always loved seeing us out and about and then phoning my dad and saying we just saw your daughter in that shop you know. So he said, 'you have that freedom but I don't want to receive the phone call that, you know, your daughter was seen with a boy or things like that'. So that was his biggest fear.

Megh's father is making a similar connection with education but he also extends it by incorporating notions of freedom for her. He is making it explicitly clear that he is 'allowing' her to have the 'freedom' of post-compulsory education but warning her that this freedom lies within an expected code of conduct, one which is based on protecting

his izzat by not associating with boys. Such prohibition of communicating or being seen with males was evident mostly in the narratives of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage women. Among the Indian heritage women, the rhetoric changed slightly, in that such association was not forbidden, but it was still framed within expected outcomes. For example, Ganga explains the 'talk' her mother had with her about boys and relationships before she went to university:

My mum says as long as you don't do anything bad [having sexual relations] it's ok [to have boyfriends] obviously make sure that they [the boyfriends] are the same religion and caste... But I don't know she feels if we are allowed to or if she's [her mum] just saying it so that we won't do it...But she always says if you do anything to make sure that we are careful and so that no-one sees anything, because if we get seen then people start talking.

Hence Ganga is allowed friendships with boys, but not allowed to let that develop into anything sexual. By putting in the caveat about religion and caste, Ganga's mum is ensuring that if Ganga must operate outside of what is approved of by the community, then the males Ganga associates with have to be compatible with her family, which in turn means that Ganga can enter into a sanctioned relationship (such as marriage) with that male. However, even for Ganga, there is the warning to conduct any sort of relationship discreetly because there are community eyes everywhere Ganga's mother's comments show just how important the community 'gaze' is to BIP women's lives.

b. Identity and Belonging

Mass immigration to Britain in the 1950s, 60s and 70s brought with it new discussions about how people, particularly new arrivals, should be labelled, and whether these immigrants could ever be termed British. These discussions took place in Parliament, in the media, and at grassroots level. An examination of contemporary parliamentary papers, television programmes and newspapers reveals a level of societal panic about the integrity of the white British identity, and whether the immigrants could ever truly belong to, and in, Britain. Enoch Powell's 1968 'rivers of blood' speech to a Conservative Association meeting in Birmingham, which argued vehemently against the possibility and indeed desirability of immigrant integration, was only one example of this 'panic'. Various acts of parliament, such as the Race Relations Act 1965 (amended in 1968), the Race Relations Act 1976, and others through to the Equality Act 2010), are in part intended to limit divisive public rhetoric about race and immigration. The reality is that whilst they outlaw various forms of discrimination, their efficacy in stopping racist speech is questionable. Moreover, concurrent with this legislation, more subtle attempts to question minority ethnic people's Britishness emerged through other media, an example being a 1990 interview with the Member of Parliament (M.P)

Norman Tebbit, in which he suggested, during a cricket test match, that British minority ethnic people would always have loyalties elsewhere, and support cricket teams other than England for that reason (Fisher, 1990). The impact of rhetoric, debate and 'panic' about immigrants' loyalties was widespread, influencing, amongst others, the labour and housing markets, and, most pertinent to this thesis, education.

Alongside labels of identification, there was also discussion about whether it was possible to be British and something else. Tomlinson (2014) argues that there was a "cultural and political resistance by the white majority to the conjunction of being 'black', or 'Asian', and British." (p104). She states that nearly twenty years later this is still an issue, particularly in education. This issue of identification is tied very firmly with notions of belonging. Belonging can arguably only occur if individuals feel comfortable and at ease, and this is governed not only by the self, but also by external stakeholders, such as those that legislate (parliament), those that inform (the media), and those that educate (teachers). Thus, rhetoric clearly plays an immense role in notions of identity and self-identification, and could ultimately, therefore, impact educational achievement.

Other rhetoric that emerged concerned the nature of an ideally cohesive society, and whether minority ethnic communities ought to 'assimilate' or 'integrate'. These two terms carried extremely loaded implications for the way in which minority ethnic people were expected to live their lives in their 'new home'. The term 'assimilate' was seen to mean the retention of individual and cultural identities but with compliance with dominant codes of conduct, and of course observing laws, whilst the term 'integrate' usually implied active and passive absorption the more dominant cultural norms. There were (and are) conversations considering the extent to which society could become 'multicultural', as in ensuring that people from different cultures could observe their own discrete values, but also live side-by-side with those that did not follow that belief set, and still be respected as part of a unified society. Bhatt (2012, p8) raises the notion of "communal purity" and "good" minorities as opposed to "bad" minorities. He discusses how some Hindus and Sikhs "demanded" to be addressed as something other than "Asians" after the 2001 riots because they wanted to be recognised as "loyal, model minorities committed fully to Britishness" and who were "high achievers in employment and education", thus completely different to Muslims, who were seen as deviants and trouble makers. He further states that the "language of liberty and freedom", and of "women's and sexual emancipation" is "directed against Muslim populations as a test of their acceptance of certain values" (p9). This point is one previously made by Modood (2010, p3) who states it was "ironic" that "Muslims are experiencing the pressures to step up and be British" at the same time as other minorities are "coming to feel an easing of identity pressures and greater freedom to mix and match identities on an

individual basis.” I argue that this links directly to visible signs of difference, and of an Islamic identity, such as women who wear headscarves.

Many, such as Rushdie (1991), argue that colour is a barrier to this notion of a cohesive society. He states that the goalpost was forever being moved when it came to equity between blacks and whites, the word ‘black’ being used as a political description, and in direct opposition to the word white, for anyone who was not white:

“At first, we are told, the goal was ‘integration.’ Now this word rapidly came to mean ‘assimilation’: a black man could only become integrated when he started behaving like a white one. After ‘integration’ came the concept of ‘racial harmony’. Now once again, this sounded virtuous and desirable, but what it meant in practice was that blacks should be persuaded to live peaceably with whites, in spite of all the injustices done to them every day. The call for ‘racial harmony’ was simply an invitation to shut up and smile while nothing was done about our grievances. And now there’s a new catchword: ‘multiculturalism’. . . Multiculturalism is the latest token gesture towards Britain’s blacks, and it ought to be exposed, like ‘integration’ and ‘racial harmony’, for the shame it is” (p137).

For Rushdie, to revert the discussion to how a ‘colour’ should behave further fed notions of difference. More than twenty years after Rushdie wrote this, British society is still grappling with this concept of ordering or grouping. Wade (2014) argues that the distinction between ethnicity and race is unclear. Essentially, both terms create a notion of ‘the other’, and of insider and outsiders, and legislation such as the UK Race Relations Act (which is meant to be antiracist) “tends to include race and ethnicity as equivalent” (p593). Wade further argues that official ethnicity categories, such as white European, Asian, and Black, are rooted in colonial history, which created labels based on groupings, which in turn divides people further. Yuval-Davis (2011) argues that on a global scale, classifications of strangers - those who are seen not to belong -are frequently modified and contested. Such contestations are often accompanied by a range of frictions along “ethnic, cultural, and religious” lines as well as “between societies and states” (p2). Divisions and hierarchies are of course inherent to all communities, including the ‘minority ethnic’ groups themselves. In my experience, it is not uncommon to hear a Sikh person calling a Muslim person a ‘paki’.

However, it is not just ‘others’ who are able to bestow feelings of belonging; individuals themselves can also choose not to belong. For example, some first-generation migrants never really felt that Britain was their home. They came with a specific purpose, to make money, and the intention was to return ‘home’ and buy more land and better housing. Since they were ‘visitors’, they were prepared to accept hostility from the ‘natives’. However, subsequent generations tend not to hold this ‘visitor and host’ mentality. To them, there is no sense of being beholden to anyone; Britain is their home, and they expect full participation and rights alongside every other citizen (Wilson, 1978; Aston, Hooker, Page, & Willison, 2007).

The theme of belonging and how it is negotiated is also very important to the women in this thesis. However, it is very nuanced, and complex to unpack, primarily because the women themselves change their own stand within their story. An example is the way that some of them at times homogenise 'Asian culture' and notions of being 'Asian', 'Bangladeshi', 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'English', or 'British'. This homogenisation unwittingly relates directly to racist stereotyping, both within BIP communities and in wider society. A number of the women used the label 'British' as a prefix to the label 'Asian', or one of the BIP labels, for example 'British Indian' or 'British Asian'. For example, Prem says: **"I'm British Asian, as they (the establishment) like to term me"** implying that she has been given the label. This is something that Radwa also mentioned:

They class us as, they say 'your community'. They consider that we consider our community, because they do, as being Asians. So, if I'm an Asian, my community is Asian, if I'm white my community will be white, but with me, I don't actually class that as a community, I class a community as being my neighbours, people I associate with, you know...

Radwa, like Prem, constructs a notional dialogue between 'them and us'. Even whilst she is discussing how she is viewed by 'them', she is also referring to 'us', 'we', and 'our', thereby becoming complicit within the othering. Aadhya also uses othering and makes some bold inferences, in which she uses stereotypes:

I've never really been able to connect with English people, to people of a different culture because there is such a big cultural difference you know, they drink, they take drugs, they eat meat, you know, pork or whatever, and for me that would have been a big deal for me. You know I don't think I could live like that.

Aadhya's self-positioning is very interesting. She uses the term 'English people' suggesting she does not self-identify as English and then by homogenising all English people as she does, implies a sense of extreme difference between her and 'them'.

Prem self-identifies as: **"British. Full stop."** Meaning that she didn't personally identify with the prefix of either Asian or Indian. She goes onto state:

'Cause I originally used to say I'm Indian, a few years ago, I think that was more my parents influence. Then I started calling myself Asian, but I'm not even Asian, I'm British. My parents have Indian heritage, I'm not Indian, because I went to India two years ago. I went to Delhi, I have a love/hate with India, sometimes I love it sometimes I hate it, went to Delhi, and I have no association with people in Delhi. And then when we went back to Panjab, yes I've got a culture association with Panjab, but that doesn't mean that I'm Indian, so I started saying to my dad I'm not Indian, I'm Panjabi. And he was like Panjab is a state of India, and I was like I don't care, how many states are there in India which I can't associate myself? I can only associate myself with one of them because of the influences that you've bought culturally to England. But I can't, I can't say that I've got a connection to India, it might, it might be quite sad to say, but that's how I feel.

Prem does not identify with being Indian because she sees the country as an association of differing states with different identities, with none of which (apart from the Panjab) she can identify. Similarly, it is interesting to note how her viewpoint is different to her father's. He seems to see India as a whole, at least insofar as his self-labelling goes. Jeevan went further than Prem, expressing pride at being a Panjabi, but also notes that she did not really experience that feeling until she went to university, where she **“was surrounded by white people”**, but she also says that being Panjabi is only one facet of her, and it is secondary to her western identity: **“I am Panjabi but it's ancillary to the western side of me.”** By using the term 'western side' Jeevan is commenting on the fact that she does not want to conform to the structures such as izzat that are not perceived to be in western identity. However, she emphatically self-identified as being primarily British, despite how some others felt she should be defined:

I am British, my friends are British. But my grandparents would say you're Indian, you're not British, but I would say I am.

This difference between Jeevan and her grandparents (who are first-generation migrants) highlights the attitudinal shift away from the host and visitor mentality.

Rodela has similar feelings about where she feels she belongs:

I'm very proud to be Asian. I'm very proud to be British Asian, because, you know, I'm really proud, you know, that, of myself as well, being born here. I would class this as home, although some people might say, 'Well, actually, no, that might not be,' because of my skin colour, no, I was born here... this is home for me.

Whilst Rodela is 'proud' to be 'Asian', she does not identify with being 'Bangladeshi', as she says:

I don't really know about Bangladesh very much. I can't really talk about, erm, a lot of, you know, I've been there once... twice, actually, because we went there for my honeymoon, erm... and that's it. My parents didn't really educate us on Bangladesh and it wasn't a really, a major thing, and, to be honest with you, because it was one of the worst memories for me, I don't want to be related to that as well. But now it was one of the best memories now, because, obviously, me and my partner went on honeymoon there and it was, it was a total part of Bangladesh, and it's amazing, you know?

Rodela's experiences of Bangladesh only relate to marriage, once forcefully, and the second out of choice. Equally interesting, she makes a differentiation between her culture and Bangladeshi culture:

I'm very happy to talk about my culture of how I do things, but probably not be able to talk about the whole Bangladeshi culture as a whole, you know.

Whilst Rodela's narrative could be analysed through a different lens (perhaps a Sylhet/ non Sylheti one where class could be seen as the most important feature), the key element of the narrative is the pertinence Rodela draws to herself. Rodela refers to **my** culture and how **I** do things which seems to indicate that she has, internally, had to reject the concept of culture that is normally accepted (i.e. common traits shared by many), and recreate 'culture' as being individual. This differentiation clearly demarcates her lived experience of 'Bangladeshi' heritage and the geographical location that is Bangladesh. She strongly identifies with, and refers to, Britain as '**home**' as she constantly mentions that "**...this is home for me.**"

This question of where felt like home features strongly in how the women chose to label themselves. For example, Sabar, who came to Britain as a child at the age of five, and then went back to the country of her birth regularly (almost every year), does not regard Britain as home, and regards herself as a migrant:

I still have that migrant mentality, because some people picked me up at work over it, because they said, 'Oh, where you going?' 'Oh, you're going on holiday, aren't you?' and I said, 'No,' I said, 'I'm going, I'm going home,' and I still see Goa as my home. I will always be Goan, first and foremost. It will be, and it's not even that I'm Indian and you still get that a lot in Goa as well, they don't even, they'll say they're Goan first, Indian second, and for me that's, it's the same, it's that I'll be Goan first and then this balance. I'm not even Indian really; I suppose Goan first and then British. Erm, I don't even really recognise the Indian bit, because it's never had, India's never had that much of an impact on, on me, because when I left Goa it was still very much Portuguese mentality.

She goes onto say:

The crowds, the heat, the smells, all of that is the experience. I love it. I love going, I love driving out there [enthusiastically]. It's mental, but I love the smells, you know, you know, everything about it, the, the markets, the, you know, looking around, how you shop there, everything about it. And... for me, and when I come back to England sometimes, I think, oh [disappointedly], you know, the first week back I always think, 'God, it's so sterile here!'

For Sabar Goa is home, even though she lives in Britain. This is also true for Asha, who arrived in Britain at the age of eight. When explaining how she saw herself, she strongly identified with the Panjab:

On the forms, I always put British Indian but I suppose I'm really a Panjabi British person. I am Panjabi, and I live in Britain.

Sabar then expands what she means by saying:

I'm both really, both are important to me. My Panjabiness comes out more when I'm with Asian people and at events or watching films, and at work my Britishness comes out more. One isn't more dominant than the other.

A sense of home and entitlement to being accepted as British seemed to be very dependent on the age of the women, and, more noticeably, whether they migrated to the UK after the age of starting school. With the older Indian heritage women, there

was no reticence in verbalising this idea of belonging. The majority of these women stated a preference for where they were born or had heritage from. Interestingly, if they were born in India, their affiliation was to particular states, rather than India as a whole, or whether they felt at home in Britain. This affiliation with their region, rather than their nation maybe partly to do with the size of India. This 'regionalism' was not the case with the Bangladeshi or Pakistani heritage women. Belonging in this instance was based around the country of origin. For example, Hafsa says: **"I was born here but I'm Pakistani"**. Hafsa spent a large chunk of her childhood going back to Pakistan for several months at a time and this may explain how she identifies her sense of belonging. Palki who was born in Britain, initially says:

I'm Bangladeshi, that's important, that is a really important to me more so now than ever. So that's probably how I would identify.

When asked why now more than ever, she replied that this was because she was living in an environment that was predominately white. This is particularly interesting because it highlights the need to keep a sense of identity linked to heritage in a more conscious way. She then goes onto say: **"But I'm British first of all through and through."**

So for Palki, being both Bangladeshi and British are not separate things. Although she 'identifies' as Bangladeshi in response to her environment, she acknowledges the strength of her British identity. Another fascinating discussion to emerge from the women's narratives concerned the use of 'British' or 'English' for nation-related self-identity. The dialogue that surfaced was around notions of colour. The popular consensus seemed to be that to be English, a person has to be white, but being British was more . For example, Taani said:

My ethnicity is Bangladeshi but I was born and brought up here, I'm British Bengali because English is more dominant in our home. I wouldn't say I was English because to me it's a white person who is culturally English.

Prem expanded on this:

I'm not English, I'm British. 'Cause I think in my mind, I think, I associate English being with white, a white person, who doesn't have, who has, like, pure English blood. So people who born and bred in England, who have kids from England etc. etc.

So when I asked about her future children and whether they would then be English because they would be 'born and bred' from parents who were 'born and bred', she replied:

Wow, that's a good question. I don't know, it's not something I've thought about yet. But I don't feel as I'm English, because I don't, I look at myself and I'm not white, if that makes sense.

So I then asked if being English equated to being white and she said:

A little bit, and without having other cultural influences. So perhaps if I was Indian being brought up in a white family, and I had no other cultural association with anywhere then I might call myself English.

This was also something that Palki narrated:

I'm not English, I don't say English actually. I don't know [why], I think I, I think when I think of identity I think of nationality. It's probably more just wording than anything more if that makes sense. But I think everyone can see I'm incredibly Westernised, so yeah I'd probably just say British because that's what it says on my passport.

The exception to this way of introducing colour as a determinant of Englishness was Radwa:

I personally think I'm English, I'm British, you know, because, at the end of the day, the, I only came to this realisation a couple of, a couple of years ago, and before I would actually class myself as a British Pakistani.

Thus for Radwa, the terms English and British were interchangeable, and not separate entities.

Randeep's response was particularly interesting when she was talking about identity and belonging:

I don't know who I am... and that's... I don't have an identity, because I'm not Indian and I'm not English. I'm somewhere in the middle, where I just happen to float, because... I don't think... because of my background I don't think I have an identity. I was born here, but I don't feel I'm... I mean yeah I'm probably British. Well I am British 'cause I was born here, but I don't, I don't feel I'm wholly British or I'm wholly Indian either. That's the one thing I would say is that I don't fit in anywhere, that's something that's stuck with me all my life... even now... I don't belong, I don't belong in India and I sometimes think that we necessarily, I'm probably more comfortable here, I would probably live here - of course I would live here – have all my life, I wouldn't live in India, but I don't think you ever truly fit do you?

Randeep talks about comfort rather than belonging. She says that she feels more comfortable in Britain than India; however, she still perceives herself to be an outsider in both places. Randeep uses the words 'don't fit' to mean not wholly belonging anywhere. This idea of being 'too British to be Indian' and 'too Indian to be British' is a popular one in Bollywood films and music, where British BIP heritage people, but particularly women, are represented as having lost their way. However, the approach implies that identity is static, and binary.

Difference via the construct of class also arose in the narratives. Rodela spoke about 'chavvy' people who had no respect for elders, to whom Prem also alluded. She talked about going to school with mainly white people:

There was one other Indian girl at school and that was it, other than that they were white people. Um, and as I've grown up, I've now realised that actually I have a different background to what they had, because they were I think as the term would call it a bit chavvy - they were allowed to go to the park drink their cider I wasn't.

For Prem going to a park and drinking cider at 15 or 16 was 'chavvy'. This term is overwhelmingly pejorative, but Prem then continues by assigning positive attributes to some of these her classmates:

But some of the girls were actually really good, I remember one girl, she was more of the leader of the pack, you know out with loads of boys and stuff like that, go out smoking go out drinking, and I think we were hanging out one time, and the girls were getting, I think they were getting high or they were smoking, and I was like Chelsey what was going on there? And she actually said Prem you don't want to get into this, so she, I won't ever forget that because I felt a little bit protected, so it was like, you don't need to get into this, just hang out with us, but don't do this stuff.

Prem, like Aadhya, conflates drugs and smoking but also stresses that she felt 'protected'. This handing over responsibility for her welfare and making sure she did the 'right' or 'honourable' thing to someone else shows just how entrenched the value system of difference, othering and izzat actually is. Equally interesting is that 'the leader of the pack' also applies difference to the situation. As the only BIP heritage girl in the group, Prem is told that the 'stuff' the others are doing is not for her.

c. Language and Identity Positioning

Izzat and language used to identify both oneself and others is critical to forming an understanding of how it can reinforce and perpetuate structures of inclusion and exclusion, and ultimately racism. An example of this is the usage of the terms 'coconut' and 'desi'. A coconut is a racialized representation of a person of BIP heritage who 'acts white', a person who is brown on the outside but white on the inside. This is based on, firstly, a problematic homogenisation of what is deemed to be 'white' or English culture, and secondly, on an ontology that suggests difference based on skin colour, and, ultimately, notions of 'otherness'. This term is meant to be offensive as it implies betrayal to one's heritage, or as Kim (2014) explains, can be used for diasporic people who may be either "confused" or "lost" and "who must find their way back to their 'roots' in order to become their true self" (p640). The term 'desi' has evolved from the word 'desh' which superficially means 'land', but which is used to denote 'homeland'. The word desi is used in a variety of ways to denote authentic 'home' experiences such as desi khana (home or authentic culture food), desi clothes, desi music and desi behaviours or, to put it another way for the latter, behaviour rooted in an understanding of the cultural confines of izzat. I have been called a coconut on numerous occasions because of my viewpoints about equality, and specifically for questioning why male izzat should dictate what roles women have to have within family life. Prem, interestingly, used the same term when she talked about herself:

I've got a lot of Indian tendencies, so at a lot of people say I'm pretty fresh, not exactly coconut, because I listen to my Indian music.

By using the term 'fresh' she is connoting the term 'freshi' which means someone who has only just recently arrived in Britain and does not understand how British BIP people function. She makes a distinction between 'fresh' and 'coconut' which suggests that there is a hierarchy and equally, attributable practices to both labels. When asked what she meant by the term coconut she said:

As in, more of the English ways, so I like my Indian music, I like my Indian food, I speak Punjabi, I have these little habits that I know are prone from an Indian heritage that I've picked up from my gran, I've picked up from my mum. And so in that sense that's why I can't call myself English, because those little things make up who I am and they're more Indian than they are English.

By doing the things that she has learnt from her grandmother and mother, Prem is actually gaining cultural capital and therefore, can avoid being a total 'coconut'. She clarifies what the term coconut means:

A coconut is something I heard growing up, and I think it's when Asian people disassociate themselves with their cultural upbringing.

This term coconut was also used by Randeep, who was explaining about Indian heritage people who did not really know who they were, or where they fitted in. She explained that it is a label for people who aspire to an identity that denies their heritage:

If I was someone who hated Indian music, hated Indian food, wanted to be more English, and say oh no that's not me [not Indian heritage]. That's where you're called coconut.

This polarisation of identity based on how 'authentically' you are seen to adhere to the codes governing how you represent yourself, and how closely you observe the rule structure, is about izzat, and particularly about the way its structures are implicit within the positioning of women. Women have to behave in a way that is culturally appropriate or risk not only the status and respect afforded to their families, as discussed in section A of this chapter, but also being defined as 'coconuts'. The exertion of izzat on the positioning of women, and ultimately their standing as a members of a community, cannot be underestimated.

d. Izzat, Religion and Dress

For a number of the women in this study, religion played a significant part in their daily lives. This ranged from how they viewed their own identity, to the development of voice and even how they perceived their place in not just the UK but the world. ONS (2012) figures from the 2011 census suggest that Islam (4.4%) is the second largest religious group in the UK, the first being Christianity (59.5%). Approximately four in ten who declared themselves as Muslim reported their ethnicity as Pakistani; furthermore, almost half of all self-reported Muslims were born in the UK Hinduism (1.3%) was the

fourth largest, after those who declared they had no religion, in third place. Sikhism constituted a smaller percentage, at 0.7%. However, this data does not of course indicate how much importance people place on this identification.

The majority of the women, with the exception of Rodela and Palki, were keen to stress their religion as a component of their identity. The older narrators, with the exception of Tej, acknowledged their religion, and apart from Ganga, Jeevan, and Tarsem, so did the younger narrators. This is particularly interesting because from what some of the women are saying, and from personal experience, there is a growing awareness of, and affiliation to, religious identity, amongst, particularly, Muslim and Sikh youth. There is a desire, on the parts of some young people, to read religious scriptures for themselves to better understand their heritage. Whilst it is outside of the scope of this thesis to examine this phenomenon, it does warrant further investigation, because it can lead to the labelling and problematic noun 'fundamentalism', particularly with respect to young Muslims. Amongst young Sikhs, there has arisen a 'Khalistan' movement in the UK, within which interpretations of scripture are divisive. More extreme interpretations are evident in punitive action against young people who chose to live a life not totally governed by the rules of izzat. An example would be groups of young men boycotting mixed heritage (between Sikhs and other religions) marriage ceremonies at gudwaras (Neiyyar & Khatkar, 2013; Dearden, 2015; Parveen, 2016.) Karjol voices how she wanted to go to the gudwara to:

celebrate all the religious events, such as Guru Nanak's birthday, and I go to the gudwara every weekend. ...As I've got older I've started believing in it more. People tend to think that because we go with our parents that we're forced to go, but we go out of choice.

This desire to 'go out of choice' and learn more is not just true for the Indian heritage women who acknowledged religious affiliation, it was also true for the Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women. For example, Palki talks about having to go to Arabic classes for two hours every evening Monday to Friday and learning to recite the Koran and learning, **"to do prayer and stuff"**. However, she acknowledges that whilst she was growing up, she **"really struggled to identify with my religion"** primarily because she **"would ask my mum and my dad questions about our religion and they could never explain stuff"**, and so she could not get the answers she needed. She explains that it's partly because of the fact that:

In Islam you learn everything in Arabic, but just because you learnt to read it doesn't mean you understand it. So I didn't understand why I was being forced, almost, to learn something, but then I couldn't understand the meaning of it. Um, and I asked for a very long time, like, I'd ask questions, but my questions were not welcome. I was just told to just learn, kind of thing. And then I'd be told all these stories, and again, I'd challenge those stories, like it's all superstitions and

stuff; again I think I'm just quite a practical thinker and um I think, I dunno I think, I just asked a lot of questions and they probably weren't very welcome.

Equally, she could not reconcile what she saw with what she was being told. For example, she says:

My dad would go and play the lottery and then say you shouldn't gamble, and then I'd challenge him and say well playing the lottery is gambling, so how like how can you be a good Muslim if you do that? And then he'll just say your mum's raised you wrong and he didn't like to be challenged by us girls, but then I guess that's what my education did do, it gave me those skills to be able to ask questions and put two and two together.

This is very telling with regards to how Palki's father regards his role and the role of his wife in relation to how the girls were brought up. By questioning him, Palki is contravening the unspoken rules of izzat, and that is because her mother did not enforce understanding of those rules, and so it is, in her father's opinion, his wife's fault. The fact that he is contravening the rules of Islam is irrelevant. As a male, he has the right of interpretation. Palki goes onto say:

I've studied, like I studied Islam extensively when I was at school, like I did a GCSE in it, I got an A* in it, like I understood it, I understood bits of my religion that I don't think members of my family did, which is why I was so inquisitive... And um, I just feel like I've been let down a lot by what I've been told about my religion from people if that makes sense.

For Palki, this understanding of her religion brought her into direct conflict with other members of her wider family and community. With the ability to read and access wider information easily, there is a better 'understanding' of scriptures, which, in turn, means that a lot of the younger people are better informed about the cornerstones of 'their' religion than perhaps their parents were. This is predominantly pertinent to the working class children whose parents often came from rural communities and who could not write or read any language, and so it was easier to confuse religious expectations with cultural (i.e. izzat) doctrines. Whilst it is acknowledged that the way religion is practised relies heavily on an oral tradition, it was practised from observation of others' practices, and within the confines of what male elders in villages stipulated.

Another interesting facet about religion and izzat was regarding the way both of the Muslim women who had married white men had to ensure that their husbands-to-be firstly converted to Islam. For Palki, the conversion was not for religious reasons, because she herself was not sure how strongly she affiliated to Islam, but in order to prevent her mother from being 'shamed' by the baradari. Palki says:

If someone asks then my mum can say yeah you know what Palki is married, she married to a guy that converted, so there's no embarrassment to my mum so that was very important to me.

With the non-Muslim women who had married outside of their heritage religion, this partner conversion was not expected, or was not voiced as being expected. However,

izzat manifested in other ways, such as not being acknowledged by the community, or by not being invited to religious events where the wider community would be present. Tej talks about how when her first child was born, she did not get the customary visits from members of the community, but more importantly, she did not get the birth ceremonies from her parents and brother:

I suppose the only time it really hurt was when I didn't have the baby functions and stuff for my daughter because she wasn't all Indian. My parents, and brother never came with the stuff they are supposed to bring. I didn't say anything. It was my own fault... choice to marry a white guy.

'Marrying out' has not meant that Tej has been ostracised, because her family still speaks to her; however, she has been cut out of the traditions and customs because she violated the confines of izzat, and are, perhaps, victims of racism.

For many of the women, religion was deemed to be an integral part of their identity, as Amal pointed out:

Muslim is who I am inside, Asian is who I look like, and Britain is where I live, and all these identities are nested within you and I don't think I could separate either of those and none of them are in conflict with each other.

For Amal this did not happen by chance:

I do believe that, going back to the issue of being a nuclear family, that also shaped, that we had less of that problem that some communities, that some of my friends had, because they always had to be Asian and really identify with that, whereas we were ok, and my parents didn't really have this great desire to hold on as much as others. A nuclear family meant that we had less of an identity problem.

Because Amal grew up in a white area without any extended family or community that shared heritage with them, she feels that they managed to escape the confines of adherence to a single cultural identity.

Keddie (2011) indicates that whilst there has been historic mistrust between Islam and 'the west', with the 9/11 terror attacks, the landscape changed significantly. The positioning of opposites has morphed into increased levels of active suspicion and even hatred of Muslims from some, and the framing of them as misogynists, oppressors and terrorists. Furthermore, as Shah and Iqbal (2011) highlight, global anti-Muslim rhetoric is responsible for an increase in religious awareness amongst some Muslims, and in particular young, diasporic Pakistanis. For a number of the Muslim women interviewed for this study, arguably prevalent anti-Islamic rhetoric has been a major influence on their development of self. For example, Taani describes walking down a street and having strangers shout out 'terrorist' to her. She says: **"I know I'm not a terrorist it's just the way the news has portrayed us."** The fact that she has to verbalise that she is not a terrorist is of note, because how she is perceived by others is clearly impacting on her. Taani recognises that she does not even need to voice

what her religion is because it is given as being obvious from her hijab. Undoubtedly, post 9/11, there has been more racism directed towards those who are Muslim and wear headscarves (Revell, 2012). This was very true for Sadia and her experience of feeling 'different'. Because she wore a headscarf in year six of primary school, and the school itself had very few BIP heritage people, she felt vulnerable. Her experience of being relegated to *persona non grata* was exemplified by what she voiced:

I used to go in a group where everyone was white, and then people never used to socialise with me, they used to ask other people's opinion, they wouldn't ask mine so I used to feel really left out. They would be like oh um, like when everything's done the teacher would be like so Sadia what do you think, what did you discuss in the group, so obviously I used to come up with something 'oh we discussed this...' I never said oh they didn't include me.

For Sadia, the isolation she felt was a direct result of looking different.

Her secondary school experiences were no better. She explains how challenging it became in years 9 and 10 particularly:

It was quite hard, because um, we used to go past people and they'd be like 'Pakis' or 'you lot eat curry', like 'get out of our country you have no right', and they'd say it to me when I walked alone, but I like I say I'm not the type of person to get into a fight and I used to just leave it, I used to be like pathetic.

For Sadia, these experiences tarnished her childhood. She refers to herself as 'pathetic', but these experiences will have impacted Sadia's capacity to learn. The school and to a certain extent the compulsory educational system, let her down by not ensuring an environment that was conducive to learning.

The outward appearance of a person can determine how they are viewed by wider society. Differences in skin tones, as previously discussed, is one element of outward appearance, but another is clothing, such as, for some BIP women a headscarf, veil, or burkha. There are many views about the wearing of a burkha or indeed a hijab. Some writers, such as Kabeer (2000), argue that wearing a hijab is actually about creating agency through choice. Furthermore, it could be argued that Muslim women should not be seen through a reductionist lens that sets up a binary system whereby women in the west are 'free' and Muslim women are seen to be 'subjugated'. Jahan (2011) cites Rozario (2003) who argues that a woman who wears a burkha is turned into a "non-person" and is labelled "unapproachable". The fact that women may have chosen to wear these items is not, in this viewpoint, really given credence. However, the argument is complex. On one hand, many women do chose to wear the hijab, but if that choice is framed within the cultural confines of izzat, then it cannot really be a choice. Equally important is that the hijab, as an example, is not necessarily a religious artefact, but, I believe, an external indicator of belonging. It is a physical expression of a paradigm shared with others from a similar cultural heritage which, although originally constructed through male-defined izzat rules, does enable a sense of 'sisterhood' (Zaytoun & Ezekiel,

2016). Nevertheless, for many of the women in this research who wore a hijab, there was a constant weighing of how others, who were not party to the shared understanding, would see them. Roseen expressed this fear when she was discussing how others within her university class would see her. She said **“I always used to have this fear in me, like I’m Bengali, the way I’m dressed, how are they going to see me?”** How she saw herself was irrelevant at this point, she simply wanted to feel like she belonged, irrespective of what she looked like or what she was wearing. She further clarified that she wore a headscarf because she felt **“protected”**. Before she married, she did not wear a headscarf. However, after marriage she started:

to practice Islam and it was after that I realised I feel comfortable, I feel that this is who I am...and this is my identity

She does not really clarify why she started to wear it after her marriage, but she does go onto say:

Erm, I’ve never, ever encouraged my daughters. My daughter who’s 21, she only started wearing about a, er, after my uncle’s death, erm, in November. She started covering from February this year. Erm, and my other daughter, she’s started, who’s going to be 16 in July, she started wearing from year, er, aged 12. So, I’ve never, ever encouraged them to wear headscarf and to...they, they, they’ve done it. The older one, she’s just started recently. But the, this is, I think it’s your identity and, you know, this is who I am and this is how I am.

So whilst Roseen may have come to wearing a headscarf independently, she was still aware of what it meant with regards to judgements, sound or otherwise, about her identity. Interestingly, it was reassurance from a tutor that allowed her to gain a sense of belonging, as the tutor advised her to **“just forget how you look, it’s what you’re giving, that’s the important thing.”** This enabled her to gain confidence and she clarified this point by saying:

I’ve realised that it doesn’t matter how I dress. People who are, erm... who are, you know, good humans or good people, they, they don’t see that, they don’t see that, and that’s what I’ve learnt over the years.

From the starting point of insecurity, Roseen seems now very secure in her own identity, and also her sense of agency. It is interesting to note that Roseen says ‘that’ in ‘they don’t see that’, twice. Roseen is implying that she is aware of some negative connotation of the hijab, but that ‘good people’ see past it to the person beyond the dress. The headscarf is merely one attribute of her. Her sense of agency is so developed that she articulates it in terms of any other person with a diverse background:

I am different so that’s important to acknowledge that. So, I am different. Although we share the race, human race or we’re human, we have our own qualities and understanding, but remember I am different and I have my needs. So, it’s like somebody who, who had a disability, who couldn’t do things, but not to forget that they’re also human. So, it’s that understanding. So, it’s important to say, yes, I am Muslim and I have my needs, erm, even like work nowadays, in,

erm, in, people go out for lunch and do things; I go and do my prayer first and then do my lunch and everything, and I think my colleagues have understood that – these are her needs. So, it's like having, you know, somebody who have disability, they have their needs and qualities that needs to be met, but it doesn't stop them being an equal, you know, equality in that area.

Roseen embraces the hijab as giving her a greater sense of agency; this was not the case with all of the women who wore it. Aadhya, for example, states that it wasn't her choice, but her husband's view of what she should and should not wear:

I had worn jeans and stuff but he wasn't happy about jeans, so it was more long skirts and shirts and long tops and thing like that so I think that was fine, that was acceptable, you know, or Asian clothes. But I think we did have arguments and things about that, you know he wasn't happy about me not covering my head.

For Aadhya, it was in the end simply easier to comply than to continue to challenge. Part of the reasoning for wearing the hijab was based on what others would say, and Hridi voices this when explaining why she wore a hijab:

I feel like others would be looking at me and saying why isn't she wearing one, she should be wearing one. People judge you, and your family, on what you look like.

This judgement that Hridi refers to is the izzat lens.

For some of the women, there was a conflation between religion and culture. Sadia, for example, talks about how in her religion the purpose of wearing a 'scarf' is to prevent sexual relations:

because you're meant to cover yourself from boys, before marriage you're not really meant to like dress up in front of boys because it leads to going into sexual relationship and all of that stuff, and you're not allowed to have sexual stuff before marriage. So like you're never meant to feel attracted to boys, a boy is not even meant to look at you.

She then goes onto say that her religion meant she could not show her hair. This was a difficult thing for her in primary school, because she felt she was bullied for it, as it was only her and one other girl, who she became friends with, that wore a headscarf. She said that:

People used to make comments that oh um you're different, so why are you different, why do you wear that, why can't you be like us like show your hair, look at our hair we do it like that. And I used to feel really upset, so I used to go home and ask my mum.

She stresses that her parents did not force her to wear it, but that her father did suggest it. This was also what Inaya says. She concedes that originally it was her father's request:

When I first started to wear the headscarf, I started when I was in year 5, and to be honest I did wear the headscarf because my dad tell me, told me to.

Um, when I, um when I got older and I moved secondary school, then I realised I wasn't doing it for him I was doing it for myself.

The realisation that Inaya had is an interesting one. She talks about the fact that a headscarf gave her an identity as a Pakistani woman, because although she had been born in Britain, she remained a Pakistani because of the way she had been brought up. She says:

My parents have influenced me in a way where they've brought me up in this Pakistani way which I'm really happy and proud about, and when it comes to my religion I feel um, um they have taught me about my religion. They brought me up in the sa- Pakistani um, way, where you know, I wear the clothes, I um practice um kind of um, in Pakistani culture, wh-what yeah um. I brought up in a way, in a way I would have if I was in Pakistan like but in a kind of, in a British environment.

Randeep similarly recounts about her upbringing and about how, as a young woman, she was not allowed to wear certain clothes, such as miniskirts, because they were immodest. As she says:

It was an izzat thing. But I was a rebel, once I was out of the house I used to just roll my skirt up. If some auntieji had seen you, then it would have been really bad, because you would be known as shameless.

The power politics involved within the choices women are allowed to make with regards to how they clothe their bodies is not just pertinent to the women in this thesis. The tale of other women being 'too loose' or 'too uptight' in relation to clothing is not uncommon. However, such labelling is particularly detrimental to Muslim women who wear a hijab, sometimes from within their own communities. For example, Sadia talks about her secondary school experience:

Secondary was hard as well because I went to another school, and the school I went, I made new friends but none of them wore a headscarf. So I was the only person wearing a headscarf, and everyone in the year group used to be like, how come you wear it and your friends don't wear it blah blah, and one of my friends kind of got into an argument with me and was like, look you wear a scarf. People are making comments about us. Maybe you should take it off and try your hair like that, and I felt really upset; I was like, listen this is my religion, I'm not going to stop because of you. I know you're a Bengali but not the type of Bengali that wears a scarf. And some of my friends used to not talk to me and all of that.

The fact that her hijab was causing attention meant that her own friends turned on her. They did not want to be seen as different, and since the hijab was a visible sign of difference, it enabled them to be isolated as a group, but it also had a double impact for Sadia, because not only was she isolated from her wiser peers, but she was also isolated from others who shared her heritage.

e. Summary

In this chapter, I have articulated how constructions of gender, and gender disparity within family structures, are interlaced with expectational boundaries created by izzat. I have shown the complexity of labelling of identity both by my narrators and also by the wider society. I have also discusses how labelling impacts on the language that is used to denote those who 'transgress' these boundaries, whether that transgression is viewed by the baradari or the educational environments. Both produce the same outcomes. Doherty and Hughes (2009, p387) suggest the term 'self-esteem' concerns the relational correspondence between the real self and the ideal self. This concept feeds into the construction of identity for some of these women, as arguably, the ideal self is someone who operates within izzat boundaries. However, as the narratives show, this is not always the case, raising a question about the self-esteem, by Doherty and Hughes' definition, at least, of some or many of the women in this study. Often, the women comply because of a lack of choice, rather than a desire to be a 'good' woman by izzat standards. The notion of 'home' and belonging, particularly for the different generations, and the relationship with izzat, is multifaceted. Finally the narratives have demonstrated how izzat is used to police behaviour and induce conformity within the culturally constructed package of 'being good'. The following chapter illuminates how the izzat lens intersects with education, and is applied by families to that context.

5 Chapter Five: An Izzat Lens, the Four Pillars and the Intersections between Family and Education

In this chapter, using an izzat lens, I demonstrate how the family co-constructs the educational journeys of the women. The chapter starts with an overview of family structures and intergenerational ties. Many of the narrators discussed 'sacrifice', and particularly parental sacrifice for the betterment of their children. I will examine how this sacrifice enables the ties of izzat to be reinforced. All four pillars intersect to inform the journeys, and so will be used throughout the discussion. A consideration of how some BIP heritage people were able to 'trailblaze' for their siblings is undertaken and finally, a summary concludes the chapter.

Family and family life are pivotal in both the educational journeys of, but also the outcomes for, individuals. Moreover, izzat informs and enforces the influence of family on education. The Swann report (1985) suggested that Indian communities have high academic achievement because of their close-knit extended family units. This notion of family unit applies equally to Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage communities, but, as previously discussed, figures show there is a discrepancy in educational outcomes. Thus, the difference cannot simply be equated to close-knit family unit membership, but needs to be critically examined to understand what part not only parental and family influences play in educational outcomes, but also the mindsets of institutional settings.

a. Family Structures

One theme that arose several times with all three heritage groups was the notion of individualism within a family unit. A number of the women spoke about the importance of loyalty to family, and how no single person was more important than the whole unit. For many, this extended to the generation and dispersal of money. As Radwa expresses:

With Asians, we're, you know, if you're... in a one, two, three people are earning, they're putting in a pot for the whole family.

This 'communal pot' was also referred to by Randeep, who said:

When I was growing up and we all worked, everyone put the money in one place. I just did it because that's what we did. It wasn't my money it was ours.

This shared wealth, which can function as outward-facing prosperity, is another way in which izzat scaffolds how the family is regarded by the baradari. Or, to reframe that, the 'honour' of the family lies not just in how that family conducts itself, but also in external signs of prosperity that can be seen by the baradari. This is further discussed within chapter six.

Modood et al (1997) stress that it is relatively common for Asian families to live together in larger units and Knipe (2016) suggests that these tend to be multi-

generational households. Harrison and Phillips (2010) claim that “the desire for extended family living under one roof, and thus large accommodation, persists among many British Asian families” (p24). All of the women in this thesis lived with, or close to, extended family. For the married Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage women in particular, co-located, extended family might include their brothers-in-law and their wives and children. The picture was slightly more complex for the women who had married white partners. These women were living in nuclear family units, but interestingly, were more closely associated with their own extended families, rather than their white in-laws. However, it should be acknowledged that this type of family structure and living is not just pertinent to BIP heritage families. With the lack of affordable housing, many people across Britain, irrespective of heritage, are choosing to live in multi-household dwellings (Pilkauskas & Martinson, 2014).

In the case of BIP-heritage extended family households, all family members are typically seen as interdependent and responsible for each other’s welfare, and this mutualism is enclosed within an izzat-framed structure. This in turn impacts on educational experiences and expectations, and can be seen in Prem’s father’s experience. He ‘chose’ to work from the age of 16 despite being

encouraged by the tutors to go for further education, he was quite academic, but in his mind-set he felt that he had to start working ...because he had to save money to get my aunt [his older sister] married, so, so he was thinking family responsibility.

This narrative highlights the difference not only in expectation but also the importance of family honour or ‘responsibility’. Prem’s father had to be a responsible patriarch because his father had died when he “**was only six**”. Despite being younger than his sister, he had to work to earn money for her dowry because izzat demands it.

Alongside the pre-set roles of responsibility, there were also other gendered differences between fathers’ and mothers’ roles, such as males making decisions and females in supportive roles:

My mum was such a...er, practical person. She, she used to knit and sew and, and everything, she made everything for us. And she’d just have to look at something to, you know...copy it and make it. And, you know, she, she was, erm... there, erm...supporting and encouraging... but I, I remember my dad more saying [about the value of education]. So, she [her mum] kept...the family going in terms of, you know, cooking, cleaning, shopping,... So, erm, yeah, so my mum, I think,... you know, she was there, but I think it was my, my dad, I remember my dad’s influence more in terms of...you know, say, saying all these things about education and ... telling us stories about the past and, you know,..... how, you know, it’s so important and he wanted us to, you know, do well, and so on and so forth. (Asha).

Um my mum was, as you can imagine, she was snowed under 10 kids, um, she was the typical housewife- she really was the typical. She, she was not involved in the decision making, all she she did she'd wake up at 7 o'clock, she would do the breakfast, lunch, dinner, you know get our lunches and and things like that. Um, whenever we did go to her and ask for something she always you have to ask your dad, you have to ask your dad. That was always her role. And my dad was you know, he was the the breadwinner, And in a way you know, my dad, my dad passed away thirteen years ago, when that happened it was really hard for my mum. 'Cause then all of a sudden we were going to her and then she used to sit there and say I don't know it was, and it wasn't just in terms of education it was decision making about anything. But then that's when my older sisters stepped in, and they took that role of my dad you know, ok so we will start making that decision (Megh).

Megh's narrative firstly demonstrates that her parents' respective roles were not dissimilar to those in many other families, whatever their colour or heritage, in that time period (1980s), where there are traditionally set roles for men and women. Secondly, and more importantly, the narrative highlights how difficult it was for the mother to 'take the reins' after so many years of supporting.

Interestingly, the power status of women does change if the patriarch either becomes infirm, or dies. Thus, widowed women, and those whose husbands are incapable of fulfilling the role of patriarchal figurehead, have to become 'pseudo males', which is to adopt the traditionally male role of enforcing izzat boundaries. It was interesting to note that a number of the fathers of the Bangladeshi heritage women in this study had mental health issues. Whilst an exploration of why that might be is outside of the remit of this thesis, what is clear is that this situation forced the mother to take on the male role with regards to izzat and family honour. This is evident in what Aadhya says when she talks about her childhood:

My mum has always been the dominant person in my family, and my dad had a bit of a breakdown when I was seven years old. So since then he barely featured in our lives at all, he was in the house; we knew he was in the house, we'd talk to him occasionally but he was confined mainly to the bedroom. You know, he hardly spoke about anything, he hardly had any sort of input in any of our lives and in what happened to us, it was always my mum who controlled everything. (Aadhya).

Prem pointed out that her **"grandmother was very influential"** [within the family] because her grandad had passed away **"so gran had to bring up her kids by herself"**. This influence extended to what could and could not be worn by the girls in the family

I remember sleeveless, sleeveless tops were not allowed until I was 18 because my granny had an issue when I started wearing them, she'd always say cover your shoulders, and only now like 10 years later, she's finally ok with it. But even now if I wear a polo neck she's happy as Larry. (Prem).

The power structure in Prem's family is not unusual. There is a 'hierarchy of respect', in that elders don't have to 'earn' respect but are given it simply because of their age. It is another way in which izzat is applied and judged by individuals, family and baradari. Such intergenerational izzat is expressed in many different ways, but often through large family or community gatherings. Nesbitt (1995) uses children's birthday celebrations to explain differences between what she refers to as south Asian and white British family structures. In her research, South Asian children generally had large, age-irrelevant celebrations with extended family and members of the community, whereas the white British celebrations were with peers of the child. Within Asian parties, she stresses, there is always a ritual of feeding each other some of either the birthday cake, or some mithai (Asian sweetmeats). Cultural practices, such as the touching of elders' feet in reverence, are reinforced not only in such gatherings, but also through both mythological storytelling and Bollywood films. Those that don't adhere to this unspoken izzat code are seen as insolent, uncouth or having lost their 'cultural roots'. This is something that Rodela explained. She found working in an environment that was predominately white problematic because of this lack of respect for elders:

The people that were there [the workplace], they were really young people that I would relate to as chavs. Oh my gosh [shocked]! I was just, like, oh [disappointedly], you know, I really felt different, because I was, like, erm... although I wasn't educated to, like, a higher level, I, I was disciplined [inflection], so I knew when to say things and when to stop and I knew that to respect my elders. Whereas in this setting I was witnessing things that, like, 'You can't talk to her like that [surprise] she's older than you!' you know. I've always grown up with that.

This 'respect hierarchy', and sibling co-responsibility with parents, is one of the reasons why older siblings often have so much to say in what happens in the life of younger siblings. Whilst this is very alien to the 21st century eurocentric vision of family life, it was common across all three heritages examined within this thesis. A number of the women voiced an acceptance of domination by elder siblings by framing it as a 'right' equal to that of their parents. Palki discusses how her elder sister reminded her that she was "**still very much Bengali**" therefore, she was "**still very much expected to get an arranged marriage and all that kind of thing**" and so she should not "**get any ideas**". This was said in response to Palki going to college, reminding her about the izzat parameters within which she should function. 'Getting any ideas' is code for thinking that she could go out with boys, or chose her own husband. Taani constructs this in a positive way by voicing how her "**sisters have really helped**" her by "**always**" having "**a go at**" her "**to do better**". By using the word 'helped', Taani reframes this domination as effective support, for which she is grateful. This is an example of how

this izzat-informed deference to older siblings can also be motivational, and perhaps good for success on an educational pathway.

I. Sacrifice and Intergenerational Ties

The themes of sacrifice and intergenerational ties were recurring ones. For example, Jeevan talked about how she put her family's happiness above her own. She said:

I listen to my family a lot so I take all their comments on board, so if they want me to change, then I probably would, because I want my family to be happy. I think as grandparents for example, they're quite strict, and I think to make them happier I'd happily do whatever they say.

The inference of the word 'strict' is a code that is used by people of Indian heritage to denote how overtly the codes of izzat are adhered to. This is very evident in what Tarsem says when she is talking about her relationship with her parents and also how she frames that relationship with regards to her role, but also how she contrasts it with what she perceives would happen within a white family:

I do conform to what my parents expect of me, because I do think well, would my parents approve? One of my guy friends said to me that you should always do things to please yourself, forget your parents. And I turned around and said that I wouldn't be making myself happy if I was making them unhappy. It just doesn't go. Their happiness is my happiness, and my happiness is their happiness. That's the way I see it...They're doing everything for me. Whatever I do is never going to be enough at all. I've spoken with other friends, especially gorrays [white people but in a derogative tone] I'm not putting them down at all but their parents would not fund them for Uni, wouldn't fund them like my parents have done. It's go out get a job and move out as soon as possible. With our parents it's different, they hold onto you for as long as they can.

Tarsem explicitly outlines the connectivity between herself and her family, emphasising that she would not choose to do anything that would not be approved of, or anything that would make her parents unhappy, because their unhappiness is automatically her own.. She feels a sense of obligation because she knows that her parents have funded her and with language like 'their' and 'our', she homogenises and 'others' whites, who she claims are expected to be self-sufficient far more quickly. The fact that she uses the potentially disparaging term 'gorrays' for 'white people' also reinforces her 'moral high ground'. This moral high-ground means that conformity within izzat becomes more palatable.

A number of the women noted how hard parents had worked or how they had spent money on providing educational tools at a considerable loss to themselves. Jaanki said:

Asian parents say that for education we always have money. They will purchase anything that will make that the course comfortable to learn too, such as PCs, laptops etc. Even if they [the parents] are struggling [financially]. I mean this is what I have seen with some others up to degree level and also what I have personally experienced.

This sacrifice binds the family unit together, but more importantly ensures that the women both refer to, and are bound by, the sacrifice as a mechanism for their betterment and thus an influence on their conduct. This also allows them to justify the importance of the sacrifice. Jaanki wasn't the only woman to express this gratitude. Asha: "**he work so hard... seven days a week, you know, days and nights and whatever, he worked so hard**" and Prem: "**my parents had to work quite a great deal**". They both talked about the long hours that their parents, especially their fathers, worked in order to ensure that their children's lives were better than their own. However, by reconceptualising hard (paid) work as 'sacrifice', it is used as an emotional lever to create obligation, but that obligation is not just financial-in-return, or good-grades-in-return, but also an obligation to submit to izzat and relinquish autonomy.

b. Aspiration or Actuality: Parental Attitudes towards Education

In addition to control over level of education (Ahmad, 2001), parental aspirations (Bhopal, 2016), choice of higher education establishment, and indeed subjects studied, are key themes running through both the literature (Bagguley and Hussain, 2007b; HEFCE, 2014) and within the women's narratives here. These are all framed by izzat. Ahmad (2001) states that "pragmatic and social (status) concerns" (p146) by BIP heritage parents do impact on how they view the education of their daughters, a point with which Crozier concurs (2009) in the suggestion that there are some concerns from BIP heritage parents regarding "the impact of Western values on their daughters' moral development" (p294). Such concern then influences choices of institutions and subjects of study, and also participation in extracurricular activities.

Parental beliefs about not just education, but also the rights of women to have an education, have an interesting relationship with izzat. For the working class Pakistani heritage women, particularly historically (the older women in this sample), there was limited value placed on education. There was a ceiling placed on how far the women were allowed to be educated. As Noor highlights:

I think where my parents weren't from a very highly educated background, they kind of didn't push it with us until, I mean, when I was growing up, I went to school I finished school and I got married, so I finished my education at 16. I never went to college, I never went to university.

For Noor, the only way she can explain her parents' reluctance to see any future for her other than marriage at 16 is to blame it on their lack of education. She spoke wistfully when she talked about the fact that she did not go to college or to university. Alongside izzat, this is also about class and capital, and generational knowledge. A further example of how izzat intersects with class is demonstrated by what Radwa says:

My parents didn't value education, they didn't realise how important it was, yeah. The thing is, my parents were, my dad came here with very little education. He started working... often worked and he was happy to work in a factory, worked in a bakery. Back then you didn't need an education to get a job. What they failed to understand was that education was important because, even if you get married, you still have to balance the books... in your home...

Radwa articulates the lack of foresight of restricting education for girls, even if they do have only to get married, because they need to be efficient at running a household or as Radwa states, to be able to **"balance the books"**.

This was also true for a number of the older Bangladeshi heritage women, but what was particularly interesting was that the younger generation had been allowed to move through that constraint. Aadhya discusses this change:

[Back then] **they didn't care whether you had an education or not. Because in our culture, especially when we were younger when we were growing up, it's almost like it didn't matter if the daughters had an education. You know it's very similar to how things are back home, I mean I know things have changed now and girls do have an education back home but it was very much that they're going to get married, they're going to have to be stuck at home doing the housework and looking after the kids so it doesn't matter. So for us, um for our parents, for my mum mainly, it was never a priority whether we did our homework or not, whether we went to school or not, whether we learnt or not... I don't remember her ever having any input in my education, whether we learnt.**

Aadhya is referring to a village-based, working class attitude from the homeland, which dictated a girl should be married as soon as she reached puberty, negating the need for any further or higher education. For Aadhya, this attitude impacted on compulsory education. Greater emphasis was placed on how she and her sisters were viewed through the izzat lens by others, particularly regarding behaviour both in the baradari and in school. If they did not behave in line with the rules of izzat, then there would be repercussions:

If we had any bad comments come back from the community or school like we were misbehaving or we were causing problems or we weren't listening, obviously then we'd get a beating for it or shouting for it. But other than that all the positive comments I got, all the time I did really well, my grades I sort of got really good GCSE results and stuff, none of it was ever recognised or ever applauded or ever well done or good girl or whatever.

This imbalance, punishment for negatives, but no praise for success, meant that educational pathways were inadvertently impacted in the very least motivationally.

The change in generational attitude is also evident in what Taani articulates. She highlights that her mum wanted better for her own daughter than she had:

Within the Bengali culture obviously, education is like a big thing cos like in Bangladesh you do get educated but it's not like the same thing, not like the

education you get here. So like obviously, parents want to get the best for you. My mum did go to college in London but didn't go to uni cos she then had to get married and she wanted us to have degrees. They are supportive.

The only exceptions to this intergenerational change in attitude were Rodela and Sadia, who were younger participants. Rodela forged her own path regardless of pressure from both her mum and the wider community. She blamed her initial lack of aspiration for herself on her mother:

Up until the age of... 15, 16, secondary school I thought I was going to be married off...with children, dead end job. Didn't really have that inspiration. Whereas when I look at other friends, their parents, oh my God, they just go through hell and back to get them to university (amazed). They save like mad to get them to university. That was not the case. That wasn't the case. But my mum's a single parent, bearing in mind, she probably would have if she, if she could have, but wasn't able to, but I just feel like the encouragement wasn't there either.

Interestingly, Rodela equates lack of encouragement with poverty. She alludes to the fact that her mum did not have the knowledge to understand the importance of encouragement. The fact that Rodela's mother had no education herself, or knowledge of the education system, meant that she did not have the tools to be proactively positive. Rodela's mother's social capital was based on izzat that says that the best outcome is ensuring that her daughter married. However for Rodela to see how other BIP heritage parents were behaving with regards to education made her feel conflicted.

For those parents from a Bangladeshi and Indian heritage who acknowledged the potentially transformative power of education, there was an expectation to aim as high as possible. This was something that was mentioned by a number of the women, such as Firoja:

My dad came here and he didn't have anything, you know so, he want- he wanted his kids to do well you know, so, and that high, achieving high standards.

Some of the women explained how education was seen by parents as a vehicle for betterment, as seen in what Asha said about her father:

dad would always, from an early age he would, you know, used to talk to us about education, how important it was,... ,and say 'I want my children to be educated, I want them to have a better way of life, better standard of living' and all the rest of it, 'and that comes through education.

He valued not the cognitively and emotionally transformative power of education, but its potential for material benefit, for 'better standard of living'. Asha continued by saying that her father was able to highlight the value of education to her:

he'd say things to us like, 'If you've got an education, nobody can take that away from you. Other things might change in your life, but if you've got an education, you've got it for life'.

Prem concurred:

So he never went to uni. So I think hearing these stories growing up it was like, they had missed opportunities, so it was like you know we've got it on a plate here, we don't have to really pay a lot of fees at that point in time so why not go for it. So that was part of why we got into it as well I think.

This was also true for Sabar, who states that her parents, especially her father, has motivated and encouraged the children, including his daughters, to do well academically. She said this was because her father wanted his children to have a 'better future' than he himself had been given, and he felt that education was the way to ensure this.

For Sadia, as she explained, it was about making her father's wish for an educated child come true after he experienced disappointment in his son and the son's lack of educational ambition:

My dad always said that be an educated person, I want you to be educated I want you to get a good job, so I kind of made my dad's dream come true.

Contrary to popularist rhetoric, especially about Muslims, Ahmad (2001) states that it was often the fathers that encouraged their daughters' paths to educational persistence, particularly in families where there were no sons. This was true for the Indian heritage women in this study, and mostly true for the Bangladeshi heritage women, such as Megh:

My dad was always, uh, an advocate for education, he always used to say I want you to study, I want you to work hard, I want you to do something for yourselves and be successful whatever you end up doing... He was always just happy with us wanting to study [but only through school, not any further for her]

It was not the case for the majority of the Pakistani heritage women, except for the ones who were single parents, such as Nargis, who said "**I have educated all my girls, with a degree they can be independent; they can do anything**". It was also true for those women who had not been given the opportunity themselves, but wanted to ensure that their children did have it, in order to be prepared for hard times such as Radwa. She was one of the strongest advocates for the transformative power of education. She said:

Regardless of you going off and getting married and having children, you still need a good education [firmly]! You could be...white, you could be black, you could be purple, but you need a good education regardless of what you do in your future.

Asha also spoke very highly of the importance of education, in this case for her children:

I've always said that, you know, you can see that education is important and it is good to, you know, go to college, go to university...and then think about your career paths.

For Asha, getting an education sets up the foundation for future employment and career paths. Ultimately, knowledge is seen by many of the women as power, the power to gain economic security as Jaanki explains:

Education is the most important thing, you know like the thing they say, knowledge is power. I don't mean like English, maths, Science as separates, I don't mean like knowing Pythagoras, cos like let's face it, who uses that crap, but like a way of getting a better job. It's a way to get out of poverty, we are so lucky because we have that. They don't have it in third world countries so something simple like paying £12.50 could make the difference to a child over there but we don't even have to do that.

For Jaanki there is a clear link between education and a way out of poverty and that is through better employment opportunities. This power, or way out of poverty is also about the izzat accrued by gaining wealth.

Another very interesting aspect was of accessing (and being allowed to access) higher education in order to be able to 'show off' in front of the 'baradari' or community, because status is linked to izzat. For some of the Indian and Bangladeshi heritage women, parents knowingly used the education of their children as a vehicle to gain social mobility, both for the children and for themselves, in how they were seen by the baradari. As Megh explains **"He [her father] did have an expectation of I'm letting you go to university, you better do well- because then I can tell people"**. Secondly it was a way to compete with wider family, as Samira suggests: **"Parents feel 'proud' if their children do well and they look 'good' in front of family and friends"**. This was echoed by both Asha and Prem who highlight the importance of doing as well as, if not better, than cousins. Asha explains how her father's beliefs about education were shaped through observing how education had improved the lives economically of his cousins. Similarly, Prem explained how it was the constant references, from her own parents, about her aunt and cousins and how well they were doing because they had gone to university **"and God did we hear about it"**, and the fact that **"they'll put the graduation picture up"**, that spurred her on to doing well academically. Personal experience as an Indian heritage woman suggests that the 'wall of fame' (the graduation photo wall) is a really important feature of an Indian heritage home. This could be seen as a beneficial element of izzat because it is the wider extended family and community links that provide the lens that allows for parents to see how education can improve both economic and marriage outcomes and therefore, creates a desire to

want the same for their own children. However, equally it could be argued that it is not entirely positive because what is being valued, through learning from the extended family, is not education for socio-political liberation, or self-actualisation, but education that is still ultimately for income and for status and security leading to the subjugation of a woman.

c. Parental Knowledge of Education and the Educational System

Being able to decipher and manipulate the knowledge required to successfully navigate the education system is complex, and as previously stated often requires the assistance of a knowledgeable other. Parental knowledge of a system means being able to demystify educational networks and processes, which in turn allows for advantage. The extent of such knowledge is often correlated with both parental educational levels and social class. Those South Asians from a disadvantaged socio-economic background are disadvantaged because “they do not possess the class consciousness of their middle-class South Asian peers, at the same time [as] experiencing religion-cultural exclusion and discrimination from dominant society” (Abbas, 2007, p88). Many BIP heritage parents, including my own, thought of education and teachers with reverence. The idea of inadequate teachers or schools was seen as a myth. Nargis is an example of this uncritical mindset. She attended secondary school for two years when she arrived from Pakistan and believes in the transformative power of education. Despite pressure from the wider community, Nargis allowed her daughters to go away to university. She claims “**there’s no such thing as a bad school or bad teachers**”, implying that it is the responsibility of children uncritically to conform, follow rules and learn. Whilst Nargis has some insider knowledge, she has not accessed enough capital to understand that the educational system of which she speaks so highly may misunderstand her attitude. Rather than understanding that her stance is one of trust, it may be taken as a simple lack of interest in her daughters’ education; this in turn fits the prescribed narrative stereotypically given to BIP heritage women by large parts of white society and institutions. As a teacher in schools in very deprived areas, I often heard colleagues berating BIP heritage parents for not being interested in their children’s education, or simply abdicating responsibility to the establishment. Nargis’ belief, and its potential misinterpretation by the education establishment, exemplifies the way in which the uninformed perception of a dominant power can become a ‘truth’ that is not. Such ‘truths’ are created outside of institutional contexts.

Compartmentalising is another theme to emerge in the context of systems knowledge. For some of the women, including Noor, Radwa and Jeevan, the experience of school was very separate from home. Parents had limited knowledge of what they were expected to do to benefit their children’s learning, and, likewise, schools had limited

knowledge of what the nature of home life for this cohort. Noor stresses that for her to navigate between the two was very difficult:

[School including primary school] was quite difficult because again, where my parents weren't from an educated background, um and I was brought up in a very strict culture, um, I went to school.. It was, it was very... it was very difficult in finding... almost, first of all where do I belong? Um, and secondly, um, just, just mixing .There wasn't a lot of Asians at that time [in her school], um, I did struggle with school, um I was, I've never been an academic person, always practical- hands on. So, I found school... I found it quite difficult. Because I felt, that... going home, I there wasn't really any support there with homework, or it wasn't pushed. Everything was what I learnt at school.

Noor's parents lacked the knowledge to support her academically. Expectations were placed on her that meant that she struggled to find 'belonging', and was not able to find a sense of self. This led to her lacking in autonomy and voice.

For Radwa, the compartmentalisation stemmed from both her parents and the school. Firstly, her parents gave full responsibility for her education to her school. They did not speak English and so had limited access and knowledge of what they were expected to do to support her. Secondly, the school did not try to engage with her parents with regards to giving them knowledge about what they could do to support her:

And that's because, in the school there wasn't really much push. I mean, we didn't really get much push from parents, because as far as our parents were concerned, the school was deemed the best and they were giving their best and that was it. And, obviously, their input was very little, because their language was second, you, you know, erm, English wasn't their first language. So, they didn't give us much input into what, you know, the... Went to the school and the school teacher said, 'Yes, they're doing really well,' that was good enough for my mum and dad. ' I mean, some of it was my parents because I think they should've pushed me, but I don't blame them too much because they were not encouraged as parents to push their children. The school didn't say to them, like, nowadays the school says to the parents, 'You need to push your children, you need to push your children. You really need to get them to do this, you need to make them do that.' Back then the school never interacted with the parents, apart from telling them, 'Oh,' on parent evening, 'your child's doing really well,' that's it.

Radwa's parents trusted the school to educate her without understanding what they needed to do to ensure the process was enhanced. They had no cultural capital with regards to the importance of activities such as reading with her. However, for Radwa herself, things have changed. Having gone through the British school system, she is able to utilise her knowledge with regards to what she needs to do to support her own children. She said:

Obviously, if I read books at home with my children, then that's, that extra learning time my child's getting at home. It's like when you're learning a job, a new job, if you're getting training at home as well as at school, then you'll actually quickly learn to do the thing that you're trying to do. Like, for example, driving – if you know you've got a driving instructor, but then a family member

takes you out in the car, you're actually having extra time and learning, you learn faster and you learn better. So, yeah, as a parent I believe that parents, we need to give our children that bit more help.

Radwa's knowledge of partnership with the school means that her children should have better educational outcomes than she was permitted.

For a number of the Indian heritage women, this manifested in a different way. Whilst some (first generation) parents likewise lacked the tools to help their children with education, as in Jeevan's case:

My parents struggled to help me through school, when I used to come home they couldn't really help me because they didn't really understand themselves.

...they employed other tactics to keep the women motivated, such as Prem's parents:

I was so close to jacking it in [her degree] but my mum kept saying you've only got a few more weeks to go. She helped me to break it down into smaller steps. She helped me to keep going.

This positive reinforcement, even when systems knowledge is lacking, appears not to have been present for the majority of older Pakistani heritage women, with the exception of Amal. Another way that a number of the Indian heritage parents positively reinforced was by advocating the importance of homework and, as demonstrated by what Asha says, a supportive attitude:

When we came to the UK, I remember my dad really taking an interest in what we were doing at school,...and then at home we'd have pencils and pens and paper and...he'd, you know, saying, right, you know, 'Practise your alphabet, practise your handwriting,' and he'd have a look. I remember we were going to make some, erm, Christmas decorations [inflection]. And I'd come home to say to daddy that, because we needed to take things from home, things like tinsel and glitter and other bits and pieces to make these decorations. And, er, and they hadn't bought them, but that morning I said, you know, I needed them and they said, 'OK, you go to school,' and I remember we had a lodger, and he was really lovely, actually, my dad had got him to get the things...and then bring them to the school. So [laughs], so I still had to have them, you know.

Asha's father may not have understood the importance or relevance to his daughter's education of the tinsel, but he ensured that he supported what was happening in school.

Randeep's father applies a colonial lens to his view of academic success; he assumes the white population will do better than those who are not white. This is both stereotyping and racist, because firstly, he homogenises white people, and, secondly, he correlates educational success with colour. Hence, Randeep is moved from a diversely mixed school to an almost entirely white one:

I went to predominantly mixed race school for my early schooling. So lots of Indians, Afro-Caribbeans, very few English people actually, and then, I went to a secondary school that was pretty similar, kind of the demographic in terms of people, and then my parents, my dad took me out of that school. 'Cause he wanted me to... have a better education, I don't think they felt that school was good enough- it was a...they thought it was a bit rough and there was lots of stories about kids being naughty, girlfriend, boyfriend stuff and not really studying and stuff, and they were obsessed with education. They wanted us to have a good education. So they moved me to a school which was on the other side of the town and it was all white, and I was the only Indian.

In an attempt to improve Randeep's academic prospects, her father removed her from a school that she was used to and felt comfortable in to a place in which she felt displaced. Not only does Randeep's father use a colonial lens; he also uses flawed logic. To take her away from a school that had 'kids being naughty' because they were having relationships rather than 'studying' and putting her into a school where it was not unusual to have relationships between the pupils is interesting. From this it could be argued that in his hierarchy of importance, for Randeep to be seen to be studying was more important than anything else. Equally having relationships was acceptable for whites but not for those of BIP heritages. The fact that the first school had a reputation meant it impacted on his izzat and by moving her he in effect minimised the fallout from that.

For many of the women, including myself, parents employed their own limited knowledge of education through what they perceived to be 'good' and 'bad' subjects. Good subjects are those that would ensure that the community was impressed and so maintain izzat, but also subjects that would lead to higher status employment. Jaanki explains it further:

My mum and dad supported me in those subjects [English, Government and Politics, and Child Development], and they didn't even think of it, they didn't even think of those subjects as bad subjects, they just said just study. For them, it was just about as long as your child is studying: head down in books, writing, reading, thinking about the books that they're reading it's fine. So I just did those subjects and I really enjoyed them, but as far as my extended family were concerned um, I was pretty much like a thickhead.

Whilst Jaanki chose subjects she enjoyed, and her parents were happy because they saw it as 'studying', the izzat of her nuclear family was not enhanced. Equally, the wider family izzat was compromised because she was not studying 'high status' subjects, and so was deemed not to be intelligent. She further elaborates:

Because of the subjects I chose, because I didn't choose double science. And at that time they didn't realise that getting a B in English is also very good, you know, but they didn't see things like child development as good because

they thought those sort of subjects are about wiping bums. They thought it was about wiping bums, and government and politics they said unless you're going to become Prime Minister then there's no point you know, and um they said but at least you didn't choose art because then we would have been devastated.

Whilst the knowledge of high status subjects is accessed by Jaanki's extended family, they do not understand the intricacies of each subject. The assumption that everyone who studies Government and Politics intends to work in politics highlights the importance to these parents of being career-canny in choices. For them, subjects have to be practically meaningful and have a purposeful outcome, otherwise there is little or no point in studying them. Most important to them is how subjects are viewed through the izzat lens. Clearly, there is a 'taxonomy of acceptability', and in that hierarchy, art is evidently at the bottom of the pile. Jaanki's comments illustrate that although her parents and her extended family were happy that she was 'studying', their limited knowledge of how different subjects could be used to gain access to employment or higher education (Or to be inherently valuable for personal development), impacted on the way they exerted influence, and also in how they flexed the izzat card.

d. Trailblazing for Sibling Agency

Some of the Bangladeshi heritage women explained that through their lives, they were able to improve the outcomes for their siblings; in effect, they were the trailblazers for their younger sisters regarding taking education as far as possible. Raheena explicitly makes clear the connection between a development of agency, for both herself and her younger sister, through engagement within education. She takes the responsibility for ensuring that not only she, but also her younger sister, have a different trajectory with regards to marriage, by applying positive deviance. Positive deviance is a sociological concept dating back to the early twentieth century but is now seeing a reapplication particularly within the areas of development, and in health and medicine (Marsh, Schroeder, Dearden, Sternin, & Sternin, 2004; Herington & Van de Fliert, 2017). I suggest that this is applied by some of the women through gaining an education. Through education, they have more chances of securing a spouse who is also better educated, which in turn will enable better chances of autonomy. Moreover, she makes a connection with how the community viewed her and her sister's focus on their studies. She says:

So during my secondary school, my younger oldest sister... got married, she had a kid and then had a divorce. All of those things were really tough, and um and that made me focus in my studies even more because I didn't want that for myself and I most certainly didn't want that for Xxxx (younger sister) either. So, it was very much heads down in the books, study as much possible and kind of get myself, get ourselves, out of this hole surrounded by all these communities, surrounded by all these well-wishing, curtain twitching neighbours..

Megh talks about how her father realised that he had pushed her into a marriage too soon when he saw that she had become a mother when she was very young herself, and her husband was unable to provide financially for them:

I think he realised that oh I got her married too soon, should have given her that time - and I think that's where the guilt trip started with 'we'll look after your baby'.

Megh recognises that, in offering to look after her child when she went back to college, her father had realised that he should have let her finish her college education. This would, in turn, have allowed her to develop greater agency and independence because she would be able to find employment that would allow her to be more financially secure. By pushing her to get married to a person from Bangladesh who himself had limited education, and therefore, limited opportunities to get well paid work, her father had limited her:

I think my dad realised what he did with me, because after me my other sisters, he let them go through the entire system. Um yeah - after me um, because um, with my sisters - my younger ones - one is a lawyer, one is a, uh, pharmacist, another's an accountant, so they've, they've you know, gone through the entire system.

Roseen tells a similar story. Her father did not believe in education for girls and he **"never believed that girls should study and it was a huge challenge for my sister to go all the way through the system"**. Roseen further talks about how her parents treated her brothers in a different way **"cos they always encouraged our brothers to do that"**. However, Roseen returned to education after she had married and in-between having children. Roseen stresses that it was not until they saw that the education was a gateway to success that their viewpoint changed: **"But, I think when I started doing my diploma and I got promoted and offered jobs that were more higher paid, at that time their attitude changed."**

Thus, for Roseen and a number of the other narrators, education was to their parents not about developing a strong independent critical voice or autonomy, but actually about a route to financial independence, especially if the 'worst', that is a relationship breakdown, should occur. This acceptance, in part, is also a judgment made from an izzat perspective because it is the idea of education for women becoming more acceptable, but only as a defence against other outcomes that would be even worse in izzat terms. In other words, they had chosen to give ground on the issue of female education, because it might be the only way to hang on to the other disempowering norms of izzat.

Equally interesting was that whilst one of the Indian heritage women, Prem, said that her parents were too busy to be involved in her education, she also highlighted a common strategy utilised by some parents: placing an older sibling in charge of overseeing the education of the younger siblings. In Prem's case, this sibling had some experience of the education system and was, therefore, deemed to be qualified to make sound judgements. This was for two reasons. Firstly, the parents were busy working, and secondly, there was an assumption that older siblings would know more about the education system in this country. This scenario was also true for me.

e. Summary

In this chapter, I have unpicked the intersecting layers between izzat, family and gender. I have shown that there are nuanced differences between not only heritage groups but also within the groups in terms of how izzat is interpreted and experienced. I have demonstrated through the narratives of the women some of the boundaries that are created by izzat. For a number of the Indian heritage women, there was a different set of attitudinal constraints and restraints, compared to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women. For these particular Indian heritage women, the constraints were not only around subject and university choices that they had access to, but also the types of careers that were deemed to be acceptable to their parents. The restraints experienced by this group of women were particularly around not wanting to let their families down by operating in a way that was autonomous and outside of a collective co-dependent way. Since the parents had sacrificed a great deal, it meant the women's code of conduct had to be within certain parameters, and mindful of izzat. Ultimately, education is seen mainly as a means to gain economic security, rather than seen as providing new ways of seeing the world, and was a way in which the norms of izzat could still be enforced. The next chapter examines the role of izzat on the marriage, employment and education 'triangle'.

6 Chapter Six: Izzat, Marriage, Employment and Education

In this chapter, I present izzat as a lens to understand the complex relationship, conceptualised as a triangle, between education, marriage and employment. I unpack two trajectories of educational diligence: marriage and employment. Using the four pillars, I demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between izzat and education. Next, I argue that the relationship between izzat, marriage and education is a complex one, of which the women have only partial ownership, as the family's wishes are paramount. I highlight the similarities and differences of the impact on the lives of the women. I then critically explore the usage of education as marriage currency, and moreover as a form of dowry, to ensure 'better' matches. Finally, I illustrate the way izzat relates to decisions made about employment and how it can enable empowerment and control for some of the women in this study.

Education was seen by a large proportion of the women as a way of achieving a desired outcome, whether it be a suitable match for marriage or for career aspirations and self-sufficiency. Bhopal (2011) states that, generally, BIP parents want their daughters to have a degree and go into lucrative and prestigious jobs, which in turn would enable them (the daughters) to be financially independent, if they need to be. This, argues Bhopal (2011), is no different to other British middle-class families who want their children's lives to be comfortable but also prosperous. However, unlike middle class white families, these women are restricted in their choices because of izzat. Furthermore, education is weighed economically, with attention paid to calculated returns either through marriage or employment. Moreover, this is all encased within how the baradari will view such returns.

a. The Marriage and Employment Trajectories

The relationship between education and employment is well documented: better education generally equates to higher-paid employment. Education is pivotal to mobility, both socially and economically (Crozier 2009). Dufur, Parcel and Troutman (2012) argue that parents make calculated choices to enhance the outcomes for the lives of their children. This is done through a process of "investments" that are expected to morph into educational accomplishments, which should in turn translate into "higher levels of education and occupational attainment in later years, thus promoting upward mobility in our stratification system" (p2). However, for this BIP heritage group of women there is the added dimension of marriage. The trajectory of education is not simply better employment prospects, but also better marriage prospects. For a number of the Bangladeshi heritage women and Indian heritage women, the goal was to attract husbands who matched them academically and financially. For some of the women, and particularly those of Pakistani heritage,

education was seen as a safety net in case of hard times if the marriage broke down and the woman needed to earn a living to support herself.

Just like marriage, employment too was embroiled in the invisible structure of izzat. How exactly izzat impacted on employment varied between the different heritage groups. For a number of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage women, the option to work was unavailable. Their husbands were not comfortable with them working, and so they did not. Data from the Cabinet Office (2017) suggests that this phenomenon not uncommon in this heritage group. The data shows that women from Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritages who were of employment age were the least likely of all ethnic groups to be in employment, with 35% in employment, and 59% economically inactive. For a number of the Indian heritage women, none of whom were students, izzat manifested in the types of employment that were deemed to be acceptable for the family to look good. Thus, not only were there expectations regarding the types of jobs that were acceptable for women, but also an emphasis on careers that carried prestige both economically and socially.

b. Dowries

There has long been a tradition of dowry-giving in BIP cultures. Tomalin (2009) suggests that it is problematic to define the exact nature of dowry and how it operates across the three different heritages. Whilst it is illegal in many countries where it is nonetheless practised, it has not been banned in the UK (Bolch, 2017). Conventionally, dowry has been in the form of jewellery, clothes and cash. Tomalin (2009) goes onto say that it is a way, in societies that were based on male succession, for women to gain a part of an inheritance from their parents. Anderson (2000) stresses that, historically, this has been gift-giving from parents to a daughter, but that it has now become the modern practice of, essentially, 'buying a groom'. This is done through the transfer of assets to the groom and his family, bypassing the rights of the bride to any share, and thus not truly a woman's inheritance. Anderson states that dowry giving is both class- and culturally- constructed, with increasing blurring between traditional Pakistani and Indian practices. Similarly, Rozario (2009) notes that the practice in rural Bangladesh has changed from the groom's family giving bridal wealth upon marriage to its opposite. She stresses that this change is about male honour, and linked with socio-economic changes that have occurred. Anderson (2000) argues that whilst Pakistani daughters are legally able to inherit, this is usually packaged as the dowry, which amounts to less than what she is due.

Globally this practice has evolved, and in line with other patriarchally bound practices, women have fared least favourably, particularly in light of the escalation in dowry-related violence (Niaz, 2004). Bradley (2009) argues that dowry is the result of a

system built on the domination of women's lives by "male needs and desires" (p94). Moreover, Niaz (2004) suggests that persecution, brutality, and physical and emotional abuse have increased in correlation with the increase in dowry demand. Additionally, Jehan (2009) makes clear that

"dowry continues to represent the social and economic dependence of women, their increased vulnerability to gender-based violence, a debt –trap for low and middle income families, and a possible catalyst for son-preference practices." (p59).

Bhopal (2016) suggests that education is seen by BIP heritage parents as an 'investment'; however, I demonstrate that education, and particularly higher education, is only sanctioned in the cases of some of these women because it is a necessary part of the dowry. Moreover, I argue that dowry is a complex phenomenon that is inextricably linked to the izzat lens through which BIP heritage women are viewed.

c. Izzat and Education

There is an irrefutable relationship between education and izzat, which feeds into the way in which education is viewed by the wider BIP community. As long as the family izzat is not compromised, compulsory education is, generally, viewed positively. As Raheena highlights:

There's certain things you can't do, it's just, just don't even go there. But when it comes to your education Asian families love education, as long as you've got your heads down, you're doing well in school, they will love you - they will let you do whatever you want to do. But you can't just go and mess around.

The 'certain' things that are not allowed included "**hang[ing] out with boys**". Raheena recognises the importance of 'playing the game' because she will be left alone, rather than constantly policed. She says:

Education was the way to get out of it, because it wasn't going to be financially, it wasn't going to be because of my extended family members, it wasn't, most certainly wasn't going to be my dad. You know, in terms of improving our life, our dad was the person, should have been the person who improved our life, and encouraged us to, but he wasn't around so we had to do this. And we had a choice, well I most certainly felt like I had a choice, I could try and work my arse off and make something of my life because I do have that choice, I have that freedom, or I can give in to what everyone else wanted, which is not the family, what the extended community wanted, and worry what other people said, and do what all the other Bengali girls were doing, Asian girls were doing; and I was like do you know what? I- I, that would have been like committing suicide. Especially given the the aspirations, you know things like going on holidays, you know once in a blue moon if you go to Bangladesh you should be grateful. I don't think so, the whole world is out there, I want to see the world. I wanted to you know taste food from around the world. I wanted to go and, I wanted to go an communicate with people at all level you know? Um, so I just got my head down.

Raheena recognised the power of education to transform her and her younger sisters' lives on many levels, including a route out of a confined space that was bound by izzat and the expectations of the baradari. Furthermore, she felt education (and particularly higher education) would enable her to have more choice and more autonomy than other women in her community.

Undeniably, izzat played a significant part in how far the women were allowed to be educated. For some of the women who had gone onto higher education, izzat was applied in a covert way, to show off to the baradari. This point is very clearly narrated by Megh:

He [her father] did have an expectation of 'I'm letting you go to university you better do well- because then I can tell people'. But then yes, when we get you married we can get you a suitable match, somebody who's earning a lot of money and who who's done well for himself.

This is the threefold impact of izzat. Firstly, Megh is being told the choice to go to university is not hers to make but that she is being 'allowed' to go. Secondly, she is being allowed to go because her father can utilise that for his izzat because he can then tell people. Finally, there will be rewards for her family's izzat, by having a better financial marriage match that the baradari can acknowledge, and, therefore, accredit her father with.

I. Secondary Education and the Izzat Lens

Abbas (2002a) found that for some parents, attending a school where their children would have friends of a similar ethnicity was found to be a reason for 'staying local', where a cultural community was clustered. However, what Abbas does not make clear is which of the three things is the main priority for these parents; is it being with friends, staying local, or being with the same ethnicity as themselves? Furthermore, Abbas (2007) stresses that sending children to their most local secondary school was more important to working class South Asian parents, especially if the child had been to the local primary schools, because schools such as those which selected pupils were "considered to exist for a certain social class of people" and so "such an education was considered unattainable" (p82). However, the findings of my thesis suggest that such local preference is also a cultural or izzat related issue. For the majority of the women, secondary schools, particularly, were chosen by fathers for of a number of reasons. For the majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women, the two main factors that were considered were location, as in proximity to the home, and whether it was a single or mixed sex school. The school did not necessarily need to be a religious, but it did need to be single sex, thus indicating that it was not religion itself that influenced these fathers, but more the need to distance the girls from boys and, therefore, associations or behaviour that could cause shame to the honour of the family. This was also true for

three of the Indian heritage women. For others there were other factors, such as racism, that impacted.

Shah and Iqbal (2011) state that many Muslims are unhappy with allowing their daughters to travel any distance to get to school because of a perceived threat to their daughter's purity from possible sexual attack, again something that limits the women's educational opportunities. Furthermore, they stress that out of a sample of 222 Pakistani parents in one town, 187 said single-sex schools for their girls were important. This preference is a way to protect the family izzat, as the girls will be less likely to be corrupted through perceived bad influences (Shah and Iqbal, 2011). Inaya was sent out of catchment to a secondary school and, despite her Muslim heritage, she was sent to a Catholic school because it was a single sex school. Firoja also experienced the same: **"I went to an all-girls comp, um, which was my dad's choice"**.

For a number of the Indian heritage women, izzat played out in a different way, in that the emphasis was on getting good grades, as Jeevan explains:

They force you to get the good grades and if you don't get the good grades, there's going to be trouble. You're going to get told off. So one of my friends who's white British her parents was fine about it, even if she got a d or an e, they used to be like, as long as you do your best. Whereas if you got a b my dad would be like 'no, that's not good enough, you need an A'.

Better grades ensure a more positive impact on the family izzat. This then filters into chances of better jobs, which in turn opens up suitable marriages, because within the dowry would be a good higher level qualification that would enhance earning potential. This is further examined later within this chapter.

II. Choice of University, Subject and the Izzat Lens

Agency and choice in relation to university and subjects played out in different ways for the women. Firoja explains her understanding of the way most BIP heritage parents view university: **"The expectation is still, don't care what, don't care what you do, you have- you must go to university, you must get a degree"**.

This was certainly true for the Indian heritage women. Without exception, all the younger Indian women stated that going onto HE was not really a choice but part of the expected path for them, particularly because of the 'shaan', or prestige, it brought to the family. I argue that this links directly to dowry, because in addition to status, a good education is ultimately a strong part of the dowry package, as it ensures the bride is positioned to have good earning potential in the future.

The older Indian heritage women also stressed the importance of their education to their parents, but did not say that university was seen as a natural progression. However, this was certainly the case for me (also one of the older women), but at that

time, in the late 1970's and early 1980's, I would appear to have been one of the exceptions to the rule. My experience was similar to the younger Indian and Bangladeshi heritage women, such as Taani:

Within our culture, education is really important. I've been brought up in an environment where everyone does go onto uni and I've never really not thought about not going to uni as I was growing up.

and Tarsem:

I wasn't given a choice, it was compulsory; it was just the way it was going to be. First 'A' levels, and then do a degree.

Both Karjol and Jeevan confirm that it was pre-decided, to the point that they did not consider alternatives:

I never really thought about it really. It was just what was going to happen and everyone [in my family] knew it. I knew I would do my GCSEs and then 'A's and then do university. That's all there was to it (Karjol)

With my sister and me it was...mainly because it was what we had to do (Jeevan).

Thus, going to university is the natural progression after college for the younger Indian and Bangladeshi heritage women, because it fits within the expectation placed upon them because of izzat. Jaanki summarised this attitude towards education in these terms: **"For all South Asian groups, after their first degree is like the beginning of 'their' life [the point at which they can step away from an automatic educational progression path]"**.

The location of the university was an issue that frequently emerged. Nargis talked about how she answered criticisms from the baradari about letting her daughters go away to university, rather than attending a local one. Despite pressure from the baradari, Nargis respected her daughters' decisions. As someone who had attended secondary school within this country, she had some knowledge of the educational system, and realised that the best university for the subject might not be the local one. Furthermore, she says that the girls should be given the same opportunities as boys:

People said why are you letting your girls go away to university; I said they need to be the same as boys. They are good girls, I have instructed them in our culture.

However, she still refers to the fact that her girls are 'good' girls and that they are aware of their 'culture'. This is an emphatic, izzat-informed signal: the girls know the boundary of and will behave accordingly. This was also the case for Asha. She talks about what people said to her father and also about the fact that he knew she 'would do the right thing':

And, actually, some of my... friends of my parents were saying to my dad, 'Are you sure you want to send your daughter away?' you know, da, da, da, da, da, you know. And, erm, I knew my, my dad trusted me, I knew I was going to do the right thing, and, you know, and I went away...and, and lived on campus.

Ultimately, the experiences of the women did differ with regards to whether they were allowed to move away to university or not. For a number of the Indian heritage women, attending a university gave them a legitimate reason to leave home and have a bit more 'freedom', particularly if they had an older sister who had done so. Tarsem highlights how she witnessed the hold of izzat on the movements of her sister and how her sister then chose a university that she would have to move away to. She stresses:

I think my older sister went to University to get away [from home] because she wasn't allowed to go out much, but with my sister and me it was a little bit for more freedom...

For Tarsem and her sisters, moving away by going to university was a legitimate way to gain slightly more autonomy without evoking the negative influence of izzat. This was also true for Ganga, who said:

I suppose when I was younger there was that thing whereby you can move away from home legitimately, as I got older I never really thought about it, it was just going to be.

Ganga clearly knew that by working hard she would be able to go to university and that this would not only give her a degree, but it would also mean the same as the outcome for Tarsem, in that she could have some freedom, and she would be far enough away from the community gaze to minimise the impact of izzat. However Inaya was not allowed to make that decision:

When I first did apply for medicine, I applied [to] you know, **, *****, ****. I kind of branched out, I was looking for places [away from where I lived]; I really wanted to get away from home.**

Whilst she wanted to leave home and had actually applied to do a degree that would be seen in a positive light and so would give her more ammunition to make a strong case, it still did not bring the outcome she had desired. She stresses that she "had a talk with... mum and dad". Inaya then says:

I really take my dad and mum's advice into account because to be honest, I've done things in the past and when they haven't agreed with that, something bad, something bad has always happened. I don't know if that's a coincidence or anything, when I follow their advice, something- I-I feel like after I follow their advice they were right and I'm actually happy.

Inaya had to reframe her choice because of something that is a primary consideration for a number of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage parents. Just as with

secondary school, university was acceptable if it was local or commutable. This in turn meant that parents could ensure that the women operated within the expected boundaries, and that they could be contained if need be. Interestingly, Inaya still frames it in a positive way. Although she's not going to leave home, she is still happy about it because it was the advice they gave her, and she believes that they have her best interests at heart. She then expands by saying what had really happened, but it's still framed positively:

And I had a talk with my dad, my dad originally he wanted me to go to *** [local university], he's like "just go to *****". He-he's always wanted me to stay at home, he's like, I'm his little Daddy's girl...**

Inaya then contextualises her comments by saying that it's not just her father but it is actually a generic occurrence not just for her but also for others like her:

He-he's always um, I think that is um, with Asian parents actually is they do want you to stay at home, they're very protective of their children. And so I applied to ***.**

By foregrounding this as a shared and conflict-free experience, Inaya makes the izzat effect more palatable.

d. Izzat and Marriage

Both class and current age (as in whether they were above 30) determined whether many of the Pakistani heritage women, and some of the Bangladeshi heritage women, women such as Radwa, Selma, Noor, and Nargis, were allowed to access further or higher education by parents. Izzat dictates that the natural progress for a 'good' woman is to get married. This lack of choice denies agency. For Radwa marriage happened after a year of college, whilst for Selma, Noor and Nargis, even college was not an option. Equally, a number of the women, across all heritage groups, indicated that getting married was the expected norm after you had completed your education, as Sabira explains:

It's just expected that a young Asian woman will grow up, do her higher education as much as possible and then just get married.

By using the adverb 'just' Sabira implies that she sees it as 'lesser' in some way. Bhopal (2011) states that the "arranged marriage has been a key instrument for economic, social and political stability in South Asian communities" (p439). The Home Office (2000) states that the difference between forced and arranged marriage is quite clear. An arranged marriage is one in which there is the ability to say 'no' with regards to potential partners selected by the family, and a forced marriage has no such leeway. However, Siddiqui (2003) argues there is a very thin line between forced and arranged marriages because often women will be coerced into marriage rather than defy their

parents. Gangoli, Chantler, Hester, and Singleton (2011) posit that applying a cultural lens means that women are not seen as victims in this, but are simply fulfilling expected norms. Anitha and Gill (2011) advocate that positioning 'forced marriage' as a 'cultural act' that is illegal detracts from a more significant point; that it is violence against women. Furthermore, this confers passivity onto the women by assuming they are unable to "change patriarchal practices in their communities from *within*" (p49). I also argue that when arranged marriage filters through an eurocentric, educationalist lens it reinforces the image of the passive victim, which is then used in a reductionist narrative for BIP heritage women.

The language used by the women highlights words such as forced and choice. For example Prem informs: **"I'm happy to have an arranged marriage because there will be some element of choice there, I won't be forced into anything I don't want."** The word 'some' indicates that the choice is within parameters. Within the Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage women's narratives more women used words like 'forced', 'against wishes' and 'coerced'. For example Raheena says: **"both of my older sisters had arranged marriages against their wishes, and that was really tough."** Whilst Raheena uses the terms 'arranged marriage' and 'against their wishes', she conflates arranged marriage with forced marriage.

Equally Aadhya tells of her older sister:

My second sister was quite rebellious, she got away and didn't get married until 18 I think it was, but again you know she didn't want to get married; she had a boyfriend here she didn't want to go to get married, but she was kind of like forced into it.

Aadhya continues by exploring the similar experiences of her other sisters and herself. She uses the word 'forced' in all of the instances. She says that her mum **"forced me to go [to Bangladesh] when I was 16 a week after I finished my last GCSE exam"**. For Aadhya, who enjoyed learning and school so much, this was a truly catastrophic effect of izzat. She extends her narrative by saying:

Um my husband made sure I was staying for three months, he didn't want me to come back, because they had this thing about British girls going there getting married coming back and divorcing, so they wanted me to be pregnant, made sure I stayed for three months to make sure I was past the abortion time, yeah so... And then I came back obviously, I got really ill, I got pregnant and got really ill, I couldn't keep anything down so got really ill so, they let me come back. But it was after three months.

By ensuring that Aadhya was more than three months pregnant, her husband asserted his control over her body. By having his baby, she is bound twofold. Firstly, he is able to ensure that she will not be able to change her mind about the marriage once she returns to the UK because of the way the 'baradari' view divorced women, and those

with children particularly. Secondly, with a child to look after, she is going to need his support. By impregnating her, the husband and his family have utilised insider knowledge from within the community: historical cases where British BIP heritage women who have been forced into a marriage abroad but then on returning to the UK immediately file for an annulment or divorce. For Aadhya, the impact of izzat did not stop there. Once her husband migrated to the UK, and she had given birth to the baby, she tried to go back to education. However, she explains:

I went back to college, so I was studying for two years, but he was very abusive and very insecure and very possessive and all that stuff. In the end I had to stop.

Despite staying in the marriage, Aadhya found that her wish to finish her education to the level she wanted was ignored. The patriarchal control of her life now was passed to her husband, and he had the right to stop her from continuing, which he does, indirectly, with behaviours that become so intolerable that Aadhya chose to stop. Both social class and parental qualifications influence the process of how a marriage is 'arranged'. Many of the Indian and Bangladeshi heritage women felt that the system was akin to an unofficial 'dating agency', where a woman is introduced to 'suitable' matches. Suitability was filtered through an essentialist lens, which resulted in a 'tick list' of qualities that would enable the development of family izzat. Amongst these qualities should be a decent level of education. For the younger Bangladeshi heritage women who were married or who had arranged marriages, the more modern norm seemed to involve arrangements outside of Bangladesh, as opposed to 'marrying back home'. This was also the case for the Indian heritage women, through a mixture of introductions, curriculum vitae (CV), and online dating sites. CVs are discussed later within this chapter. One other interesting phenomenon to emerge from the narratives was that of 'love' marriages. These were acceptable, but only if the partner's taxonomy was similar, regarding characteristics such as religion and caste. Amongst the narrators, two Bangladeshi heritage women had chosen to marry non-Bengali men. In both cases, the men had been expected by the mothers of the women to convert to Islam, because of what the baradari would say (if they did not); thus, their taxonomic status could be brought closer to the daughter's. Four of the Indian heritage women (including myself) are married to white men. Whilst none of the men have converted (or vice versa), all four have experienced policing by the community gaze. This has manifested in a number of ways, such as not being invited to events that they would have normally been invited to, because, at least in part, of their taxonomic 'distance' from their wives' families

For a number of the Pakistani heritage women, the impact of izzat was also very evident, particularly for those from a working class background, and specifically

through marriage to first cousins. All of the women who were married were married to their first cousins from 'home', and they had gone back to Pakistan in order for the ceremony to take place. Once married, the women returned to the UK and then applied for permission for that spouse migrate to Britain. Charsley (2013) suggests this system of marrying first cousins is rooted in protecting the women within the family, namely that if they marry a family member, there is a greater chance of the marriage succeeding. Moreover, daughters with British passports can be used as an economic advantage for overseas family (Shaw & Charsley, 2006). This marriage to relatives, I argue through an izzat lens, is for the ease of the family. If the family izzat is contained within the family, there is less likelihood of the baradari having reason to 'talk'. Using an intersectional lens, it is noticeable that this perpetuates the cycle of disadvantage. The women themselves might be able to advance academically, but once married, they will have a working class husband from their family's village back in Pakistan who will bring with him an expectation that is based around working class ideals more at home in a village in Pakistan. As Casey (2016) states, this practice means, essentially, that the people practising it are stuck perpetually in a cycle of being first generation: every new generation will have a parent not born in the UK. Thus, for working class Pakistani heritage women, the hold of izzat is particularly visible in a very overt way. Radwa is the person who most clearly exemplifies this point. Radwa is a third generation British citizen, but has married her cousin from Pakistan. Here she talks about her thoughts on izzat, relationships and education:

I don't want my kids having boyfriends. I want them to get married, have a husband or a wife and have children, you know? And that type of rubbish, I've been to school, I've seen college and I've seen what it does to girls' and boys' lives. It's not an important part of your life. I mean, I know girls who've just ruined their lives because they've decided, oh, they're madly in love with a boy and running around after him and just ruined it. What for? To have skeletons in your closet which you are ashamed of opening. You know? I don't want my kids living in shame.

Although she talks about her 'kids', she actually only refers to her daughters in the flow of the narration as evidenced by the usage of boyfriends, and then girls who have ruined their lives. Equally interesting is that as an insider, that is someone who has been to school and to college in Britain, she believes that she has insider knowledge about how young people behave within those settings. Radwa has a particular viewpoint with regards to how relationships should be formed and carried out. Laying the blame for sexual relationship formation at the door of educational establishments is clearly going to impact on how far she will 'allow' her daughters to be educated. Moreover, by talking about living in "shame" she is evoking the power of izzat, and how her children, and therefore she, will be judged by the baradari.

I. Education as Izzat Currency

Izzat is played out through extravagant lavish weddings that can see the guest list in excess of 1000, and the bride 'presented' to all, bejewelled and clothed in lavish and heavily embodied or designer outfits. Wilson (2006) notes that these displays are about projecting an image to show prosperity and represent "male qualities, although expressed...through women's clothes and jewellery" (p97). As Karjol stresses "**there were so many randoms at my wedding but if we didn't invite them, people would have said my parents didn't marry me off properly**". 'Randoms', to Karjol, are people who were relatives of relatives, and the baradari, rather than close family and friends. Thus the family had to be seen to be doing the right thing for the sake of the gaze of the baradari.

I argue, based on the narratives, that educational qualifications have become an integral part of a dowry. This is very evident in the way this practice has evolved within the UK, particularly within the Indian and Bangladeshi heritage communities. A degree as a bargaining tool for better marriage prospects was explicitly evident in the narratives. Taani explains:

A degree does help your marriage prospects. It's a bit of a thing in Bengali culture. I actually find it a bit annoying actually because they look for a stable person with a degree.

This is done through the creation of CVs that contain all vital information: "**You write everything about yourself and then it gets passed on. It is a bit weird but it works.**"

Megh explains:

For us [when looking for suitable spouses] you have your CV's. So my sister has her CV of what her achievements are, then the groom...that is how bride and groom searching happens now. So you do an exchange of CVs and photos and then so, so when when we did eventually find the guy, and again it was - ok so studied to this level then we need to find someone at the same level so there's uh, there's similarities- they have something in common on an intellectual level. And so we invited the family down and they got to get together, they had a chat, left them alone for a couple of hours they were talking. And it's based on that meeting, because the thing is it takes years to get to know a person, so we can't give them years, because Islamically also you can't really um let them have a relationship of any sort unless you agree. So on both sides everyone was happy so it was ok so um but they wanted to do was because it's the younger generation they like to talk, so my sister said I want to get to know him more. So we said ok so we've said yes now, if we didn't say yes, we couldn't allow you talk because Islamically that's wrong because if they really get close together and then it falls apart then you've got the reputation and all of that. You have to protect them.

There are many interesting phenomena highlighted in what Megh says. She stresses that the family, collectively, find '**the guy**'. This collective approach is further stressed when she says: '**we invited the family down**', and again when she says '**so on both**

sides everyone was happy'. This is key because it highlights that the marriage is seen almost as the joining of two families, and two lots of izzat, rather than simply two individuals. Equally, it emphasizes the importance of making the marriage work. All reasonable steps have to be taken to ensure the longevity of the marriage, so having **'something in common on an intellectual level'** is vitally important. This is so important that it cannot be left to chance, which is why the CVs are scrutinised, in order to **'find someone at the same level'** in terms of how far they have **'studied'**. Megh also talks about the difference between the generations in terms of approach. The **'arranged'** part is not questioned, but because **'the younger generation they like to talk'**, as long as her sister said yes to the match, and both families said yes, then she and her intended husband could have conversations on the phone or via the Internet. It is at that point that Megh stresses the importance of izzat within this scenario. She points out that **'if they really get close together and then it falls apart then you've got the reputation and all of that. You have to protect them.'** Reputation, or how the rest of the community see her sister, is important, because if this arrangement falls through, then her **'reputation'**, as someone who may have had premarital relations, may prevent her from finding another suitable match. Prem acknowledges that she knew from an early age that an arranged marriage was something that happened, as her siblings were experiencing it:

At the age of 16/17 it was part of my mind, but it was knowing that my older siblings, when they were having match-making whatever going on, the criteria would be religion, background, height, age and then it would be their education.

Religion and background, meaning, specifically, someone's, was as important as having a desirable level of education. Bhopal (2009; 2010) suggests that getting a degree allows Asian women to redress the gender balance within their cultural confines; they can also to use degrees as a way of securing an arranged **'match'** of their choosing. Therefore, education, and particularly degree attainment, plays an important role in the types of matches available. Tarsem explains that in terms of bargaining power in the **'marriage stakes'**, it was valuable to have a degree:

Having an Education [that is a degree] means that you can pick who you want to marry within an arranged marriage. It gives you more bargaining power.

To some extent, this seems to be inherently contradictory as Tarsem seems to suggest picking from a selection that she has not made. However, what she is saying is that greater choice is created *within* the parameters of izzat created systems. Bhopal (2011) emphasizes that having a degree not only elevates choice with regards to potential marriage matches, and the ability to exert influence, it also, in turn, builds women's capital. She found that her respondents did not want to be seen to be **'becoming like**

English people' (p34) but women who are still 'Asian'. This is problematic on several levels. Firstly, the implication is that by becoming educated, BIP heritage women somehow lose their cultural heritage and become 'English', which is code for white. Secondly, that being Asian and being a woman means that you should not be 'too' educated, or you will be an outsider.

Inside the narratives of some of the women, there arose the concept of equal matches.

Indian parents think that if they're going to get you a really good bloke who's earning loads, and with a really good education, then that person's going to want someone who's equal. They're not going to want some girl who's just dropped out of secondary school (Tarsem).

As Tarsem says, finding a match who 'earns well' means that they too will want someone who has the potential to earn well. This potential to earn more is based on holding a degree, and can ultimately have detrimental consequences, as was expressed by Randeep: **"My nephew liked a girl and she liked him but the match was not accepted by her family because he didn't have a degree."** This overriding of choices made by the young people by family is about status and earning capacity. The status is directly linked to izzat. The baradari would measure the family as lacking if a daughter was married to someone less educated than her. Hafsa says, about a friend of hers:

Somebody I know who she, she studied medicine, and she- she's obviously a doctor she's, I think she's a registrar now. But um, it was quite hard to find her a partner because she is so educated and then, equally one of her really good friends who's also I think she's a consultant in London, she couldn't find a partner either because she was so educated, so in the end they've had to go below. Which I don't they're... not really been ideal.

Hafsa highlights that her friend and her friend's friend have in effect overeducated themselves, and so are unlikely to find similarly-educated males, which in turn means settling for someone who is 'below'. Hafsa constructs this in a gendered way with men having to be in an equally or superior position. She goes onto say:

that's one of the things I can remember my mum saying to me too, is that you don't want to be so much educated that then how are you going to get someone at that level. You see what I mean, better to be more grounded and be more... not... well, 'cause I mean she's for example she's a consultant and she's now married to someone who, I don't- I think he just, nowhere near where she is.

The fact that Hafsa uses words like 'grounded' and 'below' indicates that she thinks that there is a ceiling that women should not go beyond, otherwise they will struggle to find a man. She goes onto say:

And I don't know I just think... .. he needs to be of the same, do you know what I mean, of a similar amount, and he's not so she's kind of crushed him. That's the problem.

Being more educated than her husband has meant that she has emasculated and so 'crushed' him. This assumption that a man is emasculated if his wife is more educated is directly related to izzat.

Afshar, Aitken, and Franks (2005) suggest that, particularly for Muslim women, higher qualifications make them undesirable with regards to the choice of husband, since similarly-educated men would send for a wife from 'back home', so that many educated Muslim women would 'find themselves of necessity obliged to fight for their rights on all fronts' (p278). The implication here is that they have become too independent and therefore are no longer operating within the realm set out for them within the izzat boundaries (Bhopal, 1997). Furthermore, having higher level qualifications can mean that the woman has priced herself out of the market, whereby she is seen to be too westernised, and, therefore, unsuitable to marry. Firoja expresses this element of being 'too westernised' very eloquently:

My appearance is seen to be quite unusual, you know I've got short hair, I've got tattoos, I have a piercing- you know those sorts of things kind of confuse Asian people, but also it confuses non-Asian people you know, they don't- they don't get it.

This is interesting, both because it brings attention to how non-BIP people stereotype BIP women, but also in the way it positions her as an outsider by other members of her community. Equally, she is still viewing herself through an izzat lens, because she positions herself as someone who not only pushes the baradari boundaries but also those set by the eurocentric lens for women of her heritage. She then goes onto say:

Because, I think yeah, they do see it [having a degree] as adding, as commodifying, you know kind of, yeah... I would say so. Um, but it's quite rare for me, at my age, and as a Bangladeshi, British born Bangladeshi, to be unmarried actually.

So as she sees it, although having a degree is commodified, there are other facts, such as an individual's cultural location and consequent appearance, especially if that is outside of the realms of izzat endorsed behaviour, that then impact on marriage prospects.

e. Izzat and Employment

Bhopal (2011) claims that for many BIP women, educational qualifications are essentially "stepping-stone[s] to greater social mobility in their professional careers", and therefore, a "positive factor in their lives" (p442). However, this is only partly true. There is greater choice with regards to suitable marriage matches, as Jeevan narrates:

I think it's because of my nan and grandad's generation which was if you don't get good grades you won't get married, you won't have a family. Cos now with arranged marriages, it's harder because they look at everything. They look at your degree, your A levels, what job you do. Cos if you're not doing a very good job then it's going to impact on your proposals.

...but qualifications are also emphatically foremost about enhancing their dowry. This is most clearly demonstrated by the preference for some professions over others. Randeep further unpicks this point by saying that only particular professions were seen to be good enough:

So the cliché of doctor/lawyer/accountant was very much my upbringing. So if you weren't one of those you weren't good enough.

'Good enough' refers to the enhancement of the status or izzat of the family. The preference for particular professions means that there is a perceived disparity in the value attached to subjects, and also the universities that BIP students apply to. Ghuman (2001) suggests that alongside being keen for their daughters to enter HE, some Asian parents also dictate subjects, such as sciences and maths, and also eventual career pathways, such as teaching and medical professions. Bagguley and Hussain (2007b) indicate that women from South Asian heritages tend to apply more for certain subject areas when compared with their white counterparts; these were: dentistry, medicine (and subjects related to medicine), law, business (and subjects related to business), computer sciences and mathematical studies. This is supported by The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (2014) data, which indicates only minor fluctuations in the numbers that since 2006 show particularly low numbers of BME heritage students applying to degree courses in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. This was certainly true for the women I listened to who had gone onto higher education. However, an interesting difference in my data, in comparison to Ghuman, was that teaching was not seen as a desirable subject by some of the younger Indian and Pakistani heritage women in this study (but was acceptable to some of the Bangladeshi heritage women). For example, Karjol says:

Teachers aren't seen in the same light as doctors and lawyers. It's a money thing. If I had said to my family that I wanted to be a teacher, they'd have said why don't you be something else. Teaching just doesn't have the status thing.

Karjol's point was echoed by Radwa:

You can't be a dinner lady, or a canteen person or running a restaurant. You know you, you either be self-employ... Asian people prefer, you either be self-employed, a doctor, an engineer, an accountant, a lawyer. Anything else is menial. I mean, ok you can be a teacher if you want, that's even a good... That's alright. But it's not... it's not a good job. It's not the best job. You can be a nurse, but really, if you're going to be a nurse you might as well be a doctor. Do you understand? It is that sort of aspect of um, our mentality, the way we're brought up...

Applying the izzat lens to what Radwa says regarding employment hierarchies, it is evident that the result of the educational trajectory that is employment is a career that is not only well paid, but which also has more prestige. For Radwa, the connection between education and material outcomes is very clear:

We are brainwashed to believe that we need to be educated and be the best. And not just be educated and be below, we need to be high achievers because we like the flashy life. We like the good houses, we like to have good cars, we like to be, we're a bit of the Zainab's, you know snobby.

Although Radwa suggests that education allows for individuals to fulfil their desires for 'flashy things', what is also implicit within her narrative is the idea that it is also about presenting to the wider community that your family is successful, as the Zainab (a television character who wants better things so she could present herself in a particular way to the community) reference illustrates. This links directly back to the notion of izzat. Social standing is significantly improved with the evidencing of wealth, and accumulation of wealth correlates directly to education and dowry.

This desire to present a successful front is also evidenced by Hafsa talks about a family friend who studied hard to be a dentist:

There's a girl as well, another girl that we know, she's a dentist, but bizarrely she's not actually going to work. So she spent 5 years studying this qualification she's now a dentist, but she's not gonna work.

Hence, because the fact that a woman is qualified and has earning potential does not mean she will work. Thus, there is a contradiction, in that izzat is enhanced through education, but equally, izzat may also prevent her from working. The career is not necessarily about working but is firstly, to attract the right kind of marriage proposals and secondly, as a safety net in case the marriage does not work or in case of economic need (Ijaz and Abbas, 2010). It is a high-status career *in potentia*, rather than, necessarily, a career actualized; it is in some ways symbolic. This may go some way to explaining what Palmer (2011) states, which is that according to the Labour Force Survey in England and Wales (2007), approximately 80% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women aged 25 and over, compared to under 40% of Indian women in the same bracket, were not in paid work. More recent data (2016) in a press release from the Department for Works and Pensions suggests figures of almost 55% for Bangladeshi/ Pakistani women in 2015. Unfortunately both sets of the data have been conflated to include both Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage. Previous discussions within this chapter would indicate that this figure is counterproductive and misleading. These figures need to be separated out into the two heritages to gain a clearer picture.

An aspect to the Indian heritage parents' perceptions about careers was their desire to ensure that their children went into professions that did not demand the long hours that they themselves had to put in. Prem exemplifies this point:

My parents had to work quite a great deal, and as a result we always knew that we wanted to have the educational background so that we weren't doing the hours that perhaps they were doing. 'Cause I think as my parents were growing up they did factory work, they did 12 hour shifts, 15 hour shifts, um and then they got the shop which is a lot of effort as well. I think they encouraged us to go to uni, have an education, because they didn't want us to do those hours. However, what they've now realised is that the 9-5 that perhaps existed in the 70's/80's doesn't exist, so when they see us do the hours that we do, they're like oh we educated you to do this? You know to work your weekends? To work in the evenings? So that's kind of a little eye opener as well for them.

Lack of parental knowledge meant inaccurate assumptions about qualifications, the types of employment available and modern realities about working hours.

f. Empowerment, Control, and Independence

For a number of the Bangladeshi Heritage women, agency was developed through a number of means. For Rodela, working and earning an income was the point at which she gained independence and so was out of parental 'control'. She says that it was also the point at which her mother realised that she (Rodela) had autonomy:

I think I got my independence when I started working, yes so, that's when I started getting my independence. I started pay, to pay my own way and my mum realised, "no, actually, no, she's not in my control anymore". So, she couldn't really get me to do things like wearing what she wanted me to wear.

Financial independence allows Rodela to exercise freedom, have a degree of autonomy, and not be 'controlled'. By making such choices, Rodela is operating outside of the acceptable framework constructed by the enforcement of izzat. However, this seemed, for the women in this study, to happen only when the father or husband died or became incapable of being the head of the household. This was true for Roseen, for example. Her husband, similarly to other Bangladeshi heritage women in this thesis, was much older than her, and when he was incapable of managing the financial burden of the family, Roseen **"had to become assertive"** because she was

"a mum, you know, and I'm able to manage all this and balance and, you know, be, become the breadwinner. You know, I was the one who was earning, he was, he wasn't earning as much as I was doing and it was like the role changed (inflection) itself."

This was a major turning point for Roseen in terms of self-belief and ultimately the development of her agency. It was at this point that she was able to reflect on what she had not been allowed to be:

"I could identify my own feelings, my own sadness I'd lived and I lived for the sake of living, basically – for my parents, for my family, for my children".

Roseen had, as is the expectation within an izzat structure, put her own life behind the needs of everyone else.

For some of the women, agency was used as a means of empowerment. Those who were mothers, similarly to other parents, were able to reflect on their own experiences, and so wanted to ensure that their daughters' lives were better than their own. As Megh argues:

“I think people are seeing that shoving girls to the side, they haven't realised the potential - and it's just that potential that even, you know, if they can become a success, not just for becoming suitable marriage material but also um, that they can earn for themselves: they don't need to rely on somebody else... I think girls are trying to make a stand for themselves now, thinking we're not just supposed to go get married and be a housewife. And I think that was a thing of the past. So I think there's a two pronged thing of yes, you know, so then we can get you something suitable, someone suitable for when you marry, but also um, where they can be self-sufficient for themselves”.

Megh is unmistakably suggesting that change is happening. Furthermore, there will be a generational shift, and likewise an acknowledgement that women can be self-sufficient, and do not need to be looked after or confined within the patriarchal hold of izzat. For Megh, success comes through being able to earn for herself, and not just to have to be a housewife.

g. Summary

This chapter explored the relationship between education, marriage and employment. I established clearly the influence of izzat on the choices made by the women with regards to this 'triangle'. Furthermore, I argued that some parents, fathers in particular, made decisions regarding their daughter's education based on keeping them 'pure'. This happened through attendance at single sex schools, or going to a local HEI. and living in the parental home. The use of education as an integral part of dowry was demonstrated as being a key facet in how far and what subjects could be studied. Moreover, education, particularly higher education for the Indian heritage women, brought positive honour on the family, especially if the woman stayed 'desi' and did not become too westernised as part of the process. This was the best way of retaining and building izzat. The next chapter examines how izzat in conjunction with eurocentrism lens shapes educational *experience*.

7 Chapter Seven: Izzat and the Shaping of Educational Experience

In this chapter, I unpack my term 'prescribed narrative' to show how the women were given a story, or identity, that they had not selected. This is a collectivist identity given by power structures, such as educational establishments, and the media. Moreover, I show how being given this narrative impacts on or reproduces izzat structures, agency and sense of self. Historically the eurocentric lens with which BIP heritage families and family life have been viewed often suggested a mismatch between generational aspiration, belief set and value systems (Crozier & Davies, 2008; Abbas, 2010; Khambhaita, 2014). I argue that barriers and disadvantage are sustained just as much by educational institutions as they are by the four pillars. This is often constructed within a reductionist frame that feeds into the wider societal rhetoric and labelling of majority and minority populations. Gillborn (2008) suggests that it is through these mechanisms that "minoritising" (p2) occurs. Furthermore, argue Anderson and Taylor (2006), institutions often match the cultural assumptions of the majority group, meaning the practices of that group are seen to be the norm, to which other cultural practices should conform. I address a dichotomy between a need for more ethnic minority teachers and the view, widespread amongst BIP heritages, that teaching is a low status profession that lacks izzat-building potential. Archer (2011) notes that BIP heritage parents "feel less comfortable in their interactions with schools" especially if the school is "a predominantly white establishment" that has limited access for diverse "school social networks" (p462). I suggest that this in turn sustains poor access, through practices such as streaming and setting. Finally, I demonstrate how there is transference of knowledge taking place for some of the women.

a. Prescribed Narratives

Brah and Minhas (1985) draw on their experience working as female, BIP heritage teachers/researchers in schools to address the issue of 'prescribed narratives' for BIP heritage young women in the schooling system. They argue that Asian young women are given particular labels or tags such as "docile, passive, exotic looking, arranged marriages, and housewives" (p19). Furthermore, they suggest that teachers "utilise the twin notions of 'cultural clash' and 'inter-generational conflict' to explain away the problems that these young women may encounter as they pass through the education system" (p16). Thus, the narrative for BIP women collectively tends towards 'victim' (Ahmad, 2003b), someone who is oppressed (Jahan, 2011), or not politically active (Rashid, 2014). Moreover, Crozier and Davies (2008) stress that 'Asian' girls are seen by teachers as "quieter and calmer than the 'Asian' boys and more controlled by, or under the control of, their family" (p295) and whose education was not seen to be

important, because they would only end up being married off. This framing of BIP heritage children in a particular way, and consequently holding lower expectations of them, has been extensively highlighted in the research (Wright, 1987; Mirza, 1992; Brah, 1994; Sewell, 1995; Shain 2003; Gillborn, 2005; Basit 2012; Miah 2015). More recently, Indian heritage pupils (particularly girls) have been seen to be high achievers and capable of integrating, whilst Muslim women are badged with notions of family oppression, low aspiration and imminent forced/arranged marriages (Ghuman, 2001; Miah, 2015).

Gillborn (2005, p15) suggests that through their “expectations and actions”, teachers are complicit in the creation of racial stereotypes, and so, inequality. For Karjol, this was evidenced in the way she was spoken to by her headteacher after she had been disruptive in class. The Head told her off and then said: **“what would your father say? I know you lot have strict values”**. Karjol is being ‘othered’ and placed inside a patriarchal box. Keddie (2011) stresses that eurocentric ideals of agency and empowerment for women tend to value “individual autonomy, choice and freedom” (p142) which is in direct opposition to collectivist notions of being. This is a viewpoint which Karjol voiced: **“I’m happy because ...I know that they [her parents] are always interested in my best benefit.”** Hence, far from being a “victim” who is “passive and in need of being saved or liberated from her plight” (Keddie, 2011, p137), Karjol trusts her parents to do the best for her. For Raheena, discussions about her identity were too limiting:

I'm me, I'm British, I'd probably say that more than I am Bengali. But, I think I don't want to define myself as English or Bengali or anything like that, because as soon as you do that, as soon as you label yourself and put yourself in a box you subconsciously, you have lots of things that define you. Those kind of cultural things, um but if I had to then I will say I'm a British Asian because that then, then that doesn't put me in any particular box.

Although she regards the labels of Bengali and English as constraining and thus defining who she is, she does not really see the label ‘British Asian’ in the same light. To her, this label is broad enough to not hem her in. Not wanting to be ‘stuck in a box’ is really interesting in light of what she says next about an education context:

And that's really interesting, because in the arts, in the, within the education system or participation/engagement, there's lots of opportunities where you can have money to be part of schemes and projects and that kind stuff. And I did that a few years back and I had such uh trouble trying to put myself because I had to define myself as a being me person with disabilities in order to get this bursary, and I've really struggled to put myself, because I didn't see myself as that.

By having to comply with a label that was already chosen for her created a lot of anxiety for Raheena. She did not see herself as someone with a disability, and in order to access funding, she had to conform to a label that didn't fit her self-image.

Because as soon as I did that it came up with lots of issues, and you saw yourself as that person, you saw yourself as a disadvantaged person, as somebody it's almost like if you're of BME there's almost something wrong with you. And I said no there isn't something wrong with me but I want to do this so I can have this opportunity. Um so, this is why I don't like to put myself as English or Bengali. I'm British Asian, I'm an artist, and that gives me scoop, scope, to be who I am. And then I can change myself, I can evolve myself, so who knows you know, if we ever met again, I might be a different person again.

Raheena feels that it identifies her as someone who is lesser or as she puts it someone who is '**disadvantaged**'. For Raheena, being forced to accept a label takes away her power to self-determine who she is or who she can be. Also interesting that she raise a temporal dimension, identifying that her identity evolves all the time.

Crozier and Davies (2008) suggest that after the London bombings of July 2005, BIP heritage families and particularly young BIP heritage people were no longer seen as "passive but upstanding members of society" (p289), but viewed with suspicion. It was at this point that the rhetoric began to change, and a parallel 'truth' began to emerge: there were 'model' BIP communities and 'troublesome' BIP heritage communities that were divided along religious lines. The one commonality in all of the rhetoric is that the 'problem' is positioned solely within BIP families, rather than acknowledging wider societal factors, such as lack of or silenced voice, which may play a role. This feeds directly into some young Muslims feeling disenfranchised (Revell, 2012; Hoque, 2015; Miah, 2015). Ultimately, this positioning also seeps into educational experiences and journeys.

b. Access and Barriers: Dialogue of Dis/Advantage

Using the four pillars to view educational journeys, it is apparent that inclusion and exclusion is often related to success, namely, who is considered an insider and who is not. This is pertinent when considering barriers that prevent many BIP heritage women, especially those with strong religious affiliations, from not just accessing but also fully participating within an educational journey; in turn there are impacts on access to other opportunities. A lack of access, through poor knowledge, agency, and sometimes attitude, starts from birth and continues into higher education, despite an emphasis within many higher education establishments on widening participation. For some of the Bangladeshi heritage women this lack of access was very tied to contextual knowledge. Firoja said:

I didn't go to university, I stayed at home because in my family it wasn't kind of, um I wouldn't say, I mean now things have changed obviously but it wasn't, ah, I don't want to say they- I don't think they did this maliciously- but, they didn't make me aware that that option was available. Let's say that, they didn't make me aware that that option was available, they didn't know it was available.

Firoja's parents did not know who went to university and that it was an option for her because nobody had given them access to potential pathways other than staying at home. Ultimately, for Firoja, this lack of access was a result of many oppressing intersections, such as coming from a poorer background, lack of parental agency, being a girl, having parents who did not know people who went to university, or the knowledge of how to enable their child to apply. For Firoja, university came much later, after she gained employment.

A lack of knowledge also impacted Amal's access. She says her parents had limited knowledge of the education system, and that this was true also for a number of her peers, and that they were all

really just bumbling along, doing the best you could, we didn't really, didn't really understand qualifications, I just knew you had to do well try your hardest that was it. So it wasn't a really planned educational journey as such.

She then further clarifies that

for many of my peers it was also quite similar in that you didn't really know what you were doing and um so if someone else from your community had done something it was like a a cue perhaps you could do that- because we were all finding our way. Um 'cause our parents hadn't gone through the system so you know we had nowhere to sort of hook what we should do, we didn't have that many English friends that you could actually look at to explain the system to you.

Amal highlights that living within a community that is also lacking knowledge can be problematic. The disadvantage is twofold: firstly, you are an outsider to the system, and secondly, the accrual of knowledge is both patchy and incidental. Amal, like many other women in this thesis, seems to conflate 'English' with being white (since she was also English, strictly speaking), and automatically having knowledge to access the system.

As established, early learning readiness is a useful aid for enabling successful navigation through the education system. If a child has not had the opportunity to attend an effective pre-school setting, then learning at home becomes even more important for success in navigating barriers. This has been recognised by both the main British political parties; however The Social Mobility Commission (2017, p16) stresses that as a result of cuts in funding, the availability of parenting support programmes is no better than it was in 1997. Thus, despite some success in improving outcomes, funding is not available or prioritised. Also, there are some families that are hard to reach anyway, despite these programmes, which suggests that the cycle of disadvantage is in some instances not being broken. Lack of access to preschool and

poor attendance during compulsory schooling both lead to disadvantage. Figures from the DFE (2017) for the school year 2015/16 illustrate school attendance rates for different ethnicities. The data is broken down into figures for primary and secondary schools and also identifies persistent absence, which term is used when a pupil misses 10 or more sessions (a session being defined as a morning or afternoon). Persistent absence covers both authorised and unauthorised absence. For Bangladeshi heritage children, the figures for persistent absence are 10.8% at primary and 9.4% at secondary, and for Indian heritage the figures are 5.9% at primary and 6.1% at secondary. The figures are alarming for Pakistani heritage children: 11.6% at primary and 13% at secondary, especially when viewed in conjunction with a consideration of the heritage of those children who have poor access to preschool provision.

Radwa highlights another issue that relates to all four pillars identified in this thesis:

I know plenty of Pakistani mums who don't use places like Sure Start because of English speaking ... English, they think their children won't be able to talk to the teachers and that they can't talk to the teachers.

The mums she refers to have limited English, and because the bulk of the teaching staff tend to be English speaking, a barrier to access is unintentionally created. This means that those mums are having to (perhaps even, arguably, choosing to, because it is challenging) operate outside of a system that was put into place to support them.

Another barrier experienced by some of the women happened because as children, they were sometimes absent from school, or unable to be fully present for themselves, because they were required to interpret, by their parents, and sometimes by teachers. This is an example of how both families and the system prioritised their own needs over those of the women to whom this had happened. Rodela says

From the age of, like, seven I had to be a translator for my mum, had to miss a lot of school because was my dad was always poorly, erm, and he used to be away all the time, as well. So, my mum always had it tough. Erm... so, when it came to doctors' appointments, just routine appointments as well, and everything, I always had to miss school, you know. There was no option about it. You know... .. it was either... you know, my mum didn't have an appointment or I missed school, and the easy option was to miss school, and a lot of it. I had to take my dad because he had bad asthma, erm, and he was quite old as well. My dad was old, much older than my mum, so, you know, and he had a lot of poor health problems.

Rodela is an example of how the impact of disadvantage can be doubly so. Firstly, her absence, she says, was not questioned by the establishment, and secondly, despite having an older brother, she had to do all the interpreting. Using an izzat lens suggests that this happened because her education is less important than her brother's. Equally, it could be that an older, male child interpreting at the mother's medical consultations would have been seen to be inappropriate. Appointments were also an issue for Firoja.

Firoja has a sister who is disabled and so she also had to interpret “**just to kind of reassure my dad you know in case he missed anything**”. Firoja goes onto say that no one chased it up because she thinks her father would explain to the school the necessity for it. She continues:

So yeah again and that's why my school days were interrupted. But also I was able to catch up so it was never a problem, you know I never felt behind or anything like that, I just, I was able to catch up. Um, at that point I was.

Hence the more time Firoja was absent, the harder it became to keep up and that certainly would have been the case with the curriculum gaining complexity. Thus the barriers would have increased. Rodela said that the system let her down because nobody questioned her absence, especially when she went with her mum to Bangladesh for long periods of time. However, in college, her supposed absence was noted, and a letter containing inaccurate attendance information was sent out without consultation with her. The repercussions of that letter were astronomical for her:

... I was in my class without fail. but, oh no, I had a letter coming through the post from college saying my attendance was 95%, which made me so cross, 'cos that was not the case. They had actually made a mistake on their system, but how do I convince my mum that that wasn't the case?

The repercussions of the letter were that Rodela was pulled out of college by her mum because her mum thought she had been “**messing about with boys**” because “**she was hearing things**” from the community about other girls doing so. In order to protect the family izzat, Rodela's mum acted in the only way izzat permitted, by removing Rodela from an environment where she could freely interact with boys. For Rodela, the most upsetting thing was that no-one followed it through. No-one contacted her to ask why she was no longer attending college: “**In that respect I felt like I was let down very, very, you know, in a major way. That was really unfair.**” Rodela acknowledges that her mum was at fault too but she feels most let down by the system. She articulates:

You've got to let things go, and I've let things go, because I am where I am now and I've achieved what I needed to achieve and I've done, you know, things. So, I'm proud of myself. But the fact is, you know, yes, I'm an Asian girl and, yes, people do go on holidays and things like that,...but xxx is in college, her parents have taken her to Pakistan or Bangladesh to get her married, but they need to really follow these things up and I did really feel that, in college, they didn't. They didn't phone or make the effort to say, you know, 'Why is Xxx not in college? She was doing so well... She never had a day's sick off... And nobody followed it up and, and... literally, nobody cared. I mean, I really did and I thought, you, you're not helping me. Obviously, my mum wasn't helping me or my family wasn't helping me, but they could've helped me.

Rodela compartmentalises it as being part of being an 'Asian' girl and the way in which the system views her. The fact that girls are often 'taken' to be married without

challenge, also relates to how BIP women are given a narrative that is not necessarily the one they would like to own. The system hindered her access, impacted on her agency and through this misguided eurocentric attitude created even greater barriers for her. A better pastoral system that allowed for individual conversations with students before sending out official letters, would have given Rodela a better chance at success. Crozier and Davies (2008) suggest that BIP heritage youngsters are regularly ostracized and sometimes intentionally excluded from being active members of their school community. This can happen through mechanisms such as “racial harassment by their white peers; insensitivity to cultural differences and in effect symbolic violence; parental concerns about the safety of their children; and, to a limited extent, religious demands” (p286). This is particularly true for the working class Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women in this thesis, a point very clearly articulated by Palki, who reflected on an incident at school:

I remember when I was um, we had a Rama and Sita play production that we did at school and I was cast as the gazelle which I was very disappointed about 'cause I wanted to have a more predominant role, but the day before the actual production, after all the dress rehearsals our neighbour came and said to my mum why are you letting Palki be part of this production, it's a Hindu thing you know, are you a Hindu now? Really laying it on my mum quite thick, and I remember my mum being confused about it, and um then she didn't let me go so I felt really bad 'cause I'd really let everyone down from my, in my school and my mum just wouldn't budge on it at all. And then I remember the next day I went to school and I didn't get told off but my teacher asked me what happened, and I said my neighbour said I couldn't do it because I'm a Muslim, and it's a Hindu thing and I'm not a Hindu and I shouldn't do it. And I- I just remember being really upset about it, and my teacher said don't get upset about it you know, I'm just disappointed because you, you let us down, and then I said, I just remember thinking I had no way of letting you know like that I couldn't do it.

This narrative demonstrates a number of points. Firstly, Palki was let down by the teacher, because the teacher clearly did not know Palki very well or she would have understood the powerlessness that Palki herself was experiencing by ‘letting down’ everyone. Equally for Palki, the play went from being something she wanted to be an even larger part of, to something that impacted on her sense of self and agency. The choice not to perform the play was not Palki’s. It was a choice made by individuals within the baradari who were policing using izzat. This decision about what is acceptable was then inflicted on Palki’s mother. In order to maintain ‘izzat’ as a Muslim family, Palki had to be prevented from participating. Secondly, the teacher appears to have made an assumption that the choice of play would be accepted by the community simply because it was of ‘ethnic’ origins. Lack of consideration of religious difference, implies that she was operating within a reductionist narrative, something that Troyna (1992) coined as the three ‘S’s (samosas, saris and steelbands) (p149) approach to diversity. This approach is both unhelpful and racist, albeit unwittingly so. By producing

a play that she deemed to be 'diverse', and by not consulting with, or explaining rationale to, the large Muslim population in the school, the teacher played a part in not only the alienation of Palki, but also her mother and the baradari.

This unwitting, unintentional cultural marginalisation experienced by Palki is played out in schools across the country. A poor understanding of the needs of the cohort means a lack of access or ability to participate fully, and thus results in the type of non-participation experienced by Palki. As Crozier and Davies (2008) stress, blaming BIP heritage children for not integrating and for choosing to exclude themselves from the white majority is an act of racism. This is because the curriculum generally, is tied up to either favour a white British viewpoint or if there is a foray into diversity, it is an enforced perception of what that should be. The children/students are not fully consulted and so have no ownership of the process. The only way Palki's mum could gain control or agency was by keeping Palki away, and even that was an act that was forced upon her by the community and the watchful confines of izzat. In Palki's case, her mother lacked tools or access to be able to engage with either the school or the neighbour to discuss the choice of play. This is an example of how the intersections of class and izzat worked against one of the women within this thesis. Palki is not a lone example; many working class BIP heritage youngsters do not choose to be on the outside, but are prevented or deterred from being in the mainframe.

I. Hindering Access by Gatekeepers

Sometimes a journey needs a guide and in education, these are traditionally the 'gatekeepers' such as teachers, and other educational professionals such as careers officers. Kogan (1980) argues that when parents are given access to their child's classroom, there is increased confidence in the teacher, and also in the relationship between them and school. As previously stated, schools need to develop partnerships with the entire school community, not just those who already have access, which is those communities that are actively engaging with professionals. In addition to the issue of partnership, there is also the issue of accountability. The attitude and knowledge of the professional can, as Jones (2006, p174) suggests, hold tremendous power, as they "play a crucial role in gaining access" and so are significant not only to educational outcomes but also to the journey itself. Equally, for those families that function on the margins of society for reasons of socio-economic status or ethnicity, the ways in which they experience interaction, and are empowered by a professional, can influence success.

Not only are working class children, including those from a BIP heritage, hindered by a restricted knowledge (their own and their parents') of educational systems, but also, frequently, the impression the educators have of BIP women means that they are

ridiculed for having either too little or too much aspiration. Crozier (2009) stresses that the issue is not one of aspiration but of inadequate advice in order to fulfil these high aspirations. The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2017) suggest that poor access to careers advice and work experience over the last twenty years in particular has had a significant and negative impact, especially for disadvantaged students whose extended circle of friends and family may also lack knowledge of systems. Furthermore, this has happened against a backdrop of “dedicated funds and organisations for managing outreach” (p54). This lack of accessible support was also articulated by a number of the BIP heritage women, such as Ganga:

I had a careers interview once at school. I remember that he was quite surprised that someone from my school was going away to University, because it was a bit of a rough school.

For Ganga, the career’s interview was not empowering but an opportunity for a professional to impact negatively on the aspirations of a young person. This careers officer hindered access by pigeonholing the young people in Ganga’s school simply because it had been painted in a particular way. This hindering of access also impacted, on Inaya who voices her concern at the absence of a careers interview, when others did have one:

But... um, I was never approached [to have a careers interview], which I- I actually find it kind of strange now, some of my friends were approached and they had similar grades to mine, doing similar subjects and by our sixth form head he um, he had interviews with them and yeah but he never approached which I actually find a bit strange now.

Inaya went to a catholic, predominately white, all-girls secondary school. The fact that she was not approached is as she says ‘strange’. Whatever the reason for her lack of inclusion, it did impact on her ability to decipher what she had access to, with regards to future opportunities both academically and also for a career. For Prem, there was a different sort of knowledge limitation, in that there was an assumption made by the professionals that she knew, or had access to, someone in her family who knew which universities to consider, and why. Prem expresses frustration at this:

I don't think my college helped me in choosing my universities. Because, I felt like I had no support, it was just kind of like ‘choose your 6 universities’. Ok, my siblings had been to university but they were doing their own thing, I couldn't turn to my folks going ‘what university do you suggest?’ 'cause they don't really know.

This lack of a knowledgeable other meant that Prem was unclear about the routes that were accessible to her. She goes onto to say:

So I just kind of had a shot myself, and um everyone went, um banged on about these Times league tables so I was looking at them, but what I really needed was

someone to put a bit more perspective on to say 'Prem you've not gone to a college where you can get into the likes of' - oh which ones did I apply for - ***, ** in ***, so I think that was quite a good one, another really good one for law, not quite Oxbridge, but still really high in the leagues. Looking at that now, I would never had a chance of getting into those universities, because I hadn't done a Duke of Edinburgh award, I didn't have 5 A Levels, I didn't have A*'s at GCSE's.

Prem employed the only tools she had to make what she thought was an 'informed' choice at the time, using information gained. However, as she states, although she applied for 'good' universities based on a league table, what she did not realise at the time was that because of her limited CV, she did not have the capital to get into those that were deemed to be 'elite'. This was also true for Palki, who did not fully understand (because she did not have knowledge or access to knowledge of) the some of the language connected to higher education meant. She says:

I didn't even know what a Russell Group university is, so that was, I just, terminology that was never used where I was from. Um I did have aspirations when I was younger to go to like Red Brick university, but then I kind of changed my mind because I wanted to be closer to home, and also, like I didn't, I got I think one A in A-Levels so I would never have got in- I never even applied for those universities. I didn't know how to play the game then.

The game Palki talks of is what Severiens and Wolff (2008) suggest is access to and participation in the holistic experience of education, such as participation in extra-curricular activities (such as The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme).

As Jaanki notes:

My mum and dad, they didn't have much knowledge about Russell Group universities, and nor did I or about these so called post 1992 universities, and uh, I don't think it was their fault though because they weren't educated about it. And the school's sixth form, the careers advisors, should have told them about it...

She stresses that the gate keepers, such as the school and the careers advisors, limited access for her, initially. She then continues by saying

because they [her parents] said if they knew they would have tried to push us [her siblings and her] even more and helped us with our choices so we did go to a Russell Group university, and that would have... but they didn't know, they didn't have a clue.

Jaanki is now approaching this scenario from a position of knowledge. Having both an undergraduate and postgraduate degree means that she has insider capital within the educational establishment, and so has made 'informed' choices with regards to her doctoral level studying.

c. Minority Ethnic Teachers

The need for minority ethnic teachers has been a subject for discussion in the literature for over twenty years. Ghuman (1994) argues that this need is about cultural understanding, and also to inspire minority ethnic children through having role models with whom they could empathise. Both Singh Raud (1997b) and Jessop and Williams (2009) stress the importance of having teachers and lecturers from diverse backgrounds. Jessop and Williams state that shared cultural backgrounds between students and educators enable discussion within “a safe space, without the fear of ridicule” (p101), and could help with any hurdles, such as prejudice or segregation. Stevenson (2012) notes a disparity in degree attainment between white students and those from a BME background, despite entry with similar tariffs. This disparity is also reflected within retention rates. Mountford-Zimdars et al (2015) posit that differentials in degree-level student attainment are closely related to a ‘sense of belonging’. This sense of belonging on one level equates to visibility of people around who look like you and who have some shared understanding and knowledge. This is especially pertinent with regards to the complexities of izzat and the codes by which it is operated. Housee (2008) suggests that connection between students and teachers with regards to lived experiences can help to create a protected space in which the students’ experiences are vindicated, giving confidence to their voice.

Jeevan highlighted this, arguing that the teaching profession should be a reflection of society, namely the multicultural aspect. She explains that a lack of minority ethnic teachers impacted on her in a number of ways, such as being bullied:

In some schools like my secondary school there were mostly whites, and the white kids felt that they could do what they liked to Asian types. If there were some other [non-white] teachers in that school then we would not always be seen as an easy target, because someone could defend us.

For Jeevan, the correlation between being bullied and a lack of those with positions of power who looked like her is very marked. What is particularly worrying in this is that she does not feel that white teachers have the same commitment to the safety of ‘Asians’ as other ‘kids’.

The lack of a diverse educational establishments’ workforce has been the subject of numerous governmental discussions (Rampton, 1981; Swann, 1985; Commission for Racial Equality, 1986). In 1998, The Department for Education and Employment, as it was known then, announced that the teaching profession across all sectors should mirror the society it serves, and thus should be a workforce that both recruits and brings diverse strengths and qualities. Thus numerous initiatives by different governments to both raise attainment and also to improve access to higher education for students from BME backgrounds ensued (Sullivan and Noyes. 2013). Additionally,

Wilkins and Lall (2011) cite a number of reports commissioned by the government to reverse the “under-representation of ethnic minorities in the UK teaching profession” (p366). In addition to poor recruitment onto postgraduate education degrees, equally worrying are poor retention figures (Hamilton and Riordan, 2016). Furthermore, many who do apply, tend to do so as late applicants, or do not hold high classifications on their first degrees (Rampton, 1981; CRE 1986; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). As a direct result, the Teacher Training Agency set targets for all teaching providers to increase the number of trainee teachers recruited from BME backgrounds (Carrington et al, 2000). However, numbers of BIP heritage teachers remain low. Data from Gov.UK (2017) shows that the majority of the teaching professionals in schools in England are white British. This lack of diversity continues within senior positions in schools and, equally alarming, in university teaching staff. Senior management teams that run HEIs have only 2% of principals and vice chancellors in the UK that are of non-white origin (HEFCE, 2016). Correspondingly data from 2014-15 shows figures for diverse heritage lecturers are highest at 9%. The numbers then start to go down: 8% at professor level and 2% amongst vice- chancellors and principals (HEFCE, 2016). Thus independently these figures cause concern but within an intersectional framework are actually alarming especially if applying a filter of those academics from non-international backgrounds.

The limited literature on ethnic minority teachers (Bird 1996; Gay, 2002; Jessop & Williams, 2009) suggests that pupils want their teachers and peers to have greater diversity knowledge, confidence and cultural awareness. Unintentional and subtle forms of racism were experienced through the curriculum, either through invisibility of minority cultures, or through awkwardness and/or inappropriateness in drawing on the experiences of BIP pupils themselves. They (the pupils) felt discomfort when staff and peers ‘tip-toed’ around ‘race’, and this deepened their feelings of difference and isolation. A diverse workforce would help reduce these differences and allow for a greater sense of belonging. In this research, Zahra argues that there is a need for minority ethnic teachers because they are able to “**better understand ethnic problems and English [white] teachers don’t really understand the sort of ethnic problems that you may have at home**”. The ethnic problems she is referring to are those structured around izzat. She expands “**anyway they can’t really communicate with your parents if they [the parents] aren’t educated.**” This comment suggests the need for multi-lingual capacity within the teaching staff. However Zahra’s viewpoint was not the only one, there was an interesting mixture of thoughts on this. Ganga, for example said: “**I think there’s a need for every type of teacher, because there is every type of student.**” Also Samira’s viewpoint: “**sometimes I feel that I am not understood and ethnic minority teachers would help.**” The **understood** and **ethnic**

minority elements of her comment suggest a direct correlation between the izzat and insider knowledge of it. Moreover, the suggestion is that an ethnic minority teacher would know, without having to be told, what boundaries, restrictions, and expectations she is living within, without essentialising her. For Radwa, the fact that the headteacher was known within her family and the community was a positive. She says

We had an Asian head teacher in my infants' school; she was wonderful, Mrs Xxx. She was a very motherly, community type of a woman. I mean, she knew my granddad.

For Prem however, it did not seem to matter that she did not have any ethnic minority teachers:

They (all her teachers) were all white. Um, I don't remember there being any ethnic minority teachers, I don't think it mattered really.

Prem presents as a confident person who may not have needed that extra support of having a teacher of similar heritage to herself. For Rodela, having teachers from her own heritage was actually disadvantageous

She [a white teacher] was amazing. She, she made me feel so, you know, erm, I don't, I don't know, she just, I think what it is, is, erm... when you're Asian and you have someone that's, you know, looking after you and they're English, it's almost like, oh my gosh, you're amazed by them, because I just always felt like, you know, if there was an Asian teacher or something, I don't know, it was just that Asian thing. I don't know what it was, I don't know if I was being judged or not. I'm just being honest here. Yeah, I, when there is an Asian teacher, I just felt like there's things that, there were things that were embarrassing, that you couldn't mention to them, because you, you almost think, oh, that's a culture thing, you know, grow up, sort of thing... I always felt more comfortable with my English teachers.

What Rodela says here is interesting on several levels. Firstly, she expresses a sense of wonder, perpetuating a firmly eurocentric discourse, one where a white teacher is esteemed for understanding and supporting a student who was not white. This almost reverence is very complex, because although Rodela does not have a sense of entitlement, the class teacher's behaviour is entirely appropriate, as that is her role. Secondly, Rodela suggests that a teacher from a similar heritage would prevent her from feeling comfortable, because she felt she might have been culturally 'weighed' on the 'izzat scales'. Ganga's comments are also interesting:

We had this science teacher that was Asian, and she was quite young. And the boys used to just like not listen to her and stuff like that. It was mainly Asian boys and they used to say stupid things to her and that. And if she was white they probably would not have.

Ganga regarded this incident as race related rather than gender based, or age related. However, when viewed intersectionally with an izzat lens, it is all three. Power

structure roles within izzat dictate that men are in charge. So her 'status' as teacher was irrelevant. Firstly, she was a woman of a similar heritage to them, and thus the rules of educational establishments did not apply. The fact that the teacher was very young meant that she was closer in age to the boys, which probably compounded this power imbalance. Ultimately, these narratives paint a very complex picture, within which are hints at some contradictions that are inherent in some of the narrators' experiences of being educated in a white-dominated culture.

The teaching profession in the UK is largely serviced by women, with there being almost three times as many women as men in the profession (Gov.UK, 2017). This is for a multitude of reasons, notwithstanding that it is poorly paid in comparison to other professions (Drudy, 2008). Therefore, it is not seen as attractive to men (Chevalier, Dolton & McIntosh, 2005) but, because of the holidays, women can combine their other commitments, such as children, with a career (Weiler, 1988). Women are often projected as nurturing and caring, and it is those qualities that have lifted teaching (especially primary school) from a 'professional' to a vocational status (Drudy, 2008). This 'demotion' has changed how the profession is perceived amongst some of the BIP population, and as previously identified, teaching as a profession was no longer seen as desirable by the families of a number of the women in this study, such as Karjol, who said

teachers aren't seen in the same light as doctors and lawyers. It's a money thing. If I had said to my family that I wanted to be a teacher, they'd have said why don't you be something else. Teaching just doesn't have the status thing.

Without doubt, there is a need to redefine the attractiveness of teaching as a profession, particularly in order to recruit, and more importantly retain, good teachers, including those from BIP heritages. The added complexity is that whilst there is an acknowledged need to recruit from a diverse base, there is equally a lack of desire on the part of some BIP heritages to enter the profession, as it does not add prestige to the family izzat.

d. Institutional Mindsets (Limitations and Ceilings)

Hart (2012) suggests that aspiration is a complex phenomenon that is formed through a series of interventions and negotiations that are not necessarily undertaken by young people themselves. She suggests that educational aspirations can only become reality with support from family, professionals inside educational establishments. I argue that in the case of BIP heritage women, consideration must also be paid to the baradari, and in particular the izzat gaze. The limited literature on BIP heritage women and educational achievement stresses the importance of positive attitudes, relationships

and expectations towards, with and of students by their teachers. Arguably, education should be about empowerment, but it is frequently about power status, particular with regards to relationships, classroom control and 'management'. Wrigley (1997) discusses the need for schools to have a culture that has achievement enshrined in it, a point that Macleod, Sharp, Bernardinelli et al (2015) echo, citing a key factor that enables success as "an ethos of attainment for all pupils, rather than stereotyping disadvantaged pupils as a group with less potential to succeed." (p10). This viewpoint correlates with what Mirza (2006) argues is the eurocentric lens used by educators, which in turn means that the children of particular migrants are thought to be lacking both intellectually but also culturally, as they come "from less civilized societies" and can only progress if they blend in or assimilate by losing "their cultural markers" (p147). For many BIP heritage children, particularly girls, these prejudgements can have a profound impact on their self-belief and, ultimately, their outcomes. For Randeep, alongside having to deal with feelings of not belonging, she came to see very quickly how the teachers had no idea who she was and what her needs were:

I never felt comfortable in that school, up until when I left, it was never... They [the teachers] didn't notice, they-they weren't bothered, they just never, all my school reports just say- and I've still got them actually- they all say if Randeep just paid a bit more attention and didn't just switch off then she'd do really well, she's an intelligent child blah blah blah, so yeah no they didn't, they didn't have a clue what we were, whether we were feeling uncomfortable or that maybe that wasn't the right environment for us. But at the time you don't know though do you?

Randeep was doubly let down by the education system. Firstly, no-one realised that she was dyslexic and secondly, she was made to feel invisible as an individual because of what Hallam and Parsons (2013) suggest is a mismatch between what teachers believe is the ability of the pupil against what the pupil actually believes. This 'ceiling' on both ability and ambition was experienced first-hand by a number of the women, such as Prem, who said that she was actively discouraged by teachers from wanting to be a solicitor because they believed she could not do it: "**They [teachers] were rubbish. They said I shouldn't do it [try to become a solicitor] because it was so competitive and I won't be able to do it**". Jaanki also voiced how there was a ceiling placed on young people after just one set of exam results

They try and discourage you from the higher professions, you know like Doctors, Lawyers, and Accountants because you didn't get the right grades first time round. But everyone can improve.

Belief in the efficacy of practice is a key component of positive mindsets. Equally, for a number of the Indian heritage women, 'practice makes perfect' is a mantra given to them by their parents; success is important because then the baradari can be

impressed. Unfortunately, when the very professionals who should be encouraging the development of this mindset are the ones placing the barriers and ceilings, outcomes will be impacted. The mismatch between institutional mindset and parental expectation (that allows for them to build izzat capital) means that Indian heritage women in particular are constantly navigating tricky waters. Hence, when examining the difference between actuality and aspiration, teacher attitude and expectation is crucial. Sadly, within the bigger picture the teachers themselves are operating within a system that is punitive towards those who 'fail' through inspection and evaluation processes, and if aspirations are too high then there is a real chance of that happening (certainly in the short term), and so the more 'realistic' approach is taken. This is where belief and izzat play a positive role: the parental drive to create status and further accumulation of izzat through the academic success of their child can compensate for the negativity held within the educational establishment.

Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Gerbino and Barbaranelli (2011) stress that "both personality traits and self-efficacy beliefs have proved to be important predictors of academic achievement" (p79), which is just as well for Sabira

They wouldn't encourage you to be a doctor or anything like that; they thought it was out of your reach...I got Fs the first time. I said to them that I was going to resit, get Cs and then get my A levels. They [the staff at her college] said 'you can't jump from an F to a C', but I said 'I can [emphasises firmly] do anything. None of them ever encouraged me to do it. Anyone else would have been discouraged.

Whilst Sabira had the self-belief that she could 'do anything' and so succeeded despite the scepticism of some professional in the education system. This is not the case for many, especially those who languish in the bottom sets because of a perceived lack of ability. This is something that is based on cultural misinformation, and a fundamentally flawed system that denies young people a chance to escape from limitations that have been placed on them. Not all children develop at the same rate yet there is no real allowance for that reflected within the curriculum. The disparity is created in a number of ways, such as summer born children in reception classes having to take tests when they are not cognitively able. Within a rigid system, once a child has been labelled, it is very difficult for them to shift out of that limitation.

Such institutional mindsets, which place not only limitations but also ceilings on aspirations and ability, need to be challenged. In order to achieve better outcomes there has to be equity of access to quality education. This access is not only about notional 'good' schools, but also about access to high expectations and an unlocking by stakeholders of understanding of the mechanisms (like parental consultation, and

attendance monitoring) of the systems that are in place. Nargis is interesting in this respect: as someone with some 'insider' knowledge of the secondary education system, she trusted her children's school to be in touch if there was a problem, and so felt no need to interfere. She stresses schools had no choice but to act in the best interest of the child even if it was to the detriment of the child:

What can schools do if the children behave badly? If any teacher phoned me I need to ask the children first, what did you do wrong? People just jump too quickly to blame.

What Nargis voices here is complete faith in the school system. There is no question about disparity in access or that the school might be wrong. For her, the fault can only lie within the child. Unfortunately, this attitude of trust is often misunderstood by the school as being one of disinterest.

One of the ways this marginalisation and disadvantage manifests is through a lack of educational capital or, to put it another way, educational knowledge, particularly amongst working class sectors, BIP heritage families. Prem talked extensively about how her parents were always too busy to take an active interest in her education:

My parents never really got involved in our education. So they never, never came to parents' evening- and I don't resent them for it, it's just the way it worked for us. So, they were unable to come to parents' evenings because of the shop, um, never really said 'how you getting on with your school work?', never really read our reports because they were busy, and I've never really been parented in that way, I kind of just used to get myself together. So I hear some people, especially people I work with, they say they sit down with their kids for an hour every day after work, or like, they make sure they pack their own bag so they have a rota. But we never had that, we just did it, like you know you had to get ready for school, you sort yourself out you get your stuff ready. Um, so parents were around, never really forced grades on us, never really forced us to do get A's or whatever. Um, but just encouraged to go to school obviously, get good marks.

Clearly from what Prem says, whilst her parents wanted her to succeed, they were too busy running their business. Seemingly, they did not understand the importance of going to parents' evenings, or reading and discussing reports. For Prem, that meant she had to 'sort herself out', which arguably limited, or delayed the accumulation of, her cultural capital as a pupil.

e. Setting and Streaming

The notion that intelligence and potential are both 'fixed' abilities persists in society, governments and also the teaching profession. Mirza (2006 citing Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) suggests that the 'new IQism' is based on a cultural deficit model, and one which is a kneejerk response to external pressures such as educational policy and league tables, which in turn causes the need to select and categorize students into bandings

based on supposed ability. However, as Hallam and Parsons (2013) indicate, this ability group apportioning is not a precise process. Schools routinely use both Cognitive Abilities Tests and Standard Assessment Tests to decide pupils' abilities, and thus to determine which academic trajectory to place them on. The rhetoric that is used to promote the usage of these tests involves enabling personalised learning for each learner, in order to maximize potential. However, research (Douglas, 1964; Barker Lunn, 1970; Hallam & Parsons, 2013) suggests the reality is somewhat different. Young people are screened and then assigned a particular grouping, with, often, very little movement after that. This is particularly detrimental to children who come into the educational system without English or capital or the learning readiness needed to do well; thus they can start at a disadvantage.

In order to fully comprehend this situation, an explanation of the difference between streaming and setting is useful. Streaming happens when children are sorted into groups by general ability across core subjects (Maths, English, and Science), whereas setting happens when pupils are organised into different groups, dependent on ability, *within* those core subjects individually. Hallam & Parsons (2013) found that in comparison to white pupils, more Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils (16.0% to 24.2%) attend schools that stream. *Setting* is very prevalent in primary schools. Children as young as six are placed in sets for certain subjects such as Maths, English and Science, as part of the politically-driven effort to 'raise standards'. These sets are created at the beginning of the academic year, and children will often stay in them until the next set of tests. What practices of streaming and setting can so easily do is not only, through labelling, to form beliefs about performance, and thus damage or limit self-efficacy, but also create 'ceilings' for academic success. The impact of such practice on outcomes for the women in this study is disproportionate for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is the issue of placement within the streams, and perceived ability across all three subjects. In order to be in the top stream, a young person often needs to be academically able in all three subjects; ability in one of these subjects does not enable placement in the top streams. Whilst schools do this because they are bound up within accountability and league tables, as highlighted previously, children from the poorest backgrounds tend to start school with the least developed skills, and this in turn means they get placed in the bottom sets. Since it is more likely that Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage girls will be in the lower sets, it is to their detriment. As Radwa explains:

I was in the bottom set for all my groups. I feel it's racism in that system. Cos most of the girls in the lower sets were Asians, so they couldn't do well you know, only a few were at the top set.

Radwa claims it is racism, because the school made decisions based on stereotypes and moreover, had placed a ceiling on these women. Furthermore, the women know that they are positioned within a particular frame, which is passive victim, but still conform to these expectations, because it is the easiest path within an already difficult journey. This illustrates not necessarily a lack of voice, but a voice that is muted, and mistaken for a lack of intelligence. This is particularly disadvantageous to young, working class BIP heritage girls, because, as Hallam and Parsons (2013) postulate, higher ability groups get more experienced and sometimes more highly qualified teachers who may also hold higher aspirations for the students (Archer, 2010). Of further note, being in the lower sets often means a limited availability of resources, specialist teaching, limited subjects and getting grades that cannot exceed a particular point. As Radwa highlights:

In school particularly, secondary, and they put you down for GCSEs if they put you in the bottom set, basically you will never ever achieve a high grade pass. The highest you can get is a C. Only found out that now. And I was in the bottom set for all my groups.

Studying at a level where grade outcomes are capped means that there are less options with regards to further and higher education. Thus schools and teachers reinforce not only the values of privilege, but also perpetuate a cycle “based on stereotypes and past experience” of “low expectations for low ability students”. This in turn means that “students [have] lower expectations for themselves, confirming and further reducing expectations” (Hallam & Parsons 2013, p517).

Radwa, retrospectively, feels let down by a system that was meant to empower her:

That was in my secondary school, but I mean I'm sure things have changed a lot since then you know, I'm sure. If I had known back then I would have said no, put me in a top, better set. Do a test on me and check me, what is my potential. And don't put me, throw me back at the bottom set just because you think well you know she's not thingy...trying...

She felt that a ceiling had been placed on her ability based on some static results within a limited framework, and not on her potential. Most importantly, lack of knowledge of the system not only rendered her voiceless, it had also stripped her of the power to act until it was too late.

It will be useful to gauge whether the 2015 changes in UK secondary school assessment processes (Pells, 2017) might help or hinder those already functioning at the margin. Schools no longer have to use summative assessments to track pupil progress, but can instead use formative knowledge to do so. Whilst, arguably, formative assessments are more supportive for those who do not do well in summative assessments, the issue of prescribed narratives is not likely to be resolved, as the

result is based on a judgement made by the teacher. Moreover, the new system has moved from a two-tiered approach to a linear one that is no longer modular, with reduced or no coursework and, in most cases, a single exam at the end of two years. The government's plan is to move all subjects across to this system by 2020 (Pells, 2017). A body of research (e.g. Younger & Warrington, 1996; Woodfield, Earl-Novell & Solomon, 2005) indicates that more girls, than boys, do better at coursework than exams, therefore, it will be interesting to see whether this change impacts on this group of women.

f. Transference of Knowledge

Historically, selective schools have always been significant in the delineation of social class (Abbas, 2007). Hence, generally, parents who are middle-class know that if a child does academically well in a selective or private school, they can use this outcome as a route into an 'elite' university, and also profession. As Bhopal (2011) argues, social capital can be transferred through "networks of relationships" which can in turn "facilitate access to other resources of value" (p439). Middle class BIP parents are also privy to this knowledge, which means that they are able to utilise it for the betterment of their children. Noor is an example of a parent who has moved through social classes and is able to use her social and economic capital to her children's advantage by using 'insider' knowledge to extend the parameters for own children:

She [her daughter] went to ** [state primary school] and she was in the top set, she was getting the top grades, but they weren't challenging her enough. so I'd go into school and I'd say look, she's doing really really well but she needs to be challenged, she's in a- in a class of 30 pupils and you know, I want to push her more, she she can do this. So they weren't pushing her, that's when I started to look at private schools, and that's when she went to a private school and I never looked back, and I always always say that if I, if if you can invest in anything, invest in your children. Going to **** [private primary school] and giving them that start was probably one of the best starts I could have given my children because it really built a solid foundation for them.**

Noor has the financial capacity to 'invest' in her children, and this allows for better educational outcomes than she had, mainly because her parents did not believe in education for girls beyond compulsory education. Noor, despite being a successful businesswoman, feels she is lacking because of what she perceives to be her limited education. Abbas (2007) postulates that successful educational journeys are about being able to 'speak the language' of the system within which one is operating, and which is also the language of the "dominant culture" (p87). The ability to access the system fully is based on the accumulation of knowledge that grants insider status. As a first generation woman, Noor did not have 'the language', and with a lack of parental support for education beyond what was deemed mandatory, and growing up in poverty, it was not possible for her to gain that. However, with maturity, wealth, and insider

knowledge gained through longevity of residence in the UK, Noor has gained some language of the dominant culture. She has realised that there are steps she can take that will enable her to improve outcomes for her children. Abbas (2007) argues that this ability is not one that all young people can acquire successfully, but those that do grow more “understood” by the gatekeepers, and this in turn allows for advantage. The ramifications of this are numerous, but most interestingly, he suggests that “children who have been socialised into dominant cultural values appear to the teacher to be ‘more gifted’” (p87).

This clearly is the case for Noor’s children. Whilst she herself struggled to ‘speak the language’ of belonging as a child in the educational system: - **“It was, it was very... it was very difficult in finding... almost, first of all where do I belong? Um, and secondly, um, just, just mixing [with people of a different background to herself]. There wasn’t a lot of Asians at that time, um... I did struggle with school”** - she believes that her children have no such restraints and she goes onto talk about how they can operate in different settings with ease. Her children’s educational journeys did not happen by chance; she planned in great detail what possible trajectories might look like:

She [my daughter] was very clever anyway, um but my son was a very average child but he had the potential, so she finished *** [private primary school] and she went to ***** , sat the exams, got in, did really well. Um, my son, went to ***** [private primary school] and they said that he was a very average child. He didn’t go to ***** [selective secondary school] because he wanted to go to a state school. And I moved, we moved to ***** [different area], and moved into the ***** [non-selective ‘outstanding’ secondary school] catchment area because I thought if he doesn’t get into ***** [selective secondary school], then we’ve got a backup.**

This meticulous planning (including moving house) in order to improve the chances of getting into a particular school is a known white middle class tactic (Ball, 2003). As Abbas (2007) points out, the separation of social classes has always been evident through the use of, or access to selective schools. However, this is certainly not something that every parent could or would chose to do, especially if it took them away from areas within which they felt comfortable and a sense of belonging to. Equally of note is the fact that not every parent has the disposable income that Noor has, or indeed could afford to prioritise in such a way.

It cannot be denied that academic performance data does indicate that pupils do better in grammar schools than in other secondary schools (Atkinson, Gregg & McConnell, 2006; Coe et al, 2008; Bolton, 2016). However this is partly because Grammar schools select pupils based on ability. The data for academies is rather less clear cut as not enough data is available (Full fact 2016). It must be noted that the children in grammar schools are not necessarily brighter but may similarly have had better access to

networks and resources such as tutoring. This is where class difference is really apparent, because knowledge of the school system is not enough to get into a grammar school. A lack of cultural or social capital, or to put it another way, not having the correct 'tools', can prevent even the brightest of underprivileged children from getting in, as Randeep said:

My brother is a bit of a boffin really, but he didn't get into grammar school. My dad put him in for the 11+ but nobody told my dad about the funny tests you had to do.

The 'funny tests' she's referring to are the abstract and reasoning tests which are an indication of cognitive ability and that are a vital part of the entrance exam. No child is born knowing how to take these tests but middle class parents are able to provide resources such as books or tutors. The way social class impacts here is twofold. Firstly, in a family that is experiencing unemployment or poverty, the ability to be able to buy resources is limited. Secondly, the knowledge of the need to provide these resources is missing. This then also, indirectly, impacts on how that family views its own social position particularly with regards to izzat and the community gaze.

Randeep goes onto say:

it destroyed [my brother's] confidence [not getting in] but it didn't last long. He got the best degree in his university and got a prize and my dad was actually happy. [My brother's] daughters go to grammar school but they had tutors.

Randeep's father's honour, or izzat, was restored once her brother managed to get a prize at the university he attended. Moreover, her brother was able to utilise his knowledge to ensure that his girls did not face the same obstacles that he did. Randeep's brother was not the only one to utilise private tutors. Tarsem's parents also paid for both Tarsem and her siblings to have the same throughout their primary and secondary schooling, something Demos (2015) suggests is quite prevalent within Indian heritage families, as they are twice as likely as white parents to pay for extra tuition for their children. With the aid of external mechanisms, many Indian heritage parents are successfully negotiating the barriers that exist around privileged education, which in turn is enabling them not only to build more izzat, but allowing their offspring a chance at what they, and the baradari, would perhaps think of as an 'upwardly-mobile trajectory. As Bolton (2016) highlights, grammar schools have more Indian heritage children than those of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage. This has a direct correlation with the way the izzat lens is applied to education by those of Indian heritage. Moreover, it relates to class, because whilst working class parents may wish to employ these strategies, there is a cost implication. This is an example of how (predominately Indian heritage) first generation family members, who have higher qualifications are empowering second and subsequent generations through either selective schooling or through 'enrichment' activities'. These are tactics that white middle classes had already

been employing but a stark difference is that whilst often white middle class attitudes are about enhancing critical engagement with the world (Dale, Shaheen, Kalra and Fieldhouse, 2002), for BIP communities, the izzat lens has education in a taxonomy topped with generating status.

Whilst the Indian heritage women experienced a lot of overt support in the guise of extracurricular classes and tutors, and equally covert expectations as in ensuring the building of izzat through getting into prestigious schools and universities, for many of the second generation Bangladeshi heritage women there was also employment of knowledge that parents had gained through their own educational journeys. Taani's narrative shows the level of faith she has in her parents' perceived knowledge of herself and her abilities. She stresses being actively encouraged to do well:

My parents have really helped me, they would say 'if you can do this then you could do even better'. They just encourage me to better cos they know I can do better.

Roseen was able to use the social capital she gained through her own experiences to change the outcomes for her children:

There was occasions where I did bunk off school and I just presented the letter and the teacher never questioned it [even though it was written by her in her hand but pretending to be from her mother], and I think that was horrible, you know? If the school was strict and like, you know, 'how dare you do something like that?' maybe my personal attitude towards education would've been much stronger at an early age... And because of those experiences, I'm much stronger and tougher with my children [smiling], that they don't get, they can't get away [chuckles] with things... I think if the system had been stronger at that time, those children or the pupils who haven't gone on further education or did all these things, it's because of that system wasn't strict enough to identify those needs, and these are my, I think, you know, my own issues that I've seen throughout my life, because the system wasn't strong... The system collapses sometimes, and because they see you're from this area or, I don't know, but I, I've seen these areas, I live here.

Roseen not only applies her own knowledge of the system to ensure that her children have better outcomes, she also questions the system that allowed young people like her to fail. She lays the blame at the feet of the establishment, suggesting they have preconceived ideas about who should succeed and who should fail based on which area, or background you come from, basically a eurocentric lens. Roseen is able to understand and confront this because of her knowledge of the educational system but more importantly gaining a degree in later life has given her greater agency and voice. Whilst Roseen was able to change the outcome for her own children, sadly this is not necessarily the case for all children and especially for those who come from those "areas" (Roseen) that are below the radar. Areas that house children who miss out on

opportunities because of: a lack of external support; or funding in terms of extra curricula activities; or because of a lack of knowledge by the parents. Children that have been written off because of a prescribed narrative.

A number of the Pakistani heritage women also utilised their experiences of education to enable their children to do better. Radwa talks about the fact that she does not want her children to have the same sort of regrets that she has. She is working class, not working, married to her cousin who came over from Pakistan as an unskilled manual worker, which means that they have limited disposable income. Nonetheless she has keen aspirations for her children:

I want them [her children] to, basically, make the most of the educational system, to achieve the best they can and, even if they decide they don't want to work... they don't want to do anything, but they're educated. They have every - all the tools in their handbag, you know, that, if later on they decide that, 'You know what? I want to do this now [keenly],' it's not a hurdle. It's not a hindrance; they can just go and do it. They can achieve whatever they want. You know, that's what I want for my children. I don't want them to, sort of, sit with regrets and think, 'God, I have to do this all over again and...' you know, like their mother has. I want them to just go off and just... do things the way they want to do it. I mean, if they decide they, you know, after studying and going to university that they decide, 'Well, you know what, I want to take a year out now and just go travelling around the world,... but at least you've got the tools in your handbag, that even if you went travelling around, you could find a job out there [strongly], in any country, because you're qualified enough for someone to employ you.

Radwa is not alone in wanting to utilise her knowledge and the frustration at the limits placed on herself to improve the outcomes for her children. She is a passionate advocate for education and, even if the children do not want to use that education initially, it is something that they will always have to fall back on, they will always “**have the tools in their handbag**”.

Whilst social capital was denied in some aspects to some of the women, it was also granted through non-establishment informants, such as siblings, and extended family who, as Khambhaita (2014) states will often mentor the young people about the process of HE. This process was evident for some of the BIP women in this study:

Inaya: [before she chose a university] **my-my cousin said to me I don't know what's happened to you Inaya [because of the choices she wanted to make]. I still get that pressure from people [family members] saying a degree's a-um like you'll get a degree but when you apply for jobs, when they look at when they look oh you've got a degree from ****, they really like, they're cautious they can't... It's not, it doesn't stand out as much as **** university because **** one of the top hun- 100 universities in the world.**

For Inaya having a more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978) meant that she had advice that allowed her to think ahead of her degree to when she needed to apply for

jobs. This scaffolding, or transference of knowledge makes the difference to being able to operate with some capital.

g. Summary

I have demonstrated how the prescribed narrative given to the women is a eurocentric lens. It is through this lens that BIP heritage women are often portrayed, and positioned by many educationalists. Equally I postulate this lens frames BIP parents in a way that is far too simplistic and negates what Brooker (2002) suggests is the primary child rearing rationale for all parents, that is to wish good outcomes for their child. This naturally is formed within the caveat of belief systems that have been shaped by the parents' own cultural norms. Therefore, I argue seeing their experience through an izzat lens offers a more accurate alternative to the eurocentric lens. I have shown the dichotomy of expectation with regards to the ethnicity of teachers whereby some women acknowledged a need for them but equally, voiced an unwillingness to consider it a viable career as it lacked status. An intersectional approach highlighted the disparity between and amongst heritages and classes with regards to how knowledgeable parents were of the educational system, and whether they were able to utilize that knowledge for the benefit of their child. I presented the ways in which educational establishments reinforce these differences and barriers. Finally I showed how some families are able to use the knowledge gained by extended family and community in a positive way. The last chapter summarising the key points of the thesis and draws conclusions.

8 Chapter Eight: Conclusion

It is important to state that I am grateful to the women whose voices feature within this thesis and equally acknowledge that I simply did not have the wordage to be able to do every voice the justice that it deserved. Moreover, some voices may appear to be 'louder' through longer excerpts. This was simply because I felt unable to condense these segments as there was significance laced throughout.

This thesis contains stories or, personal narratives of women from three different heritage groups, as I stated at the start I am part of the data analysed. Writing this thesis has helped me to reflect upon my journey, both as a participant and as an educational professional, and to consider factors which enable academic success. This group of women are frequently positioned according to heritage and religion, particularly those who are visibly Muslims. Alternatively, represented as docile innocents hidden from participating in society (as referenced throughout this thesis). Whilst the dialogue is about them, it does not allow for their voices to be heard. Instead they are given a collective identity at micro and macro levels, and represented in an ethnicised and marginalised way. Often these representations are gendered in a socially, culturally and religiously constructed way. Whilst white dominant discourse filters these women through a eurocentric lens which ethnicises them, equally the izzat lens restricts and defines how life, including educational journeys, should be undertaken. As my research has shown izzat plays itself out differently across the BIP groupings.

At the start of the research journey I posited the following three questions:

- 1) What do these particular women remember as defining moments in their educational journeys?
- 2) In which ways does izzat intersect with other structural factors and identity categories to impact BIP heritage women's educational journeys?
- 3) What, if anything, can educational institutions learn from these voices about how to improve outcomes for all BIP heritage women?

The intention is to address these questions during the course of this conclusion.

Therefore, this final chapter is organised into four main subsections. The first section unpicks the first question by providing a summary of the thesis through revisiting key messages voiced by the narrators. Within this there is also a consideration of how izzat informed and defined their journeys. Particular regard is paid to what izzat means to the narrators and to the multiple spaces they occupy.

The second part addresses question two whilst giving consideration to the theoretical implications of this research. In the third section a discussion ensues on the implications for policy and practice as a result of my findings and therefore, addressing question three. Finally subsection 4 emphasizes implications for future research.

a. Summary of Research and Major Findings: Research Question 1
(What do these particular women remember as defining moments in
their educational journeys?)

As evidenced throughout this thesis, I have signposted how sometimes singularly, and sometimes together, the four pillars of agency, access, attitude, and knowledge, the izzat lens, and the eurocentric lens impact on educational outcomes for this group of women. Whilst the marginal position of all the women I interviewed was clear, they were certainly not voiceless. My data shows that when broken down, far from being a homogeneous whole, differences can be noted in and across each heritage both in terms of how they see themselves and also in their experiences. This difference is also evident in how the izzat lens is applied. 'Trust' and being 'good' were voiced by a number of the women in relation to how they should behave, or more importantly should be 'seen' to behave. The izzat lens was used in a multi-level way to police movements of women, by the women themselves, their families, and the baradari. This surveillance, particularly if judged as lacking virtue by the baradari would reflect on the parents and whole family, as Randeep stressed about the 'auntieji's reporting on perceived 'deviant' behaviour. As Jeevan notes, the baradari are everywhere including at university. For some of the women, such as Prem, this policing meant that whilst she was allowed to go out, she self-regulated her behaviour by not "taking the mick". This is about conforming to, and being complicit with the boundaries imposed by the izzat lens.

Another way conformity to the izzat boundaries were ensured was through the language of othering, and expecting identity to be static. Some women, such as Aadhya, homogenised all white people into being a particular thing, such as drug taking, drinking, and pork meat eaters. This meant there was a ubiquitous 'them and us', and made conforming to the norms of izzat easier to accept. For some women, such as Firoja, this othering was from both 'sides'. She voiced how she confuses both white and non-white people as she does not conform to expected, prescribed narratives for someone of Bangladeshi heritage. Another powerful way of doing this was through the use of terms such as 'coconut' to describe women who had become too autonomous and so were behaving as if they were 'white'.

Defining moments for the women in their educational journeys are presented within the thesis in relation to their own taxonomies of self therefore, how they present themselves within their stories; their interactions with their family, how the family influence the journey; and how they were framed within their educational establishments. Religion played a significant part in identity but for some women, particularly those who wore headscarves and so were visibly different, this could at times make the journey difficult. For Sadia wearing a headscarf rendered her invisible,

and alongside isolation, she also felt vulnerable because she became an easily identifiable racist target. Sadly Sadia's experiences are not unique. Many of the women who wore headscarves found it equally segregating. However, in one case segregation was self-imposed, whereby Roseen knew her headscarf made her stand out. Equally her story shows how an empathetic pastoral tutor can make all the difference; her tutor was able to consolidate her developing self-esteem.

This research found that gender disparities existed but this was also relational to izzat. Ultimately males cannot get pregnant and females can, which would bring shame onto the family and compromise their izzat and standing in the community. Whilst there was an acknowledgement by many of the women of the discrepancy in how females were treated in comparison to males, this difference was not enforced in a universal way. Equally, class plays a significant part in how gendered roles are seen and executed. For example, Palki talks about how boys are mollycoddled from birth so that they then continue to adopt a superior positioning in their relationships with women. Prem stresses that gender disparity covers household tasks such as cleaning but did not extend to education. What is evident from the BIP heritage women within this research is that those who understood the transformative power of education, particularly with regards to social mobility, or those who had been through the education system within this country utilised that knowledge, within their available resources to the advantage of their children. Middle class parents acknowledged that the different types of schools make a difference to educational and long term outcomes.

Respect for elders also surfaced a number of times, for example Rodela expresses horror at how poorly older co-workers were treated through the language used to address them. Many of the women were keen to emphasize the interconnectivity within their extended family. This was presented through parental sacrifice with a number of the women voicing compliance to what was expected of them because their parents had sacrificed so much for them to succeed. Another key point made was that parents only really wanted the best possible outcomes for their children, Jaanki voiced that 'Asian' parents will always find money to support education, such as through buying equipment. Tarsem contrasts this conformity with the idea that happiness is dependent on all being happy; so if her parents are happy, then she is. However, not all the women felt that their parents supported their educational endeavours. Aadhya found that her educational journey was curtailed because of the baradari and her mother conforming to the expected norms of izzat.

Trailblazing for siblings and others within the baradari regarding education was apparent in the narratives of a number of the women from all three heritages. Raheena navigated hurdles within her own educational journey to improve not only her own, but her sister's life chances. She acknowledges that education was a way out of poverty for

them. Another strategy employed by middle class parents such as Noor was to move to the location of a good school, and to utilise resources such as extra curricula tutors to gain access to selective schools. This was an example of using insider knowledge of the educational system, gained through their own journey, to provide better outcomes for their own children. This development of agency was also seen in other ways whereby siblings and extended family, and sometimes other members of the community, helped each other to access and gain knowledge of systems. Whilst there is limited literature on this support network, clearly for BIP heritage parents such as Noor, who have the financial resources to support the transition for their children into such schools, it was utilised for positive outcomes.

Many of the women voiced that going to university was just seen to be a natural progression within their educational journeys. As Jaanki says, an undergraduate degree is the natural expected minimum for many BIP heritage people. However, my research suggests that is only really true for those whose parents hold high aspirations, and/or those who have knowledge of the system. For the Pakistani heritage and Bangladeshi heritage women there was a preference by fathers for them to attend single sex schools and universities within their locality. Both of these again related back to the izzat lens. Single sex schools ensured that the women were kept away from temptation, and going to local university meant staying under the surveillance of the baradari.

A major finding of my research was the usage of izzat as an element of a dowry, which was used to find an 'equal' partner. Equal being someone who has similar level qualifications but an undergraduate degree as a minimum. Thus, I suggest education is an integral part of the dowry. A requirement to have a degree was evidenced to be both a positive and a negative such as Randeep's narrative about her nephew not being able to marry the girl he liked because he did not have a degree and so was deemed to be unsuitable. All three groups regarded it as useful marriage currency but there was also an underlying worry for some that women could get 'too' educated. This would then impact negatively on their marriage prospects because no man would want to marry them as evidenced through Hafsa's gendered expectation; husbands should not only be in higher status employment but should also earn more. A more qualified woman effectively would have priced herself out of the marriage market and when viewed through the izzat lens, she would consequently be a threat to the structures that exist to coerce conformity. Equally, for some of the Pakistani, and Bangladeshi heritage women, education was seen as a security net if the worst should happen, such as divorce or widowhood and they needed to earn a living.

For a number of the women, education was not just about marriage prospects but also about the type of professions they could pursue that were seen to be acceptable through the izzat lens. This was linked to subjects that were suitable in order to build status, family prestige, standing within the community, and future employment. Essentially, subjects which generated greater disposable income. Whilst Jaanki highlighted how the izzat lens impacts on the choice of “bum wiping” subjects such as childhood studies for Indian heritage women, for a number of the Bangladeshi women teaching was an acceptable profession. Another key finding was how educational establishments’ actual hindered access to education for some women, which in turn limited their ability to reach the potential they thought they had. Radwa narrates about being put into sets that put a ceiling on her, and some of the women evidenced lack of knowledge, or utilising of careers advice. Furthermore, some procedures were not thought through, such as colleges sending attendance data in a letter to parents’ home addresses without talking firstly to the students. For Rodela the letter sent to her home had life altering and emotionally devastating repercussions because the letter contained inaccurate information. This is a clear indicator for better and more nuanced understanding of the student demographic.

Many of the women evidenced education as a way of bettering their outcomes. It was seen as an acceptable route within izzat boundaries to ‘independence’. This was exercised through better job prospects and income that was theirs to utilise, as Rodela demonstrated when she voiced how she no longer had to dress the way her mother wanted because she had her own money to buy clothes. Equally, for Roseen, having to take on the role of breadwinner meant that she was able to develop a greater sense of agency. This also meant that she began to reflect on her own life and how she viewed her own positioning within that. For working class Pakistani heritage women the impact of izzat was perpetuating of the class divide by marrying cousins who themselves are working class but from rural locations within Pakistan.

b. Theoretical Implications: Research Question 2. (In which ways does izzat intersect with other structural factors and identity categories to impact BIP heritage women’s educational journeys?)

It was stated from the outset that this thesis was built on a theoretical framework but was not a theoretical thesis. Having said that, whilst no new theories are proposed, the research does make a number of original contributions. The intersectional framework that emerged out of the narratives, and incorporating the data highlights the importance of understanding at an individual level, rather than simply homogenising an ‘ethnic minority’ whole. This is in direct opposition to dominant discourse within this arena

which has focused on three parallel modes of thought. Firstly, locating underachievement within the child and positioning the child as deficit. Secondly, through homogeneous assumptions about BIP communities as crushing structures that deny all agency to the women within them. Finally, through undifferentiated constructions of BIP heritage women by educational institutions that set them on a particular trajectory, specifically one which tends to be based in victim mode. This thesis has demonstrated that BIP heritage women, like any other women, are able to create agency in the framework within which they operate. It is not enough to make links between underachievement and elements in isolation such as poverty or ethnicity. The subtle intersections, which includes the izzat lens, have to be understood to recognise the impact on achievement for BIP heritage women in particular. Izzat operates as a lens through which women and girls have to navigate, but it also offers those from the outside a means of understanding the challenges these groups face. Moreover, this has to be in tandem with an acknowledgement, and understanding of the eurocentric lens. I argue izzat should be seen as a critical component of the intersectional approach. Specifically, using izzat as a key lens through which other intersections are viewed has not been previously suggested or explored within the literature, and so is an original contribution to knowledge.

I establish that identities which are ascribed based on negative language, such as 'coconut' are problematic. They are based on the assumption that society does not or should not evolve or change. By claiming to be 'desi' there is an underlying assumption based on fear of losing identity or 'roots'. This issue of language is further problematic when it is used to 'other' communities. The descriptions used for how different communities fit within the UK vary from: host and guest; assimilate, and integrate; majority to minority communities; desi and coconut. This ascribing of identity based on perceived factors is not helpful as it serves to ground difference rather than similarity as a facet of Britishness. Furthermore, they in turn reflect not only the polarisation of society but also the homogenising of groups into a one size fits all strategy that is both reductionist and simplistic in outlook. Equally valid within this is the complexity of individuality, and those individuals which may seem to be functioning outside of, or between both parameters. These individuals tend to be excluded from both cultures. A very strong example of this is those who have chosen to 'marry out'.

Another original contribution of this research is centred on understanding how education is an integral part of izzat. Whilst class played a significant role in the educational outcomes for these women, it is evident from the data that the heritage the women hold is inextricably linked with outcomes in a very overt way. Using an intersectional approach I argued that British BIP heritage women are coerced and sometimes forced, both overtly and covertly to be complicit within a structure that

policies their every move, and permeates through every aspect of their educational journey through to the two trajectories of marriage and employment. Furthermore, this nebulous structure known as izzat is located as 'identity', more specifically within notions of belonging. So if you want to be an insider then you have to adhere by the rules of izzat; and therefore, those who chose to contest it are created outsiders who are no longer seen as BIP heritage. This othering on the grounds of heritage is not an isolated case, within education this becomes truly problematic. This narrative has gained particular credence with the rise in anti-Islamic, post 9/11 rhetoric that is very apparent in the media; Muslim women are seen to be forced into adopting the veil, and dismissed as not fully comprehending that they are in fact oppressed by men (Rashid, 2014).

This focussing on culture manifests in educational settings through assumptions made about ability and also access to particular sets, subjects and even schools. Thus BIP heritage women are frequently marginalised, oppressed and prescribed a narrative by educational settings, but also by the codes enforced by izzat with regards to subject choices and schools attended. Whilst the notion of cultural heritage in relation to educational identity is evident somewhat in the literature, the narratives of the women within this thesis enable a more heterogeneous understanding of: who they are, how they are, what they are, how they see themselves, how others see them, and the notion of what it is to be British or 'Asian' and the relationship of that to educational success. I advocate that a nuanced intersectional approach is particularly needed when developing an understanding of izzat. I believe this is not simply a tool for patriarchal oppression but actually a lens through which a clearer understanding of lived experiences can be developed, and therefore enable better pastoral support within schools. More importantly, the relevance of a negative cultural lens to the development of autonomous thought needs to be questioned. By this I mean it is too simplistic to dismiss izzat as something that prevents BIP heritage women from having autonomy. In many ways izzat had a positive impact for some of these women, in that they were enabled to access higher education through utilising the networks of family and baradari.

c. Implications for Policy and Practice: Research Question 3. (What, if anything, can educational institutions learn from these voices about how to improve outcomes for all BIP heritage women?)

I evidenced from my data that there are differences in the outcomes between Pakistani, Indian, and Bangladeshi heritage women within education. Whilst Indian heritage women are gaining success academically, this is within a narrow range of subjects, and for specific purposes. Bangladeshi heritage women appear to be making good progress,

but are having to operate in overtly racist environments. This navigating is also true for Pakistani heritage women who were visibly different through wearing headscarves, but unlike the Bangladeshi heritage women, working class Pakistani heritage women are not achieving academically as well as could be. It is clear from my research that aspiration is not enough to guarantee positive educational outcomes for BIP heritage women. It may work for a few individuals but for the majority, there has to be a systemic change. Moreover, it is imperative that students, and parents, are given the tools to enable successful navigation through the educational system. I acknowledge that the educational establishments themselves play a pivotal role within this because of the power they hold. By demonising some intersections between these groups such as being a Muslim, serves only to further divide rather than address the impact of core issues such as socio-economic circumstance, as well as the two lenses of izzat and eurocentricism. Change has to be in a number of ways, primarily in 'mindset', within the educational institutions.

Changing the way support is framed needs to start with early years and with those working with families in the most deprived areas. Consideration needs to be given to how to reach children who are not accessing free early years provision. As Radwa highlights, there are still mothers, particularly of Pakistani heritage, who do not access state provided childcare. This may be for a number of reasons, such as lack of knowledge or concerns about being judged as not having children who are ready for school, or even wanting to keep the children at home for longer. It is not enough to provide free nursery spaces when an effective outreach programme is lacking. Effective outreach means working from within communities as an integral part, with families in order to understand barriers, and to create opportunities for better uptake. Moreover, this has to be someone with an understanding of the izzat lens so that they can tread the fine line between acknowledging issues for the family and equally being able to push forward the educational agenda. Whilst I acknowledge that issues of access and barriers can be created by cuts in funding, there also needs to be a more effective way of targeting support. Simply opening a centre in the locality will not necessarily generate footfall through the door.

I demonstrated how this cycle of disadvantage continues with the way schools choose to teach, often assigning an intelligence label prematurely. This then results in mismatched classes that have setting and streaming within state schools but also at selective schooling. For those parents who have demystified the education system and are financially able, access to tools such as tutors and moving house are a necessity to allow best outcomes for their girls. However for those who are operating within the margins, this is not a possibility. This leads to what I suggest is necessary, which is for policy to change. Local schools irrespective of catchment area, should have

extracurricular resources that are not dependent on the ability to afford, but are seen as an equal opportunities tool that scaffolds support. This support incorporates all aspects of the four pillars from access to knowledge of barriers to success, to enhancing agency through attitudinal shift. This access support should include: tutoring, coaching, accessible career guidance, and demystifying the 'language' of further and higher education. This is critical, especially for those children living in areas of significant poverty and within the cycle of deprivation.

I argue for the importance of practitioners within education to use an izzat informed lens, whilst acknowledging the eurocentric lens that is often subconsciously applied to this group of women. An izzat lens should combine with an intersectional framework guiding discussions with BIP heritage women. This framework needs to be embedded in a pastoral system where practitioners can use their knowledge to shape the conversations that allow for voices to be heard and barriers to be minimised. This has to take the form of a nuanced approach allowing for differences in experiences and barriers to be at the foreground of discussions. Furthermore, this can then be used to map out how different dimensions of intersectional oppression can be not only minimised but more importantly understood by a predominately white workforce. This should be used to shape conversations, rather than as a tick box toolkit. Educational practitioners need to have training to adopt a more sensitive but equally nuanced conversation which supports without prescribing a narrative. This is imperative if young BIP heritage women are to feel their voices are truly heard. Moreover, there is a need for professionals to not only unpack the term izzat but also to understand what it means regarding how life is lived and the barriers that ensue as a result of it. Finally, educators cannot assume that parents and students know 'by osmosis' what role they need to play within the journey. A clear, scaffolded approach is needed, one that does not alienate or label and is embedded throughout a strong pastoral system within the educational system.

With a utopian lens I would like to think we do not see colour but the reality is that colour does matter and being white comes with some inherent privileges. I have shown that racism impacts both overtly and covertly on the journeys of the women within this thesis. For those women who were working class or visibly different through dress, the impact of racism was significantly more overt. I offered a stringent exploration of racism as a concept, the way it is expressed, and how it permeates value systems. Through this I highlighted how institutionalised racism and other forms of racism directly impacted the lives of these women. I demonstrated that because of the racism within the system, not everyone has an equal starting point and the gap for many increases. Through these narratives I have shown how the education profession reinforces certain stereotypes, and thus chronically fails BIP heritage women. I discussed the dichotomy

between a need for a diverse educational workforce and the lack of interest in teaching within some of the BIP heritages.

The government's agenda of more faith schools will only serve to create more divisions and communities that are segregated unless managed effectively. I argue that faith schools should have a quota of at least half the pupils being from religions different to the premised faith, in each class. This quota system would help to remove barriers erected from 'othering'. Inaya's experience of going to a white catholic girls' school (that had large numbers of BIP heritage girls) where she experienced friendship with white girls for the first time, made her realise that white people were just like her. The more barriers are broken down, the more likely it is that essentialising will be minimalised.

My research suggests that a few tokenistic attempts at decolonising the curriculum through mediums such as black history month are simply scratching the surface. As a young person, I was unable to identify with anyone in the books I read. There were no characters like me. It was not until I went to university that I discovered the wealth of literature and history I had been denied. Whilst I acknowledge there is more 'diversity' within books at schools, there is still a long way to go. Black history should not be just for a month; it should be an integral part of what is taught in an inclusive curriculum that celebrates and acknowledges the contributions people of colour have made to this nation; not as those who have been colonised but as those who are equally British. This can only truly happen if policy makers, and those who design and implement the curriculum understand and acknowledge the multifaceted way in which white privilege affects educational journeys. I advocate an overhaul of the different layers of the curriculum and paying regard to how there is an inherent strand of bias and advantage. Particular regard should be paid to teacher training and delivering content that develops an understanding of white privilege and how that impacts on the sense of belonging for students of colour.

d. Future Research

This research should not be considered within a vacuum. More work needs to be done to fully understand a number of key components raised and found in this research. For example, whilst I raise the idea of education as a vital element of dowry, this deserves a more comprehensive study that reviews the subtlety of this for different elements of the BIP communities, as well as looking at the differing intersections of disadvantage with more explicit mapping of class and religion. Moreover, I feel there is scope for a nuanced study that also looks at the relationship of caste within the process of

educational journeys. I specifically did not focus on this as I felt I did not have enough data to present on it.

I strongly suggest an analysis of the current curriculum and education system with regards to how eurocentric it is and equally how white privilege sits within it. I would suggest discussions with policy makers as well as those who both create and deliver the curriculum and other stakeholders. This has to be done in an inclusive way because alongside the viewpoints of those who are missing from the curriculum, there also needs to be a stronger understanding by those who control the content whether this is consciously or not.

A longitudinal study might be interesting to determine whether changes within examination systems make a difference for BIP women, and if there is any evidence of generational shift. Equally, research that considers whether the amendment in legislation that allows for bringing spouses over from other countries, makes a difference to the educational outcomes for working class Pakistani heritage women, should be undertaken.

Finally, since I advocate using an intersectional approach with izzat at the heart of it, it would be useful to source the views of the practitioners regarding the efficacy of such a tool. Change can only occur if all agents participate fully, only then can an environment be created where understanding is not simplistic or surface level, and one which allows for less homogenising to take place.

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10 **Appendices**

- a. Bios of the women
- b. Glossary
- c. UPR16
- d. My research journey
- e. Intersectional Inclusion Lens Tool
- f. Invitation letter
- g. Information sheet
- h. Consent form
- i. Ethical approval

a. Bios of the women

General information about the women

- **Academic qualification ranges**

The least qualified women had no formal academic or industry based qualifications at all, the highest qualification levels were PhDs.

- **Marital status**

These ranged from single to married. Cohabiting (without parental knowledge) to divorced. There were also two narrators who were widowed.

- **Professions of the women**

These ranged from Business owners, Charity Workers, Dentists, Events Managers, Housewives, Lecturers, Self Employed, Social Workers, Solicitors, Students (UG, M, and PhD levels), Teachers, and Welfare Workers.

- **Religions of the women**

The religions were not necessarily tied to the geographical region that the women, or their families, originated from. The Bangladeshi heritage women had Islam and Christianity. The Indian heritage women had religions which included Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Islam. The Pakistani heritage women had Islam.

- **The Bangladeshi Heritage Women**

Roseen is a 43 year old professional occupation woman. She is first generation British, arriving in Britain when she was 9 years old and attended just one year of school in Bangladesh because her parents chose not to send her. She had no English when she arrived. Neither of her parents had any formal education. Roseen's father came to Britain just after the Second World War to work in the dockyards. She is the second of five siblings, she has two brothers and two sisters. As an adult she went to university part time and gained a degree. She has four children, two boys and two girls. Her husband is much older than her (15 years) and leaves the parenting to her. Her father was also significantly older than her mother.

Rodela is 24 years old and a part-time undergrad university student as well as working within a nursery as a key worker. She is second generation British and neither of her

parents had any formal education and both were illiterate. Rodela's father came to Britain when he was 12 years old. Her mother came in order to marry. Rodela is the second of five siblings. She has an older brother, and three younger brothers. Her father died when she was 16 years old, shortly after her youngest brother was born. Her father was significantly older (15 or 16 years) than her mother and he had a lot of health problems.

Megh is a 37 year old professional occupation woman. She is second generation British and neither of her parents had any formal education. Megh did her degree part time through encouragement from her work setting. She is fifth of nine siblings, the youngest two being boys. She has 5 children. Her husband is much older than her and has mental health difficulties. Her father was much older than her mother.

Palki is a 29 year old professional occupation woman with both undergrad and Masters level degrees. She is first generation British arriving in Britain when she was x, and neither of her parents had any formal education. She is the fourth of five siblings the youngest of whom is a boy. Her father had mental health issues and left the family to return to Bangladesh when Palki's brother was a few weeks old. Her father is 17 years older than her mother.

Raheena is a 36 year old professional occupation woman who has an undergrad degree. She is first generation British, arriving in Britain when she was 12 years old with her mother. Raheena's grandfather worked on British ships and was given British citizenship when he retired. Her father had lived in Britain the majority of his adult life but didn't really speak English. Neither of her parents had any formal education. She was kept back a year in primary school. She is the third of six siblings the youngest two of whom are boys. Her father had mental health issues and didn't really engage with the children. He is 15 years older than her mother.

Firoja is a 34 year old professional occupation woman who has an undergrad degree. She is second generation British. Her father and mother both have some formal education. She is the first of three siblings, all girls. Her father is significantly older than her mother.

Sadia is a 22 year old university undergrad student. She is first generation British, arriving in Britain when she was four weeks old and her mother does not have any formal education. Her father arrived when he was 8. He went to school and college in the UK He now has his own business. She is the one of three siblings. She has a brother and a younger sister. Her father is 9 years older than her mother.

Aadhya is a 37 year old housewife. She has 3 children. She is first generation British, arriving in Britain when she was 4 and neither of her parents had any formal education. She is the third of seven siblings the second youngest of whom is a boy. Her father had mental health issues and didn't really engage with the children. He is older than her mother. Her mother did all the parenting.

Hridi is a 22 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British and her mother initially went through some of the school system to secondary level and then, later in life, to university. Her father has no formal qualifications although he went to school in Bangladesh. However, his dad was already in Britain. Hridi is the first of four siblings the youngest of whom is a boy. Her father is significantly older than her mother.

Taani is a 19 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British, and her mother went to college in in the UK after arriving at the age of 18. She is third of 5 siblings; two older sisters 23, and 21, a younger brother, and a younger sister. Her father went to college in Bangladesh and came over to marry her mum. Her father is much older than her mother.

- **The Indian Heritage Women**

Asha is a 58 year old professional occupation woman. She has three children, two daughters and a son. She is first generation British and arrived in Britain at the age of eight having already attended school in the Panjab and being able to write Panjabi. Both her parents went to school in India but neither have any formal qualifications. She is the first of five siblings the youngest of whom is a boy. Asha is a Sikh.

Sabar is a 45 year old professional occupation woman who is also a part-time undergrad student. She has one child. She is first generation British and arrived in Britain at the age of five. She attend preschool and 'reception' in India. Her parents came to Britain two years before Sabar and her siblings. Sabar had no spoken English when she arrived. Her father went to school in India and joined the navy at 18; her mother has no formal qualifications and worked as a Learning Support Assistant. She is the second of two siblings, and has an older sister. Sabar is a Christian.

Tej is a 51 year old professional occupation woman and part-time Master's degree student. She has two children. She is first generation British and arrived in Britain at the age of 3. Her father went to school in India; her mother has no formal qualifications. She is the second of three siblings the oldest of whom is a boy. She left home at 18 and was estranged from her parents and brother for 10 years. Tej is a Hindu.

Jaanki is a 31 year old PhD degree student. She is second generation British and both her mother and father went through the school system in Britain to secondary level but neither have any formal qualifications. She is the second of three siblings the oldest of whom is a boy. Jaanki is a Sikh.

Jeevan is a 20 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British, her father arrived in the UK at a young age and went through the secondary school system. Jeevan's mum was born in the UK but got married at a very young age and so didn't go to college or university. Her maternal grandfather arrived in Britain in his 30s. She is the second of three siblings, the eldest and youngest of whom is a boy. Jeevan is a Hindu.

Prem is a 28 year old professional occupation woman. Prem has both a undergrad and postgrad degree. She is second generation British and neither parent has any formal qualifications, although both did attend some secondary schooling in Britain. She is the last of four siblings. She has two brothers and one sister. Prem is Sikh.

Randeep is a 49 year old professional occupation woman. She is married and has one daughter. Randeep is educated up to GCSE level. She is second generation British and her father went to school in India but does not have any formal qualifications. Her

mother did not attend school. She is the fourth of six siblings the eldest two and youngest two of whom are boys. Randeep is a Sikh.

Karjol is a 33 year old self employed professional occupation woman. She is second generation British and neither parent has any formal qualifications, although father did attend secondary school in Britain. She is the first of three siblings, all of whom are girls. She is married and is Sikh.

Ganga is a 19 year old undergrad university student. She is second generation British and her mother went through the school system in Britain. Her father has no formal qualifications although he went to school in India. She is the second of three siblings the youngest of whom is a boy.

Tarsem is a 24 year old postgrad university student. She is second generation British and her father went through the school system in Britain. Her mother went to school in India. She is the second of four siblings. She has two sisters and one brother.

- **The Pakistani Heritage Women**

Radwa is a 34 year old housewife. She is third generation British and her father went through the school system here. Her paternal grandfather fought in the world war and then settled in Britain. Her mother has no formal qualifications but did minimum schooling in Pakistan. She is the fifth of seven siblings. She has three older brothers, an older sister and two younger sisters. Radwa has three children.

Samira is a 21 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British and neither parent has any formal qualifications although her father went to secondary school in Britain. She is the third of five siblings, two older sisters, and a younger sister and then youngest brother.

Amal is a 43 year old professional occupation woman and part time PhD student. She is second generation British. Her mother went through the secondary school system in

Pakistan. Her father has formal qualifications from a college in Pakistan. She is the first of five siblings the oldest and youngest of whom are boys. Amal has three children, two girls and a boy.

Sarah is a 46 year old professional occupation woman. She is first generation British arriving at the age of 8 and went into the last year of infants' school. She had no English when she arrived but went to school in a predominately Pakistani/Indian area. Her father lived in Britain but visited them in Pakistan during her childhood. Sarah remembers feeling very upset when she came to Britain because her two oldest brothers stayed in Pakistan to look after the family house. Neither of her parents has any formal qualifications. She is the youngest of five siblings, and she is the only girl. Sarah has 4 children, two boys and two girls.

Nargis is a 48 year self-employed woman. She is first generation British and attended three years of secondary school in Britain. She returned to Pakistan to get married to her cousin. Neither of Nargis's parents has any formal qualifications although her father went to secondary school in Pakistan. She is the ninth of nine siblings, two of whom are boys. Nargis has three daughters and is a widow.

Inaya is a 19 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British and her mother went through the school system here. Her father has no formal qualifications although he went to school in Pakistan. She is the second of four siblings the youngest of whom is a boy.

Noor is a 44 year old self employed professional occupation woman. She is second generation British and her father has no formal qualifications although he went to secondary school in Britain. Her mother did not attend school. She is the first of three siblings the youngest of whom is a boy. Noor has two children a girl and a boy.

Hafsa is a 35 year old Professional occupation woman. She is second generation British. Her father has some 'A' level equivalent qualifications from schooling in Pakistan but worked in manual labour in Britain. Her mother is illiterate but worked as a piecework seamstress from home. Hafsa's father had mental health issues. She is the

second eldest of four children. She has an older brother and then a younger brother and sister. Hafsa has two children, both boys.

Zahra is a 22 year old housewife. She is second generation British. Both parents have limited education. She has three siblings, one sister and two brothers. Zahra went to college in Britain but went to Pakistan during her second year, to get married. She lives with her parents.


Sabira is a 21 year old university undergrad student. She is second generation British. Her mother came to Britain at the age of five. Her father came in his mid-20s to marry her mother who is his cousin. Sabira's mother worked as a manual worker and then after the children were born became a housewife. Her father is a taxi driver and investor in property. Sabira is the eldest of six siblings. She has one brother and four sisters.

b. Glossary

Akandparth	A religious ceremony where the Guru Granth Sahib is read all the way through
Angrez	An English person
Apne	one of our own/someone like us
apne pare the kharayna	Literally means to 'stand on one's own feet' but also implies self-reliance.
Argeya	For a female to arrive
Babaji	Father's father
Baradari	Brotherhood/kinfolk/community
Bhowaji	Father's sister
Desi	Authentically from an Indian/Pakistani culture
Freshi	A recent migrant from the Asian subcontinent
Ghuddi	a doll, or another word for a little girl
Gora	A white man
Goree	A white woman
Gudwara	A Sikh Temple
Guru Granth Sahib	The Sikh holy book
Izzat	Honour of the family/community
Jamikee	An Afro Caribbean woman
Jamika	An Afro-Caribbean man
Jat	A Sikh of the land owning, or farming caste.
Massi	Mother's sister
Paree	Not belong to own biological family but to the perspective in-laws.
pati	Husband
Pindu	A backward thinking person or a villager
pita	Father
putra	Sons
Sauss	Mother in law
Shaan	prestige

Mithai	Indian Sweetmeats
Vakeel	Solicitors
Zameendar	farmer who also is a landowner
Zameendari	to take care of the land
Sink school	A school within an area of mass deprivation and noted for underachievement

c. UPR16



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH

FORM UPR16

Research Ethics Review Checklist

Please include this completed form as an appendix to your thesis (see the Research Degrees Operational Handbook for more information)

Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information		Student ID:	ecs80050	
PGRS Name:	Sukhbinder Hamilton			
Department:	School of Languages and Area Studies (SLAS)	First Supervisor:	Tamsin Bradley	
Start Date: <small>(or progression date for Prof Doc students)</small>	[]			
Study Mode and Route:	Part-time <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MPhil <input type="checkbox"/>	MD <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/>	PhD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Professional Doctorate <input type="checkbox"/>	
Title of Thesis:	Izzat, Intersectionality, and Educational journeys: Hearing the Voices of British (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani (BIP) Heritage Women.			
Thesis Word Count: <small>(excluding ancillary data)</small>	79,283			

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study.

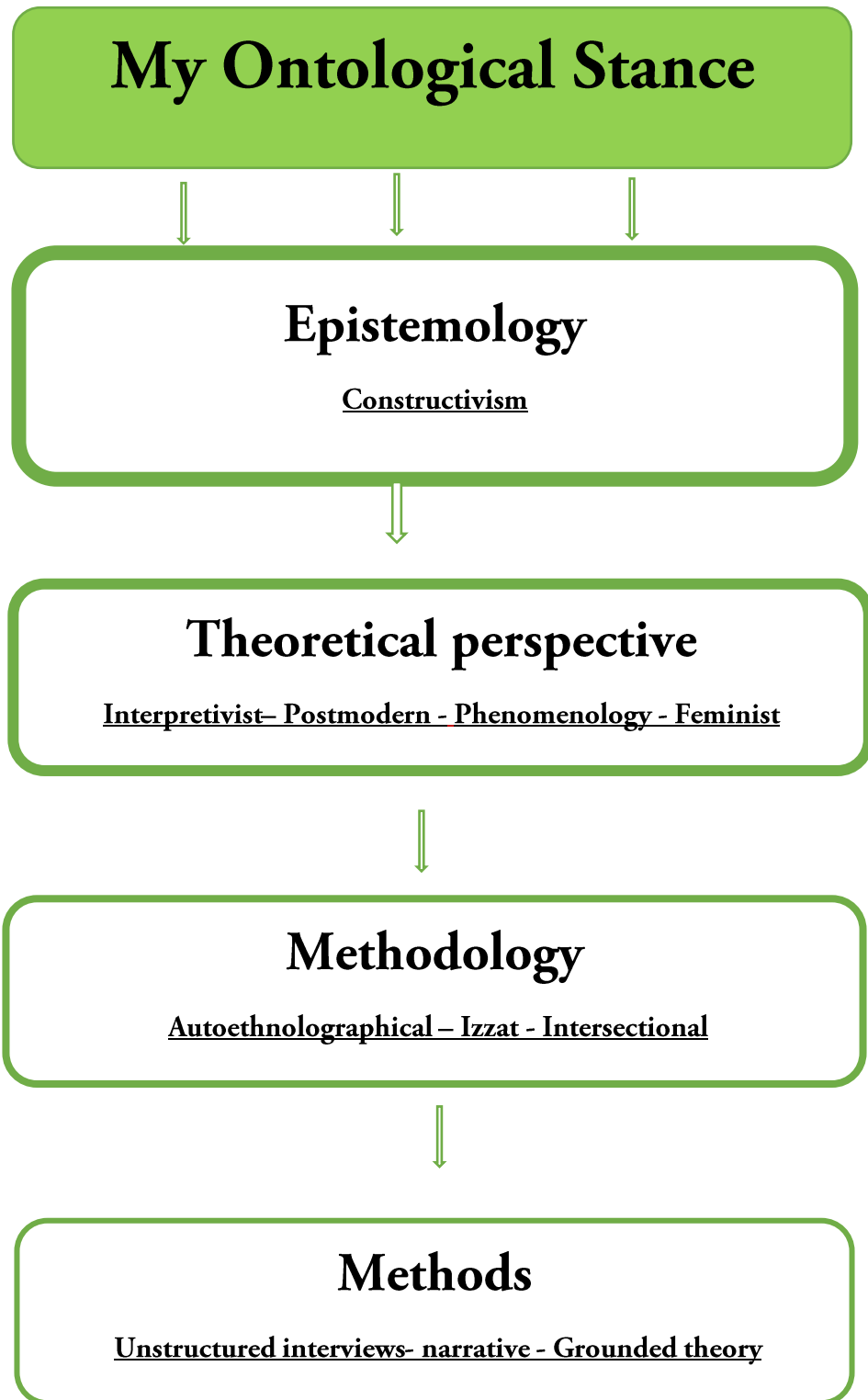
Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

UKRIO Finished Research Checklist: <small>(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: http://www.ukrio.org/what-we-do/code-of-practice-for-research/)</small>	
a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Candidate Statement:	
I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s)	
Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/SCREC):	13/14:33
If you have not submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered 'No' to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain below why this is so:	
[]	
Signed (PGRS):	Date: 14. 08.18

UPR16 – April 2018

d. Research journey



(Adapted from Gray, 2014).

e. Intersectional Inclusion Lens Tool

Policy/practice



izzat	gender	class	ethnicity	sexuality	disability	other



Immediate implications for:



1. Young person → Need for clarification/ consultation/discussion?



2. Young person & Family → Need for clarification/ consultation/ discussion?



3. Young person & Baradari → Need for clarification/ consultation/ discussion?

f. Invitation letter



St George's Building
141 High Street
Portsmouth PO1 2HY

Researcher: Sukh Hamilton sukh.hamilton@port.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Tamsin Bradley tamsin.bradley@port.ac.uk

Study title: 'Liberation within a box?'; Cultural mediation and emerging identities amongst British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women.

FHSS REC Ref No: 13/14:33

Dear Potential Participant,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am undertaking for my PhD.

My research is about listening to British Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani (BIP) women's memories about their educational journeys in this country. As a BIP woman you have been identified as a suitable participant for my research.

I have attached an information sheet and consent form for your consideration and should you agree to participate, I would appreciate it if you could complete and return the consent form in the envelope provided. I will then be in touch with you. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Additionally even if you agree to take part and subsequently decide to withdraw (up to the point of writing) this will be accepted.

I appreciate you taking the time to read through this letter.

Yours sincerely

Sukh Hamilton

g. Information sheet



St George's Building
141 High Street
Portsmouth PO1 2HY

Researcher: Sukh Hamilton sukh.hamilton@port.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Tamsin Bradley tamsin.bradley@port.ac.uk

Study title: 'Liberation within a box?' ; Cultural mediation and emerging identities amongst British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women.

FHSS REC Ref No: 13/14:33

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Please take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study? This study is being undertaken by me in order to gain my PhD. The intention is to examine cultural mediation and emerging identities amongst British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women by listening to a selection of their voices. By that I mean simply listening to your experiences as a British BIP woman who has gone through some/all of the educational system in this country. The primary purpose is not to generalise findings to the entire female BIP population, but rather to shine a spotlight on the experiences, and opinions, of a self-selected sample.

Why have I been chosen? The research focuses on the educational experiences of British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women and so you have been identified as a potential participant, and have approached me to take part.

Do I have to take part? No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You are still free to withdraw at any time up to transcribing, and without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part? Participants in this research will be asked to take part in an interview that will be taped.

What do I have to do? If you agree to take part in this research then you will be asked in the first instance to think of 5-10 key memories related to your educational journey. The 'interview' will then consist of filling in the details of their stories around those memories. These interviews will be arranged at your convenience.

What are the other possible disadvantages and risks of taking part? There is a time commitment for those taking part in this research (the interviews will be between 30 – 45 minutes) but no other risks or disadvantages are anticipated.

What are the possible benefits of taking part? The benefits of taking part will relate to the opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences.

What if there is a problem? Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might suffer will be addressed. In the first instance any comments should be directed to the Phd supervisor Dr Tamsin Bradley (contact details are at the top of this document).

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential? All data shared by participants will be respected and identities will be protected. Individual names will not be used in the report and all material will be stored carefully to ensure confidentiality. Specifically this will mean storing paper documents in a locked desk and storing computer data on a system which is protected by a password. The data will be used for the thesis and may be additionally used for academic articles. Once data is no longer required for these purposes it will be either destroyed via the confidential waste system or deleted from the computer. Handling, processing, storage and destruction of data will be compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998.

What will happen to the results of the research study? A copy of the final thesis will be publically available in the University Library and on request the transcripts from individual interviews will be available for participants to see.

Who is organising and funding the research? This research is being funded as part of the doctoral programme at the University of Portsmouth. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study.

Contact Details: If further information is required please contact me, Sukh Hamilton, at the email address given above. Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering participation in this research project.

h. Consent form



St George's Building
141 High Street
Portsmouth PO1 2HY

Researcher: Sukh Hamilton

sukh.hamilton@port.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Tamsin Bradley tamsin.Bradley@port.ac.uk

Study title: 'Liberation within a box?' ; Cultural mediation and emerging identities amongst British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women.

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet (dated) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time (up to the point when the data are analysed), without giving any reason.
3. I agree to audio recording of interviews
4. I agree to being quoted verbatim.
5. I agree to the data I contribute being retained for the future and being used in published academic research.
6. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

Date:

Signature

Name of Person taking consent:

Date

Signature

i. Ethical Approval



Sukh Hamilton
PhD Student
SECS
University of Portsmouth

REC reference number: 13/14:33
Please quote this number on all correspondence.

8th July 2014

Dear Sukh,

Full Title of Study: 'Liberation within a box?' ; Cultural mediation and emerging identities amongst British BIP (Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani) women.

Documents reviewed:

Consent Form
Participant Information Sheet
Participant letter

Further to our recent correspondence, this proposal was reviewed by The Research Ethics Committee of The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

I am pleased to tell you that the proposal was awarded a favourable ethical opinion by the committee.

Kind regards,

FHSS FREC Chair
Jane Winstone

Members participating in the review:

- David Carpenter
- Jane Winstone