

Jassal, Vanisha (2019) *An Examination of the Relationship between Shame, Honour and Child Sexual Abuse of Females in South Asian families*. In: Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse Researcher Workshop, 20 March 2019, London. (Unpublished)

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**An Examination of
the Relationship
between Shame,
Honour and Child
Sexual Abuse of
Females in South
Asian families**

VANISHA JASSAL (UNIVERSITY OF KENT)

PHD WORKSHOP - CSA CENTRE

20 MARCH 2019

- Explain the focus and timetable for the research;
- Discuss the meaning of *shame* and *honour* through some initial findings;
- Discuss the pervasiveness and inter-generational presence of these concepts and the implications for victims and survivors;
- Discuss my research strategy and methodology;
- Share barriers to participant recruitment and solutions;
- Seek comments and advice from the audience around aspects of the research.

The aims of the session



Focus and timetable for the research

- A more concerted effort needs to be made about the incidence and prevalence of CSA in South Asian families and understanding the experience of victims and survivors from these families;
- It is widely accepted that this is a gap, in practice, policy and research terms (Gilligan and Akhtar 2006; Children's Commissioner 2014).
- Part-time PhD:
 - started Jan 2017
 - data gathering started August 2018 and due to complete Dec 2019.
 - planning to submit Jan 2021 😊

Discuss the meaning of *shame* and *honour*: some initial findings

Shame

- Shame is a universal emotion and crosses all communities;
- Is there a distinct element of shame as experienced by South Asian communities, as often cited in academic literature and government research (Gilligan and Akhtar 2006, The Home Affairs Committee 2013; Cowburn *et.al.* 2014; Gill and Brah 2014)?
- Interviews have certainly defined the concepts of shame as one relating to family and community shame (in addition to individual shame and may be even more so than individual shame);
- 'Shame' has at times been difficult to define by participants, possibly as the concept is so integral to their lives.

Honour

- Honour as an emotion also has universal applicability;
- Is there a distinct interpretation of 'honour' as experienced by South Asian communities;
- Themes around family honour have certainly emerged from the data.

The pervasiveness and inter-generational presence of these concepts: implications for victims and survivors

Inherent and powerful influence of shame and honour

- Questioning the term 'concepts'; they are very much a permanent and deeply embedded reality for these women and unfold in different ways from childhood to adulthood;
- Concerns about damage to and potential loss of family ties appear to be the main reason for remaining silent about the abuse;
- Where a disclosure was made (in adulthood), very little was done to support the survivor in terms of action against the perpetrator.



Inter-generational survival of these concepts

- The need to acknowledge the 'positive' nature of these concepts and balancing this with the need to problematize them;
- Understanding their powerful and irremovable status including across generations;
- Noting where a 'change' may occur: particular ethnic communities?; particular generations?; particular socio-economic factors?



Strengthening professional practice

- Fully appreciating that there are child victims facing *additional* barriers to disclosure – really understanding the impact of this reality;
- We need to continue our questioning of inequalities of services for ethnic minority families.

Research strategy, methodologies, barriers and solutions

Accessing survivors

- Survivor support groups
- Snowballing
- ‘Personal’ contacts
- Local authorities
- Research website (to be launched end of March)
- Social media
- Presentations about the research

Accessing practitioners

- Survivor support groups
- Snowballing
- Local authorities (to be revisited)
- Police forces (to be undertaken)
- Research website (to be launched end of March)
- Social media
- Presentations about the research

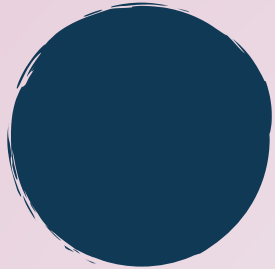
Methodology

- Face to face interviews
- From the very creative to the more practical 😞
- What does this mean in terms of *how* we research CSA?

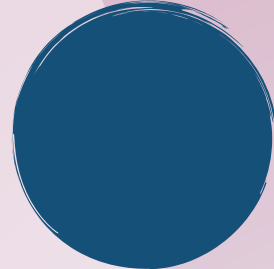
Comments and advice around aspects of the research



**Comments about
the research
topic and findings**



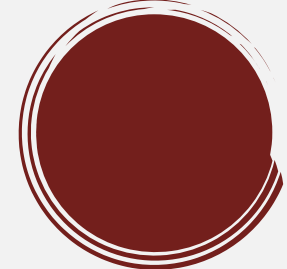
**Comments/
advice on the
research
methodology**



**Advice on
recruiting
survivors**



**Advice on
recruiting
practitioners**



**CSA Centre
BME Project**

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THANK YOU

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