Stalking and coercive control: Commonly used strategies in honour-based abuse against young people

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Title

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Having read this chapter, you should be able to understand the following:

- The definition and features of honour-based abuse (HBA);
- The prevalence of HBA globally and in the UK;
- Common strategies, i.e. coercive control and stalking, used in HBA against young people
- Research, policy and practice recommendations to understand and prevent HBA against young people

Introduction

Honour is a universal concept, but its meaning, value and applications vary from time to time, culture to culture, region to region, and class to class. Generally, the term honour has positive meanings such as high respect, great esteem, and the quality of knowing and doing what is morally right. The term is also used for rewards and recognitions such as the Queen’s honours. However, it becomes controversial when honour is combined with violence, abuse, and killings, creating a new category of violent crime mainly associated with certain cultures and communities.

It is noted that honour crimes exist across countries, cultures and religions. Social, cultural and political conditions that may lead to honour crimes (HBA & honour killings) are wide-ranging, not culturally specific or religiously sanctioned. It is important to consider that, despite the wide use of the labels (such as honour crimes, honour-based abuse, honour-based violence, and honour killings), there can be no honour in abuse, violence and murders. Where religion, culture or customs are used to exert and justify power or control over others, particularly women and girls, this can only be a misuse of that culture, religion and tradition. Therefore, I have adopted the term honour crimes in this chapter to avoid unnecessary cultural specifications to demonstrate that whatever the excuse, honour or otherwise abuse, violence and killings are a crime and human rights violations.

No community, culture or class has the monopoly on defending one's honour through violence. It has been a historical and cross-cultural phenomenon; it was attributed as

an underlying reason for horrible violent practices, including duelling in England, foot binding in China, wife immolation in India and the honour-based system of retribution in the Southern States of the USA. These are described in the following section.

Historical practices based on honour

Although these practices have been carried out in different geographical and historical contexts, the underlying reasons were similar and had significant parallels to honour-based abuse and violence.

Duelling was an ancient practice that involved a fight between two men using matched weapons, usually because one person dishonoured or insulted the other personally or his female family members. In many cultures, honour was and is considered bigger than life. Thus, it was fought not so much to kill the opponent as to gain satisfaction, that is, to restore one's honour by demonstrating a willingness to risk one's life for it (Shoemaker 2002; Britannica 2008a).

Chinese foot binding was an ancient custom of breaking and tightly binding the feet of young girls to change their shape and size. Feet altered by footbinding were known as lotus feet, and the shoes made for these feet were known as lotus shoes. It aimed to change the female's feet to conform to family ideals of beauty and marriageability to protect its honour and reputation in the respective community or social group (Smith 2022; Brown & Satterthwaite-Phillips 2018).

Sati was an ancient Hindu tradition that commonly existed in India. The practice required widows to jump into the funeral pyre of their deceased husbands. There were many reasons behind the practice; however, the common reason was that a husband is a protector of honour attached to his wife, and after his death, no one will protect his honour. Therefore, the widow should immolate herself with him (Doniger 2022; Menski 1998)

The honour-based retribution system in the Southern United States is a relatively recent practice. The traditional culture of the Southern United States is called a "culture of honour", in which honour norms were highly valued. The insults on one’s reputation were answered with violence as a retribution strategy to enforce one's rights and deter predation against one's family, home, and possessions (Nisbett & Cohen 1996). These honour-based practices were outlawed through political, social

and legal measures, but still, several types of honour-based abuse and violence exist in many cultures and communities. Hence, the two common parallels between these practices and existing honour-based abuse, violence and murders are the underlying notion of honour and the use of violence to protect or restore the honour of an individual or social group.

This chapter draws on primary and secondary research to discuss coercive control and stalking behaviours within Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) contexts perpetrated against young people in the UK. Coercive control is defined as behaviour involving a pattern of threats, humiliation and intimidation, and stalking is a behaviour involving regular surveillance (physical and/or online) in a way that makes the targeted person feel scared, distressed or threatened. Given the wide use of the term Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) by the UK government and domestic abuse sector organisations, this exact term has been adopted herein for its familiarity and consistency within the book. HBA is a form of domestic abuse, and research recognises that coercive control is central to the perpetration of HBA (Karma Nirvana 2008; Idriss 2017). Similarly, stalking has been commonly used as one of the key strategies to track the victims and their activities (Bhanbhro 2021). This chapter defines the notions of honour and Honour-Based Abuse (HBA). It discusses the commonly used strategies, such as stalking and coercive control in HBA against young people in the UK, and possible solutions to prevent it.

Definition of the concepts: Honour, dishonour and shame

The notions of honour, dishonour and shame are universal. Still, their understanding, meaning, value, and applications vary from culture to culture, region to region and class to class. Thus, there is not a single definition of these concepts. Nevertheless, the most widely used definition of honour in the literature is: "a person's value in his own and others' eyes" (Pitt-Rivers 1968, 503). The second part of the definition is significant in analysing and understanding HBA. Though some consider honour to be a personal quality and about the appraised value of a person in their own eyes, it ultimately depends upon recognition and validation from the group members. In the context of HBA, honour works in tightly knit social groups or communities in which most members not only know each other but are related to each other by blood or marriage. In such social groups or communities, honour is one of the major sources

of a person or family's social position within its respective social group. In this social group, family honour is highly valued and aggressively protected. For example, in the UK, when a father from such a social group suspects his daughter has a boyfriend, it will harm his family's reputation in his social group. In this scenario, the family's social group is not its neighbours or people who know them but the people and families who are related to them. Also, their opinions will matter to them when they make choices and decisions (Bicchieri 2016) and impart validation to the social status based on honour (Pitt-Rivers 1968, 503). It is important to note that the physical distance among such group members is not that important, especially in this digital age, when everyone is connected through mobile technology. Therefore, honour plays a key role in maintaining and assessing the social position of an individual, family or social group in the social structure that is subjected to damage through their social and moral behaviours, specifically, the sexual conduct of women and girls (Campbell 1964; Abou-Zeid 1965; Pitt-Rivers 1968).

Dishonour and shame are secondary concepts to honour and play a vital role in the implication of honour through abuse and violence. They are brought about by women's and girls' actions or alleged actions, which other group members would judge as dishonour or shameful for their family. As explained in the above example, having a boyfriend is considered a dishonoured act brought by the girl to her family, which brings shame to the family among other group members, who validate the family's honour-based social position. By contrast, a male family member's same action or type of action is not viewed as a source of dishonour for the family, although it may be considered his personal dishonour.

In so-called honour crimes (HBA and honour killings), the sources of dishonour refer to a woman's sexuality, which encompasses aspects of her body, behaviours, choice of clothing, communication, and virginity status. Various behaviours and actions of women and girls are interpreted as sources of dishonour and shame for an individual man or a social group. This can trigger the use of HBA as a means to control, limit damage, punish or eradicate so-called dishonour. The so-called dishonourable actions largely relate to men exercising power and control over women and girls, restricting them from crossing three key borders between what is considered honourable and dishonourable. The three borders are neatly conceptualised in Box 1

and refer to (i) sexual, (ii) bodily, and (iii) social aspects and are fundamental for preserving an individual or social group's honour (Bhanbhro 2021).

Box 1: Sexual, bodily and social borders

Sexual	**Bodily**
● Pre-marital sex ● Extra-marital sex ● A woman or girl being raped ● Getting pregnant from the sexual relationship ● Having a boyfriend	● Wearing revealing/tight clothes ● No proper purdah ● Adopting a western lifestyle by migrant women and girls living in the Western countries
Social ● Asking for a share in the inheritance ● Disobedience to parents and/or family men ● Working outside of the home ● Moving away from their family house before marriage ● Going out without the permission of parents or other male members of a family ● Talking to an unrelated man ● Using mobile phone ● Using social media	**Social (predominantly related to marriage)** ● Marriage: ○ without consent of family ○ outside one's social group (concerned norm circles) ○ by eloping with a man of her own or another social group ○ with a man from a lower caste ○ with a non-Muslim man ● Asking for a divorce ● Saying no to cousin's marriage ● Complaint to relevant authorities against parents who tried to arrange a forced marriage

Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA involves violence and abuse (such as forced marriages, honour killing & female genital mutilation), including murder, committed by people who want to defend or restore the real or perceived tarnished honour of an individual or a social group. Bhanbhro views any type of honour crime as a social practice, a patterned and routinised set of behaviours of people in a social group rather than an isolated individual behaviour. This social practice operates within a tight social group. The social group can be a family (joint and extended family), clan, caste, community or tribe (as described in Table 1). The joint and extended family systems are key features of the social group where honour crimes tend to occur more.

Table 1: Description of social groups

Term	Definition
Family	A group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together is called a family.
Joint Family	A family in which two or more families live in one house. For example, if someone has two sons and both are married, have one or two children, and live in a single house. This type of family is called a joint family, where children live with their grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, and children in the same house. Another important feature of a joint family is that the members of a joint family hold a common property. Generally, the head of the family is a man who manages the property on behalf of its members (Britannica 2017). This type of family is common in South Asia, i.e. India and Pakistan.
Extended Family	This type of family comprises almost every blood relative, parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and possibly spouses. These people live in various locations and come together for holidays or special

	occasions (Britannica 2009). This type of social arrangement is also common in India and Pakistan.
Clan or kin group	A group of families who trace their descent from a common ancestor and share the same surname is known as a clan (Britannica 2008b).
Tribe	A group of clans forms a tribe. Every tribe has a male tribal chief with the power to make significant decisions about his tribe. A tribe has a common descent, language, and culture (Britannica 2022).
Community	A group of people or families who follow a common culture, traditions, norms and values is called a community. In the context of HBA, the community comprises families with the same ethnicity, language and socio-cultural understanding and significance of family honour. It is also not necessary for families that make a community to live in the same geographical area. They can live in different places in the same country or region or different countries but adhere to a family honour system.

Victims of HBA can be men, boys, lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people, but are more likely to be women and girls. In the UK context, HBA is more prevalent among young girls.

Honour crimes, or HBA, is an umbrella term which includes a range of harmful practices committed using the pretext of honour, such as domestic abuse (Reddy 2014); violence or death threats; economic abuse (Chowbey 2017); sexual and psychological abuse; acid attacks; forced marriage (Noack-Lundberg, Gill & Anitha 2021; Foreign and Commonwealth Office & Simmonds 2013); forced suicide (Gorar 2022); forced abortion; female genital mutilation (World Health Organisation 2022); assault; and being held against one's will (Aplin 2022; Gill & Gould 2020; Bhanbhro, de Chavez & Lusambili 2016; Hester et al. 2015; Nesheiwat 2005). These harmful practices are described in table 2. There are widely used alternative terms for HBA, including honour-based violence, honour-related violence, patriarchal violence,

honour killing, and murder in the name of honour. Killing or attempted killing of a person (in most cases, it is a woman or a girl) in the name of saving or restoring the honour of a family, clan or community (commonly known as honour killing) is an extreme form of HBA.

Table 2: Descriptions of harmful practices

Practice	Description
Domestic abuse	Domestic abuse comprises broad categories of behaviour, including physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse and psychological, emotional, or other abuse (Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The perpetrator of domestic abuse is a close family member or current or former partner, which can happen anywhere and is a crime.
Economic abuse	Economic abuse is any person's behaviour substantially affecting another person’s ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property or obtain goods or services (Domestic Abuse Act 2021).
Sexual violence and abuse	Sexual violence and abuse are any behaviour thought to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent. Sexual violence and abuse can be physical, psychological, verbal or online. Any behaviour of a sexual nature that causes you distress is considered sexual violence or abuse. Sexual abuse is a crime which occurs between strangers, friends, acquaintances, current or ex-partners, or family members.
Psychological abuse	Psychological abuse involves the regular and deliberate use of various words and non-physical actions. They are used to manipulate, hurt, weaken or frighten a person mentally and emotionally; and/or distort, confuse or influence their thoughts and actions within their

	everyday lives, changing their sense of self and harming their well-being (Kaukinen 2004).
Acid attack	Acid attacks are a form of violence in which acid or another corrosive substance is thrown at a person - usually a woman or a girl - to maim, torture, or kill them.
Forced marriage	A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or, in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as domestic or child abuse and serious human rights abuse (The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office 2022)
Forced suicide	Families may deploy a strategy of forcing women to kill themselves to remain technically innocent of murder. However, it may not be clear whether an individual woman has committed suicide due to direct coercion to spare her family men from going to prison. It could be an outright murder disguised as self-killing, or a woman killed herself due to the unbearable pressures of the restrictions upon her life (Honour Based Violence Awareness Network 2021).
Forced abortion	A family could force a woman to have an abortion if the family alleged that the woman might have become pregnant without wedlock or from an extramarital affair.
Female Genital Mutilation	Female genital mutilation (FGM) involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons (World Health Organisation 2022). This mutilation is intended to maintain family honour by preserving the woman's virginity until marriage and controlling the woman's sexuality before and after marriage. The intended result is a reduction of her libido

	to ensure that she will not be tempted to engage in premarital or extramarital sexual behaviour.

The ideology that triggers the harmful behaviour towards their family members is that women and girls are carriers of family honour, which is considered a precious social resource. Given the social, cultural, and economic value of family honour that lies with women and girls, the social groups have rules and practices to protect that value they have placed in honour. For example, if a young woman marries without her family or parents' consent, this act would be considered dishonourable for the family. This young woman's behaviour can trigger gossip about her family's reputation, showing that the family is exposed to dishonour and shame in its concerned social group. As a result, the family, particularly the male members, will attempt to restore the family honour. The action could involve a harsh warning to killing, and any harmful behaviour in between (may be threatening, stalking, harassing, forcing her to leave her husband, or killing her. The actions and behaviour to protect or restore family honour are context-specific; they could vary from slight (warning or threatening) to extreme (forced divorce or killing).

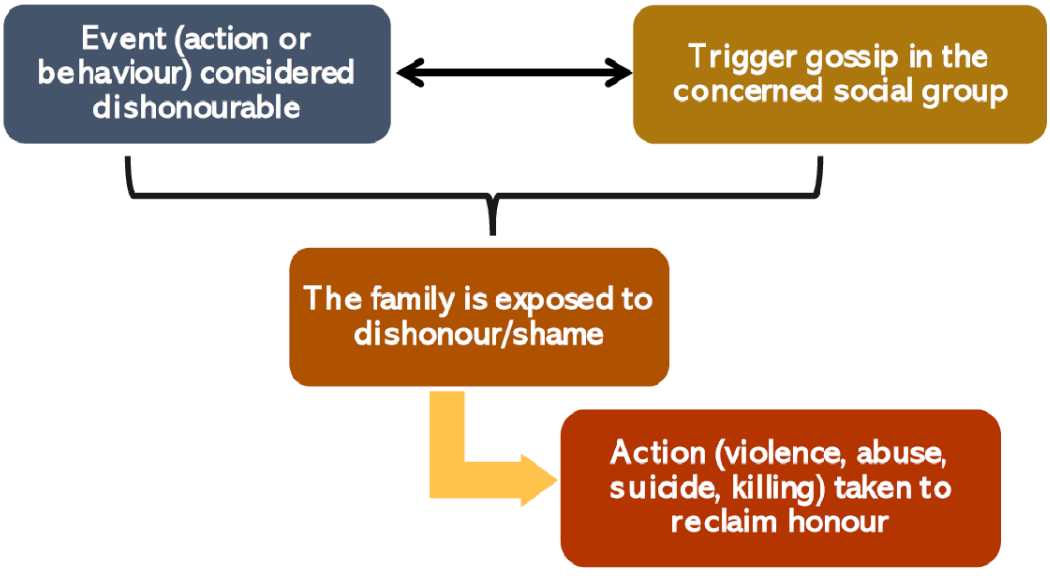

Figure 1. a model shows how honour is implicated through abuse, violence & killings.

The top right box of the figure depicts the role of gossip in HBA. The available literature (such as Dogan 2013; Hasan 2002; Glazer & Ras 1994) and my research demonstrates that gossip has a central role in HBA. It is viewed as a necessary and sufficient device to ensure appropriate female behaviour is maintained and which operates through public opinion (Glazer & Ras 1994). In the author's study within the UK Pakistani community, the significance of gossip was ubiquitously represented in the Urdu language phrase "*log kia kahein gey*" (what will people say). It is important to note that the opinion of random people or acquaintances is not important in family honour. Still, the judgement of one's social group members will trigger the family to take appropriate action to intact the family honour. The phrase was used as a mechanism for social control (Bhanbhro 2021), and the female participants from the UK viewed gossip and rumours as a critical catalyst to others enacting HBA. One such participant, a 24-year-old female participant 'Nargis', expressed her concerns about gossiping,

> "This is a real problem in our community. When a girl is suspected of having a boyfriend, as rumours spread like fire, her family starts controlling her movements and stalking her to track her activities. Even though she doesn't have a boyfriend, community people make up gossip about her. As a result, the trapped girl's life is ruined".

The above quote shows even if it is a mere rumour or suspicion, which is also not a crime (having a boyfriend), the emotional and psychological abuse through stalking, controlling and policing the behaviour of the victims can have a disastrous impact on one's life. All these tools, including surveillance, stalking, and coercive control for inflicting physical and psychological harm to innocent persons, are about maintaining power and control. Therefore, I argue that HBA is one of the practices of the honour system, which is the system of power and control.

Theories related to HBA

Two widely used explanations in the literature exist to understand honour crimes, including HBA and honour killings. First, it is condoned by a specific culture type known as 'honour culture', which authorises its members, mainly males, to resort to abuse, violence and murders to save family honour (Lowe et al. 2018; Khan et al. 2018; Kurkiala, 2003). According to the second theory, VAWG is committed by men

using any available excuse; honour is merely one such excuse that serves as a reason where the real cause is down to the socio-economic and political structures of society that are essentially patriarchal and universally oppressive for women (Begikhani 2005; Pimentel et al. 2005; Sev'er & Yurdakul 2001).

Both explanations are likely to have some truth within them. However, neither is supported by sufficient empirical data. In addition, the first explanation, which is probably the most prevalent, is reactionary in the sense that it appears to close the door on the potential for change; culture is treated as being essential and beyond criticism. In the 'cultural explanation' of honour crimes, the culture, traditions, and religion of particular communities are taken as causes of violent crime for the sake of honour. Conversely, some scholars have criticised the cultural explanation. For example, Montoya and Agustin (2013) argue that the "culturalised forms of violence" largely ignore the gendered nature of violence, and the cultural framing of violence creates a dichotomy between non-violent Europeans and violent others. Similarly, Meetoo and Mirza (2007) argue that in 'domestic violence' discourses, including honour killings, the victim women have been highly 'ethnicised'. In turn, the cultural/racial classification not only stigmatises particular acts of violence but entire communities (Montoya & Agustin 2013; Abu-Lughod 2011; Bhanbhro et al. 2016).

Thus, when honour-based abuse is dismissed as a cultural issue, the communities in which it prevails are stigmatised. Those who suffer violence also face their suffering being brushed off as a cultural problem (Montoya & Agustin 2013; Ewing 2008). In addition, some scholars argue that cultural understating and representation of violence conceals more pressing and central structures of violence affecting women and political processes that shape it; in those parts of the world where culture is usually blamed for such violence. It is necessary to be mindful of this when analysing and understanding violence in cultural terms per se (Abu-Lughod 2011; Ewing 2008; Shah 2007).

The prevalence of HBA worldwide and in the UK

HBA occurs worldwide in various cultures, some regions being hotspots, such as South Asia and the Middle East (Fisk 2010; Mayell 2002). Some authors (see Abu-Rabia 2011; Cooney 2014; Idriss 2017; Khan, Saleem & Lowe 2018) identify these regions' cultures as rigid, collectivist, patriarchal, place a high value on family

honour, and are highly sensitive to the opinion of social group members. Also, men in these cultures are authoritarian, aggressive, and violent; in contrast, women are compliant, conforming and passive victims.

The United Nations (UN) agencies and the European Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men define so-called “honour crimes as a complex issue but may be defined as a crime that is, or has been, justified or explained (or mitigated) by the perpetrator of that crime on the grounds that it was committed as a consequence of the need to defend or protect the honour of the family”. The UN has identified honour crimes in more than 30 countries, including Albania, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Netherlands, Palestine, Pakistan, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, the UK and the USA. Estimating prevalence rates of HBA worldwide is problematic because there are no reliable statistics as it is not a recorded crime category in any country except the UK.

In 2000, the UN Population Fund estimated that at least 5,000 women and girls worldwide are murdered yearly in the name of so-called honour – although these figures are contested. Some researchers and activists believe that the rates are much higher. Nonetheless, of the 5000 internationally reported honour killing cases, 2000 are from India and Pakistan, according to the international digital resource centre Honour Based Violence (HBV) Awareness Network (HBV Awareness Network). Also, the annual reports published by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) show that over 15,222 honour killings have been recorded in the country between 2004 and 2016. This figure excludes attempted honour killings and other forms of honour-related violence. This means an average of 1170 honour killings annually and 22 per week (HRCP 2019). More recent statistics show that the problem persists. In 2021, 128 women were killed in Sindh province of Pakistan in the name of honour (Soomro 2022), and in Punjab province, between July and December 2021, 90 women were killed, 2,439 were raped, and 9,529 women were kidnapped for honour (The News International 2022).

Since 2019 England and Wales police forces have started recording offences identified as related to so-called ‘honour-based’ abuse (HBA).

The UK police and Crown Prosecution Service currently use the following definition of so-called HBA,

> “an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community’s code of behaviour” (Home Office 2022).

In the year ending March 2022, there were 2,887 HBA-related offences recorded by the police in England and Wales. This was an increase of 6% compared with the year ending March 2021, when 2,725 offences were recorded in England and Wales, excluding Greater Manchester Police (GMP), who could not provide data for the year ending March 2020 following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019. The GMP covers 6 geographical command areas with population diversity; thus, its data on HBA would have shown a significant increase in HBA offences. In 2021, there was an increase of 18% compared with the previous year ending March 2020, with 2,024 HBA-related offences (Home Office 2022).

The Home Office has collected the above figures from police forces on a mandatory basis since April 2019. The data before 2019 also presents a bleak picture. For example, in 2015, the BBC reported more than 11,000 honour-related violence incidents, including 29 honour killings and attempted killings of women and girls, which were recorded by the UK police forces from 2010 to 2014 (Talwar & Ahmad 2015). The recent figures above show that the number of HBA offences recorded by police forces in England has soared over the past five years. The statistics show a persistent increase in HBA incidents yearly, which means the recorded incidents of HBA are just the tip of the iceberg, finding year after year, given its hidden and unreported tendencies.

Common strategies used within HBA: Coercive control and stalking

The notions of ‘honour’ underlying abuse, violence, and killings within the HBA context do not operate in isolation but exist within an organised system of social and cultural structures called the ‘honour system’. The system comprises structures of cultural (norms, values, beliefs, customs, and traditions) and social (gender, class,

caste, kinship, and ethnicity) and operates through rules, social entities, and practices (Bhanbhro 2021). The constant surveillance of women and girls by their families is one of the honour system's major tools to protect the honour associated with them. The family members vigilantly supervise women and girls' behaviour, activities, and social mobility. Male and female children are trained from an early age to behave in a certain way consistent with the honour norms and conform to the system's rules. For example, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) HBA victim/survivor voices project report (2015) states that coercive control was the most common abuse involving HBA. It included monitoring social activity, removing phone and internet access, house arrest, removing passports, withholding visa documents and attempts to shame the victim using the internet, email and social media.

Policing women and girls' behaviour, activities, and social mobility through elaborated rules, restrictions, and practices to avoid alleged honour violations is an integral part of the honour system. For example, if a young person, in the HBA context, mainly a female, is found or allegedly perceived to be involved in any action given in Box 1 will imply that the person has violated the family's honour and brought dishonour and shame to the family. This is explained by 'Nuzhat', a respondent within recent research by Bhanbhro, who said,

> 'if women expose themselves by wearing revealing clothes or too tight clothes, it can become an issue of dishonour for their families. The [family] men …. would be mocked as '*beghairat insan*' (a person without honour) by their *biradri* or community'.

Consequently, the family takes action against the person who brought or tried to bring dishonour to the family. That action can include controlling and coercive behaviour, assault, threats to kill, harassment and stalking.

Coercive control and stalking are commonly used strategies in HBA. For example, the 2022 HBA figures (2,887) show 17% of controlling and coercive behaviour and 6% of stalking offences involving HBA were recorded by tagging them with offence categories. Similarly, in 2021 figures (2,725), 14% of controlling and coercive behaviour and 5% of stalking offences involving HBA were recorded by the police (Home Office 2022). The figures show often use of coercive control is HBA because

the control is established without obvious violence against the victim. It is to remember that HBA affects people of all ages and genders but often begins early in the family home, mainly against girls and young women. Therefore, from an early age, coercive control is deeply embedded in socialisation, masked as obedience, discipline, and family duties according to family honour norms and values. It is built on expectations about behaviour made clear to them at a young age. Also, in the countries like the UK, where laws are strict, coercive control is a strategy that could be used secretly or wrapped as family customs and traditions.

Research by Bhanbhro suggests that at an early age, coercive control is used by a family to stop young people from crossing the borders (sexual, bodily, and social) and ensure adherence to acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Hence, the control masked as obedience to parents, grandparents, extended family members or elder siblings is often established without overt violence against the victim.

Likewise, surveillance through stalking is maintained to abide by the family norms of honour by not involving in activities and behaviours considered sources of dishonour for the family. Stalking is someone repeatedly behaving in a way that makes you feel scared, distressed or threatened. It can include regularly following someone, watching or spying on someone and checking their social media activity and communication, i.e., internet use, email or phone. See the below example of how surveillance is maintained through community gaze.

Case study: Stalking through community gaze

Nuzhat, 22, was a college student. One day it was her friend’s birthday. She was invited to the cinema to celebrate her friend’s birthday. Nuzhat was reluctant to go because of what her family would say, but as the college finished early and her other friends also decided to go, she joined them. She was standing in the ticket and booking area with her girlfriends, and some boys were standing nearby. Nuzhat’s male cousin saw her standing there and told his parents that he saw Nuzhat with a boy in the cinema. Her cousin’s father told Nuzhat’s father that she had a boyfriend and his son saw them in the cinema together. A suspicion was created in her father’s mind that she had stained the family's honour; therefore, she must be stopped from damaging it further. Consequently, Nuzhat’s father instructed her brothers, male cousins and some male neighbours, mainly taxi drivers, to keep an eye on her.

After this, wherever Nuzhat went, someone was stalking her. Nuzhat was always sacred and distressed, and her studies were disturbed. She said that she “was treated like a criminal at home”. She explained to her family that she had no boyfriend and went to the cinema with her female classmates, but no one believed her; everyone believed her cousin’s made-up story. Even neighbours who were part of their social group started rumours that Nuzhat may elope with the boy, and they made up many other stories. She described her “family as furious and that she was always taunted that she had made the family a laughing stock”.

Not only did people follow her and track her activities, but her family called everyone from her contact list to find out about the people she was talking to. They also spoke to her friends from the college to get information about Nuzhat’s activities in the college. She was prevented from visiting her friends' homes. Nuzhat said, “I had nightmares, my mental health was deteriorating, but no one cared. Even my college teachers didn’t take notice of my situation. At home, everyone was concerned about so-called family honour”. Nuzhat was strictly instructed not to speak about this situation to anyone at college. So, she was scared to tell anyone.

Meanwhile, the stalking continued, but they didn't find her with a boyfriend. After almost a year, things settled; however, Nuzhat said, “I was punished for the sin I didn’t do, and I lived in hell for almost a year”.

Nuzhat said stalking girls in her community is common and discreet because her community is a closely-knit group of families. Most of Zuzhat’s community members live on the same street and know each other. Also, many of her community's men are taxi drivers, and they go to all corners of the city every day, so while working, they can keep an eye on her community’s young people, mainly girls. Nuzhat said, “if a taxi man sees something, he would report it to the concerned young person’s father or elder brother, and in many cases, family restriction for young people starts from that point”.

As explained above that HBA occurs in a closely knit social group or network (i.e., family, clan, community), and male members are the key actors. The network peoples’ participation in any action or behaviour, such as stalking (as in the above example), to intact or restore their social group member’s honour is voluntary and reciprocal. They involve in the activities through a collective commitment to enforcing

honour norms in their social network. The social group members' expectations of participating in social practices are mediated through positive and negative sanctions. The one who conforms to the practice by involving in the activities receives praise, reward, and social and economic support.

In contrast, the one who does not participate in the practice gets punishment, disapproval and, in some cases, socially shunned. It is a reciprocal arrangement; if a social group member supports another member in need (in the above example, protecting family honour), he will get back the same support when needed. The main purpose of this arrangement is to intact the patriarchal system of power and control over women and girls.

HBA Impact

Violence against women and girls, which is purportedly committed in the name of ‘honour’, is a form of gender-based violence (GBV). GBV refers to harmful acts and practices directed at individuals based on their gender and is rooted in gender inequality, power abuse, and harmful norms. GBV is a serious violation of human rights and a life-threatening health and protection issue.

HBA involves direct emotional/psychological harm, including distress, anxiety, low self-esteem, fear, fear, isolation, helplessness and dependency on a family. It can negatively affect women and girls' emotional and mental well-being if they are directly victimised or witnessed. As they may live in constant fear for their safety within households, it can impact their day-to-day life, for example, their ability to access social and healthcare services. The Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspection study (2015) in the UK found that two of the 36 victims and survivors of HBA, including forced marriage, had attempted self-harm, including suicide, and 11 reported taking medication for anxiety or depression (Hester et al. 2015). Similarly, the negative impact of HBA, including anxiety, depression, desperation, hopelessness, mental abuse, reduced self-esteem, and suicide, was highlighted in research studies (Sedem & Ferrer-Wreder 2015; Dickson 2014; Sabbe et al. 2013). Living under a controlled honour system has a massive impact on young people. It ranges from living in constant fear and difficulties to making life choices such as choosing a life partner or living in a student accommodation instead of home to enjoy a less restricted life.

Implications for policy, practice and research

This chapter lays the groundwork for future empirical research into the subject by demonstrating that honour crimes (HBA & honour killings) are not timeless and essential to the social groups and communities in which it occurs. The essentialist view has confused and limited empirical research. More primary research on the subject is feasible, reducing the reliance on secondary and tertiary data sources. Further studies are required to develop an evidence-based and sensitive method that better encapsulates the communities' perspectives and relevant social structures and is utilised in honour crimes prevention strategy and policymaking.

Honour crimes, including abuse, violence and killings, are not isolated individual incidents but the collective social practices of the honour system. The system is patriarchal as it predominantly works to the advantage of men by providing them power and control over women and girls. The powers do not lie within individual men but within the system's social structure; thus, the system ascribes the power to its agents (men) to enforce family honour through harmful practices.

Common approaches have been suggested to address violence against women and girls in the name of honour and otherwise: introducing strict laws, training police, cultural competency building of prosecutors, more shelter homes for victims, etc. These efforts are necessary but not sufficient to prevent HBA. Therefore, there is a need to bring change from within to alter the social structures and narratives that create a viable environment for perpetrators of HBA.

Public and policy discourses on HBA often arise from journalism and demotic discourse rather than empirical research, scholarship, and theory. Moreover, the perspectives of communities where HBA is prevalent have been afforded less attention. Therefore, further empirical research is needed to investigate and understand the underlying narratives and assumptions behind HBA. Future research needs to investigate and understand the common characteristics of the social groups in which family honour is highly valued and fiercely protected. The collected research evidence on those social groups will provide avenues for targeted social interventions to prevent HBA.

There is a need to improve the official recording of HBA nationally. In the UK, cultural and religious sensitivity to HBA may be reduced by focusing on specific social

groups with specific social forces that support honour crime instead of certain cultures and communities. This could be achieved by encouraging conscious efforts, including:

- By engaging targeted social groups to bring change from within;
- Ensuring a change in attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours of community members, particularly young people, about the notions of honour and its implications through harmful practices.
- Bringing a clear understanding of young people concerning family honour and their communication skills developed to discuss these sensitive issues in a family.
- Uplifting young people's skills to report incidents like stalking and their consequences to concerned people and organisations.
- Developing clear pathways for young people to access support.

Discussion Questions

- Exploring how the notion of honour underlying abuse, violence and killings is understood historically and culturally.
- How to involve social groups and communities, particularly young people, to bring change from within to prevent HBA?
- How do we develop the capability and empower young people to communicate with parents, family members, guardians, and peers about harmful practices like HBA and to understand and spot early signs of them?

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