

Jasvinder Sanghera

KARMA NIRVANA

**HONOUR ABUSE
THE VICTIMS STORY**

JUNE 2009

Honour Abuse Statistics

- At least 12 honour killings per year (Cowan 2004)
- Over 110 Murders Reviewed to identify link to honour killings (ACPO)
- FMU deal with 400 cases of repatriation annually
- 42% of FMU cases involve minors
- FMU receive around 5000 calls for support a year
- Asian women are 2 -3 times more likely to commit suicide or self harm
- Thought are women driven to commit suicide, is suicide cleaner than murder?

IZZAT

SHAME AND HONOUR

“The worth of an Asian girl is defined by how she conducts herself”

“It is the daughter’s duty to carry the family honour”

Real Life Case Study

A mother holds down the legs of her pregnant daughter while her son strangles her to death and then stands in the dock and defended her actions in the name of honour

Why?

Why is izzat so powerful and persuasive?

Why is izzat more important than a person’s human rights?

What about the Right to life, personal liberty, security & equality?

Honour Violence

How does honour impact on a woman/man?

- Living in fear of immediate and extended family
- Feeling of being monitored/watched/controlled
- Creates dependency, isolation and loneliness
- Loss of sense of self– not an individual in their own right
- Ashamed, silenced - betrayal

Real Experiences Of Honour

Recent izzat research asked three generations of Asian women a series of honour related questions

(Mental Health Trust Derby and Karma Nirvana research, June 2004)

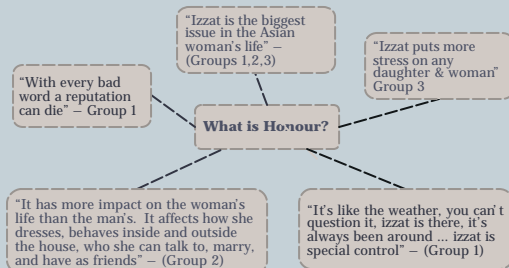
- **Group 1:** aged 16 -25
- **Group 2:** aged 26 -40
- **Group 3:** aged 41 -57
- **A focus group exploration on the impact of izzat, shame, subordination & entrapment on mental health & service use in South Asian women living in Derby**

What is Honour?

Group definitions of Honour:

- No single meaning
- Consists of a learnt complex set of rules that an Asian woman has to follow in order to protect the family 'name' and maintain family position
- Group 1: "It's like the weather, you can't question it, izzat is there, it's always been around ... izzat is special control"

What is Honour?



Feedback

- All women were asked the question:
If you had to choose between 'izzat' & your daughter- which would you choose?
- **Members of the two older generations said izzat every time**
- "Izzat is almost like a veil...so it is impossible for people to talk about their feelings openly & honestly" (Group1)
- **All consuming & powerful 'fear' of protecting family honour & izzat**
- Izzat prevents women from seeking help

Further research:

Narratives from interviews 2006 – 2007

- Mere suspicion can lead to gossip & abuse
- A negotiation of freedom
- Resistance catalyst for regime of surveillance
- Concept of honour used in relation to family & wider community acceptance, linked to image
- Honour 'izzat' translated as the emotion shame
- Experience of guilt & feelings of shame due to having asserted personal freedom

Barriers to getting help:

- Disownment/Ostracised from community
- Not aware of services – key to minors
- Displacement/isolation/identity
- Lack of information and access to help
- Fear of being found – bounty hunters, reprisals
- From dependence to independence
 - Learning independent living
 - Establishing a new life for herself and children

Considerations:



- Domestic violence – partner, immediate & extended family – collusion
- Murder in name of Honour – view of death
- Forced marriage
- Suicide rates (higher than national average 16 -24yrs), Depression
- Disownment/Displacement
- Witness Protection
- Forced Marriage Protection Order
- Victims can be perceived as morally corrupt
- Restricted Freedom/House Arrest?

Best Practice



Do:

- Recognise your clients wishes
- Reassure about confidentiality
- See in a secure/private place not in family presence!
- Means of discreet contact
- Seek advice – e.g. Community Safety Unit, FMU, Karma Nirvana
- Under 18 years, refer to Child Protection procedures - forced marriage is a child protection issue
- Use of Ward of Court? Holding Passports?

Do not:

- Do not underestimate that perpetrators of HBV really do kill their closest relatives and/or others for what might seem a trivial transgression
- Send the subject away, believing its not serious or a matter for your agency
- Approach the family or community leaders – Collusion
- Share information without the consent of the individual
- Attempt mediation

The Society We Live In?



“We must not allow political correctness to lead us to moral blindness”

(Mike O'Brien)

“Cultural acceptance does not mean accepting the unacceptable”

(Sir Ian Blair)

The Honour Network



The Honour Network Help line
0800 5 999 247 between 9.30am -9pm

- Received funding from FMU –
- Notion of ‘friends become family’
- Launched on 11th April
- Between 11th April 2008 – 31st March 2009 - Honour Network received almost 4000 calls

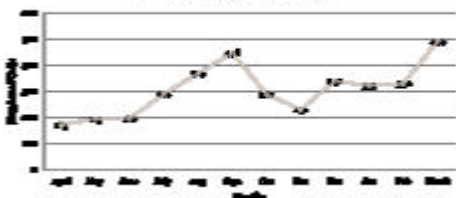
A Resource for –

- Victims male & female – potential, in crisis & surviving
- Those disowned & displaced
- Poster Campaign

Honour Network



**Calls to Honour Network
with April 2008 - 31st March 2009**



Training



- Forced Marriage – The New Law
- Real Life Case Studies
- The Dos & Don'ts
- Real accounts of Survivors
- Moving from practices of Cultural Sensitivity
- Women with “No Recourse to Public Funds”
- Contact knevents@btconnect.com

THE ONE CHANCE RULE



**HONOUR VIOLENCE.
IT'S A CRIME.
IT MUST NOT BE IGNORED.**