Social Death: A Grounded Theory Study of the Emotional and Social Effects of Honour Killing on Victims’ Family Members—A Palestinian Family Perspective

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al-Muntada</td>
<td>Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization Against Domestic Violence Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSA</td>
<td>British Sociological Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>Family members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDCAF</td>
<td>Democratic Control of Armed Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>Family member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM1-F</td>
<td>Family member (number of family member interview) - Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GT</td>
<td>Grounded Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HK</td>
<td>Honour killing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Right Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICN</td>
<td>International Council of Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHP</td>
<td>Mental health professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHP-F1</td>
<td>Mental health professional-Gender (number of family member interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOW</td>
<td>Ministry of Women Affair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCPHS</td>
<td>National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO’s</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
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<td>OPT</td>
<td>Occupied Palestinian Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Palestinian Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCBS</td>
<td>Palestinians Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSR</td>
<td>Qualitative data analysis software International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Symbolic interactionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIFEM</td>
<td>United Nations Development Fund for Women</td>
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<td>UNPF</td>
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Abstract

The University of Manchester
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A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on
Victims’ family members- A Palestinian family perspective

Abstract

The murder of women in order to uphold ‘honour’ has occurred throughout history and in
many contexts. Despite high rates of domestic violence and increased rates of honour
killing over the last decade in Palestine, there is a paucity of empirical data about the
phenomenon, the social and cultural forces underlying it and how it affects family
members emotionally and socially. The standpoint of this thesis is that Palestinian society
today has no solution to honour killing (HK). This study addresses two questions: the
factors that contribute to HK, as reported by the participants; and the emotional and
social effects and consequences of it. The study adopted a Grounded Theory method.
Data were collected using individual and group interviews with family members,
professionals and neighbours associated with victims of HK. The total numbers of the
participants were 43 (23 family members, 15 professionals and 5 neighbours). A feminist
paradigm guided the data collection and analysis. The findings of this study have
revealed that the HK phenomenon is multifaceted, grounded in the interplay of several
complex factors, including institutionalized patriarchy within society, families and
Palestinian culture; honour and shame values in the traditional society and other societal
influences (cultural norms and values, legislative and institutional systems). This study
therefore concluded that HKs were patriarchal and traditional methods of disempowering
and subjugating women, enabled (directly or indirectly) by families, communities,
political parties, religious leaders, professionals and the state, rendering society at large
as unlikely to condemn honour killing. The main result was that although family
members killed their female relatives primarily in an attempt to re-establish their honour,
the murder failed in this purpose and in fact made their situation worse. Understanding
this significant finding gives a clear message to family members and to the public that
honour killing harms perpetrators emotionally and further damages family honour, where
enter into a long process which ultimately leads to social death. Thus, multiple efforts are
needed to combat HK, but this is extremely difficult. Altering the attitudes and behaviour
of those who believe in HK is not an easy task but one of the first and crucial steps in
combating this issue is state action. This study shows that most participants, especially
family members, were concerned about family reputation and endeavoured to resolve
problems within the family. This makes solving the problems inside families more
difficult for any external party. Therefore, it is necessary to find ways to work with
families. Further research has the potential to increase our understanding of other social
factors and processes involved in honour killing, which would enable concerned parties
to better craft effective intervention strategies.
Declaration:

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other institute of learning.

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My heartfelt thanks goes to Dr. Shaun Speed for his careful attention to the detail of this study, for his thought provoking advice and for providing meaningful insight. Thank you for providing ongoing practical support and indeed for teaching me how to be a Grounded Theory researcher.

Family and friends played an important role during the year. Most of my thanks should go to my family, particularly my husband, Nasser Atalla, and my two daughters, Dina and Sophia, for their precious love, constant support and encouragement. Thank you for supporting me all the way.

My sincere appreciation goes to:
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The Author

I qualified as a staff nurse in 1993 from the University of Jordan. I worked as a staff nurse in a general hospital in Amman in Jordan, and in Bethlehem in Palestine from 1993 until 1998. Then in 1998 I worked as a lecturer at Al-Quds University. There I was supported to undertake a Master degree in Community Mental Health. In September, 2008, I was granted a scholarship from the Ford Foundation in New York, United States of America, to do my PhD study at the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social work, University of Manchester. I started my PhD study in January 2009.
Foreword

Overview of the thesis:

Chapter one is an introductory chapter which provides background information and debates about the concept of honour and honour killings. The debate about concepts of honour killing will be explored and the working definition that will be adopted in this study will be clearly articulated.

Chapter two reviews the literature about honour killing. Attention is paid to the substantive literature relating to honour killing, with a particular focus on research which has been conducted on the challenges that mental health professionals faced while working with threatened victims of honour killing.

Chapter three introduces the qualitative methodology used in the study. The rationale for deciding the methodology is presented. This study was drawn largely from feminists and symbolic interactionism approaches. The main tension and intermediate conflicts between the adopted methodology and the theoretical frameworks is discussed in detail.

Chapter four describes the research working methods employed in the design of the study. This study explored the experience of family members who lost their female relatives as a result of honour killing. This chapter also discusses the issue of rigour in qualitative studies and the ethical consideration pertinent to this type of study. This chapter explores the practical issues associated with researching sensitive subjects in a manner consistent with good practices.

The findings of this study are presented in three chapters: Chapter five highlights the socio-cultural and familial factors associated with the occurrence of honour killing in Palestine. Chapter six presents the pivotal roles that governmental and nongovernmental institutions played in the practice of honour killing. The main challenges and hurdles that women’s institutions faced in dealing with the threatened victims of honour killing and their families are
explored. In this chapter the structural context is also explored and the link between it and the socio-cultural factors is highlighted. Chapter seven presents the theory of “social death” and how family members managed to live with social exclusion by their close-knit community. It highlights the effect of the crimes on family members. The contextual factors affecting the effect on family members are described. The consequences of the effects of the honour killings on family members are presented.

Chapter eight discusses the issues arising from the findings. Links are made with a range of theoretical and substantive literature. Male domination and an honour code are linked to the literature and how they are socially constructed inside Palestinian society is discussed. The original contribution of this thesis is discussed. Finally, strengths and weaknesses of the study are highlighted. Implication for policy and practice and recommendations for future research will also be addressed.
Significance and background of the study
Introduction:

The first chapter of this thesis introduces the significance of study by commencing with background information. The scope and aims of the study are provided along with the research questions. The reader is provided with an appreciation of the problem, various definitions of honour and honour killing (HK), and the existing knowledge related to the problem.

1.1 Significance of the study

In the Middle East, HKs have been reported in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Yemen, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), but they are a worldwide occurrence (UN, 2002; Iqbal, 2006; Vitoshka, 2010). In 2000, the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) estimated that 5000 women are victims of HK every year (UNPF, 2000). In 2005, it was further reported that definitive worldwide estimates of HK incidence do not exist (Amnesty International, 2005). This was related to many reasons, such as the fact that most HKs are not reported, perpetrators go unpunished, and the concept of HK justifying the act in the eye of the society (Mayell, 2002). When reviewing the statistics concerning HK and its incidence nationally and internationally, Abu-Lughod (2011) found that the figure of 5000 HKs globally has become a standard statistic used in numerous reports. Only a few sources give a date and source for these figures (UNPF, 2000), whilst other reports speculate that the apparent increase in prevalence is related to how figures are derived. This reflects the complexity surrounding the definition of the concept of HK (Abu-Lughod, 2011), the misunderstanding of the phenomenon (Abu-Lughod, 2011), the failure to analyze it sufficiently (Vitoshka, 2010) and this leads to difficulties in prevention.

The failure to provide clear facts about the context and concept of HK renders the phenomenon open to debate or false analysis. As discussed by Abu-Lughod (2011), unreliable statistics, little discussion of the context, individual situations and similarities and commonalities across forms of violence against women make it difficult to compare between general homicide and murders committed in the name of honour. Therefore,
Abu-Lughod (2011) emphasized that in order to understand the HK phenomenon, the specific social conditions in which women, men and families find themselves in particular settings is a starting point. She also added that the analysis of gender violence should address the local, national, international, political, institutional and cultural dynamics.

HK is a significant social problem which affects the unity and stability of Palestinian and other societies (Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2006). The true extent of this violence is still unknown due to under-reporting of these acts and the fear and shame associated with these crimes, and the acceptance of abuse within families. The various records detailing the prevalence rate suggests that there is a high level of violence against women committed by family members indicating that about 37% of women who have ever been married were exposed to violence by their husbands and that there is a dramatic increase in the HK cases during times of political violence (HRW, 2006, PCBS 2011). A high correlation between political violence and increased levels of abuse against women was reported in the majority of the national and international reports about violence against women in OPT (Amnesty International, 2005; HRW, 2006; Palestinians Central Bureau (PCBS), 2006; Hansson, 2008).

The Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOW) in OPT published a situational analysis in 2010 that addressed violence against women and the suggested strategies to combat it. This report highlighted the pervasiveness of violence against women in OPT. In spite of the difficulty in finding reliable statistics, the reports of MOW (2010) and Al-Muntada (2007) managed to uncover high rates of abuse. MOW also reported that domestic violence is not prohibited by law in OPT and that perpetrators of HKs are still protected by this same law (MOW, 2010).

Similar to other traditional and conservative societies, OPT uses customary methods of legislation and social normalization to validate the codified practice of gendered abuse, resulting in its uninterrupted existence (HRW, 2006). One such prevailing application of gendered violence used to strengthen traditional notions of masculine supremacy in OPT is the recurring practice of HK, which
represents about two-thirds of all murders in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (the exact number of murders was not mentioned in the UNICEF report) (UNICEF, 2000; Hassan, 2006).

In one recent study conducted in OPT, it was found that health care practices concerning family violence are hindered because of misconceptions and the fear that involving people outside the family could break through the boundaries of the family or ruin the family’s reputation (Haj-Yahia, 2009). Robinson and Spilsbury’s (2008) systematic review of ten studies that were conducted in UK, Australia and USA showed that a lack of knowledge about interpersonal violence and specific training in related issues may underlie medical personals’ hesitancy to assess victimization in patients. Some investigators have noted that negative attitudes towards victims of violence may also compromise the care received by them (Robinson and Spilsbury, 2008). However, these findings suggest that research is needed on potential prevention and possible intervention measures that could be successfully offered to victims of violence. Studies have also demonstrated the need to improve our contextual understanding of violence against women and HK in OPT and beyond (Hasso, 1998; Kevorkian, 2000).

Given the paucity of information on this topic and the apparent spread of such violent acts, research in this area is crucial. By examining the motives underlying HKs in OPT and the effects of the HK on family members, this thesis to give some insight into the relative roles of socio-cultural, institutional and familial factors in shaping such crimes.

Violent death is recognized as one of the most traumatic crisis events that can be experienced. Coping with it is damaging and disabling for bereaved families. Despite the similarities between HKs and homicide cases, this subject is still under-researched, and consequently many factors about the effects of HK remain unclear.

Studies show that family members’ inability to talk about their experience of losing their loved one does not necessarily mean that they are not affected emotionally (Stewart, 1994). Many thoughts and feelings crowd into the mind of the bereaved person, which consequently affects their grief in a negative way (Stewart, 1994).
Still less is known about how health care service providers can best care for those who grieve and for those who are not allowed to express their grief. This study will therefore explore the emotional and social impact of these HKs on family members and the potential role of the mental health professionals (MHPs) in providing care to these family members. This Grounded Theory (GT) research study will be helpful to gain a greater understanding how MHP can best care for those who grieve.

1.2 Choice of methodology

This study is an exploratory study using GT method. GT is a research methodology that enables researchers to understand the thoughts and ideas of people who usually have a common experience (in this case, the families of victims of HKs). GT is commonly used to discover new information where little is known about a subject (Moghaddam, 2006). GT focuses on the nature of social process (how people think and behave) that are used by individuals to resolve challenging issues. This approach is helpful in generating a theory to explain this behaviour and may also be helpful in predicting future patterns of behaviour (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Walker and Myrick, 2006; Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

1.3 Emergent research problem and questions

1.3.1 Research aim and questions

The main aim of the study was to understand and explore the emotional and social effects of HKs on the families of the victims.

Research questions were:

1) What are the root factors that contribute to HK of women, as reported by the participants?

2) What are emotional and social effects of the HK of female relatives for the family members?

3) What are the potential roles that can be effectively adopted by MHPs to help the bereaved family members to deal with emotional and social consequences of losing their female relative as a result of HK?
1.4 Study context description

To set the study context, a brief discussion about OPT, its culture and HK follows.

1.4.1 Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)

The Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) includes the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. OPT is an Arabic country in the Middle East. It was occupied by Israel on 14\textsuperscript{th} May, 1948 (dubbed by Palestinians \textit{Al-Nakba} – ‘the Catastrophe’). As well as historical OPT (as defined by the 1922 Mandate of the League of Nations), Israel has occupied the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip since June 1967, as well as annexing the Golan Heights from Syria. The Palestinian Authority (PA) was established on 29\textsuperscript{th} August, 1994, in accordance with the Oslo Accords peace process, on 13\textsuperscript{th} September, 1993. The Oslo Accords attempted to resolve the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflicts and were a framework for the future relations between the two parties.

The term ‘Arab’ is associated with a particular region of the world and includes almost all of the people in the region extending from the Atlantic coast of Northern Africa to the Arabian Gulf. The classification is based largely on common language (Arabic) and a shared sense of geographical, historical, and cultural identity. The term ‘Arab’ is not a racial classification, but includes peoples with widely varied physical features. Arabic people may tend to view themselves as a unified entity (Hammad et al., 1999), but they are not a homogeneous group with respect to race or religious belief, and although the majority are normally Muslim (92\%), they include significant Christian and Jewish communities (Hammad et al., 1999, p. 9). Maps 1 and 2 at the end of this section show details about the land and areas of the OPT after the Oslo Accords.

1.4.2 Cultural background of Arab society in relation to gender issues

Different researchers of the Arab world examined the interrelation between culture and the situation of women and showed the important link between the inherited norms and gender inequalities of women in the Arab world (Khater, 2001; Rubenburge, 2001; El-Sadawi and Hetata, 2007). The social values and norms of Arabs are more dominant than the religious, and they influence various spheres of life (Khater, 2001); the effects of the
inherited customs are more powerful in dominating women’s lives than religion (although the former are often disguised as the latter) especially in conditions that are related to women’s rights to ordinary activities such as travelling alone, decision making, earning money and working (El-Sadawi and Hetata, 2007). It is suggested that the patriarchal system plays an important role in shaping women’s perceptions of themselves. Some of these perceptions may lead to them accepting many practices as proper, normative, or justifiable, like accepting beating and humiliation, in addition to legitimizing the limitations of their roles in society (Hasso, 1998; Rubenburge, 2001; Levesque, 2005).

As discussed by many scholars (e.g. Barakat, 1985; Kevorkian, 1999, 2000; Haj-Yahia, 2009), the patriarchal Palestinian society constructs a socially non-negotiable role for females that requires them to rely on I’zweh, which means the protection by males, in order to ‘survive’. Consequently, women may feel secure, although the price they must pay for I’zweh is submission to the male hierarchy (Kevorkian, 1999). As argued by Kevorkian (1999), to be born female in Arab society is to be born voiceless (at least as required by masculine hegemonic needs). This is demonstrated by customs surrounding the birth of a child, the acculturation process, marriage and how the society deals with the abuse of females (Kevorkian, 1999).

1.5 Honour, HK and their debated definitions

Within the Arabic customary mores, immodest behaviour dishonours a family, and one way to cleanse family ‘honour’ is by loss of life (Baron, 2006). Honour is a collective affair, and the honour of the entire family depends on every member, and particularly the conduct of women. The concept of honour may depend on an individual’s own feeling of self-worth; or it may be depend upon the assessment of the person’s worth in the eyes of others; or by the actual opinion of the individual held by others or even by a complex interaction of all three (Council of Europe Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2003). In some circumstances, female and male honours differ. Female honour is enshrined in concepts such as virginity, modesty or selfless love whereas male honour is framed by the capacity to defend the honour of the female (Council of Europe
Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2003). Abu-Lughod (1985) argued that the meaning of ‘honour’ in Middle Eastern society transcends the meaning of self-respect; rather it is a mechanism that regulates social relations and the attitudes of individuals.

Researchers have highlighted that there is no common and unique definition of ‘honour’ in the traditional value system (Mojab and Abdo, 2004; Sen, 2005; Gültekin, 2011). This in turn affects the implementation of the HK and the approach to gender relations (Mojab, 2004; Sen, 2005; Gültekin, 2011). Gültekin (2011) believed that such ambiguity in the definition is due to cultural and regional differences and results in many contradictions, restrictions and punishment. Such ambiguity also results in the differences in how HK is defined and conceptualised in research studies by varying scholars.

The Council of Europe Committee on Equal opportunity (2003) defined HK as:

‘The murder of a woman by a close family member or partner as a result of (suspected or alleged) shame being brought on a family by the action (a suspicion or allegation will be enough) of the woman’ (Council of Europe Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2003, paragraph 10)

To overcome ambiguity in defining HK, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (2010) encouraged the writers of legislation and also researchers into HK issues to adopt an expansive definition of HK that reflects three basic elements: 1) control over a woman’s behaviour; 2) a male’s feeling of shame over his loss of control over female behaviour; and 3) community or familial involvement in augmenting and addressing this shame (UNIFEM, 2010). UNIFEM (2010) stressed that HK is a form of violence against women, and consequently governments are expected to exercise due diligence in preventing and punishing it.

Much of the previous literature in the field highlights considerable debate about using the terms ‘honour’ and ‘honour killing’ (Council of Europe Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, 2003; UNIFEM, 2010; Baisley, 2010). Baisley (2010) argued that categorizing HK as a specific form of killing rather than a murder or violence against women promotes religious and cultural stereotypes. Others adopted a
culturally-blind approach and considered HK as a part of a universal problem of patriarchy that affects women regardless of their culture (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010).

Baisley (2010) and Korteweg and Yurdakul (2010) emphasized that although this approach (i.e. the universality of the HK phenomenon) attempts to eradicate the cultural stigmatization of (Muslim) immigrant communities, it is at the price of marginalizing the complexities that structure women’s (and men’s) identities and practices. Korteweg and Yurdakul (2010) clarified that people’s identities and practices are constituted in the intersections of race, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, class, sexuality and other social divisions, but culturally blind approaches ignore all but the gender dimension.

‘Honour-related violence’ is a newer formulation, used to capture forms of violence other than murder that are motivated by perceived honour violations (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). Korteweg and Yurdakul (2010), in their critical analysis of political and media debates about honour-related violence in Europe and North America, noted that the terms ‘honour killing’ and ‘honour-related violence’ (and their equivalents in the relevant languages) are used more frequently in some Western countries such as Britain, Germany, Canada and the Netherlands. In the Dutch media, ‘honour-related violence’ is most often used, whilst the British media and policy reports use the formulation ‘so-called “honour”-based violence’, in order to implicitly reject the idea that murder or violence could legitimately be called ‘honourable’ (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). In both Germany and Canada, the term ‘honour killing’ is used, but not ‘honour-related violence’. Similarly, some Middle Eastern researchers prefer using the concept of ‘killing in the name of honour’ in order to avoid semantic rationalization of the killing (Mojab and Abdo, 2004). Researchers have also emphasized that HK should not be considered in isolation from the general phenomenon of violence against women, as this isolation has two risks: first, it may stigmatize immigrant communities (Ertürk, 2004; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010; Baisley, 2010); and second, the normalization of other forms of violence may make everyday incidents of violence against women invisible or neglected (Ertürk, 2004).
Korteweg and Yurdakul (2010) concluded that in Western countries, the HK phenomenon was largely conceptualized as resulting from immigrants’ culturally specific gender relations. They argued that such conceptualization had two contradictory consequences: stigmatizing minorities by positioning gender equality as a hallmark of Western culture and gender inequality as the mark of immigrants; and enabling an understanding of honour-related violence and HK as specific forms of domestic violence within immigrant communities (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). Therefore, researchers positioned HK in Arab societies within a broader context away from principles of cultural relativity (Abu-Rabia, 2011).

The literature on HK is not, however, homogenous as there is no consensus on the definition of the phenomenon (Ishaq, 2010). The lack of a clear conceptual and operational definition has been a barrier to valid and reliable research into HKs, in that numerous concepts of such crimes as used in the literature have revealed its elasticity (Abu-Odeh, 2000; Kevorkian, 2002; Touma-Sliman, 2005; Welchman and Hossain, 2005; Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006; Gill, 2006; Hansson, 2008; Reddy, 2008). For example, both Kevorkian (2002) and Welchman (2005) argue that using the term ‘crimes of honour’ and more specifically ‘honour killing’ has two risks: Firstly, the definition of the crimes is mainly determined by the perpetrator, and secondly, it legitimises the abuse by claiming that ‘honour’ is a contributing factor (Kevorkian, 2002).

Researchers in HK suggest that ‘crimes of honour’ refers to a variety of forms of violence against women, such as ‘honour killings’, assault, confinement or incarceration, and forced marriage (Welchman and Hossain, 2005, p. 4). The term ‘crimes of honour’ is generally used to refer to a type of violence against women categorized by ‘motivation’ rather than by the perpetrator or other forms of manifestation (Welchman and Hossain, 2005).

In her in-depth qualitative study of ‘femicide’, Kevorkian (2000) expanded the definition of HK to reflect the voices of victims in OPT by reframing it within a continuum that extends from ‘threats’ to ‘actual killing’. Kevorkian argued that femicide is not only the actual killing; rather it is a range of acts and situations including not only the physical
killing of a woman, but also threats and other components of a painful and a difficult process that sometimes results in actual death. This reflects the level of suffering that a woman faces before murder, and also shows that sometimes living under a continuous threat of killing is a tortuous process. Kevorkian’s approach helps in exploring and understanding the process that leads to death. She defined *femicide* as:

“All violent acts that instil a perpetual fear in women or girls of being killed under the justification of “honour”” (Kevorkian, 2000, p. 7).

Sen (2005), in her in-depth analysis of HK, suggested three main elements in attempting to differentiate HKs from other acts of violence against women: first, the potential of women to participate in the killing; second, state sanction of such killings through recognition of honour as a motivation and mitigation; and third, the collective decisions regarding punishment.

Sen’s contributions have moved the discussion beyond the debate around the idea of mitigation and justification of these crimes. Sen considered HK to be honour-based killing that is rooted in collectively monitored and policed codes of behaviour (Sen, 2005). Faqir (2001) and Obu-Odeh (2000) provided narrower definitions of HK, by linking it only with actual and suspected deviation from sexual norms imposed by the society. Others such as Vitoshka (2010) added forced suicide and a murder for fabricated offense to the definition of HK and emphasized that HK targeted both women and men, in order to not deny the suffering of male victims of HK. Such varieties in the definitions offered reflects the complexity of the HK phenomenon and the need for researchers to define it more precisely in order to avoid misinterpretations and to address the phenomenon more effectively.

The literature on HK also showed that there is no conformity as to whether such crimes are specific in kind and nature or similar to other crimes against women (Ishaq, 2010). Most scholars studying the occurrence of HK in Western and non-Western cultures suggest that in order to better understand and prevent HK, it is a fundamental requirement not to confuse ‘honour-related’ crimes with what are known as ‘crimes of passion’ or other forms of domestic violence. The implication here is that HK is related
to the social context in which it occurs, and not to the individualist emotional imbalance of the perpetrator of the crime of passion (Welchman and Hossain, 2005; Ishaq, 2010). However, Southall Black Sisters and South Asian activists in the UK stressed that HK is a murder, but is not unique in nature compared to domestic violence or other forms of violence against women (Siddiqui, 2005). Southall Black Sisters have argued that domestic violence is a narrow and Western notion that ignores or fails to account for a number of problems affecting black and minority women in the UK (Siddiqui, 2005). They have suggested further that separating HKs from other forms of domestic violence stigmatizes minority cultures as barbaric, patriarchal, and cruel, leading to differential and racist treatment from the state and the mainstream community (Siddiqui, 2005). The group have also argued that honour-related violence is gender-neutral, because men have also been victims of HK and forced marriage (Siddiqui, 2003). However, Baker et al. (1999) have argued that whilst this may have some truth, men are more able to escape the negative sanctions triggered by a breach of ‘honour’, and even if they are subject to violence, their female counterparts still do not escape punishment themselves. Siddiqui (2005) also stressed that in cases where men are the victims of an ‘HK’, they are usually targeted due to an actual or suspected relationship with a woman which would ruin the woman’s reputation and expose her to potential HK (Siddiqui, 2005). In this way, without attempting to simply dismiss or deny the victimisation of males in certain cases, it is still possible to argue that men’s victimisation revolves around attempts to control women, and that it is a form of gender-based violence (Reddy, 2008).

The issue of considering HK and honour-related violence as a gender-based violence is however highly debatable, not least because (as experts in HK discussed) of the role of female relatives in committing these crimes. The main debate is whether, if a woman is involved in these crimes, it can be termed ‘gender-based’ violence. The writing of Kandiyoti (1998) on ‘patriarchal bargaining’ provided in-depth understanding in this argument, as she clarified that the authority of senior women is internalized by younger women through women’s life cycle in the patriarchal extended family. In classic patriarchy, the control of older women over young women is counterpart to their subordination to men. Older women depend heavily on their sons and therefore they are
preoccupied to show their lifelong loyalty. As a consequence, in their attempts to keep the conjugal bond, older women often suppress, control or even abuse young women. The impact of this classic patriarchy has many complications in women’s lives, as older women exercise more surveillance against them. In order to reproduce family status, older women resist breaking the traditional rules by younger women through using harsh punishment and even murder.

In order to be explicit in describing HK, UNIFEM encouraged researchers to include in their definition of HK responses to all kinds of behaviour that challenges the authority of men (UNIFEM, 2010). Their aim is to enable the policy makers of laws and legislation to be mindful of the possible exclusion of behaviours and sanctions.

For the purpose of this study, I formulated a definition of HK that incorporates the above researchers, experts and scholars’ suggestions and also reflects the Arabic context. However, I do acknowledge that there cannot be one definition that encompasses the complex nature of HK. For the purpose of this thesis the definition of HK is:

The killing of a woman by her father, uncles, brothers, mother or others for behaving contrary to the traditional cultural norms of modesty; for engaging in, or being suspected of engaging in, sexual practices before or outside marriage; for violations of restrictions imposed on the dress of women and girls, employment or educational opportunities, social lifestyle, or freedom of movement. A woman can be targeted by her family members for a variety of reasons, including behaving against familial norms, refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of a sexual assault, seeking a divorce and even for seeking inheritance rights.
1.6 Summary

As discussed in this chapter, the lack of consensus on the meaning of honour and HK terms, combined with unreliable data, has made it difficult to measure the true dimensions of the phenomenon. Some of the terms are used interchangeably to describe issues related to HK, including honour-related violence, gender-based violence and crime of honour. It is difficult to estimate the prevalence of HK due to the inconsistency in definitions, under-reporting, and lack of epidemiological studies concerning the subject. In order to understand the contributing factors to this phenomenon, the next chapter examines the available literature on the topic.
Map 1: in green colour the West bank and Gaza strip
Map 2: Palestinian security and civil control after Oslo Agreement
Reference: United Nation Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. May 2010
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review
Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter starts by discussing the debate in the literature concerning GT and then search questions and search strategy are discussed in detail. The chapter provides description of the reviewed studies and their quality and addresses the current research concerning HK and critically reviews the literature relating to honour killing and its contributing factors. Other literature relating to the experience of service providers in dealing with honour killing cases and strategies for help are discussed in detail. Finally, the gaps in the literature are identified.

The aim of a literature review is to build a case or rationale for the proposed study and to identify any gaps in the knowledge on the topic of the study (Hart, 1998). The purpose of reviewing the literature is to fill gaps in the existing theory, to identify research questions and to complete the theoretical description. It also familiarises the researcher with works that have been published on all concepts related to a study, and introduces the researcher to how the topic under study has been researched by others, highlighting key issues.

A GT methodology will be used in this study, and accordingly a new body of literature will be created after generating the study findings. Reviewing the existing body of the literature is essential in establishing a connection between theory and reality (Munhal, 2001, p. 233).

2.2 Debate about reviewing the literature in GT

The founders of GT differ in their views about using literature at the beginning. Glaser and Strauss (1967) warn the researcher against conducting the literature review on the topic of interest in order to limit the intake of information about the focus of the study. According to Glaser (1992), there is no need to review the literature in the substantive area under study.
Strauss (1987) sees the literature as playing a key role in sensitizing the researcher, and Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) proposed techniques whereby prior understandings are deliberately used to question data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), prior literature can be used as a secondary source of data and as ‘a stepping off point during initial interviews’ (cited by Reinicki, 2007, p. 28).

While this thesis adopted a GT using the Strauss and Corbin approach, it used past research on HKs to inform the study. The literature about HKs was examined and incorporated into the research. This was done to sensitize the researcher to those factors that have been found to contribute to the occurrence of HKs in previous research, and also to build a body of knowledge about how MHPs can best help the victims and their families.

Additionally, the literature review was conducted for pragmatic reasons as a doctoral research student I was required to gain ethical approval prior to commencing data collection. One of the requirements of the ethical approval application was to present a research proposal including a literature review.

2.3 General aim for doing the initial literature review

This review was undertaken to gauge existing knowledge in the field, to determine where major gaps in the existing research about HK remain, to identify research questions and to provide a rationale for the conduct of the proposed research.

2.4 Review objectives

- To identify the contributing factors to the occurrence of HKs.
- To investigate the relationship between cultural background and the prevalence of HK in the OPT and worldwide.
- To identify how MHPs can best help.
2.5 Review questions

1. To what extent do the societal cultural norms, religious beliefs, notion of honour and other external factors create a situation wherein HK can occur?

2. What are the support measures, as suggested in the literature, which can be undertaken by MHPs to deal with the families of HKs?

One of the difficulties in reviewing the literature is that there is little comprehensive information on violence against women or HK of women in OPT, and the statistics about the prevalence of these incidents are often unreliable. During the last 10 years, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) has tried to investigate the prevalence of domestic violence and intimate partner abuse, but the true extent of this violence is still unknown due to underreporting of these acts by the victims as a result of fear, shame, or acceptance of abuse (PCBS, 2006). The various records about the incidence rates are not reliable, but the basic contours of the problem are clear. The majority of reports and research studies by PCBS (2006, 2009, 2011a) and international organizations such as HRW and national organizations such as Palestinian Central Bureau indicated that there is a high level of violence against women committed by family members, and there is a high correlation between political violence and increased levels of abuse against women (PCBS, 2006; Hansson, 2008). They also suggested that the occurrence of honour killing is inextricably is linked with general violence against women.

2.6 Search strategy

The aim of this review was to explore literature relevant to HK and notions of honour. The search was started in 2009 and the final update was in May 2012. The key words included ‘domestic violence’, ‘crime of honour’, ‘honour killing’, ‘honour-related violence’, ‘honour-based violence’, ‘femicide’ ‘honour’, ‘killing’, ‘marital violence’, ‘causes’ and ‘effects’. It was observed that terms such as ‘honour killing’, ‘crimes of honour’, ‘honour violence’, ‘honour-related violence’ are used interchangeably in the literature, and therefore for simplicity the term ‘honour killing’ (i.e. HK) is used throughout this thesis. Search strategies involved extensive searching of six electronic data bases: Ovid MEDLINE (1946 to May Week 1 2012), PsycINFO (1806 to March
Week 2 2012), PsychBooks from 1806 to May 2012, Social Policy and Practice 20/1/2012, Cochrane Database of Systematic Review (for the 1st quarter of 2009) and Peer Review (1968-2009). The decision to use these electronic resources and databases was based upon my previous academic experience, education and the topic under study. HK is complex topic and has different meaning and definitions so using different resources from different disciplines enabled me to capture most of the articles that were related to the subject under study. Given the breadth of the material uncovered, the search had to employ an approach that helped in retrieving literature sources for investigation, including Google Scholar search, hand search of key journals (such as Journal of Postmodern Criminology and Journal of Personality and Social Psychology), and subsequent ‘snowballing’ of references. An examination of the references list helped me to identify studies which would indicate any relevant work that could then be sourced. A hand search of key journals enabled the researcher to identify recent material that might not have been found in database searching. The above journals were chosen because they covered issues related to HK or they had published studies related to HK. Grey literature including dissertations, were checked through PsyInfo and website of relevant organization were searched for any local studies.

2.7 Inclusion criteria

This study aims to explore the contributing factors that lead to the occurrence of HKs and the emotional and social effects of these killings on family members. The emotional and social effects are not explored in the previous literature, therefore empirical studies about HKs were included whether they examined the effects of murders or not. The literature review was not restricted to any geographical area. Studies in both English and all common Arabic translations or equivalents of the English key terms searched for were included. Related to the limited studies that addressed HK in OPT, studies about violence against women were also included in order to broaden the understanding of the contextual factors that contribute to the occurrence of violence against women. Qualitative and quantitative studies about HK were included.
2.8 Data extraction

Searching databases using the generated key terms resulted in more than 2000 references in Ovid Medline, Peer Review, Psych INFO and through searching Google Scholar. Searching and reading the suggested results would have been time-consuming and therefore the following limits were applied to the search:

- This study focused on a certain type of homicide, HK, therefore empirical studies about homicide of women as a result of political or state violence and other causes were excluded from this initial literature review.

- Studies that addressed other forms of gender-based violence and violence against women such as trafficking, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and forced marriage were excluded from this literature review.

Despite the applied search restrictions, the search still yielded a large number of studies (738 references). Therefore, the search procedures were directed toward reading the studies’ abstracts in order to exclude unrelated studies. Subsequently, the full texts of the studies were extracted and used in the review. Duplications in the references were then eliminated, resulting in 100 studies. At this stage, I was able to exclude studies that were not relevant to the study, as some discussed other types of violence, such as sexual abuse, family violence and marital violence, but not HK. Some studies discussed only the notion of honour and not HK, so they were also excluded. Some authors were contacted when only the abstract was published. Only one author replied and sent her study and also suggested new references. A further refinement of the studies was made, resulting in 35 relevant studies concerning HK (primary research, secondary research and two systematic reviews).
2.9 Quality issues

Critical appraisal of the literature in this review used the checklist established by Hawker et al. (2002), incorporating a coded comments system that allows reviewers to record an assessment of each checklist component. After consideration of all items on a given checklist, the methodological quality of each study was rated using Hawker et al. score (1-9 very poor; 10-19 poor; 20-29 fair; 30-40 good). Hawker et al.’s method covers a number of areas, including: abstract and title; introduction and aims; method and data; sampling; data analysis; ethics and bias; findings/results; transferability; implications and usefulness. Each area has sub-areas, which are rated on a 4-point scale (1 very poor; 2 poor; 3 fair and 4 good).
After assessing the quality of the reviewed studies, the range of total scores of the reviewed studies was 16-32. Most of the reviewed studies were ranked poor
to good quality. A summary of total scores with sub scores are presented with a clear indication of the strengths and weaknesses of each identified study according to this judgment method. The screening elements for the assessment form and the details of the assessment criteria for each area are shown in Appendix 1 to explicitly show how scores are decided according to the scale of Hawker et al. (2002). The quality of the reviewed studies can be seen in Appendix 2. The characteristics of the reviewed studies can be seen in appendix 3.
2.10 Description and quality of the reviewed studies

Twenty-six primary studies were identified, seven secondary research studies, and two systematic reviews, as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Studies identified by type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Studies (n=26)</th>
<th>Secondary Studies (n=7)</th>
<th>Systematic Review Studies (n=2)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Araji &amp; Carlson, 2001</td>
<td>Kogacioglu, 2004</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A’jlouni, 2002</td>
<td>Agarwal, 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andersson, 2003</td>
<td>Devers &amp; Bacon, 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW, 2004</td>
<td>Hartman, 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sev'er, 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinthio &amp; Ericson, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Iqbal, 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ali, 2008</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Belge, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edvardsson, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Goksel, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hansson, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kardam, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasrullah et al., 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouis, 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korteweg &amp; Yurdakul, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishaq, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terman, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitoshka, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zia Ullah, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abu-Rabia, 2011</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Most of the reviewed studies were qualitative studies (Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994; Kevorkian, 2000; HRW, 2004; Sev'er, 2005; Cinthio and Ericson, 2006; HRW, 2006; Iqbal, 2006; Ali, 2008; Belge, 2008; Edvardsson, 2008; Kardam,

Two of these studies were mixed-methods studies that used qualitative studies and surveys (Miller, 2009; Zia Ullah, 2010). Thirty-four studies were published since 2000. Most of the studies were descriptive, not analytical. The reviewed studies discussed the nature and historical roots of HK in the Middle East, the UK and Canada; factors contributing to its occurrence; a brief description of the characteristics of both the victims and the perpetrators; and suggested possible strategies in combating it.

It was observed that legal issues and prescriptions were the main concern of half of the studies (Kevorkian, 2000; Faqir, 2001; Kulwicki, 2002; HRW, 2004; Kogacioglu, 2004; Sev’er, 2005; Edvardsson, 2006; HRW, 2006; Iqbal, 2006; Agarwal, 2008; Ali, 2008; Belge, 2008; Hansson, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Reddy, 2008; Ouis, 2009; Devers and Bacon, 2010; Hartman, 2010; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010; Vitoshka, 2010), and one focused on the media and policy debates (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). Some of the studies reviewed failed to provide additional perspectives on the analysis of HK, and sometimes they duplicated information and added little to the knowledge base.

The reviewed studies were heterogeneous in all aspects of design, including sample, methods, results and outcomes. The studies employed a variety of research methods and participants. Quantitative studies used a structured survey questions (Araji and Carlson, 2001; Miller, 2009) and analysis of court and medical files (Kulwicki, 2002). Qualitative studies used interviews with varied participants, such as family members, professionals (including MHP, police and lawyers), tribal notables, religious leaders and judges. One of the qualitative studies (Ali, 2008) used both interviews and participant observation of religious lessons in various mosques in Jordan. The studies were also varied in the matter of the setting: four studies were conducted in the Palestinian Territory (Kevorkian, 2000; A’jlouni, 2002; HRW, 2006; Hansson, 2008); four in Israel
(Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994; Hasan, 2002; Ouis, 2009; Abu-Rabia, 2011); seven in Turkey (Andersson, 2003; Kogacioglu, 2004; Sev'er, 2005; Agarwal, 2008; Goksel, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Vitoshka, 2010); one in Sweden (Edvardsson, 2008); eight in Jordan (Araji and Carlson, 2001; Faqir, 2001; Kulwicki, 2002; HRW, 2004; Cinthio and Ericson, 2006; Ali, 2008; Miller, 2009; Hartman, 2010); one in North America (Terman, 2010); four in Pakistan (Iqbal, 2006; Patel and Gadet, 2008; Nasrullah et al., 2009; Zia-Ullah, 2010); one in MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) (Kulczycki and Windle, 2011); one among South Asian women in Canada (Ishaq, 2010); one in the Netherlands, Germany and the UK (Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010); and one in the UK as a single study site (Reddy, 2008).

Participants in these studies were recruited from a number of sources. Two of the case study researchers (Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994; Vitoshka, 2010) did not mention the source of the case studies they analyzed. Therefore, it is not possible to judge the credibility of the study by Glazer and Abu-Ras (1994), or whether they followed ethical consideration while recruiting the participants. Providing detailed information about the method of recruitment in sensitive studies is very important, as any potential biases in recruitment will jeopardize the internal validity of any study (Huibers et al., 2004). The following table presents the sources of the twenty six primary reviewed studies and two systematic reviews studies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author and Date of Publication</th>
<th>Source of Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kulwicki, 2002</td>
<td>Court records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goksel, 2008</td>
<td>Parliamentary records, penal codes and civil laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belge, 2008</td>
<td>Archival research in court houses and other state archives, and interviews with lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police officials, murder convicts serving jail sentences, members of women’s organizations, local notables in rural areas, and Kurdish nationalist leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korteweg &amp; Yurdakul, 2010</td>
<td>Parliamentary records, newspapers, NGOs and police documents and interviews with stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zia Ullah, 2010</td>
<td>Statistics from Human Rights Commission, books and documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Se’ver, 2005</td>
<td>Court transcripts and local and national media coverage and case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goksel 2008</td>
<td>Lawyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali, 2008</td>
<td>Women’s organizations and mosques Clinical work, court records, police officers, judges, tribal notables, village Mukhtar, Attorney General and Chief Forensic Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Araji &amp; Carlson, 2001</td>
<td>University students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, 2009</td>
<td>University students, lawyers, academic, judges and legal professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ouis, 2009</td>
<td>Interview with teenagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevorkian, 2000</td>
<td>Clinical work, court records, police officers, judges, tribal notables, village Mukhtar, Attorney General and Chief Forensic Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinthio &amp; Ericsson, 2006</td>
<td>Dailies (e.g. <em>Jordan Times</em>) and campaign speeches from organizations fighting HK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iqbal, 2006; Edvardsson, 2008; Hansson, 2008</td>
<td>Victim support organizations and NGO activists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW, 2006; Kardam, 2008</td>
<td>Local organizations and previous research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishaq, 2010</td>
<td>Previous literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andersson, 2003; Nasrullah et al., 2009; Zia-Ullah, 2010</td>
<td>Documents (e.g. books, articles from journals and NGO reports) in order to collect secondary statistical data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW, 2004</td>
<td>Women in prison, Lawyer, police, judges, MHPs and Parliment members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A’jlouni, 2002</td>
<td>Public, detail about who was interviewed was not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitoshka, 2010</td>
<td>Case studies from Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only three authors addressed the difficulties of recruitment during their research (Ali, 2008; Edvardsson, 2008; Kardam, 2008). Two of the studies who tried to interview victims’ families reported that recruiting family members was difficult or even impossible (Edvardsson, 2008; Kardam, 2008). A families’ desire to not talk about the incidents after the murder inhibited recruitment; and, as suggested by Kardam (2008), reaching families or threatened victims was risky and required having personal connections with people (who were trusted by the families) who might be able to help researchers to recruit potential participants. Therefore, to deal with recruitment difficulties, Kardam (2008) mentioned that she interviewed people who witnessed the HK, professionals who worked previously with the victims, and she cross-checked the data with others and reviewed court files and interviewed judges and lawyers if there had been a trial. Similarly, Edvardsson (2008) in her study faced the same difficulties as she could not interview either the threatened victims or their families, and instead she interviewed MHP who worked closely with the threatened victims. The experience of previous research regarding recruitment showed that it is difficult to obtain confirmed first-hand data on HK, which provided the researcher in the current study with awareness of the main difficulties and challenges when recruiting participants and how to minimize these difficulties.

The critical appraisal of the studies revealed several methodological observations about the literature. First, the rigour of the data concerning the primary data of HK was frequently problematic, as much of data were
contradictory. For example, studies from Jordan showed different statistics in the matter of number of killings within the same year (Faqir, 2001; Kulwicki, 2002; Ali, 2008). Data from OPT also showed similar contradictions regarding victims’ and families’ characteristics and the number of murders (Kevorkian, 2000; HRW, 2006; Hansson, 2008). Data concerning perpetrators was incomplete, which affected reaching general consensus about them. Secondly, the rigour of data was also affected by their validity and reliability, trustworthiness and auditability as most of the reviewed studies interviewed representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions, lawyers and judges. Data from survey, qualitative and secondary research was also based upon court records, autopsy files and newspapers. The lack of consolidated and accurate data as a result of gender sensitivity and misreporting of HK led to partial information and misinterpretation, and consequently threatened the validity and reliability of the studies. Interviewing women threatened with HK and the victims’ families and knowledgeable informants could address such shortcomings and provide a full and truer picture of the reality of HK and the details of what happened with the victims before the murders.

The use of qualitative research methods in these studies was not accidental; this reflected the complex social and historical context in which HKs are practiced. These specific conditions necessitate the use of qualitative research methods in order to understand how the world operates, and to understand the subjective experience of persons in order to value the importance of relationship in human experiences (Klass et al., 1996). Additionally, HK was not explored fully in the literature, therefore utilizing qualitative research methods enabled the researchers to gain more information and understanding of the topic under study. However, the reviewed qualitative studies were different in design; used small and non-representative samples; lacked detailed information about case findings and sampling strategies; or lacked reasons for using specific data collecting methods of analysis and how the themes emerged, all of which compromised their credibility (and the problems in sampling affected the transferability). For example, Ali’s (2008) ethnographic study, Vitoshka’s (2010) case study, Edvardsson’s (2006) qualitative
study, Kardam’s (2008) qualitative study, HRW (2006) qualitative study and Hansson’s qualitative study (2008) had shortcomings because they did not mention in detail their methodology, how the sample was recruited, how saturation was achieved and how the decision to stop the interviews was made. This made it difficult to assess whether their sample uncovered most or all important perceptions in their studies. Ali (2008) did not mention how observation was carried out or the main difficulties in conducting her study and method of analysis.

Patel and Gadit (2008) conducted a descriptive systematic review in order to examine the motives underlying the *Karo-kari* killings (a type of premeditated HK) in Pakistan and other forms of violence against women. Patel and Gadit (2008) reviewed 14 papers that focused on Pakistan and other papers that covered the international perspective. Reports by media and governmental organizations were reviewed for case studies and analysis. In regard to the quality of the Patel and Gadit review (2008), their study was judged to be poor to fair quality because of missing data about the methodology of the included articles and reports, publication dates, sample size, population and other required characteristics, and the fact that minimal details about data analysis was provided.

Five studies were comparative (Andersson, 2003; Agarwal, 2008; Belge, 2008; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010; Vitoshka, 2010). Those comparative studies which analysed specific domains and were filled up with experiences gathered from different angles, enabling the reader to discover innovative approaches to the study of HK. In all, these studies of poor to fair quality and presented a complex picture of honour killing and its effects.
2.11 Descriptive synthesis of the research findings

A narrative approach was used to synthesise the included studies. At this stage I brought together the findings from the set of included studies in order to draw conclusions based on the body of evidence. I considered the relationships within the data and explored and organized findings from the included studies to describe the patterns across the studies.

The emergent themes from the synthesis of the studies reviewed were categorized into four themes:

- Factors underlying the occurrence of HK
- The perpetrators of HK
- Prevalence and lack of reliable and valid information
- How to help

2.11.1 Factors underlying the occurrence of HK

The reviewed literature provided theoretical perspectives on HK as created by different social attributes of honour versus dishonour, control, shame, gender, patriarchy and religious interpretation that could be based on aspects of tradition and heritage.

From the literature, HK was described as a complex phenomenon which was affected by multiple factors, such as religion, culture, gender, political forces and socioeconomic status. Accordingly, I categorized the aetiological factors and the motives underlying the occurrence of HK as discussed in the literature in order to facilitate the analysis for HK.

2.11.1.1 Patriarchy, honour, shame and family reputation

Most studies attributed the existence and perpetuation of HKs to the control of female sexuality and therefore ultimately of women. The studies that focused on ethnic minorities in Western countries also placed HK on the continuum of patriarchal beliefs (Andersson, 2003; Edvardsson, 2006; Agarwal, 2008; Belge, 2008; Ishaq, 2010; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). Andersson’s comparative
study (2003) aimed to see how patriarchy is maintained in Kurdistan in different ways, and how the Kurdish immigrants reproduce the patriarchal norms in Sweden. She found that the men cannot adjust in going from a collective societal structure (where the family is supremely important) to an individualist society which potentially allows more freedom for individuals (Andersson, 2003). She concluded that the men in patriarchal societies are used to control and domination within the family, especially over female members (Andersson, 2003). In Sweden, this changed, and children and women became aware of their rights. She reported that when men lost control over the family, this sometimes proved to be too great a change for them; therefore, Kurdish males, either in Kurdistan or in Sweden, tried to prevent women from dishonouring the family at any cost as a way to reassert their dominance.

Five of the reviewed studies (Kevorkian, 2000; Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006; Ali, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Andersson, 2003) suggested that woman in patriarchal society are sacrificed on the altar of ‘honour’ because that has a cheaper social price for the family. Because the concept of honour is so embedded in Middle Eastern countries and is connected with female virginity, ‘honour’ was the most often reported cause for the killing of women among the reviewed studies. The concept of ‘honour’ was used to justify the killing of women, because in patriarchal societies honour depends on the perception of others, therefore behaviour must be controlled (Abu-Rabia, 2011).

Both Kardam (2008) and Andersson (2003) emphasized that the honour/shame ethic is a system that subordinates women from the day they are born. Andersson (2003) emphasized that since the woman connects with shame, she must be wary of bringing shame onto her family (Andersson, 2003). Therefore, locating honour on the bodies of women and the control of their sexuality by men legitimizes HK in people’s minds, especially when the women have committed adultery. This is supported by Araj and Carlson’s survey (2001) of university students in Jordan and Ajlouni’s survey (2002), which aimed to discover the views of the Palestinian public toward HKs. Araj and Carlson (2001) found that abusing or killing wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters who
engage in, or are alleged to have engaged in sexual misconduct is considered by some
normative (30% of students, n=180), and not deviant behaviour. Aj’louni (2002) also
found that 41% of the surveyed male and females supported the killing in order to wipe
out the disgrace.

The reviewed studies showed that ‘honour’, ‘virginity’, family reputation and shame
were interrelated. The findings (Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994; Kevorkian, 2000; Faqir,
2001) showed that the interrelation between ‘honour’, family reputation and shame was
more complex than the simple connection between the loss of family ‘honour’ and ‘the
loss of women’s virginity’. In fact, feelings of shame and the negative effects on family
reputation were the crucial elements that brought dishonour to the families, not the
behaviour itself (engaging in sexual relationships or losing virginity). Therefore, other
mechanisms were suggested to play main roles in the social control of women and HK,
including gossip and rumours (Kevorkian, 2000; Patel and Gadet, 2008).

In her empirical research study about HK in OPT, Kevorkian (2000) found that fear of
scandal and the dishonouring of the family represents 75% of the events that lead to the
threat of death. Furthermore, the study found that females who indicated a fear of being
killed are very likely to be subjected either to verbal or nonverbal threats or actual
attempts to kill them (Kevorkian, 2000). Kevorkian’s action research study (2000) also
revealed that the reason for feeling threatened, as disclosed by the females interviewed,
was the lack of cultural alternatives (she refers to other solutions that may be used instead
of being killed) (Kevorkian, 2000, p. 27).

Abu-Rabia (2011) broadened the discussion by arguing that reading the code of shame
and gender in Middle Eastern societies was misleading when social facts were a
consequence of group dynamics. He argued that although Bedouin society has prescribed
behavioural norms and is sensitive to ‘ird’ (family honour), it does not behave strictly
according to these norms (Abu-Rabia, 2011). He noted that there is a host of statistics
about women who were killed in the name of family honour, but there are no statistics
regarding women who were not killed even though they engaged in illicit sexual
relations. According to Abu-Rabia (2011), women were not killed because of the role of

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mediators and clan leaders who solved the issue through the tribal arena. Therefore, Abu-Rabia (2011) emphasized that HKs are the exception to the rule, not the rule, even in Arab society, despite social norms in the Arab sector that mandate female modesty. This issue needs further research that focuses on women who were not murdered in order to broaden the understanding of HK phenomenon.

2.11.1.2 Honour killing and the socio-demographic factors

When reviewing a variety of studies from different areas, disciplines and geographical regions it is clear that the perception of honour is not static and is subject to substantial variation depending upon some local conditions, which include economic conditions, setting, age and other factors. For example, Kardam (2008) found that the way people perceived ‘honour’ was affected by their age, education, background, residence (rural, Bedouin or urban) and social relations. Some of the respondents (people with a rural background) in her study perceived honour as the most important thing in their lives. Such differences among people were minimized when the meaning of honour is connected to women and their sexuality. Kardam’s study (2008) found that there was a strong tendency among the respondents in all provinces to relate the concept of honour to women, women’s sexuality and the control of women. Kardam’s study (2008) concluded that notion of honour in Turkey is explained by traditions and family more than religion. The study by Kardam (2008) found that illiterate women, the elderly, those from rural areas, and young men all have hard and intolerant attitudes on the topic of virginity and divorce. The study also found that the majority of the participants linked HK with social pressures and some of them connected it with socioeconomic deprivation, under-development and patriarchy (Kardam, 2008).

Interestingly, a study in Jordan contradicted the previous information about the increase of HK in rural areas and argued that the majority of the HKs took place in the urban areas (Nimry, 2009). Nimry (2009) argued that HK is less prevalent in Bedouin areas because Bedouins in popular heritage are known to be wise in handling social affairs, and the head of the tribe has a major role in compromising and addressing matters such as sexual misconduct.
Kardam (2008) also found that residents of villages showed a stronger adherence to conservative conduct and dressing, had stronger tribal and kinship relations and put greater importance on honour. This led to perceiving honour as a meaning and purpose for whose sake people can be killed (Kardam, 2008). Kardam’s study also found that rich families or powerful tribes will hardly ever accept their daughters’ dishonourable conduct with a man from a poorer or lower status family. However, when the man is rich there may be the possibility of other alternatives and different types of settlement, such as giving inflated bridal money to the girl’s family. This indicates that where people live, how rich or poor they are or how close-knit their community is affects families’ reactions to such acts.

This socioeconomic class distinction in HK was rejected by other researchers, particularly Kevorkian (2000), who stressed that although the number of HKs is higher in rural areas and in camps, it is also documented among middle and rich classes, which made it difficult to have a consensus that HK is linked to specific social class.

Nasrullah et al. (2009) found that HKs in Pakistan were associated with low education, but they did not provide enough evidence to support or explain their results. The fact that 70% of people in Pakistan live in rural areas with high illiteracy makes it difficult to conclude that there is a strong association between low education and HK. Additionally, Nasrullah et al. (2009) collected data from newspapers and the information regarding education level and the socioeconomic status about the victims and the perpetrators was limited. Therefore, the results of their study about the characteristics of the victims and their families should be taken with caution. Consistently, Goksel (2008) emphasized that it is naive to reduce HK to the level of education of the victims in Turkey, as her study found that there was a complex set of relations and dynamics behind the HKs.

Ali (2008) contended that when the perpetrators were poor, unemployed and undereducated, they committed the crimes in order to have credibility and a sense of worth in their society, whilst Vitoshka (2010) and Patel and Gadet (2008) suggested that
poverty could be one of the motives or triggers behind HK in Pakistan. Vitoshka (2010) clarified that in many poor communities, where husbands receive a dowry for taking a wife, they often kill her in order to remarry and take another dowry. Patel and Gadet (2008) and Nasrullah et al. (2009) also found similar findings to Vitoshka (2010) regarding dowry, and added a trigger in poorer communities of Sindh, whereby a woman can be killed if it is felt that she has become a financial burden on the household. These communities sometimes use Karo-kari as a convenient way of acquiring wealth or land by declaring a woman of their household a kari. This allows the family to obtain the victim’s share of inheritance (Patel and Gadet, 2008).

Terman (2010) found that economic conditions and financial causes were closely related to HK in Jordan. His study found that 66% of those who committed HK were poor, living below the poverty line of 46.3 JD per person per month. Therefore, he concluded that if a woman is unable to contribute to her family by working, she could be at greater risk of becoming a victim of HK.

The relationships between HK, educational level and socioeconomic status are still debated and lack of consistency or consensus among studies requires further examination through research.

2.11.1.3 Religion versus culture and tribal patriarchy

Although it was reported that HK is most prevalent in Muslim countries (Kulwicki, 2002), the reviewed studies have found that the phenomenon of HK is not limited to a single religion (Nasrullah, 2009) being reported in Christian, Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities (Kevorkian, 2000; Goksel, 2008; Patel and Gadet, 2008; Nasrullah, 2009; Vitoshka, 2010).

Cinthio and Ericson (2006) argued that HK is prevalent in Islamic countries because Islam constitutes a necessary mental and moral framework for reasoning in terms of female chastity and sexual behaviour needing to be controlled, and concluded that Islam and culture in the form of tribal patriarchy interact to make the practice of HK possible (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006). They emphasized that Islam encourages a logic revolving
around punishment by criminalizing illicit sexual activities, and finally that patriarchal tribal society legitimizes impulsive conduct by sanctioning the actual, physical deed as a consequence of violating the norm. Therefore, they concluded that both the culture and the religion encouraged the practice of HK in Jordan (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006).

However, other studies of HK stressed that honour ideology (such as values, tradition and ideas) is found in other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism, and emphasized that not all Muslim cultures adhere to honour ideology (Ali, 2008; Ouis, 2009). However, Ouis (2009, p. 453) also indicated that Islam serves as a double-edged sword by encouraging conservative honour values with reference to Islamic sexual morality which at the same time combats the honour tradition by reference to it being un-Islamic and not prescribed in the holy texts. Miller (2009) acknowledged that fundamental Islam may retain certain texts calling for gender differentiations in some aspects of life, but it is an unsubstantiated argument to claim that Islamic law is the direct source or foundation of HK. Others also have emphasized that HK originated in the customary law that preceded Islam and Christianity, and stressed that HK extended over communities, religions, and countries (Ali, 2008).

In pre-Islamic Arabian society (commonly known as the age of jahiliyya, of barbarism, darkness, and ignorance of Divine Revelation (Elhadj, 2010), as in most societies of the ancient world, women of low socioeconomic status were considered to be a commodity, and were bought and sold. Islam innovated the concept of women’s rights in the Arabian Peninsula, such as the right to choose whether to marry suitors (Zia-Ullah, 2010). In this way they became equal partners in marriage institutions. In contrast to other Abrahamic faiths (the monotheistic faiths emphasizing and tracing their common origin to Abraham, e.g. Christianity and Judaism (Warren, 1990)), the Islamic religion does not view women as intrinsically evil, either domestically or socially (Zia-Ullah, 2010). For example, the common practice in poor communities throughout history of murdering female infants (as in China and India today, WHO, 2011), as practiced by the poor in pre-Islamic Arabia, was emphatically prohibited in the Qur’an: ‘And when the female infant buried alive is questioned, for what
crime she was killed’ (Qur’an 81:8-9). In condemning the attitudes of such parents who reject their female children, the Qur’an says:

‘When news is brought to one of them, of [the birth of] a female [child], his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain her on [sufferance] and contempt, or bury her in the dust? Ah! What an evil choice they decide on’ (Qur’an 16:58-59).

Researchers emphasized that conceptualizing HK as a crime of tradition victimized women and took the discussion away from their status. They have stressed that HK should be acknowledged as a brutal form of violence against women rather than as a religious or traditional problem (Goksel, 2008; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010). Studies recommended that further research on this topic may help to design effective preventive strategies (Goksel, 2008; Nasrullah et al., 2009).

2.11.1.4 Power resources versus customs and norms

Belge (2008) adopted a feminist perspective to investigate the power relations and distribution among tribes and families inside Turkey and also the indigenous Palestinians inside Israel. Belge (2008) studied the relationship between honour killing and preservation of the cultural norms. Belge (2008) found that strong families (i.e. wielding power inside society) have more resources to manipulate gossip, which provides them with a greater range of options to maintain a good name when their daughter is implicated in a controversial affair, while weaker families are more likely to be victimized by gossip they cannot control. They also reported that strong families are also more vulnerable to gossip, because reputation and social capital are crucial resources for maintaining their alliances. Therefore, Belge (2008) concluded that the control of female sexuality is an integral part of building family power. She further clarified that the imperatives of building social capital, financial and military strength in a context of rivalry and competition for status encourages a set of practices—such as HK, early marriage and polygamous marriage which subjects women’s bodies to the will of their family.
In contrast, Iqbal’s qualitative study (2006) aiming to investigate why the justice system in Pakistan has failed to eradicate the practice of HK, particularly in Sindh, found a weak association between power and honour. The majority of participants (representatives from NGOs) illustrated that the motive behind HK was not to hold power, as it mostly occurred in poor- and middle-class households. The representatives argued that families killed women in order to stop gossip about female family members, which indicated that honour in this case is more of a status factor among families within the community, and not a struggle against people in power. Iqbal’s (2006) analysis of the power relation and the dynamics was not rigorous, as such an analysis requires study of the internal hierarchies of a community and the extent to which they are reinforced or challenged by other authority structures in the wider society. The significance of rivalries and status concerns in disputing processes that occur when a woman breaks the code of honour need to be addressed and analyzed thoroughly using good quality research methods. Therefore, Iqbal’s findings (2006) should be taken with caution and further research is needed to clarify these issues.

2.11.1.5 Honour Killing that did not fit patterns of gender discrimination

Only one study addressed the issue of HK not being a gender-specific phenomenon, by focusing on the imposition of a strict honour code upon individuals regardless of their gender. By examining HK among males and in cases of supposed homosexuality, Vitoshka (2010) concluded that HK also targeted males who were victims of rape, who worked in prostitution and who had sexual relationships with men. Her study also found that females accused of lesbianism were also targeted by their male family members. She also found that in some of the cases women were the perpetrators, and therefore she concluded that these cases countered the idea that gender-discrimination triggers HK (Vitoshka, 2010). These significant findings added another dimension and complexity of understanding honour killing and call for further research to address this issue more closely.
2.11.1.6 Modernization, clan authority and HK

Some studies linked HK today to facets of urbanization or to communities that are not static or frozen in time, but rather on the move. One of these studies (Terman, 2010) examined the relationship between the increase of modernization and HK in Jordan. Interestingly, Terman (2010) concluded that modernization has not been enough for Jordan to escape the upward trends in HKs because of the longstanding patriarchal structure of families in Jordan. He further clarified that the divide between the ideals and values of traditional families and those of a modern society have created tension and a setting for violence and conflict. Consistently, Abu-Rabia (2011) also observed that with the transition from rural culture to urban living among Bedouins there has been a general rise in domestic violence in Bedouin society inside Israel. Abu-Rabia (2011) related this to the decline of the authority of tribal leaders, who in the past sheltered abused women and gave them shelter until domestic harmony could be restored. Therefore, Abu-Rabia (2011) has argued that the murder of women occurs because of the mix between old and new norms, and between personal and public spheres.

Belge (2008) also examined why the dynamics of state-minority relations resulted in gradually diminishing authority for the indigenous Palestinian clan leaders who live inside Israel. Belge (2008) concluded that clan authority was paradoxically greater in a state that pursued aggressive assimilation policies and centralized state-building such as Turkey, and weaker in a state that did not pursue assimilation or cultural transformation of its minorities, such as Israel. Therefore, clan authority diminished in Israel. Consequently, to maintain the strength of the clan, strict control over female members is required, relying on certain family practices such as the murder of female members who harm the family reputation. The state’s reluctance to utilize the laws of a hostile state to challenge them enabled clans to retain control over such matters, delineating a sphere of unofficial law in opposition to the laws of the state. On the other hand, Hasan’s (2002) findings contradicted the results of Belge’s study (2008) about the decline of clan authority in Israel. He suggested that the way in which Israel honours and rewards patriarchal leadership as a regime-control measure perpetuates HKs. Support for tradition is a function of the need to strengthen certain social strata in the face of social change that
challenges the stability and existence of tradition. Hasan (2002) argued that allowing sheikhs, religious leaders and notables to act as mediators and conciliators between families and women threatened with killing in Arab society strengthened both the sheikhs’ authority and public recognition of their status.

Studies by Abu-Rabia (2011), Goksel (2010) and Terman (2010) concluded that redefining and promoting education for women would not only encourage females to see themselves as having roles bigger than just those in the home, but would also lead to the discovery by males that women have more to provide to the family and society than just serving as indicators of the family’s honour. This kind of debate takes the discussion away from the honour-shame paradigm, emphasizing that women are not essentially passive. In other words, women need to centre their strategies toward influencing males’ hierarchy, defying men’s authority and increasing their unassigned power and their influence over their sons, husbands, fathers and brothers. Therefore, further research is needed to explore transformation and modernization in Arabic societies and how this acts on and interacts with the process of HK.

2.11.1.7 Legal causes

Most of the reviewed studies considered legislation that legitimizes HK as the most important reason for perpetuating it. Hasan (2002) considered it to be legislation, not culture that encouraged men to kill women for honour. He argued that the existence of the phenomenon of HK in Arabic societies is reinforced inter alia by the legal system, which gives ‘honour’ murderers exemption. Legal systems serve both the governments and the guardians of tradition, forging an alliance between both of them (Hasan, 2002). Similarly, the literature in Pakistan and Turkey also supported Hasan’s argument (2002) and concluded that the political figures’ intrusion in judicial procedures substantially influenced the efficacy and fairness of the legal courts (Nasrullah et al., 2009; Goksel, 2010; Iqbal, 2010). In OPT and Jordan, researchers also concluded that the justice system is ‘manipulated’ in order to invoke the less stringent ‘general’ articles pertaining to crime (Kevorkian, 2000; Hadidi et al., 2001; Kulwicki, 2002; Ali, 2006). It was noted that Article 340 in the Jordanian Penal Code allows all male relatives leniency for committing
HKs, which applies to the killing of any female relative and allows for total exemption from penalty. These factors combine to provide one of the broadest categories of legal excuses for HKs. Thus, Jordanian law is particularly discriminatory to women because of the lack of legal deterrent and the wide scope of males who benefit from these crimes (Kulwicki, 2002). Many legal clauses and precedents distinguish HKs from other murders and grant judges flexibility to provide extreme leniency in sentencing (Kulczycki and Windle, 2011).

In their epidemiological study in Pakistan, Nasrullah et al. (2009) found that the criminal justice system can lead to perpetrators being freed, despite the national criminal law. They found that under Sharia (Islamic law), offenses like honour crimes are compoundable (open to compromise as a private matter between two parties) by providing for Qisas (retribution) or Diyat (blood-money/compensation). The heirs of the victim can forgive the murderer in the name of God without receiving any compensation (Section 309), or they may compromise after receiving compensation (Section 310) (Nasrullah et al., 2009, p. 196). This is consistent with the findings of literature in Jordan and OPT; in HK cases, families typically waive their right to pursue further legal action (Faqir, 2001; HRW, 2006; Ali, 2008; Kulczycki and Windle, 2011). Further research is needed to examine the effect of dissatisfaction of victims’ family members within the justice process. Studies can also explore the experience of victims’ family members in the aftermath of negotiating criminal justice proceedings in greater depth.

2.11.2 The perpetrators of HK

Interestingly, in contrast to other kinds of homicide committed against women, in HK the perpetrators were observed to be mainly male family relatives including brothers, fathers, uncles and cousins (Kevorkian, 2000; Faqir, 2001, Hasan 2002; Kulwicki, 2002, Kardam, 2008). Furthermore, one of the most disturbing aspects of HK and one of its distinctive features is the involvement of female relatives such as mothers in policing and even, on some occasions, killing their daughters (Faqir, 2001; Sen, 2005).

In Arab countries it is often reported that husbands (unless they are cousins) are not allowed to commit the crimes; rather, the woman’s family give them the right to divorce
their wives and to send them back to their families if they are accused of adultery (Hasan, 2002). This happens because their honour was not sullied as they had no blood relation with their wives (Hasan, 2002). Hasan (2002) also reported that in Arab countries, killing a wife for reasons of jealousy or possessiveness is not subsumed under HK. Therefore, studies often reported that brothers were most often the killers in cases of HK. Brothers have little to lose from killing a sister in the name of honour, especially compared to the father, who has to support the family and may face more severe consequences and punishment (Terman, 2010). Interestingly, in Pakistan and Turkey, studies reported that husbands most commonly committed HK, followed by brothers (Patel and Gadet, 2008; Goksel, 2010). This is a significant observation, but studies did not explain why this happens, and therefore future research is needed to understand this specific information in order to provide more helpful and relevant services.

Patel and Gadet’s literature review study (2008) concluded that many of the case reports of HK in Pakistan indicated the presence of certain psychopathic traits in perpetrators, including a reckless disregard for the safety of women, a failure to conform to lawful behaviour and a lack of remorse. They further argued that the fact that some of the perpetrators used the HK tradition to conceal other motives for their homicidal actions lends weight to the argument for an underlying psychopathic process. The reviewed studies provided limited and inconsistent knowledge about the characteristics of the perpetrators. Additionally, factors which have contributed to the differences between perpetrators’ characteristics have not received the attention that they warrant, which might lead to misinterpretation, misunderstanding and inadequate interventions.

2.11.3 Prevalence and lack of reliable and valid information

In both Pakistan and Jordan it was noted that HK represents a substantial proportion of female homicide. In Pakistan, HK constitutes 21% of all homicides (for both male and female victims; Nasrullah et al., 2009), and in Jordan it makes up one-third of violent deaths (Terman, 2010). The literature emphasized that under-reporting of honour cases and the dearth of official information regarding HK made it difficult to analyze and to capture the circumstances surrounding HK accurately. It also made the researchers
collecting information from other resources such as newspaper reports report on the limited value of resources they found (Nasrullah et al., 2009). However, some of these reports have still provided useful information on HK in Pakistan (Nasrullah et al., 2009), and Jordan (Ali, 2008). Therefore, many of the studies have highlighted the need to conduct further research and to collect data systematically in order to facilitate analysis of research on HK. The studies have also recommended that researchers conduct further research to address culture-specific factors in HK in order to identify groups at risk, as well as to formulate preventive strategies for HK.

It was noted that much information concerning the number of HKs and details about victims and perpetrators of these killings were not complete, and varies between studies. For Jordan alone, Kulwiki’s descriptive study (2002) mentioned that 23 murders were reported as HKs in the year 1994, whilst Faqir’s study (2001) reported 15 for the same year; Ali (2008) cited 40. It is complex to determine the number of HKs committed annually in Jordan, and data about such killings are still far from being comprehensive and reliable.

2.11.4 How to help

Many of the studies suggested possible strategies for changing the existing situation (Kevorkian, 2000; Kulwicki, 2002; Andersson, 2003; HRW, 2004; Kogacioglu, 2004; Sever, 2005; Edvardsson, 2006; Agarwal, 2008; Ali, 2008; Belge, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Patel and Gadet, 2008; Miller, 2009; Ishaq, 2010; Zia-Ullah, 2010; Kulczycki and Windle, 2011).

Patel and Gadet (2008) and Kulwicki (2002) mentioned that psychiatric nurses and MHPs can play an important role in predicting these acts and reporting cases to the authorities. Kulwicki (2002) concluded that MHPs have to expand their knowledge of domestic violence through research that helps in increasing their multicultural competences. The studies concluded that concepts of masculinity, culture and tradition which are rooted in the community must be studied and utilized to end HKs.
The dilemma around involving family members and mediators in interventions was discussed by HRW (2004), Kevorkian (2000) and Edvardsson (2008), showing that this issue is still unclear and unsupported by evidence-based research studies. For example, HRW (2004), in their comprehensive study about HK in Jordan, addressed intervention strategies that were carried out by either governmental and nongovernmental organizations working with women who were victims of domestic violence, including women threatened in order to cleanse family honour, and found that counselling for family reconciliation was rarely successful. HRW (2004) based their conclusion on their interviews with staff from the department of social services, which came under the Ministry of Social Development, who reported that their counsellors tried to find someone in the family to diffuse the threat and work toward a solution, but they generally did not succeed (HRW, 2004).

Kulczycki and Windle (2011) in their systematic review of 40 articles and reports on HK (most of the reviewed studies were included in this review, except reports) summarized the possible strategies suggested in the literature at different levels including legal, state, services, public awareness and external motivators to combat HK in MENA. According to Kulczycki and Windle (2011), these strategies are essentially reactive approaches, mostly dependent on state support, and political and societal will in situations where autocratic regimes restrict the activities of NGOs and other groups that could otherwise push for change. Similarly, this review found that the studies in this thesis mentioned the same strategies that were based upon cultural and legal transformations. Although these strategies were comprehensive, they lacked clear action steps and were weakened by a paucity of sustained interventions and outcome measures. These studies emphasized that the cultural context plays an important role in HK. Conversely, cultural norms can be a source of protection against HK, such as traditions that promote the equality of women. However, it was observed that in all reviewed studies, evidence-based approaches for changing cultural traditions as a prevention strategy to the practice of HK are not yet available.
The studies advocated the use of education to steer social changes. However, the result of Miller’s (2009) survey at the University of Jordan did not reveal any significant difference in introductory level and advanced level students’ traditional notions of gender equality and family honour.

Studies also suggested that the international community can act more forcefully to stop HK and to change laws that subordinate women (Kogacioglu, 2004; Sever, 2005; Agarwal, 2008; Kardam, 2008). Researchers built their arguments by arguing that if states started to abolish penal codes that give leniency to HK, this would shift public opinion from passive acceptance of HK to an educated resistance against killing as a violation of women’s rights (Ali, 2008; Kardam, 2008). Some studies have also indicated that changes in the law can be used to alter internal values, because the laws are a reflection of what society believes (Reddy, 2008). Whatever the legitimacy of international pressure on the state, previous studies also mentioned that the mistrust of foreign interventions, particularly suspicions concerning the West, made international agreements insufficient to eliminate HK (Kogacioglu, 2004; Sever, 2005; Belge, 2008; Zia-Ullah, 2010). Therefore, some have suggested that the legal and moral fabric of the country must lead the way in reversing biases in crimes against women (Se’ver, 2005; Ishaq, 2010). Others have questioned the effectiveness of changing legislation if the police still tortured women when they complained about violence, which indicated that some states want to remain distanced from the private and familial sphere of the society (Andersson, 2003; Ali, 2008, Zia-Ullah, 2010). It has also been suggested that empowering local efforts by individuals and communities as part of a broader community discourse may influence societal attitudes and political will to bring about change (Edvardsson, 2006; Ishaq, 2010; Kulczycki and Windle, 2011). At this time, data to prove or disprove the effectiveness of most of these interventions and strategies are insufficient.
2.12 The gaps in the literature

Although the reviewed studies were helpful in providing some insights and a concrete picture about the contributing factors to the occurrence of HK, some of their findings were contradictory and lacked clear and concurring evidence. Others highlighted the need for further investigations about the link between these factors and HK. Therefore, this review has found that it will add to the state of the art if we conduct a new study about HK in OPT in order to shed light on this phenomenon and to explore the contributing factors associated with it along with the consequences of HK on family members.

Researchers on violence against women have emphasized that it is imperative that researchers do not get lost in issues about whether one study is right and another wrong and which study presents the truth (Fisher, 2004). According to Fisher (2004), the truth is that the issues are exceedingly complex and the extent of violence against women is extremely difficult to measure. It requires gathering information in a variety of ways to fully capture the nature and extent of a variety of acts subsumed under the heading ‘violence against women’. This means that the researcher has to utilize all the tools available to them in order to further knowledge about complex issues like HK. By understanding the differences between estimates from different studies, we took full advantage of the opportunities for enhancing our understanding of the problem.

Therefore, this study aimed to incorporate the perception of family members because most of the reviewed studies collected data only from professionals, NGO representatives, lawyers, reports and newspapers. Although their studies provide valuable information, the view of family members were suggested to be absent in the literature surrounding this complex issue.

The existing literature has also highlighted the need for more research in order to ‘fill some of the gaps’ in our knowledge (Ali, 2006; Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006; Kardam, 2008; Haj-Yahia, 2009). Accordingly, the researcher in this study responded to this by deciding to undertake a qualitative study in order to deepen our understanding of emotional and social effect of HK on bereaved families and who in place to help them.
The literature review indicated that there is a paucity of published inductive, emic GT studies exploring the subject from an interpretive perspective, and also the effect of HK on victims’ families. There is a need to study the emotional and social effects of HK on family members, as no previous study addressed this issue and a study of this type will add to the literature.
2.13 Summary

In summary, this chapter presents a critical synthesis of the research literature on HKs. It describes several methodological observations concerning this research literature; summarizes, discusses and interprets findings; and highlights gaps in knowledge.

The literature about factors contributing to the occurrence of HK has been reviewed. The data about HK has a number of limitations, such as missing data, the limited amount of data available, the absence of information about relevant factors, different methodology designs, data collection varied across studies, sample size problems, research done in different parts of the country, and lack of intensive and thorough analysis. There was a general lack of methodological rigour in the studies, which means high quality rigorous qualitative research is needed to build and strengthen the evidence base.
CHAPTER THREE

Methodology and Research Paradigm
Methodology and Research Paradigm

3.1 Introduction

A research paradigm is a ‘basic set of beliefs that guides actions” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). A particular worldview influences personal behaviour and eventually the researcher’s position with regard to the subject of the study. A research paradigm is crucial for the focus of the study and determining the questions asked and decisions made about data collection, therefore Guba and Lincoln (1994) stated that the basic beliefs that define a particular research paradigm may be summarised by the responses given to three fundamental questions:

1. The ontological question - such as what is the form and nature of reality?

2. The epistemological question - such as what is the basic belief about knowledge and what can be known?

3. The methodological question - how can the researcher go about finding out whatever they believe can be known? (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 108).

Therefore, it is important for the researcher to make clear to the reader the theoretical underpinning of the chosen methodology and their ‘way of knowing’. This chapter will discuss the theoretical underpinning of the inquiry conducted in this study.

According to Jones et al. (2005), the research method must be able to accommodate the researcher’s personal preferences and philosophical assumptions. Grounded Theory (GT) is the method of choice in this study because it enables an understanding of an area which requires no preformed concepts of knowledge.
3.2 Way of knowing

According to Streubert and Carpenter (2011, p. 4), the term ‘knowing’ refers to ways of perceiving and understanding the self and the world. Ontology is a ‘branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of reality, driven by the question: what is there to know?’ (Tribe, 2009, p. 8). Therefore, it is important to know how what we come to value is created and validated (Streubert and Carpenter, 2011).

Descartes’s dualism described a fundamental ontological divide between mind and body and was driven by the search for cause and effect relationships. In contrast Kant differed and argued that all reality cannot be explained by cause and effect alone, and he proposed that nature was not independent of thoughts and reason. These debates between positivism (influenced by Descartes) and what comes after (following the ideas of Kant) have given rise to four main paradigms that can be called upon in the approach to research. These are summarised in table 3.
Table 3: Paradigms and their different stances, beliefs, knowledge and research methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paradigm</th>
<th>Ontology</th>
<th>Epistemology</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positivism</td>
<td>Realism. There is a ‘real’, objective reality that is knowable.</td>
<td>Objectivist. The researcher can, and should, avoid any bias or influence on the outcome. Results, if done well, are true.</td>
<td>Tends toward quantification and controlled experiments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-positivism</td>
<td>Critical Realism. There is a ‘real’, objective reality, but humans cannot know it for sure.</td>
<td>Modified Objectivist. The goal is objectivity, but pure objectivity is impossible. Results are ‘probably’ true.</td>
<td>Includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. Seeks reduction of bias through qualitative validity techniques (e.g. triangulation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical theory</td>
<td>Historical Realism. Reality can be understood, but only as constructed historically and connected to power.</td>
<td>Knowledge is mediated reflectively through the perspective of the researcher.</td>
<td>Focused on dialogue between investigator and participant, uncovering subjugated knowledge and linking it to social critique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Focus on constructed reality. Knowledge is constructed by scientists and not discovered from the world. Varied.</td>
<td>The distinction between researcher and researched breaks down. Insider knowledge highly valued.</td>
<td>Works with individuals on empowerment and issues that matter to them. Tends toward social, cultural or political change, using any appropriate method.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference: Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Creswell (2009)
Positivists assume a realist ontology based in an objectivist epistemology which relies on quantification and the control of variables. In healthcare research this is typified by the randomised control trial (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). In contrast, post positivism (a softer form of positivism) suggests an ontological approach were a real truth does exist but this is probably out of reach for certain (Creswell, 2009). The post positivist epistemology search for objectivity but recognises the limits of these claims to truth and adopts a methodology which aims to control bias and establish the best fit between variables (Creswell, 2009). Within the critical realist paradigm reality is understood as being constructed and dependent on power structures. This means that a critical realist epistemology acknowledges the effects of the researcher on the knowledge they produce and their methodology aims to uncover understanding and subjugated knowledge within a critique of the social (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Finally, the many variations of constructivism have differing ontological standpoints but general propose that knowledge is socially constructed and adopt an epistemology where meaning is shared and variable. The methods allow for the possibility of multiple voices and identification and empowerment of the individuals they research (Letherby, 2003; Campbell and Wasco, 2000)

Historically, qualitative research was defined within the positivist paradigm but with less rigorous methods and procedures than those of today (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). Flick (1998) argued that quantitative research has been used for the purpose of isolating (cause and effect, measuring and quantifying which allows the generalization of its findings), whilst qualitative paradigms today are based on interpretivist critical theory and constructivist paradigms, therefore from a critical theory qualitative ontological stance it is acknowledged that there are multiple realities or multiple truths based on one’s interaction with the power relations in the social world. From the constructivists’ point of view, reality is socially constructed (Berger and Luckmann, 1966), and so is constantly changing. At the epistemological level, there is no access to reality independent of our minds, no external referent by which to compare claims of truth for both paradigms (Smith, 1983). The researcher and the participants are interactively
linked so that findings are mutually created within the context of the situation which shapes the study and the researchers’ orientation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape the inquiry. More particularly, they look at how social experiences are created and are given meanings. New approaches and interpretative theories, such as critical theory, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, feminism and structuralism give qualitative researchers the possibility to provide social expression to categories of the population that were formerly silent because they were not allowed freedom of speech and the power to express publicly their problems and experiences (Taki, 2005).

Qualitative paradigms understand that there are alternative ways of knowing which differ from the positivist or post positivist paradigms. Qualitative approaches value subjective meanings and research can be conducted with different goals, methods and standards for evaluation (Haverkamp and Young, 2007). Some scholars, such as Miles and Huberman (1994) and Lincoln and Guba (2000) suggest that these different traditions can be used in a complementary way.

There are various methodologies used by qualitative researchers including Grounded Theory, Case Study, Ethnography, and Phenomenology and each method has strengths and weaknesses (Johnes et al., 2005). Phenomenology studies consciousness as experience by the participants. The goal of a phenomenological study is to describe the lived experience of the participants and the meanings of those experiences from the participants’ perspective. Therefore, phenomenology is based on the assumption that one can only describe the world as experienced by the studied individuals (Merleau-Ponty, 1999). Ethnographic research studies people who share similar cultural patterns.
or beliefs from a native point of view (Mertens, 1998). It focuses on a simple and “complex” social systems and intends to find a fit between what is observed and the way things work or are said to work (Jones et al., 2005). In ethnography, data is collected from the researcher’s observations, experiences, and interviewee reports all of which are recorded in field notes. While GT differs from ethnographic research in that it relies on the examination of multiple sources of data, including individuals, who may not share a common culture, to develop social theory (Miller and Salkind 2002). GT also differs from phenomenology in that it is based on the assumption that people develop meanings relating to events through experiences and social interactions. The meanings that people develop from these encounters eventually build their behaviours (Baker et al, 1992). Therefore, both ethnography and phenomenology would not explore the grieving process as thoroughly as a grounded theory study design is capable of and would not allow for theory development (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). GT is applicable to this study because it explains social behaviours and clarifies the cultural and social contexts within which people interact and express meaning (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). It also develops theory and can modify existing theories as argued by McCann and Clark (2003). GT has a long and established tradition in research on unexplored areas of interest. It is an established method in health care related research (Long, 2012).

3.3 Symbolic interactionism and GT

The theoretical basis of GT is derived from symbolic interactionism and psychological theory (Benoliel, 1996; Klunklin and Greenwood, 2006). GT has its roots in symbolic interactionism (Stern, 1994). GT is underpinned and associated with symbolic interactionism, which focuses on the nature of social interaction in which it perceives the human as an active agent in creating the social environment as well as being shaped by it (Coyne and Cowley, 2006). Symbolic interactionism is used to understand meanings generated by participants. According to Blumer (1969), human beings are usually interacting
as a result of their own meanings, interpretations and understandings of such social interactions; individuals’ actions in specific situations vary as a result of having different definitions and meanings related to specific symbols in their lives and to on-going changes in the surrounding circumstances (Blumer, 1969). The whole of society and its members are involved in these interactions, in which they play an important role in guiding and formatting actions (Blumer, 1969). Therefore, symbolic interactionism was very useful to this study as it enabled me to explore individual and social actions, beliefs and thoughts in relation to HKs, and to explore the influence of social interactions on shaping the families’ individual behaviours and adaptation. Symbolic interactionism was helpful in synthesizing, filtering and interpreting the emerging data. The interactionist research strategies that are specifically designed to test gender-related concepts and theories made an important contribution in uncovering the sequential processes and patterns necessary to understand gender specific context to HK involving women in OPT (Cazenave and Zahn, 1992). This study combined grounded theory and feminist theory and therefore the following discussion will present Feminist perspective and Feminist Grounded Theory approach.

3.4 Historical overview of Grounded Theory

This study adopts the GT approach. GT is a ‘general research method which provides for the systematic generation of theory from data acquired by a rigorous research method’ (Elliot and Lazenbett, 2005, p. 47). This methodology was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a reaction to the extreme positivism that had permeated most social research in the middle of the last century. GT challenged the hegemony of the quantitative research paradigm in the social science (Charmaz, 2003).

In Glaser and Strauss’s book “The Discovery of Grounded Theory” (1967) they described a research strategy used in a collaborative study of dying (Charmaz,
2003). Their work at that time was considered revolutionary because it challenged the arbitrary division between theory and research as quantitative research was viewed as atheoretical and emphasized controlling variables rather than theory testing (Charmaz, 2003). Strauss and Glaser’s work moved qualitative research toward theory development. Glaser applied his rigorous positivist methodological training from Columbia University while Strauss brought the Chicago School field research and symbolic interactionism to grounded theory from his training at University of Chicago with Blumer and Robert Park (Charmaz, 2003).

The power of GT lies in its use as a tool for understanding the empirical world (Charmaz, 2003). This means that the theory is based upon patterns found in empirical data, not from inference, prejudice or the association of ideas (Gasson, 2003). However, the positions of Glaser and Strauss remain imbued with positivism in the matter of GT’s objectivist underpinnings (Charmaz, 2003). Glaser’s position often comes close to traditional positivism in its objective, external reality, neutral role of the observer who discovers the data, objective generation of data and the reductionist inquiry of manageable research problems (Charmaz, 2003). Glaser, Strauss, and later Corbin, assume the existence of an external reality that researchers can discover and record. Glaser emphasizes the emergence of reality through discovering data, coding, and using the comparative method step-by-step, whereas Strauss and Corbin emphasize analytical questions, hypotheses and methodological applications (Charmaz, 2003).

Glaser’s method differs from Strauss and Corbin’s in its analysis procedures, and more specifically in intervention and activities used in managing data (Walker and Myrick, 2006). Both approaches use coding, constant comparison, methods, categorization and theoretical sampling, but Glaser’s method differs in the coding of data. According to Glaser (1992), the coding of data is divided into two procedures: substantive and theoretical coding (Glaser, 1992). For Strauss, coding has three phases: open, axial and selective (Walker and Myrick, 2006). Glaser’s method on the surface looks more simple, focussed and more in-line with the original version of GT (Glaser, 1992; Walker and Myrick, 2006).
Stern (1994) summarised the differences between the two approaches as: Strauss examines the data, and stops at each word to ask, ‘What if?’; while Glaser keeps his attention focused on the data and asks, ‘What have we here?’ Strauss brings to bear every possible contingency that could relate to the data, whether it appears in the data or not. Glaser focuses his attention on the data to allow them to tell their own story.

Glaser (1992) established specific criteria to evaluate a GT: fit, work, relevance and modifiability. Theoretical categories have to be developed from the analysis of collected data and must fit them. GT must work by providing a useful conceptual ordering and rendering of data that explain the phenomenon under study. In contrast, for Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998), judging the applicability of theory to a phenomenon could be achieved through four criteria: fit, understanding, generality and control. Theory has to ‘fit’ by being faithful to the everyday reality of the substantive area and by being carefully induced from a diverse data set. Accordingly, if a researcher has collected insufficient data and attempted closure too early, it would be impossible to meet this criterion. If the data in which the theory is based are comprehensive and the interpretation conceptual and broad, and include sufficient variation so theory may be applied to a variety of contexts related to the phenomenon under investigation, then the data meet the criterion of generality, as a social fact is represented. Finally, the theory has to provide control with regard to action toward the phenomenon. Therefore, theory is more than granting knowledge or illustrating a picture; it aims for individuals who use it for predicting and explaining events and to give direction to actions (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 23).

Constructivist grounded theory was proposed by Kathy Charmaz (2000, 2003, 2006) as an alternative to classic (Glaser 1978, 1992) and Straussian grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 1998). According to Charmaz (2006) the Constructivist approach to grounded theory gives priority to the phenomena of the study which implies that data and analysis are created from relationships and experiences among participants and any other sources of data (Charmaz, 2006).
It takes a middle ground between postmodernism and positivism and offers accessible methods for taking qualitative research. Constructivism assumes the relativism of multiple social realities; recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed. Charmaz (2006) refuses to accept a prescriptive way of using the grounded theory method, rather she considers it as “a set of principles” which any researcher can fine tune to suit the context of the particular research study. Constructivism aims to provide interpretive understanding of the subject’s meanings. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to reflect on their personal standpoint regarding grounded theory as what type of grounded theory and what specific tenet of grounded theory do you practice? What specific postulates of grounded theory do you want to emphasize in your research? (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007).

The debate about which GT approach is a suitable approach is confusing for inexperienced researchers and may lead to a period of uncertainty regarding which version of GT to follow. After careful consideration, Strauss and Corbin’s version of GT has been chosen because their guidance provided useful and understandable direction. Strauss and Corbin’s approach focused on developing analytical techniques and providing guidance to novice researchers (Heath and Cowley, 2003).

3.5 The feminist perspective

Feminism is a philosophy of the equality of women and is concerned with intervening in cultural practices which are oppressive to women (Adair, 1992). The feminist movement attempts to place women’s experiences at the centre of analysis and political action. Feminism takes the standpoint of women and recognizes shared experiences and opposes domination (Scranton, 1992).

The theory of patriarchy was advanced by feminist authors who see society as being dominated by males, with women in a subordinate position, considered and treated mostly as the possessions of men. This approach has been translated into laws and
customs that legitimize this differential status of women and men. Therefore, violence has been used by men to enforce those laws and customs to control women and suppress any rebellion (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). According to Kandiyoti (1988), patriarchy is a form of rule through kin relations in which family and society closely overlap, and family is stratified according to gender and age.

Walby (1989) and Wahl (1987) argued that theories of patriarchy have developed and changed because society is changing. Walby (1989), in her article Theorizing Patriarchy, opposed the previous criticisms about patriarchal shortcomings, and noted that many scholars overstated them. She stressed that many of the writers on patriarchy recognized such diversity but they might not integrate this knowledge into their theoretical scheme. In her model theorizing patriarchy, Walby (1989) suggested six different patriarchal structures: a patriarchal model of production, in which women’s labour is expropriated by their husbands; patriarchal relations within waged labour; the patriarchal state; male violence; patriarchal relations in sexuality; and patriarchal structures (Walby, 1990, p. 177). These six structures were suggested by Walby (1989) in order to provide a theoretical tool to overcome the problem of the static essentialist conception of gender relations, and also to deal with one of the problems for writers on patriarchy, who usually used or built their discussion on one single major base of gender inequality. For example, she noted that Firestone (1974) considered only ‘reproduction’ as the critical base of gender inequality and acknowledged the fact that most scholars in patriarchy considered women’s’ oppression by men as the sole basis of patriarchy.

Walby stressed that patriarchy is ‘a system of social structure, practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women’ (Walby, 1989, p. 214). The significant point in Walby’s definition is that she considered patriarchy as a system in social relations, and that she opposed the notion that every single man is in a dominating position and that every woman is in a subordinate position. Therefore, she stressed that there is a set of patriarchal practices in every
structure or institution in the society, such as cultural institutions in religion, media and education, which have their own patriarchal practices.

In Walby’s perspective (1989), the state is a centralized agency perpetuating male violence against women. She argued that patriarchy changes, but it does not have an intrinsic evolutionary mechanism. She also argued that the concept of patriarchy should be flexible in order to deal with the variation of women’s experiences (as for example ‘women of colour’) and inequality between women at different places and sites (Walby, 1989).

3.6 Feminist Grounded Theory

Feminist research displays a relative aversion to empirical positivistic methodology and rejects the claims of value-free research (Haig, 1997). Feminist researchers usually refrain from taking any interest in the measurement, validity, objectivity, reliability, representativeness and generalisation usually associated with positivist research.

According to McInnes (1994), feminism is a perspective, not a research method, which is based on the understanding that the construction of gender is a central organising feature of societies. Additionally, Harding (1987) asserted that there is no feminist method, but there are distinct methodological features with epistemological implications that characterized feminist inquiry. Therefore, the transcendence of any existing research method to a feminist methodology is based upon the philosophy of the researcher, and her application of the method. In this study, the methodology was based on a combination between feminist approaches and GT.

Since the mid-1990s, several researchers have incorporated feminist principles into their GT studies (Wuest, 1995; Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001; Taki, 2005; Plummer and Young, 2010). Contemporary forms of GT have shifted it from its original positivist and positivistic roots such as Charmaz’s constructivist stance in GT (Plummer and Young, 2010). The shift toward a more interpretive and
constructivist GT position fits with feminist inquiry (Plummer and Young, 2010). Wuest (1995), one of the first researchers who described her work explicitly as Feminist GT, argued that GT is interpretive because the resultant theory explains how social experience is constructed and takes into account diverse experiences or multiple realities within the social structure. Therefore, in this study, I adopted a Feminist Grounded Theory approach since a feminist perspective has influenced decisions and highlighted the sensitivity to the way the emerging theory might be interpreted by participants. Additionally, merging feminist perspectives with the methodology enhances the theoretical sensitivity to issues of difference which is helpful in recognizing variations in emerging concepts (Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001). Consistent with GT, it is crucial for the researcher to carefully explore how diversity is influencing the emerging concepts.

Feminist research is research that uses feminist principles throughout all stages of research, from the choice of topic to the presentation of data (Brayton, 1997). These feminist principles act as the framework guiding the decisions being made by the researcher. However, principles and factors such as gender, race, class, income and location should only become part of the analysis if they emerge in the data (Glazer, 1978; Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001).

According to Wuest and Merrit-Gray (2001), when a GT research process is informed by feminist theory, the researcher should carry out the tenets of feminist research such as reflexivity, respect, avoidance of oppression and usefulness of the findings. Therefore, to facilitate the participants’ comfort in talking, the researcher should consider the participants’ level of education and culture and avoid the use of academic language (Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001). Additionally, researchers should be attentive to participants’ voices by giving them the opportunity to tell their stories. In practice this means using the feminist perspective recognizes the significance of hearing each participant’s full story and responding effectively to nuances of differences that contributed to variation in the emerging concepts. The power of using GT lies in its power to
constantly compare the data and, therefore, the researcher’s and the participants’ interpretations are incorporated into the final conceptualization (Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001). In GT, constant comparison of the data guides the inductive and deductive processes of shaping the emerging theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1994). Therefore, GT will incorporate a range of variations in the developing concepts and consequently the emerging theory will not reflect a singular view or a predetermined feminist agenda (Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001).

Feminists have analyzed the power structure and struggle within a family and showed how family power relations shape their members’ positions in relationships of power at work (Van Dijk, 1989). In the public arena, they have shown how social power influences personal life (Van Dijk, 1989). This is what this study was built on; as social structures will be analyzed and the distinguishes between micro and macro systems are addressed and connected in order to explain and understand the phenomenon under study. The complex relationships between different subsystems will be identified and related together in order to explain their interactions in motivating the HK in Palestinian society. The constant comparative method facilitates this process (Wuest and Merit-Gray, 2001).

In the current study I was influenced by feminists, and the symbolic interactionist approaches. Integrative approaches can incorporate aspects of each. Human behaviour is a complex phenomenon and there are no quick and easy ways to explain it. The richness of different perspectives also underscores the need to avoid simplistic responses and to work against HK on many fronts. This means that elements from different approaches can be used in a complementary way (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The combination of GT and feminist theory is based upon epistemological, ontological and methodological congruencies (Wuest and Merrit-Gray, 2001). Therefore in section (3.7) the tension and similarities between GT, Symbolic interaction and feminist theory will be discussed broadly.
3.7 GT and symbolic interactionism as a feminist mode of inquiry

Feminist writers criticized Glaser and Strauss for using esoteric language in their book published in 1967, and also for being static and linear in their discourse (Keddy et al., 1996). Feminist writers such as Keddy et al. (1996, p. 450) noted that Glaser and Strauss’s attempt to write about their new approach (shifting the sociological focus from theory verification to theory generation) in a way that could be understandable by quantitative researchers might be the main reason behind using the language of positivism and the use of variables such as theoretical sampling, hypothesis, properties and theoretical ordering. However, Keddy et al. (1996) also noted that Glaser and Strauss’s disciples, such as Stern (1980, 1991) and Chenitz and Swanson (1986), who developed GT and provided readers with a clearer picture about the theory and its method, made GT more aligned with feminist research principles built upon creativity and the courage of researchers to try new way of doing science (Keddy et al., 1996). Plummer and Young (2010), along with Charmaz (2000), noted that contemporary forms of GT have shifted from original or traditional positivism (which mainly refers to Glaser’s work) and post-positivist forms (Strauss and Corbin’s position) to a constructivist stance (Charmaz’s position). The latter shift toward a more interpretive and constructivist GT position is more compatible with feminist inquiry (Plummer and Young, 2010).

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), Strauss and Corbin initiated the transition to a transactional and subjectivist epistemology and a historical realist ontology characteristic of the critical paradigm in grounded theory. Corbin (in the 2008 edition of Basics of Qualitative Research) presented set of assumptions that lie behind her and Strauss’s conception of methodology. She stressed that most of those assumptions are built upon interactionist philosophy. However, when presenting the methodological implications of those assumptions she
moved towards a critical paradigm (reflected in her concern about historical reality and social changes):

“We believe that it is important to capture as much of this complexity in our research as possible, at the same time knowing that capturing it all is virtually impossible. We try to obtain multiple perspectives on events and build variation into our analytical scheme. We realize that to understand experience, that experience must be located within and can’t be divorced from the larger events in a social, political, cultural, racial, gender related, informational, and technological framework and therefore these are essential aspects of our analysis” (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 8).

Corbin also moved grounded theory towards the interpretive paradigm and presented her concern for feminist inquiry:

‘I agree with feminists in that we don’t separate who we are as persons from the research and analysis that we do... I want to bring about social change and make persons’ lives better’ (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 11).

MacDonald and Schreiber (2001) also examined the congruence between feminist thinking and traditional grounded theory. They found both to be compatible for concurrent use, yet huge differences in some precepts were found; however, reflexivity ensured that the principles of both were well-respected (Wuest, 1995). Corbin also acknowledged that her experience in nursing may the reason behind her need to develop knowledge that will guide practice by keeping with the social justice aim of feminist research and drawing upon her pragmatic and interactionist theoretical orientation (p. 11). After the death of Strauss she also demonstrated relativists’ ontology:

‘I agree with the constructivist viewpoint that concepts and theories are constructed by researchers out of stories that are constructed by research participants… (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 10).

Corbin (2008) admitted that she made mistakes in the past and described herself as ‘misinformed’ (p. 9). Therefore, she acknowledged changes in her thinking, and that the nature of knowledge and (consequently) methodology changes with time.
GT also values the researcher-participant relationship and focuses on respecting the subjective interpretation of social experience in which these elements are highly valued by feminist researchers, which implies the compatibility between grounded theory methodology and feminists principles (Wuest, 1995; Plummer and Young, 2010).

GT's basic principle is to discover the salient problem in a given scene and from the point of view of participants (Glaser, 1992). Therefore, many researchers in GT check transcribed interviews with participants to solve the problem of integrating multiple story lines or variables enhance participation which gives the participants true participation in the research and improve validity, as was suggested by feminist researchers (Keddy et al., 1996). This also implies that the stories and verification of conclusions comes from participants, however the role of researchers remains significant in GT, as they must have the necessary skills to make a link between themes and categories in order to allow a theory to emerge. Such facts may violate the principle of non-hierarchical relationship between researcher and participants, as advocated by feminist researchers. However, Keddy et al. (1996) believed that there is no perfect world of feminist research, as hierarchies remain relative, but this should not underestimate the role of GT in advancing the cause of women and its impact on expanding our knowledge of the life of women in the society.

One of the main features of GT is building theory and deciding upon the core category; another feature is constant comparative analysis, which enables the researcher to examine and to search for interactive components (Keddy et al., 1996). This interaction includes participants’ symbolic interaction within their social nexus. Symbolic interactionism is concerned with ‘social products that are formed through the defining activities of people as they interact’ (Blumer, 1969, p. 5). This aligns with feminist inquiry, which sees the meanings and knowledge derived through social exchange (Plummer and Young, 2010). Corbin and Strauss (2008) and Glaser (1999) believed in the power of concepts and considered symbols (language) or interpretation as being central to the process
of generating the substantive theory. According to Corbin (2008, p. 12), this concept ‘gives us a basis for discourse and arriving at shared understanding’. This emphasis on interpretation of language and symbols to derive meaning is also one of the similarities between GT methodology and feminist enquiry, but feminist research focuses more on ideologies and gender hierarchies (Plummer and Young, 2010).

The basic tenets of symbolic interactionism are deeply rooted in people’s subjective interpretation of social experiences, which is consistent with the feminist epistemological underpinning – that participants are the experts about their experiences, and that their subjective experience is thus valid data (Wuest, 1995) – as they attempt to understand and attach meaning to their social world.

According to Keddy et al. (1996, p. 451), GT data are suitable for deconstructing the contextual discourse, enabling it to move the analysis to a macro level and beyond the symbolic interactionist interpretation. Plummer and Young (2010) emphasized that Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) analytical tool, which included a conditional matrix, helps the analyst to identify micro- and macro-conditions or consequences in the data. Keddy et al. (1996) observed that GT failed in the nursing field in the past, because GT researchers did not take the research to its final end, which is social reform. They referred this failure to the researchers’ focus on the microcosm of the participants’ problems, because they did not address the place of a given problem within the context of the larger social and political world. However, Keddy et al. (1996) insisted that this problem can easily be overcome, because GT usually accesses rich data that allows for strong political voices to be heard, and connecting substantive theory with other well-developed social theories enables GT researchers to make strong contributions to knowledge that progress beyond an academic exercise to potential social action.

Feminist research is interested in giving voices to marginalized individuals; this study attempted to give voices to family members who were silenced, so the
researcher was keen to use this approach by promoting and maintaining interaction between herself and the participants. Family members were given time to share their experiences. The study aim was to understand the effect of murder on them, but by listening to their life experience histories attentively the researcher experienced a personal journey of self-knowledge.

3.8 GT and professional practice

Stern et al. (1982) articulated the factors that link GT to nursing, such as the fact that nursing occurs in natural rather than controlled settings, and the nursing process requires constant comparison of collected and coded data, hypothesis generation, use of literature and the collection of additional data to verify and reject emerging hypotheses (Stern et al., 1982). Thus, the research techniques of GT are applicable to nursing practice, education and administration. Gilgun (1994) stressed that GT offers a route where social work might feel the need for change; he believed that people must feel the need for change in order to embrace it, to enable reform, change and emancipation in practice. Oliver (2011) emphasized that the strength of GT is that it moves the researcher beyond rich description and gives a voice to participants, as it presents the act of conceptualization, and might be potentially transformative. He wanted to illustrate that a theory which has emerged from the study can alter how the researcher views the world and consequently change his/her consciousness and create new meanings. This relation between theory and practice was adopted by critical realism, which stressed that the practical significance of the theory in reforming a practice, as stated by Collier (1994, p. 15): ‘theory is the growing point of practice’.

Gilgun (1994) and Oliver (2011) addressed the link between social work and GT and demonstrated that GT requires active participation between the practitioners (researchers) and participants, and valuing the opinion of the latter. Therefore, if the research is local and context-specific it can integrate the practitioners’
experience and knowledge while genuinely addressing the concerns of participants (Oliver, 2011).

According to Streubert and Carpenter (1999), grounded theorists should consider important issues before entering on a new investigation as to whether empirical research offers oversimplification of the concepts relevant to the phenomenon under study. Another crucial issue is the question of whether a need exists for deep understanding of specific characteristics related to particular phenomena, and whether a phenomenon has previously been investigated. These questions and considerations have to be answered in order to validate the use of GT in this study.

GT is relevant to my interest in how family members who lost their female relatives to HK construct and perceive their own actions and those of others and to describe what happened in their contexts. The emerging data will be related to concepts of patriarchy and power.

3.9 Reflexivity (critical subjectivity) in qualitative research

Charmaz (2005) based her new approach on the original GT method’s pragmatic strengths by drawing attention to the deep-seated differences between objectivist and constructivist GT approaches. She highlighted that positivism overlooks the fact that the data obtained and analyzed are a result of interactions between the researcher and participant. Charmaz (2005) wanted to emphasize that the role of the researcher in the enquiry process could no longer be ignored. The notion of reflexivity in GT thus became prominent in contemporary works.

According to Hall and Callery (2001, p. 263), reflexivity is defined as ‘critically examining one’s effect as a researcher on the research process’. Because research situations are dynamic, and the researcher functions as a participant and not merely as an observer, the researcher ‘must analyze him/herself in the context of the research’ (Belk et al., 1988, p. 218).
Porter (1993) sees reflexivity as the researcher’s viewing their own beliefs in the same manner as those of their participants. The researcher’s beliefs and values should be made explicit and should be taken into account in order to understand them rather than to eliminate them (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Bryman (2001) argued that sometimes qualitative researchers are criticized for lacking transparency. Transparency refers to researchers’ ability to report how they arrived at study conclusions. Researchers have to mention clearly the research process; how the analysis was conducted, what they actually did when the data were analyzed, and how they designed and planned the study in order to enhance its credibility (Bryman, 2001, p. 285).

Transparency, theoretical sensitivity and reflexivity go hand-in-hand with each other, so reflexivity is not only being free of biases; it is an ethos to be applied throughout the entire research process. Theoretical sensitivity reflects researchers’ level of insight into both themselves (such as education, experience and training), and the area that they are researching (Glaser, 1978; Birks and Mills, 2011). These prior experiences, culture and values could create a barrier to objective and inductive data analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Therefore, I was aware of my responsibility as the researcher, to be reflexive about what is brought to the scene, what is seen and how it is seen. In this study, constant comparative analysis was used to enhance sensitivity by questioning the data, looking for relationships and interactions between the data and other sources in order to ensure that what I maintained openness and a willingness to give voices to the participants as advised by Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998).

Providing a thick description of experiences of families and MHPs has furnished the reader with the sense of conditional context, participants’ emotions and perspectives toward the phenomenon under investigation. It ensures that the reader can assess whether the theoretical framework reflects their experiences and whether it can be transferable to other contexts. Care is needed in qualitative studies to ensure that the reader can assess this and other attempts to confer rigour on the study.
3.14 Summary

This chapter has introduced and discussed the approaches that will be adopted in this study in order to provide description of human behaviour and to generate theoretical insights. It is difficult to claim that the approaches that I have adopted are the only legitimate way of addressing the research questions and objectives. The use of different paradigms aimed to give the wide range of perspectives which would help in explaining the complexity of the HK phenomenon and its consequences. The next chapter discusses how I applied the principles of these paradigms in my study and how I achieved its rigour and addressed the ethical requirements pertinent to qualitative studies.
CHAPTER FOUR

Research Method
Research Method

4.1 Introduction

The chapter begins with a discussion the objectives of the study. The personal context and the motivation for choosing the study area are explored followed by an overview of GT and a rationalization for its use in this study. Then the discussion focuses on researching sensitive subjects and the major challenges that researchers face in conducting sensitive topics. In this chapter the study methods are explained, commencing with a discussion of the recruitment of the participants and the sampling approaches utilized. An overall demographic profile of the participants is presented, with a profile of the murdered victims. The data collection methods and procedures that were carried out by the researcher in this study are also discussed, along with the data analysis methods. Data analysis commenced immediately following the completion of the first interview and continued until completion of the study following the GT design.

In this chapter I will use the first-person (active voice) and ‘she’ instead of the third-person. Although some researchers consider the use of the third-person more objective, Mohr (1999) indicated that by writing in the active voice (i.e. the first-person), the writer is taking responsibility and is accountable for his or her actions and opinions. Mohr (1999) also stressed that the need for neutral objectivity had become an excuse to use the passive voice and consequently distance the subject from the object of the study, and hide the identity of the researcher from readers. This leads to cancelling the strength of the argument with a voice that is owned by no-one, and for which no-one takes responsibility (Mohr, 1999).

This study employed a GT methodology and based on feminist paradigms wherein the researcher plays a direct role in data gathering, making decisions about the research direction, interpreting and analyzing the data, so the first-person will be used.
4.2 Aims, objectives and research questions

4.2.1 Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to understand and explore the emotional and social effects of HKs on the families of the victims in order to identify how MHP can best help such families.

4.2.2 The study objectives

The study objectives were to:

- Explore the contributing factors to ‘HK’ of women in Palestinian families as identified by family members.
- Explore the emotional and social effects of ‘HK’ on the family members of the murdered women.
- Highlight the factors that helped or hindered the coping and recovery of the family members.
- Identify the actual and potential roles of the MHP in reducing the impact of ‘HK’ on family members.
- Help to inform decision-makers and health policy-makers of the voice of family members, which will be helpful in determining strategies and actions that can be implemented in order to reduce and or prevent further killings of women in future.

The research questions were:

1) What are the root factors that contribute to HK, as reported by the participants?
2) What are emotional and social effects of the HK for the family members?
3) What are the potential roles that can be effectively adopted by MHP to help the bereaved family members to deal with emotional and social consequences of losing their female relative as a result of HK?

Similar to ethnographic studies, research questions and objectives within GT are quite open, then become focused when the theory begins to emerge during data analysis. Similarly, the study design and the selection of study participants are emergent. Therefore, the direction of the study and the inclusion of participants are driven by
incoming data and the need to explicate the emerging theory. Using specific objectives with a broad purpose is characteristics of a GT study.

4.3 Personal biography and motivation

Scholars have emphasized that health and social researchers need to clarify their personal motivations for their research, particularly those who are utilizing qualitative methodologies that require reflexivity (Breen, 2007). Some scholars acknowledged that the motivation for the decision about the research topic results from a combination of personal experiences and incidents which occur in the research process (Sengstock, 2009; Breen, 2007). The process of reflexivity is a central issue in this research, so it would be inappropriate to suggest that there is no bias or pre-judgment on the part of the researcher.

Violence against women in general and HK in particular are subjects that I am interested in and in which I have a considerable amount of experience, so I acknowledge my involvement as an insider rather than as a detached outsider. I am a female researcher, interested in gender issues, who has worked closely with abused women for more than ten years, and I am a community mental health professional who had been dealing with bereaved family members. Therefore, during the interviews and research process, I was constantly reflecting on my interaction and relationship with the participants, and therefore, I do not claim complete objectivity. This personal information is intended to familiarize readers with information about my background in order to enable them to evaluate the claims I make based on the data in this study.

My interest in developing a research study in the area of HK and bereaved families was based upon my previous research experience as a field researcher in a study about the effects of murder on bereaved families who lost their relatives for political reasons. In that study I found that parents and siblings suffered a lot following the loss of their relatives, and that their pain endured for years. I was able to observe the gravity of the situation and appreciate the effect that the loss of a loved one has on the bereaved. That research also motivated me to think and to wonder about the degree to which these findings would transfer to other bereaved populations. Whilst it is traditional in
Palestinian society to admire the ‘martyrdom’ of political victims, which was openly discussed, family members had a great deal of pain inside them. They articulated that they did not talk about their pain to their close-knit society or relatives in order to avoid further pain. During that time, I was also working with abused women so I thought about those family members who lost their daughters through HKs, how they reacted and how this harmful experience affected them individually (intra-personally) and within their social network. Therefore, my interest was stimulated in the context of values influencing families’ reactions to the murder of their female relatives.

Additionally, being close to the victims of domestic violence motivated me to examine this issue more closely in order to explore in-depth their experience and in order to assess the role that MHP could play in providing support for bereaved family members.

My experience as a community mental health professional led me to the realisation that understanding the experience of bereaved families through HK could only be formulated through understanding the wider context within which the grief occurs, by investigating individuals within their social/cultural contexts. I chose to explore the grief experience from HK within the context of OPT. At the same time, one of the purposes of this study was to explore the contributing factors to HK of women as HK issues and violence against women is still a neglected social problem in the literature and research in OPT. The consequences of those crimes for family members have not been examined yet in the literature. Therefore, I found it important to undertake research to address this shortfall and gap in understanding.

4.4 Overview of GT

GT is the most widely used methodology for the analysis of qualitative data. GT utilizes data sources similar to other qualitative methods, such as interviews and observational data, and relies on participants’ descriptions and accounts. However, GT differs from other qualitative methods such as phenomenology, focus groups and ethnography in its primary objective of theory development and verification.
GT emphasizes the emergence of at least a substantive theory (local), and possibly formal theory (generalizable) to explain the psycho-social processes and structures of human activity (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Therefore, it is often concerned with the discovery of the theory rather than description, as in other approaches. The process of deductive verification and corresponding conceptualization throughout the course of the research is typical of GT methods (Strauss and Corbin, 1994; Mello, 2006). The paradigmatic characteristics of GT are based primarily on systematic reflection of the social construction of participants’ experience, listening carefully and interactively to participants, and on the inductive emergent conceptualization of the meaning of human behaviours and social process. This is the substance and aim of GT methodology.

4.5 Justification of using GT in this study

Morse and Mitchan (2002) described two main goals of GT research; to develop concepts in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, and to develop a general and valid theory. GT research provides a flexible design that allows the researchers to develop and modify the research process in order to achieve the desired credibility and trustworthiness to ensure rigour (Smaling, 2002).

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 19) summarized some of the reasons why researchers opt to use qualitative research and stressed the importance of discovery:

Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known. It can be used to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known. Also qualitative methods can give the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods.

Using qualitative research presents many challenges to health and social care researchers, including issues relating to boundaries, building rapport, management of emotions, entering the life of others, and leaving the field (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007; 2008). GT is a useful tool to learn about family members and professionals’ perceptions and feelings regarding HK. Quantitative data may be useful in measuring attitudes across a large
sample, however, using survey study for example would not answer the current research questions, therefore GT was chosen.

The literature review indicated that there is a paucity of published qualitative studies exploring the subject from an interpretive perspective, and the effect of HK on victims’ families has not been examined yet, which is a further justification for the study.

4.6 Researching sensitive topics

Renzetti and Lee (1993, p. ix) in their book *Researching Sensitive Topics* defined a sensitive research topic as one that is ‘intimate, discreditable or incriminating’. Topics such as death, grief, violence and sexual abuse fit into these definitions (Sque, 2000; Liamputthong, 2007). Furthermore, sensitive research also includes research which significantly or potentially poses a threat to those who are or who have been involved in it (Lee, 1993). Lee (1993) acknowledged that not only the topic encompasses sensitive research, but also the consequences and the situation or any other conditions that may arise during the research process. According to Lee (1993) and Lee and Renzetti (1993), sensitive research can be threatening to participants in three areas: the first is ‘intrusive threat’, which includes research that intrudes into the private sphere and personal experiences of the participants, such as sexual and religious practices which are private; the second type is research involving ‘threat of sanction’, which is related to study of deviance and may involve revealing information that is stigmatizing or incriminating to the participants; and the third type is that constituting a ‘political threat’, which refers to vested interests of powerful people in the society or areas that involve some sort of social conflict, or where there is exercise of domination and coercion (Lee, 1993, p. 4).

This study involved potential difficulties because it threatened some of the areas discussed previously, including threat of sanction and intrusive threat. Additionally, this study was carried out within the qualitative paradigm, based on feminist principles and concerned with the discovery of the real experience of bereaved families. This kind of research may, by definition, realise difficulties and tensions in relation to researching sensitive topics and the possibility of violating ethical guidelines and principles. Many research studies addressed those potential difficulties, such as Morse and Field (1995),
Sque (2000), Dickson-Swift et al. (2007) and Liamputtong (2007), who discussed the issue of researching sensitive studies and stressed that this is especially important when contemporary health and social science researchers undertake face-to-face encounters. Using qualitative methodologies to enhance the understanding of the many issues that affect health and wellbeing is typical of the paradigm (Dickson-Swift et al.’ 2007).

Feminist scholars such as Bergen (1993), Grossman et al. (1999) and Campbell (2002) also acknowledge that examining qualitative research based in feminist principles uncovers a range of topics that are particularly sensitive, such as domestic violence and rape. Feminist scholars urge researchers to conduct these kinds of research and to share a commitment to certain ways of researching women; this entails the establishment of non-hierarchical relationships between the researched and the researcher and the acknowledgment of the subjective nature of the research (Oakley, 1981; Finch, 1984; Stanley, 1990; Liamputtong and Ezzy, 2005). These principles guided this study and will be discussed in detail.

Scholars studying bereavement topics also acknowledged the difficulties that researchers face in gaining access to participants concerned and affected by painful topics, who may require a high level of sensitivity in the recruitment process. Historically, there are two opposite points of view about conducting research with bereaved families by homicide: the first emphasizes that this kind of research is harmful and unhelpful (Gekoski et al., 2012); the second stresses that it is helpful, because it gives the bereaved a voice and means of expression (Pennebaker et al., 2001). Gekoski et al. (2012) conducted a mixed study method to assess the impact of participation in trauma-focused research among women bereaved by homicide in the UK. Their study concluded that all participants gained something positive from participation, including therapeutic benefits such as being heard, having their experiences validated and feeling that their suffering was recognized; half experienced upset, but no participants regretted their participation (Gekoski et al., 2012). This is reassuring for researchers examining sensitive topics.

Ethical considerations may limit the research process due to the distress that most bereaved people experience (Sque, 2000). Sque (2000) admitted that bereavement
research produces many difficulties in the sampling and recruitment of participants, such as low response rate as a result of many factors, including the level of distress, the negative impact of bereavement on health and morbidity, participants’ reluctance to talk about their loss to strangers, and the general difficulty in communication with other people about painful events.

Researchers acknowledged that many participants do not have the opportunity to talk about their experiences to others, thus such research gives the participants a genuine experience to reflect upon their life, and therefore qualitative research is in itself helpful (Ely et al., 1991; Patai, 1991); as Parkes (a well-known psychiatrist and researcher in bereavement) stated:

‘Any bereaved people who are not ready to talk will decline the invitation to take part… one of the problems of bereaved people is to bring something worthwhile out of the loss. I believe that most are glad to find that their experiences, however awful, can be of help to others. Expressing grief can be a very therapeutic experience and the interviewer needs not attempt to block or inhibit such spontaneous expressions. Individuals at the end of life expect the discussion of emotionally distressing events to be painful and may resent being told to “calm down”’. (Parkes, 1995, p. 36)

In accord with Parkes (1995), Hutchinson et al. (1994) also indicated that interviewing bereaved families may have a therapeutic benefit, including emotional relief and some healing that may arise from such encounters. Other researchers such as Milne and Lloyd (2009) have explored the issue of researching sensitive topics and asked questions concerning whether death and dying was a sensitive issue for participants. They concluded in their research that participants can benefit from participating in research which involves telling their stories. For Hutchinson et al. (1994), telling stories about loss can be empowering to the participants, as in their study about the benefit of participating in research interview they found that participants reported that interviews enabled them to find new directions and increased their self-awareness.

This study involved investigating bereaved families, an emotionally taxing area which involved information that might reveal private or hidden issues in victims’ lives. In the case of HK, this might be problematic to those taking part in the study as they might face
stigma if a hidden part of their life is revealed. Therefore, I was aware of the sensitivity of the study and its potential challenges for the participants. As suggested by Munhall (1988), the researcher is the instrument that has to protect participants from social as well as psychological harm.

Some of the issues surrounding sensitive research are not always apparent at the outset of the research, as researchers often do not know in advance what may come out of the research and how it may be harmful to participants or to the researcher, as noted by Morse and Field (1995, p. 78):

‘Data collection can be an intense experience, especially if the topic that one has chosen has to do with the illness experience or other stressful human experiences. The stories that the qualitative researcher obtains in interviews will be stories of intense suffering, social injustices, or other things that will shock the researcher’.

This means that researchers should predict and prepare themselves and participants for any potential harm in order to deal with these issues immediately if they arise during the interview. Seque (2000) raised her concerns about disclosure and intrusion, as this may restrict the personal liberty of the participants, therefore she suggested that any potential harm in the research has to be managed and minimized without altering or compromising research outcomes in order to not affect the quality of the research.

Feminist researchers also highlighted their concern about the level of disclosure and the possibility of exploitation of the participants, as they stressed that interview may be seductive as it may lead participants to disclose information that they do not want to reveal, possibly leading to subsequent regret (Oakley, 1981; Finch, 1984). Scholars suggested that researchers should be wise and endeavour to build self-awareness about these issues, and to maintain sensitivity and empathy as far as possible (Seque, 2000). Once again these principles underpin this study.

Dickson-Swift et al. (2007) also suggested that researchers of sensitive subjects should demonstrate a certain level of discretion and respect in what they are doing, and not deal with research that addressed sensitive life events as a kind of procedure or topic to be analyzed rather than the autonomy of the participants and experiences that require respect
of responsibilities and commitments. Therefore, all the previous mentioned concerns were acknowledged and kept in mind by the researcher throughout the research process.

4.7 The conduct of the study

This section presents how I accessed participants and how they were sampled initially, then it describes how the interviews were conducted and analyzed. This section discusses issues related to GT procedures in the matter of the preparation for fieldwork and the principles of GT underpinning this study. Ethical considerations are a crucial issue in researching sensitive studies, as the success or failure of these processes may affect the quality of any human research. Therefore, in this section I also aim to explain in detail the challenges of dealing with ethical issues and how the researcher dealt with them within the study and how the researcher attempted to ensure the rigour of the study.

4.7.1 The research process

4.7.1.1 Insider/outsider roles

One of the major aspects of feminist research is to acknowledge and question one’s own place in the research process (Allen, 2004; Baber, 2004). For Rosaldo (1993), every researcher is positioned as a subject in that she ‘occupies a position or structural location and observes with a particular angle of vision’ (Rosaldo, 1993, p. 19). Therefore, prior to recruiting the sample, the researcher should determine where she fits into the research. It is suggested that insider research refers to the situation when the researcher conducts research with a population of which they are also members and share common features such as the same language and experiential base with the participants (Kanuha, 2000; Asselin, 2003). In the current study I found myself as both an insider (an insider by virtue of my nationality, professional identity, religion and gender) and an outsider (through undertaking research while studying abroad and not being an employee at the research sites).

The problems of doing research in one’s own setting have been well-documented in the literature (Chentiz and Swanson, 1986; DeLyser, 2001; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002; Breen, 2007). Qualitative researchers who study a group, organization or culture they
belong to often begin the research process as an insider or native (Breen, 2007). Scholars such as Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) described three advantages of being an insider in the research; the insider researcher has the best understanding of the group’s culture; the researcher’s ability to interact naturally with the group they study is enhanced; and the previous advantages enable the researcher to establish rapport and intimacy with the group.

Additionally, I am a mental health professional (the outsider role to family members), and I do not share the same experience of loss with family members. A more distanced researcher role encourages people to divulge a personal reflection on their lives so the participants know that the researcher is an outsider who was unlikely to exchange such confidences within the community setting (Sixsmith et al., 2003).

Being mindful of both roles that I played, during the data collection period I followed the advice from Funder (2005) and Glaser and Strauss (1968), who advocated that researchers keep an open mind and do not allow the local context to influence their thinking. I observed the flow of the interviews for any clue of my dual roles that might affect the openness and the honesty of the shared information. The key here is how the researcher can use the two roles in order to represent adequately the experience of the participants. As argued by Dwery and Buckle (2009), the key ingredient is not to be either insider or outsider, but the ability to be open, honest and to be deeply interested in the experience of one’s participants (Dwery and Buckle, 2009, p. 59). This was the guiding principle of this study.

Oakley (1981) advocated that when the researcher produces non-hierarchal and non-manipulative relationships with the participants she will overcome the separation between the researcher and the researched (Oakley, 1981). She advocated that interviewing should be an interactive experience and researchers are encouraged to bring their personal role into the research relationship. Therefore, answering participants’ questions, sharing knowledge and experience, and giving support when asked were my strategies during the interviews. In studies that addressed sensitive topics such as HK, issues like insider and outsider roles could affect negatively the validity of the collected information. Therefore,
I sought to alleviate suspicion about my identity (as a PhD student) by clarifying the purpose of my study. I was respectful to participants, and I assured them of confidentiality and provided them with information about helping services when needed. In the interview itself I followed rather than led the interview.

4.7.1.2.2 Getting access: gatekeepers

Generally researchers acknowledge the need to recruit participants in sensitive manner and some researchers consult health professionals in deciding the suitability of participants (Kendall et al., 1997). Such professionals are known as gatekeepers – those in a position to influence or control research (Grønning, 1997; Kendall et al., 1997). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995, p. 66) observed that gatekeepers have an instrumental role in mediating access for the research:

‘Whether or not they grant entry to the setting, gatekeepers will generally, and understandably, be concerned as to the picture of the organization or community that the ethnographer will paint, and they will have practical interests in seeing themselves and their colleagues presented in a favourable light. At least, they will wish to safeguard what they perceive as their legitimate interests. Gatekeepers may therefore attempt to exercise some degree of surveillance and control, either by blocking off certain lines of inquiry, or by shepherding the fieldworker in one direction or the other’.

Some recommendations suggest that health professional gatekeepers can act overzealously, blocking recruitment or introducing selection bias (Kendall et al., 2007), and some have observed that gatekeepers may inhibit participants’ continued engagement through the power they wield over them (Miller and Bell, 2002). The risk of such problems can be reduced by careful wording of the information sheet, establishing good relationships with the health professionals and keeping them fully informed about the research, as well as involving health professionals in the study from its outset (Cook and Butler-Keating, 2002; Kendall et al., 2007). For these reasons, which included practicality and ethical acceptability, I initially chose to recruit participants for the study through women-related institutions. Using a third party to establish participation was in the participants’ best interest, because this makes voluntarily participation more likely (Kendall et al., 2007). I was also aware, from previous research, that the database about
the names and addresses of victims and families was inadequate, so I approached women’s institutions that documented HK cases and had previous experiences in working with women threatened by HK.

Many authors have addressed the gatekeeper’s role in recruitment for sensitive research. Some researchers highlighted that institutional recruitment via gatekeepers could be problematic and challenging and stressed that insensitive and unethical inclusion may have negative implications (Ellison and Jones, 2002; Heath et al., 2004). Other scholars reported their concern that gatekeepers would themselves sample from the population, as they might judge families and chose families who were good with them (Long, 1999). This obstructs the researcher’s desire to interview any family that fits with the inclusion criteria of the study.

Long (1999) and Grønning (1997) concluded that they avoided the risk of recruiting potentially biased or hand-picked people in their studies by approaching families personally. For Long (1999), health workers who did not have good relationships with families advised him to contact families directly, as they anticipated difficulties if they themselves approached the potential participants (Long, 1999). Similar to Long (1999), I encountered some difficulties in recruitment, as MHPs mentioned that their previous experiences with some families were problematic and advised me to contact family members directly, as they might have refused to participate if they were approached by the professionals. In a few cases, the MHPs put me in touch with families in order to explain the purpose of my study, and following the call participants confirmed their willing participation. Cree et al. (2002) observed that researchers can get access only with the co-operation of a number of different gatekeepers; without this, there can be no research.

For reasons detailed below I consulted other women’s institutions who had no previous experience with family members, and they demonstrated a sincere willingness to recruit families. This fell within the ethical approval originally secured, and access was negotiated through women-related institutions.
Gatekeepers such as staff from women’s organizations distributed the information sheet (please see appendix 4) to potential participants. In order to familiarize potential participants with the study, the information sheet I provided to them contained my own contact details. In order to establish trust and transparency, potential participants were informed in the information sheet that the research was independent of the institutions operating in OPT, and examples of how confidentiality and anonymity would be ensured were given. To further reassure the participants, details of the university members (supervisors) and the name of a contact person in OPT (who could be contacted if a participant wanted to complain about the research) were distributed.

This study also involved interviewing MHPs who had worked previously with victims. Sullivan and Cornfield (1982) argued that when negotiating access within an organization, it is important to speak with those in the most senior position in order to give the research legitimacy. According to Dingwall (1980), when a setting is formally organized, as in women’s institutions, there exists a ‘hierarchy of consent’ in which it is assumed that superiors have the power to permit their subordinates to be studied, which may lead to difficulties in getting access to the setting (Lee, 1993). In order to avoid any potential difficulties in the recruitment of MHPs, I was keen to maintain a good relationship with the directors of the women’s institutions and staff, to win the trust of those involved, including staff and directors. In my field notes about recruitment of MHP I wrote:

So far I approached three institutions but I still did not succeed in interviewing MHP who worked closely with the victims so I will try to go again to the director of [...] to explain my intentions of this study and sampling procedures in GT. Theoretical sampling directed me toward interviewing the field MHPs not only the director so I will try this... after one week I succeeded in interviewing two MHPs who worked closely with more than four victims. Today I received a call from the same director to tell me that she arranged another interview with another mental health professional in North district. So my strategy was correct and I should always explain my study in detail in order to gain their trust (Field notes, April and May/2010).

Recruitment was therefore a continual process that was renegotiated and strengthened, particularly during the period of fieldwork.
4.8 The sample

4.8.1 Purposive sampling

In qualitative research, participants are often sampled on the grounds of their relevance to the study topic, rather than representativeness or randomness (Creswell, 1998). In GT participants often participate because they want to offer information that will further the process of theory development or will generate understanding (Popay et al., 1998). GT uses purposive sampling, whereby the sample numbers or data sources are unknown at the commencement of the study (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). Glaser (1978) suggested that the study needs to commence by locating individuals in the research field who are knowledgeable about the area of interest and can provide a rich source of data.

The initial principal inclusion criteria were all adult family members (female or male) who experienced the murder of a female relative in an HK. The second group of people who were interviewed were MHP and the staff in women-related organizations, who previously worked with the families of HK women. The selection of the participants was based on their first-hand experience with the social processes of interest. Children and young people under 16 years old were excluded from the study. The rationale for not including children in this study was that it increases the complexity of a study on methodological, pragmatic and ethical levels. In the typical Arab family, decisions are more likely to be made collectively, because of supremacy of the family/collective identity (Hammad et al., 1999). Older males and patriarchs of families may be asked to make health decisions or any other decisions for individual family members. This role of the family clearly complicates informed consent and confidentiality issues and children’s participation in health research (Hammad et al., 1999). On a practical level, in this study organizing and scheduling an interview with children would have been challenging, because they cannot consent to participate without the consent of their parents.

Family members were approached by staff from women-related organizations who provided them with the information sheet about the study. The potential participants were given one week to consider their participation and were given the preference to choose
the time and place of interviews. I was aware from previous bereavement literature that bereaved families prefer the least intrusive recruitment methods, such as receiving a letter informing them of the nature of the study, which allows them to think carefully about participation rather than personal or direct recruitment (Hynson et al., 2006). Professionals and other participants were given enough time to consider their participation in the study.

At first I recruited participants through three organizations placed in different districts. I faced many difficulties during my journey in recruiting participants. At the recruiter level, MHP in women’s institutions were over-burdened with administrative tasks and did not have enough time to approach potential participants. As mentioned in the section concerning gatekeepers (above), they also reported that some family members may not accept participation if they were approached by the institutions because of their previous experiences. I was concerned at this stage that MHP might only approach people friendly to them personally. Another barrier was the inadequacy of some of the information concerning the database, as the names and addresses of family members were not sufficiently robust in the records of the NGOs.

To overcome the administrative barrier, I spent much time with MHPs to prepare a list of families’ contact details and set specific dates that were convenient to MHPs in order to contact family members. To overcome the problem of recruiting potential participants through eligibility criteria and not according to professionals’ preference I sought the aid of other women’s institutions in order to recruit families. The MHPs agreed to recruit the families and they contacted family members.

This strategy also helped me to not risk interviewing people selected by staff from women related organizations. At this stage I started to be more sensitive to who might be missing and who refused to participate. MHPs reported that some family members did not give a reason for their refusal to participate, whilst others told MHPs that they feared the perpetrators and their reputations, whilst others reported that they felt that they would find participation in the study too difficult emotionally.
Although it is acknowledged that sometimes those who suffer most feel the greatest need to talk about their experience; others do not want to be reminded of it by being interviewed (Stroebe and Stroebe, 1987). Nothing is known of the experience of families who declined without giving reasons, so I tacitly respected their choice to refuse. Therefore I decided to review again the recruitment procedures and the literature in order to solve the problem of refusing family members participation.

Hynson et al. (2006) suggested leaving sometime between the initial letter and subsequent telephone call, and even if the family asked for more time to consider participation, the researcher should respect their concerns (Hynson et al., 2006). Based on Kendall et al.’s (2007) suggestion, which was discussed in informed consent section, and Hynson et al.’s (2006) helpful recommendations, I modified the information sheets by providing more information about the study and about myself and kept staff from the organization updated about the new procedures. I collaborated with one of the women’s related organizations to use their office for two days a week in case of any potential participant wanted to call me there to ask about the research. These strategies facilitated recruitment and I succeeded in overcoming initial problems of the reluctance of participating in this study by family members.
### 4.8.2 Theoretical sampling

Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 36) introduced the idea of theoretical sampling, stating that:

‘Whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next, and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges’

This means that further research participants who can contribute to emerging theory are invited to participate in the study. Therefore, theoretical sampling was used in this study in order to select the participants who could provide relevant data that would promote the formulation of theory. Based on this, the primary goal of using theoretical sampling was the development of the emerging theory as Glaser and Strauss (1967) believed that information applicable to a substantive area will emerge in time, if it is simply allowed through theoretical sampling.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) emphasized that participants should be chosen according to the principles of theoretical sampling. This means that in order to find participants, settings or events to pursue analytically relevant distinctions emerging from the initial coding stage and to enrich the description of the phenomenon under study so that the theory may be developed. Theoretical sampling provides flexibility and diversity in choosing different sources of data, but as argued by Strauss and Corbin, theoretical sampling should not be used simply to look for more data, but to clarify aspects of existing data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). According to Glaser, although GT is inductive in nature, deductive thinking by the researcher is required in the process of theoretical sampling (Glaser, 1998).

Theoretical sampling in this study was based on concepts derived from data during analysis (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Therefore, questions about these concepts drive the next round of data collection (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; 1998). Theoretical sampling enables the researcher to discover relevant concepts and their properties and dimensions (Corbin and Strauss, 1990; 1998). Therefore, sampling theoretically means sampling concepts not persons (Corbin and Strauss, 1998, p. 144). Depending on this, the researcher should go to places, people and or situations that will provide the data that tells
about the concepts and answer the questions about the emergent concepts. The first step is to start asking questions and to look for the best source of data to find answers to these questions.

When I reviewed the initial sample, I noticed that family members who belonged to the lower socio-economic groups were over-represented. I also noticed that more female family members were recruited than male family members. The significance of these issues was not considered in the first stage of sampling because I made no attempt to ensure the representation of families according to social class, but when data about poverty started to emerge in the analysis of the first interviews, I started thinking about social class and the need to interview family members who belonged to the middle classes. This was done to understand more about the meaning of ‘honour’ to people from other social classes, and to understand how families from other social classes reacted when their relatives were accused of potential or actual infidelity. For these reasons the recruitment strategy was focused on interviewing families from the middle social classes.

However, this could not be achieved, because families from the middle-class refused to be interviewed. Families did not provide reasons for not participating, but I could speculate one possible reason for their refusal and for their under-representation in this study. Following the realisation that family members from the middle class were not well-represented, I reviewed the database that I had from different women’s organizations. I found that the majority of victims belonged to lower social classes, which predisposes any sample in this field of study to a largely lower socioeconomic cohort or status people. Consequently, the number of poor families who were recruited was understandably more than the middle class.

My next step was directed towards interviewing male family members in order to gain an in-depth understanding about their experiences, addressing the issue of male powerlessness and its relationship with HK. I also wanted to understand the effect of murder on male members, whether they were close or not close to the victims. Some data started to show a potential link between the nature of the relationship with the victim and its effect on the level of distress and despair among family members. I had only
interviewed one man at that time, and therefore I sought the help of MHPs to help me in recruiting more males. I was relatively successful in interviewing male members, but the number of male participants was still half that of the females interviewed. This could be due to several reasons, including their need to bury the story, as men typically supported or motivated the HK in the first instance. It is also possible that sometimes they did not want to show their pain, as men differ from women in the expression of their emotions (particularly in traditional societies) (Qasem, 2010), and they also have greater fear for their family reputation and concerns about confidentiality (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2000). They might also be reluctant to talk freely about their emotions to a female researcher. Although interviewing more male participants was a challenge in the study, it was deemed to be an important aspect.

Another emergent finding was the neighbours’ role in reacting to HKs. Participants mentioned that the pressure of neighbours and the close-knit community had a great effect in inciting the murder, therefore the decision was made to interview neighbours in order to gain a deeper understanding of this situational condition, to explore neighbours’ perspective and roles in murder, to understand the effect of witnessing the HK and to fill the gap in the analysis. I was aware of the ethical issues raised when family members recruited the neighbours, so I asked them to give the neighbours the information sheet and to not put any pressure on them to participate. My aim was to maintain a non-intrusive recruitment method. I also did not want to meet them personally to induce them to volunteer.

Four of the neighbours were approached by family members, and one was approached by a mental health professional who provided the neighbour with an information sheet and arranged a meeting between me and her in one of the women’s institutions. The neighbour insisted that she did not want family members to know that she had been interviewed, so this created some tension with ethical considerations. This participant was not approached by family members, because the researcher did not interview the family involved in her case. The literature discussed the dilemma of using family gatekeepers in investigating sensitive topics. Moore and Miller (1999) noted that the use of family and guardians as gatekeepers may hinder the recruitment process, because they
may believe that their relatives suffered a lot and they do not deserve another disruption in their vulnerable lives. Whitmer (2001) stressed that trauma destroys the trust relationship of victims between themselves and others, and particularly to people who were or are perceived to have power over them. Therefore, participants who do not trust outsiders may impede the researcher progress through hindering recruitment.

I also wanted to focus on the neighbours’ role and reaction to any potential and actual infidelity, and how the neighbour and their relatives and other social networks perceived and dealt with the HK issue. Therefore, I interviewed this participant to talk broadly about her experience as a member in the community, and in doing so I assured her that I would not breach any ethical code. The possibility of further invasion of the personal boundaries of the families was still my chief concern; retaining pseudonyms and limits the details about the victims were my main strategy in respecting these boundaries. I never discussed any aspect of previous interviews with these associated people.

Other important emergent concepts that were found in the initial interviews were the ‘pressure of extended family’ and ‘collectivism’ and their relation with the motivation of HK. Therefore, there was reason to believe that the extended family could be a major element not only in motivating the crime, but that they might have a significant role in affecting families’ experience after the murder. Interviewing extended family members provided deeper understanding about the phenomenon under study.

This study aimed to explore the effects of HK on nuclear or extended family members. The review of the participants also showed that most of the participants in the initial interviews belonged to the nuclear family, so extended family members’ accounts were not yet included. Previous studies on bereaved families found that in cultures where the relationship between members of the extended family is significant, like OPT, or even more significant than that found between members in nuclear families, the grief in such a close-knit society may profoundly affect other members, regardless of the degree of the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased (Hines, 1991). Therefore, the decision was made to interview extended family members in order to gain more understanding of the experience of relatives who lost a female family member to HK, and
to explore the meaning of honour to extended family members and their attitudes toward the murder.

One of the cousins approached by staff from a women’s organization agreed to be interviewed. The ethical dilemma which emerged was that nuclear family members refused to be interviewed, so I was concerned about this and whether it would violate ethical codes. I decided to interview the cousin and the head of the clan, who asked me to keep their names anonymous, without taking the permission of nuclear family. The included participants in this case both fit within the inclusion criteria of this study (family members, whether extended or nuclear - I felt that these participants had the same right as nuclear family members of the victim to share their experience in this study, as the murder affected them also socially and emotionally). They, like the closer nuclear family were affected by the murder.

Corbin and Strauss (2008) encouraged the researcher in their analysis to ask questions that often provide direction to theoretical sampling; therefore I asked myself practical questions such as ‘what is next’? ‘Where and how will I gather the next data?’ Theoretical sampling was also helpful for clarifying the role of MHPs with threatened victims I interviewed one of the professionals who had worked with a threatened case and succeeded in preventing the murder. This was done in order to further define the themes concerning victims’ characteristics, protective measures and causes of distance between MHP and victims. For the purpose of theoretical sampling I also interviewed a lawyer and two police officers.

The decision to interview police officers and lawyers was taken for theoretical reasons, such as the gap in knowledge regarding the discharge and follow-up of victims after leaving shelters. Policewomen had to do this follow-up, as mentioned by MHP, and in order to explore their strategies I interviewed them. The data about the problem with discharging victims from shelter homes was also encountered when interviewing families. Therefore the actions of police were thought be significant and were thus examined.
The data regarding legal proceedings for perpetrators also needed to be explored in order to have a broader picture about the legislative system and to uncover the relationship between legislation and murder. The relationship between the criminal justice system and the threatened women and perpetrators was also a significant element to explore broadly in theoretical sampling.

Sampling on theoretical grounds should be continued until all the major variables that emerge from the initial data are explored and the categories that are relevant to them are saturated (Corbin And Strauss, 1990; 1998). Theoretical sampling in this study allowed the researcher to control the potential biases that might occur in the initial stage of sampling. Some of the biases that were employed were the focus on nuclear family members’ experiences more than the extended family members’. In the initial phase, I interviewed the director of a women’s institution, and through coding I realised that there was very limited knowledge about victims’ experiences and how MHPs dealt with threatened victims on a daily basis. According to Glaser, theoretical sampling, constant comparative analysis and the requirement of the saturation of the data enable the link between subcategories and themes to the main core category and can help in reducing any potential biases associated with sampling (Glaser, 1992). The wide variation in participants in this study allowed for a balanced explanation of the phenomenon under study (Morse, 2001), and also acted as a validity tool which enhanced the quality and richness in the data (Smith and Biley, 1997).

Data saturation occurs when no new data emerges which is relevant to the particular subcategories and categories; when categories have conceptual density and when all variations in the categories can be largely explained (McCann and Clark, 2003). The decision to stop was made when I became satisfied that all the categories were saturated, and when the issues raised by the participants did not yield anything new or particularly relevant to the development of the theory. However, I could not say that in each interview the participants did not add something new; but what they said was no longer unexpected, and consequently it was unlikely than anything further would be contributed to the development of the theory. Therefore, the need for further data collection became redundant.
4.8.3 Sample profile – the demographics of the participants

The total number of the participants who were recruited by purposive and theoretical sampling was 43 (family members: 23 (from 11 families); professionals (MHPs, police and lawyers): 15; neighbours: 5). Participants lived in various localities. The sample of interviewed families was diverse in age, gender and relation to victims. Participants’ ages ranged from 17 to 71. MHPs were mostly women (11 of 12), whose seniority varied from four to twenty years. Their experience and specialities included mental health, social work, sociology, being directors of women-related institutions and coordinators. All of them worked with threatened women, and some had worked previously with victims and their families. The two following figures provide basic information about families and participants. Details are limited in order to avoid possible identification.
Figure 2: Participants’ localities

Figure 3: Participants’ relationship to victims

Demographic details about family members can be found in appendix 13.

Details about women victims (such as their residence and means of murder) were not mentioned in order to avoid any identification of them or their families.
Number of victims was 12. However, eight of the victims were illiterate or under-educated. Seven were divorced or single. Victims lived in varying locations, but were mostly from rural areas. Their ages ranged from 15 to 39. The average age at the time of death was 25. Perpetrators were mostly brothers of the victims, followed by politically-affiliated people and then husbands.

4.9 The selection of data collection tool

4.9.1 Semi-structured interview

Interviews play a central role in the data collection in a GT (Creswell, 1998). Semi-structured interviews were used as the main data collection method in this study. Individual interviews provided the opportunity for the participants to tell their stories concerning the loss of their loved one or a person they knew previously. Mason (1996) described many characteristics of qualitative interviews, such as their informal and conversational style, and being thematic or topic-centred, which means that it is not only a set list of questions (Mason, 1996, p. 38). Burgess (1984, p. 102) labelled the qualitative interview as a ‘conversation with purpose’, which seems appropriate to the actual formats of the interviews in this study.

Although scholars advocate the importance of equality between the participant and the researcher, the focus of eliciting information from the participants is often produced and shaped by the latter (Dingwall, 1997). This implies that interviews to some degree are not natural or neutral and cannot be viewed as conversations. Dingwall (1997) stressed his concern about the fact that participants may be not interested in the topic of the study. Oakley (1981) also cited her concern about conventional interviewing and its potential for exploitation and the manipulation of the female participants.

Both Dingwall (1997) and Oakley (1981) were particularly concerned about the researcher’s involvement in manipulating the respondents as a source of data. Though this may not always be apparent, since there is cooperation from the respondents, it depends heavily upon their perception that they are being kindly and sympathetically
treated (Oakley, 1981; Dingwall, 1997). Such approaches are seen to impose passivity on respondents and oblige them to technically serve the purposes of the researcher (Murphy et al., 1998, p. 115).

To alleviate these tensions, Oakley (1981) suggested a more reciprocal relationship between interviewers and participants, whereby the former respond willingly to participants’ questions and requests for information about themselves and the research. For this reason, I was committed to ensuring that participants were willing to discuss a topic which was of considerable interest to them and allowed them to have a say in the direction of the interview. I might also claim that the participants that I interviewed were largely interested in discussing the topic and reported their appreciation of being able to participate in the study.

However, the researcher should also be aware that participants might try to justify or provide an excuse for their behaviours, exhibiting what is socially desirable or saying what the researcher expects, and they may try to display their competency as interviewees (Dingwall, 1997; Murphy et al., 1998). Therefore, Dingwall (1997) and West (1990) advocated that researchers use a combination of observation and interview in order to overcome the potentiality of interviewees giving socially acceptable accounts, and to access their private accounts. This can also be partly achieved by spending more time with families, which helps to promote a relaxed atmosphere, aids in uncovering true feelings, and ensures a version nearer to a normal pattern of behaviour is more likely (Long, 1999), including the employment of interviewers’ technical skills, such as developing rapport and sustaining eye contact (Secker et al., 1995).

Additionally, in this study I ensured that the participants were given enough time to consider their participation, and accordingly the participants who could not tolerate talking about the topic were allowed to refrain from doing so. Some bereavement based researchers, such as Hutchinson et al. (1994), Boss (1987) and Parkes (1995), argued that people who could not tolerate talking may try to protect themselves from pain by refusing to be interviewed, postponing the interview or by avoiding finding a convenient time (Hutchinson et al., 1994). Therefore, the qualitative researcher should support this ‘self-
protective behaviour’ and encourage participants’ power by respecting their refusal and not pushing or coercing them to participate. Therefore, free and voluntary participation was maintained and respected by the researcher throughout the process of the current study by maintaining a form of process consent in which the on-going consent of the participants was sought during the interviews. I often checked at various points during the interviews whether the participants were willing and happy to continue. I trusted that those who could not or wished not to talk refused to engage in the project.

Melia (1997) noted that if researchers allow all possible objections to the status and the benefit of data, they would not undertake any research at all. Therefore, interviews should be regarded as the expression of reality rather than a literal description of the participants’ reality, what is said in the interview must be treated as an account, and at the same time experiences should be interpreted and understood, and general views, assumptions and perspectives of the participants are an essential aspect of reality and should be taken into account during analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Dingwall, 1997). Mason also stressed that the experiences being investigated are complex and conceptual, therefore the interaction between the researcher and the participants is necessary, whereby control of structured interviews should be rejected for the purpose of facilitating negotiation, support and clarification, and to attain in-depth social explanations (Mason, 1996, p. 39).

Scholars have also addressed the disadvantages of interviews, such as the suggestions that interviews are more costly and time-consuming and responses may be influenced by the relationship between the interviewer and the respondent (Polgar and Thomas, 2000; Hulley et al., 2001). Interviewers can increase the magnitude of error if, by their appearance, manner, or method of recording they exert a qualitative influence on participants’ responses (Armstrong et al., 1992).

However despite these criticisms, semi-structured interviews are efficient in obtaining good quality data in a short period of time, and enable the researcher to tackle sensitive topics with participants (Crawford, 1997). The questions in semi-structured interviews should be broad and open-ended, allowing the participants freedom in constructing the answer, since qualitative researchers often want to understand the participants’ language
and meaning (Britten, 1995). Oakley’s (1981) suggestions were kept in mind – that women should be allowed to speak for themselves and convey how they see the world.

4.9.2 Interview guide

Prior to commencing the data collection, two interview guides (see appendices 8, 9 and 10) were developed to facilitate interviews with professionals and family members. The interview guide initially contained topics which the literature review had suggested as being relevant to the study aims, and was modified by the researcher in response to interim analysis (Glaser, 2001).

Patton (1990) described the advantages of using interview guides, such as getting systematic data from different people and to enable researchers to utilize time more effectively. In the current study, the purpose of the interview guides was to ensure that the questions covered the main aims and objectives of the study. My academic supervisors examined the interview guide in order to check that the questions covered the areas of interest. Most of the questions were open-ended questions related to participants’ perceptions of the contributing factors associated with HK, the emotional and social effects of HK on victims’ family relatives and how MHP can best help. During the interviews the participants were not constrained by the guide and were allowed to talk freely about any issues they thought relevant. The concurrent collection and analysis of data, discussed further in the analysis section, facilitated the process of refinement. As after each interview I modified the questions in the interview guide to reflect areas of enquiry I wished to pursue (see appendices 8, 9, 10, and 11 for the evaluation of the interview guides). In doing this I maintained a semi-structured approach to the collection of data using interviews.
4.9.3 Initial individual interviews

For GT, participants need to provide informed consent to be studied and the researcher needs to develop a rapport with the participants to disclose detailed perspectives about responding to an action or process (Creswell, 1998). Initially, it was difficult to conduct interviews with families because of their fear regarding the type of questions that may be asked and being unfamiliar with this method of research, since some family members were concerned that the information might be used against them.

It was noted by Demi and Warren (1995) that family members who experienced difficult experiences have serious social concerns, and may not trust researchers; they may not appreciate the value of the research, and may also fear disclosing their secrets for numerous reasons. Additionally, people in the Middle East are suspicious and fearful of the authorities, and any stranger asking questions might be seen as a government agent (Al-khayyat, 1990). As observed by Al-khayyat (1990), an Iraqi sociologist and a researcher of HK, in the Arabic countries people are not familiar with social statistical data and the interview process, and they have no appreciation of the value of the sociological research.

Most of the families in this study had not previously experienced being interviewed, so during the interview I continually explained the purpose of my study. I clearly identified myself as a PhD student in the School of Nursing at the University of Manchester, and I tried to put participants at ease. I also tried to help them to overcome their inhibitions. Participants reported their fear about publication and the possibility of being identified by their relatives and the close-knit community. Therefore, I repeatedly assured them that they would be given code names and all possible identifying details would be omitted from the publication.

In appearance, I tried not to overdress when I interviewed the professionals and the family members. The body language, the manner of dressing and respecting the social culture of the participants should be taken into account. Dress and personal appearance
may affect the interview, as participants may judge the ability of the researcher on the basis of what they can see (Arksey and Knight, 1999). The researchers should maintain professionalism in their manner and behaviours related to the cultural context (Chenitz and Swanson, 1986). I was keen to wear suitable clothes and avoided wearing informal clothes and jewellery in order to put interviewees at ease.

One of the major tenets of feminist research is that the researcher must have respect for the participants (Demi and Warren, 1995). Respect can be shown by scheduling appointments for interviews at the time and in places that are convenient for the participants. Therefore, interviews were conducted in a location chosen by participants; all family members preferred to be interviewed in their homes.

4.9.4 General progress of the individual interviews

Kvale (1996) argued that the first minutes of interview are decisive, as participants want to have an understanding of the interviewer before disclosing their experiences to a stranger. Other researchers, such as Oksenberg and Cannel (1988), noted that refusal to participate in the study tended to occur very early (when the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants) and during the first few sentences of the interviewer’s introduction. Berg (2001) urged researchers to never begin the interview ‘cold’, so I developed small-talk (informal conversation) and ice-breakers with participants.

At the beginning of each interview I introduced myself to participants and to the others who were present, including children. It was common that participants asked me about my personal and professional background, in order to maintain reciprocity I gave information about my work and other personal information such as marital status and number of children. In order to establish a rapport, I found it useful to start with administrative issues, such as signing the consent form and checking the participants’ details. I checked their willingness to continue, if they wanted the interview to be recorded and if there were any particular enquiries such as time constraints, or whether they had any commitments that should be taken into account. As an attempt to maintain ‘process consent,’ I often reminded the participants about my commitment to
confidentiality, and their right to withdraw at any time was declared prior to starting the interview. I also informed participants that I would repeatedly check their willingness to continue as the interview progressed.

Some participants were initially nervous and apprehensive about the digital recording. About one-third of the participants (particularly family members) refused recording. Naturally, I respected their preference and took notes, as the literature advises researchers not to persist in attempting to persuade participants to accept recording, as this inflexible approach may risk the entire process of the interview (Bucher et al., 1956; Demi and Warren, 1995; Bryman and Bell, 2007). Participants’ reluctance to record the interview was understandable, as the literature indicates that families with serious social concerns have other experiences, whether known or unknown, that may precipitate the conditions under study (Demi and Warren, 1995).

Some indicated that families may have higher priority concerns, such as fear of legal repercussions or of the exposure of their hidden secrets (Demi and Warren, 1995). As mentioned previously, some participants from the Middle East are not familiar with interviews, so recording is unusual for them and may raise doubts and suspicions. Therefore, I explained simply that the purpose of using the recorder was in order to not miss anything they said and to be sure that I had an accurate and complete account, and that it also let me focus on the interview. As suggested in the literature, when or if the participants showed any sign of anxiety about the recorder, the researcher should answer them in a direct and candid matter (Bucher et al., 1956; Bryman and Bell, 2007) so when I noticed that they were not comfortable with the recording, or were looking at the recorder apprehensively when they discussed some sensitive issues, I offered to switch it off and took notes.

This strategy worked and is consistent with the respect demanded by Oakley (1981) and others when interviewing. I took detailed notes of the interviews and in order to not lose phrases and language used, I kept eye contact, listened and responded attentively to participants’ answers. Here my clinical experience helped me to manage effectively the interviews and maintaining eye contact helped to observe the emotional tone of the
interview. This assisted in the interpretation of sections of the transcript that might otherwise be ambiguous or misinterpreted. Short notes were taken during the interview and were expanded upon immediately afterwards. This was particularly important where people declined the recording. Extra effort was put into the extensive process of recalling the interviews immediately after the event. These interviews notes were then translated into English language, printed and imported in the computer software programme (Nvivo) (QSR, 2008) in order to be analyzed similar to other recorded interviews. All Interviews were conducted in Arabic language and analysis was done in English language.

Most interviews took the form of gentle questions and the topics which were sufficiently broad to allow participants to elaborate on issues they believed were important for me to understand from their perspective. Probing for further details was used when necessary. Charmaz (1994) acknowledged that there is a criticism of GT centred on not providing complete details of the interview process. She also added that the interview process affects the quality of the gathered data, and stressed the necessity of explicitly shaping data gathering through framing, shaping and managing the interview questions. She argued that the inexperienced researcher may not be able to attain rich data because of the use of direct questions. She observed that direction (using direct questions) will be needed later, but should arise from the sensitivity of the researcher toward interviewees and data. From her perspective, the researcher’s reflexive role is important for seeking in-depth information and to search for narrative (Charmaz, 1994).

According to Glaser (2001), the researcher has to explore a few general topics to help uncover the participants’ views and how they frame and structure them. The use of broad questions and listening with interest at the beginning of an interview will help to develop trust and rapport, and will enable the participants to tell their stories. Therefore, my strategy in the interviews was to come prepared to listen and leave preconceived notions behind, since this would enable me to not miss important information and overlook the unique nature of each participant’s experience.

I started the interview with proper warming up by asking: ‘I would like to start by having you tell me your story?’ I noticed that participants talked for half an hour to one hour
explaining their story, which provided information about the context. I used active listening and reacted positively to comments to enhance the communication process and tried to say ‘tell me more’.

Although open-ended questions elicited further details, this sometimes took a long time, and occasionally participants talked about many details that were not related to the topic. Finding the right level of directiveness (guidance) appropriate to the interview was challenging, since I did not want to present my own perspective and to potentially bias the interview, and I also wanted participants to take their time and to feel unhurried (as suggested by Oakley, 1981). However, the amount of directiveness should be appropriate, as the interviewer needs to control the interview (Britten, 2007). Therefore I followed the recommendations of Patton (1987), who provided three strategies to maintain control: knowing the purpose of the research, asking the right questions to ascertain informant’s needs, and giving appropriate verbal and non-verbal feedback (Patton, 1987).

I noticed that in the first two interviews, when I asked participants about their stories, they shared in detail the circumstances of the murder, which moved the interview early to questions about emotions. I found that this created problems for different reasons, such as interviewees being emotionally drained and the interviewee-interviewer rapport waned. The emotional tiredness created difficulties, because the interview took more than two hours and was draining early in the interview made it difficult for them to continue. This also affected the establishment of rapport between the researcher and the participants, so I decided in future interviews to place the more emotional questions towards the end of the interview which helped in having enough time for the interviewees to get comfortable with the researcher.

Therefore, I started the next interview by asking: ‘tell me about your day?’ / ‘tell me about yourself?’ / ‘tell me briefly about yourself and your family?’, then I progressively moved on to more emotional questions during the middle of the interview.

Berg (2001) recommended that researchers remember their purpose, so in the first four interviews I used to check my interview guide when the interview was nearing
completion, to see if I missed any questions and to check if I had covered all the areas I wished to discuss, but after that I did not use it to avoid its intrusiveness. I used the interview guide for the general direction of the interviews (appendices 8, 9, 10 and 11), since most qualitative interviewers have a list of core questions that define the area they seek to cover (Britten, 2007).

However, I often encouraged family members to direct the conversation into areas of importance for them. Wording in a qualitative interview cannot be standardised, since the interviewer often uses the person’s own vocabulary when framing supplementary questions (Britten, 2007). I used this strategy in the interview in order to probe participants’ meanings and to reflect on remarks made by them.

The interviews with both family members and MHPs were emotionally taxing, since during the interview details of murder were reported and emotional consequences were raised; some participants (mostly family members) remembered their loved ones, which in some of the cases led to crying during the interviews. When an interviewee cried or was upset, I gave several responses. I paused to give them time to relax and to compose themselves. I also offered them the opportunity to stop the interview, and asked them if they wanted to continue later. I expressed empathy by saying: ‘I am sorry to remind you of this difficult experience’.

Participants sometimes became tearful when they talked about their helplessness in preventing the murder and reported feelings of self-blame. These feelings caused upset and distress, so I also offered empathy and asked them if they wanted to take a break. At the end of each interview I asked them whether they wanted further help and reminded them that they can find contact details and information about a particular support group in the information sheet. When it seemed that the interview was coming to an end I would always ask if they wanted to say anything further, and if they had anything to say to people who had a similar experience. I made an explicit statement about terminating the interview and switched the recorder off. I also told them that I would telephone the next day to ask about them, and I thanked them for their contribution to the study.
This was rarely the end of the interviews; usually, I spent half an hour with family members to answer some of the questions that they asked during the interview. They generally offered me a drink, which I gratefully accepted, and some of them shared the victims’ pictures with me. Some invited me to have a tour of their houses. Thus the interview encounter was a social exchange (Michell, 1999). In my field notes I often wrote my observations about the interview and the social conversation that followed it. This information was helpful in providing an understanding of the context, as (according to Seidman, 2006) interviews provide access to the context of people’s behaviour, which affords the researcher the possibility to understand the meaning of those behavours.

Strauss proposed that the emergent categories from the on-going analysis provide a focus for subsequent interviews, which are in turn guided by analytical questions in order to precipitate a tentative theory (Strauss, 1987). Charmaz stressed that grounded theorists shape and reshape their data collection (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, researchers should be flexible and should not be constrained by a rigid prescription of data, so the emergent data guides further data collection strategies. At this stage, the interview questions and strategies were refined and became progressively more focused and structured in order to validate the concepts that emerged previously in the preliminary analysis. Additional interviews were conducted in order to check the participants’ stories, ascertain specific data and to check my tentative interpretations. A series of directed questions were asked attempting to structure the content and to deepen understanding of the emerged categories. Although the use of direct open-ended questions may be considered a limitation, at this stage shaping the content was necessary; as Creswell (2003) stressed, by shaping the content, the method is considered wide enough to formulate a GT.

Charmaz (1994) suggested the use of direct questions in later interviews (after doing the initial preliminary analysis), but these should arise from the sensitivity of the researcher toward the interviewees and the data. I asked direct questions about the latest concepts emergent from the analysis, and sometimes requested some details about such issues. For example, participants talked continually about their poverty and powerlessness, and indicated that these factors were affecting their positions inside the society and played major factor in the murder. To understand this, in subsequent interviews I asked more
questions about poverty and how participants perceived it, and how it affected their lives.
I asked professionals direct questions about characteristics of the families, and if they noticed similar characteristics among families. Family members were asked direct questions about the effect of murder and the factors that affected it, so I asked them about their initial responses after the murder and if they received consolation from their social networks. I asked this because concepts such as ‘witnessing the killing’, ‘suppressing rituals’ and ‘violent death’ started to emerge from the data. The families mentioned that no one provides condolence to them, which was considered significant information as in Arabic society, offering condolences to the relatives of the deceased is an important act of kindness and it shows respect to the families and the deceased (Shhadi et al., 2009). Therefore, I wanted to further explore the effect of these conditions on the families’ grieving processes. The effect of the criminal justice system on the bereaved families’ experiences was also significant to the findings, so asking about the effect of the perpetrators’ prosecution on family members was considered in subsequent interviews. Based on emerging themes generated from the data, I asked more questions about the prosecution of the perpetrators.

The professionals were also asked about protective measures and procedures for the discharge of the victims from the institutions. These focused questions were asked in order to fill the gap in knowledge about the nature of protection and institutional measures, as conflicting information was noticed between the accounts of professionals and families on the role of MHPs.

Data about the victims’ characteristics emerged, but it was conflicting, as some described them as strong, whilst others described them as dependent and naïve, so my next strategy was to ask both families and professionals about the victim and how they described them. Data about victims’ decisions to leave shelters also emerged. I also wanted to explore why victims made this risky decision, so I also asked about the circumstances that led to this. The interviews continued until no information came from the interviews (data saturation was reached).
The interviews varied in length, depending on how much time interviewees had and how long they wished to talk. The length of the interviews varied from approximately half an hour to two hours and a half. I endeavoured to ensure that the exchange was as open as honest as possible, and secured as much reciprocity as possible (Oakley, 1981).

In the field notes I wrote a summary of the key themes emerging from the interview and other off-tape comments. I also wrote comments about non-verbal interactions and how participants had reacted to being interviewed. I also wrote my personal reflections and thoughts that occurred to me during the interviews.

The interview was digitally recorded when allowed; therefore, attention was given to obtaining participants’ consent for recording their interviews. Attention was also given to priming the recorder to work before setting off for the interview. For optimum audibility I placed the recorder between me and the interviewee. After each use the recorded interview was copied to computer. I also used the digital recorder to record my field notes concerning the interview. The recording and transcript were both encrypted.

4.9.5 Group interviews

In some circumstances family members insisted on being interviewed together as a form of joint interview or group interview. Some reported that this would help them to talk openly about their experiences and help them feel more relaxed. This kind of research approach requires a range of skills in facilitating group discussions and moderating, and requires observing and analysis on the part of the interviewer (Hancock, 1998).

A focus group is defined as ‘a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher’ (Morgan, 1996, p. 130). The recommended size of a focus group is 6-10 people (less than this may limit the amount of collective data gleaned; more can result in fragmentation) (Hancock, 1998). This made the group interviews with families in the current study half-way between individual interviews and focus groups, since the minimum size of a group interview in this study was 2 and the maximum was 4. In the beginning of each group interview I gave a statement about the rules of the interview, such as the necessity to respect each other’s
point of view. Another important thing was discussing the issue of confidentially, as I encouraged participants to keep what they heard confidential. It is difficult to guarantee absolute confidentiality, since anonymity is not possible in focus group. On my part, I assured them that the discussion and all data treatment would be confidential.

The role of the interviewer is critical to the success of group interviews, thus, as scholars have suggested, the use of a non-directive style of interview is ideal (Morgan, 1996). Other scholars have suggested the use of broad questions (Beyea and Nicoll, 2000). My strategy during this group discussion was to encourage free discussion, but I was also ready to intervene when necessary to resolve group problems.

One of the disadvantages of group interview is that the articulation of group norms may silence individual voices (Kitzinger, 1995). An interactive group typically features one person brainstorming collectively for other members of the group (Berg, 2001). Thus, group interviews may reflect collective rather than individual points of view, and hierarchies within the group may affect the data (Kitzinger, 1995). I conducted dyadic interviews; the literature emphasized that in dyadic interviews there is a possibility of power imbalance (Arksey, 1996). Since I interviewed a husband and wife, I was concerned that the husband might dominate the discussion, as in Palestinian society husbands have authority over their wives, which may violate the wife’s rights to talk openly, or she may give responses that are acceptable to her husband. This may undermine the trustworthiness of the study, since spouses may be reluctant to reveal personally discrediting information (Boeiji, 2004).

So my main role was working as a facilitator by asking the same question to both of them in order to give both people the opportunity to talk. I also tried to minimize the possibility of giving socially desirable responses by reiterating the confidentiality and anonymity issues and asking if either of them wanted to speak privately. On the contrary, given my over-concern about the previously mentioned potential disadvantages, I found that this interview style was helpful for self-disclosure, as both of them talked openly and for two hours about their experience, with no hesitation. Although they sometimes reported different perspectives, they generally openly discussed and negotiated with each other
about these differences. My role at this stage was to help them to elucidate their points by asking them to clarify some of their observations to each other. Here my clinical experience helped me.

One of the concerns raised by researchers about group interviews is the possibility of inhibition, relative to the supposed privacy of an interview situation, or that focus groups are inappropriate when researching sensitive topics (Kitzinger, 1995). Paradoxically, Kitzinger found that group interviews can actively facilitate the discussion of taboo topics, because the less inhibited members of the group break the silence for shyer participants (Kitzinger, 1995). She also observed that this kind of discussion could also provide mutual support in expressing feelings that are common among the group, which is particularly important when researching stigmatized or taboo experiences such as bereavement and/or sexual violence (Kitzinger, 1995).

Similar to Kitzinger (1995), I noticed this when I interviewed four sisters; the eldest encouraged the youngest to speak about her feelings by answering the question first, and they reported that this interview helped them to speak openly about their loss, and even gave them the opportunity to support each other and to have understanding how this experience personally affected each one of them. They reflected that they felt relaxed enough to reach such a level of discussion of information that they had not previously articulated. This is consistent with the findings of other scholars, who emphasized that some people may be more willing to share sensitive information because of group support than through individual interview (Farquhar and Das, 1999).

Morgan (1998) offered a number of suggestions for managing distress within focus groups, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics, including reinforcing the point that participation is voluntary, allowing participants to take a break and leave the room if necessary, preparing a referral sheet for counselling, and educating oneself to the potential issues and reactions to a particular topic.

I followed Morgan’s (1998) suggestions by observing the discussion, and when any distress occurred I managed by offering support. I also offered empathic responses when the family members talked about the loss of their female relatives and when they
ventilated their pain for losing social support. On one occasion, one of the participants vented her anger at herself for not telling her mother about her dream and for not warning her. This was one of the most emotional-taxing experiences that I had faced during the group interviews, so I felt that this participant needed more support from me. I stopped the conversation and gave her some time to relax, and asked her if she needed further help, and gave her a contact detail of one of the institutions. I tried to move the discussion in a less painful direction, and following this when we continued the group interviews I noticed that the slight tension during the group interview was starting to lessen, and they started to support each other when one of them spoke about their pain. This experience showed that researcher sensitivity in focus groups has an important role in enhancing group support by being a role model to the participants; supporting, understanding and showing respect for their experience. These strategies worked, and were consistent with the suggestions of Oakley (1981) and Morgan (1998) about the reciprocity role, respecting their privacy and empathic listening.

I also noticed that this group had more angry comments about the authorities, relatives and the close community than were expressed in individual interviews. This led me to again review the settings of the other interviews, and I realized that when participants were interviewed alone, although they talked about the social effects of murder that they experienced, and the role of relatives and the close-knit society in motivating the murder, they focused more on their own feelings. However, when another family member was present, responses were more broadly focussed and more in-depth about social consequences.

This significant observation is similar to other researchers’ experiences, who noticed that the synergism in group interviews kept the emotion going and allowed each participant to reinforce each other’s vented feelings of frustration and rage (Kitzinger, 1995). Kitzinger suggested that this kind of interview is especially appropriate when interviewing disempowered individuals, who are sometimes reluctant to criticize people in power or may feel that any problem results from their own inadequacies (Kitzinger, 1995). Building understanding about this observation was significant to me, as the level of openness and the nature of shared information varied significantly between group and
individual interviews. Furthermore, although family members were very adamant that the presence of other family members would be necessary, and that the latter knew everything about their difficulties, it actually appeared that there were some topics that they would talk about more freely when they were alone.

Although these group and joint interviews were not planned in the beginning of this study (it happened spontaneously as a result of participants’ enquiries), it gave this study more credibility and breadth of knowledge. Scholars in sensitive research indicated that participants’ talk is drawn from their knowledge and experiences of the sensitive issue of interest, therefore the knowledge that is generated from focus group is valid but this knowledge is specific to the context in which it is constituted (Jordan et al., 2007). Group and joint interviews provide an important aspect of the analysis, such as the exploration of the group discussions and discourses as a microcosm of the wider world within which such groups belong, which emphasized that what is being explored is how people define themselves and their world in a collective context (Clavering and McLaughlin, 2007). From a feminist perspective, it is about accepting what the participants want, as they also emphasized that the collective nature of the group interviews empowers participants and validates their voices and experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Fine (1994) also added that group interviews not only give voices to others, but also open the possibility to listen to the plurality of voices of others as ‘constructors and agents of knowledge’ (Fine, 1994, p. 75). A joint interview produces more data because participants fill in each other’s gaps and memory lapses (Arksey, 1996). Joint interviews are known to provide insights into interactions and the nature of the relationship such as power among couples through observation and non-verbal communication (Pahl, 1989). This certainly added to the depth of data gathered in this study.

The role of the interviewer in the discussion is crucial, as moderating and facilitating the discussion is essential. Homogeneity in group discussions facilitates group cohesiveness, promotes a feeling of safety and permits an open and active discussion (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). All family groups comprised nuclear family members, and what was significant was that they wanted to be interviewed together to feel more comfortable and at-ease to discuss this sensitive issue. This created a ‘comfortable’ environment among
them, as I observed. I noticed that individuals inside the group encouraged each other to talk, reflected on each other and sometimes added more details about some points. Although in each group it was observed that one of the participants talked more than the others, most of the participants had a fair opportunity to participate in the discussion. At the end of the group interviews I thanked them for participating in the study and for their respect for each others’ points of view. I stressed the need to keep what was discussed confidential, and I strongly assured them about confidentiality and anonymity on my part.

4.10 Managing data

4.10.1 Preliminary procedures of data analysis

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated from Arabic to English language by the researcher soon after the interview. Each script took approximately 5 to 6 hours to complete. Although this was time-consuming, it was an invaluable process that allowed me to capture the flavour of each interview. Transcribing the interview early was both helpful in remembering any particular impression or nuance observed during the interview (Bryman, 2004). This early transcription also helped me to get feedback from my academic supervisors before conducting further interviews. Reading and re-reading the transcripts was recommended by Streubert-Speziale and Carpenter in order to become immersed in the data (Streubert-Speziale and Carpenter, 2003). Therefore, I used to read the interview transcripts, which gave me a general sense of each participant’s experience. Gaining essences (understanding of the central meaning or most vital part of the experience) from the data can be achieved by reviewing the transcripts, as essences give a common understanding of the phenomenon under study (Streubert-Speziale and Carpenter, 2003). Therefore, reviewing the transcripts was one of the main strategies I used, by searching through the data to find similarities and possible relationships. Memo-writing and comparative analysis was used, which assisted the process of open, axial and selective coding, as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). A preliminary analysis was done of each interview, which improved my emerging understanding of the issues. This initial analysis also directed the research towards the
second phase of sampling, known as theoretical sampling. Initial coding is often open coding.

4.10.2 Initial open coding

Open coding means ‘the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing of data’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 61). For Glaser, it concerns breaking down the data into codes that allows the analyst to identify a tentative direction in which a study is developing and areas to find new data before a more specific focus is pursued (Glaser 1978). I analyzed each interview separately by reading and re-reading of the transcripts whilst listening to the audio recording of the interviews. Then the codes were labelled by using Nvivo codes. Initial codes and labels were descriptive and some were taken from participants’ own words. An example of open coding can be seen in appendix 17.

As suggested by Glaser (1978), line-by-line analysis helps in the comparison between incidents, therefore I used both the manual analysis and the computer software programme (Nvivo) (QSR, 2008) in initial coding, which helped me to see data more clearly and to assign codes simultaneously.
4.10.3 Field notes, diaries and memos

Researcher diaries aim to capture the ‘real inner drama’ of the research and aim to facilitate the research process through recording observations and thoughts (Bargar and Duncan, 1982, p. 2). Diaries often remain hidden in the final published account (Newbury, 2001), therefore researchers are advised to write analytical memos which will become the basis of writing for publication (Newbury, 2001).

When listening to the audio recordings, I often made handwritten notes regarding new ideas, or any agreement or differences with earlier interviews. This also helped me to think of areas to pursue in subsequent interviews. Glaser suggested that memoing ‘captures the frontiers of the analysts thinking’ and therefore if the researcher does not write memos he/she is not doing GT’ (Glaser, 1978, p. 83). Memos were therefore a key feature of the research process.

Theoretical memos are considered a key component of GT. It is the data that is developed theoretically and sensitively (Heath and Cowley, 2004). Memos are used to capture the researcher’s thoughts during data collection and analysis. Memos form the foundation of theory development, therefore researchers should record them continuously as they act as a store of analytical ideas that are then sorted to show how these ideas fit into the emerging theory (Chenitz and Swanson, 1986). Memo-sorting is considered the initial stage in the writing-up of the theory, as it pulls all the elements together in order to produce an overall theoretical framework. Memos help the researcher to raise the level of analysis from description to conceptual abstraction.

I used typed memos. I dated them and linked them to the interviews that they were taken from. I always carried a small notebook to document any idea that came to my mind. An example of a memo is presented in appendix 14.
4.11 Supervision meeting and maintaining researcher’s reflexivity

Qualitative studies are interpretive in nature and therefore the biases, values and judgments of the researcher are stated in the research report (Creswell, 1994). Research supervisors audited the research process and asked questions throughout it. Regular meetings with academic supervisors were held during data collection and the data analysis in order to provide opportunities for reflection in practice. The main areas of discussion were the context of data collection, blind reviewing of transcripts in order to enhance theoretical sensitivity, to uncover biases and to clarify the researcher’s assumption and interpretation of the data. The supervisors’ roles were significant in enhancing the credibility and dependently of the analysis, as during the coding process they regularly reviewed the coding of the data and how the categories were organized in the NVivo programme. Subjectivity on the part of the researcher and over-involvement in the data can be controlled through academic supervision meetings, which helped to prevent losing sight of other perspectives.

Feedback from supervisors was helpful to improve my skills and sensitivity in interviewing and to overcome the tension between the researcher role and clinician role. The personal interaction between the participant and the researcher during the interview is crucial, and the researcher should keep in mind the focus of the research in order to be clear about the researcher role (Orb et al., 2000). Supervision helped me to realize the main tension between the professional role and the researcher role, in that participants in the research study assisted me in discovering something about a topic or a concept while the counsellor assists the client to understand themselves and their lives. The role of the supervisors was also crucial in building my critical self-awareness, since the discussion with the supervisors helped me to be aware of my position and to strike a balance between the insider and outsider roles.

As mentioned in previous sections, interviews with bereaved families were emotionally exhausting to the researcher, so one academic supervisor provided me with regular debriefing directly after conducting the interview, which helped me in overcoming difficulties of emotional feelings that were raised after interviewing the families and
MHPs. This also helped me to gain resilience and the tenacity to return to the field as my supervisor always stressed that reflective time was needed for me and advised that I take enough time to make space between each interview. I also found that documenting my feelings in personal diaries was helpful in building self-awareness about the effect of the interviews on my emotions, such as feelings of anger, guilt or frustration. Rager (2005 a&b) suggested that diary-keeping is a self-care strategy that may assist in protecting the emotional safety of the researcher. Similar to Oakley (1981), Gilbert (2001, p. 11) suggested that the researcher must connect both cognitively and emotionally with study participants:

It is not the avoidance of emotions that necessarily provides for high quality research. Rather, it is an awareness and intelligent use of our emotions that benefits the research process.

This means that researchers’ awareness and emotional expression could have significant impacts on the quality of their studies if they are mindful of when and how to use them. My academic supervisors’ role in building this understanding in how to deal with my emotions in a creative way had a great result in the building of the reciprocity of interactions with the participants, and created a more comfortable environment which I believe created an atmosphere wherein the participants felt that they could share their stories and openly express their opinions without fear of judgment. Furthermore, as also suggested by Holland (2007) and Rager (2005a), through making sense of their emotions, researchers will be able to gain insight and to give meaning for their interpretation of the topic they are exploring, which are altered to the meaning and behaviours of those being interviewed and enable the researcher to gain intuitive insight.
4.12 Validating the themes

In GT, data analysis is an iterative process which enables data to be continuously examined for meanings, common patterns and emerging concepts and also to validate the accuracy of the categories. The ideas generated must be verified by all the data and categories are constantly refined in an on-going comparison of the incidents in old and new data (Glaser, 1978; Health and Cowley, 2004). To check the consistency of the emerging categories and codes I used various methods, such as members’ verification, peer debriefing, and also constant comparative analysis. After interviews and initial coding I read and annotated each interview transcript, highlighting and labelling concepts; thereafter, subsequent coding took place by comparing consistently the current transcript with other transcripts in order to allow the emergence of the categories and their proprieties. Consequently, additional themes and concepts emerged. This directed me to validate these newly emerging concepts.

I checked the initial findings with the participants by asking questions about those themes, such as the phenomenon of family members on different occasions reporting that victims were different to their other siblings. I also asked: ‘could you please tell me more about the female relatives’ personality?’/’how would you describe the deceased?’ Participants reported that their poverty played major role in motivating the crime, so I also asked interviewees’ opinions on this and how they explained the link between poverty and the murder. This was an attempt at add richness and density to the emerging themes and categories. In this study, peer debriefing helped in confirming the interpretation of the categories and the decisions taking in coding and the development of categories.
4.13 Ethical issues

In the UK, research ethics committees are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that researchers meet basic requirements when undertaking their studies, such as protecting participants from harm, maintaining their confidentiality, and ensuring that potential participants receive sufficient information about studies in order to judge whether they wish to take part in them (Social Research Association (SRAS), 2003; Ryan et al., 2007). Additionally, attempts should be made by the researcher to ensure voluntary participation (SRAS, 2003). Prior to conducting data collection, an ethical approval form was completed and submitted to the Committee on the Ethics for Research on Human Beings in the University of Manchester in October 2009. Their approval for the study was obtained. The acceptance letter can be found in appendix 12. The research protocol, interview guides, and consent forms and information sheet were sent to the ethical committee, and can be seen in appendices 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were explained in the information sheet. The anonymity of the data was safeguarded by the researcher by undertaking several procedures, such as the removal of identifying information from the data, and the use of pseudonyms for participants and their settings. All computerized data were password-protected, and all digitally recorded discs and transcriptions were kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s house. Furthermore, prior to starting the data collection, arrangements were made with the women’s institutions for expert help to be made available if emotional distress occurred during the interview process.

Many researchers argue that to ensure trustworthiness and the ‘goodness’ of the research study, researchers must think beyond being careful with procedural matters and documentation for the protection of human subjects to focus on matters of relationships with participants, peers, stakeholders and the larger community (Marshal and Rossman, 2006, p. 44). Therefore, I will not deal with ethics as a separate part of research; I will discuss how I dealt with ethical issues in everyday practice and my actions, as I perceive ethics to be always progressive, flexible and responsive to change.
4.13.1 Ethical practice

4.13.1.1 Gaining informed consent

Informed consent is a core element of ethical practice (Heath et al., 2004). The British Sociological Association (BSA) refers to informed consent as:

A responsibility on the sociologist to explain as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken and how it is to be disseminated (BSA, 2002, p. 3).

Kendall et al. (2007) suggested that the careful wording of participants’ letters and establishing good relationships with health professionals and keeping them fully informed facilitates recruitment. Others suggested giving bereaved families a sensitively written letter explaining in detail the research plan, what exactly participants’ rights and responsibilities are and what the researcher’s expectations are (Hynson et al., 2006). The current study posed a potential threat to the participants, as it involved entering their lives and focusing on their private experiences as families of the victims of HK. Participants had the right to know the nature of the study before agreeing to participate in it, and to be aware that it might cause some distress and discomfort (the strategies that were used to minimize distress and discomfort are discussed in detail below). Therefore, participants received an information sheet about the study that explained in detail the objectives and potential difficulties they might face during the interview.

Before starting the interview, I explained these details and potential harms in order to prepare participants for potential emotional difficulties. Each interview began with the consent form and I reminded the participants that they could withdraw at any time. The purpose of the study was reiterated at the beginning of each interview.

Consent forms in GT present a particular dilemma, since research design and question are emergent in nature (Kylmä et al., 1999). Therefore, it difficult for the researcher to tell participants in advance everything about the research. In this study informed consent had two stages, including initial consent and process consent. This means that consent activity is a process that needs to be secured at the outset of the study and to be renegotiated at
various stages with the participants, since the researcher needs to assess the effects of involvement and continually ask for new permission (Munhall, 1993). Munhall considered the ‘process consent’ as a process of continual information giving and permission seeking at key points during the research that helps to maintain trust between the participant and the researcher which reduce any possibility of unethical practice (Munhall, 1993). It also helps to secure trust, ensure that the interview process is two-way and helps reduce the possibility of exploitation (Oakley, 1981).

4.13.2 Reflection on ethical considerations during this study

4.13.2.1 Researching sensitive subjects and ethical considerations

Related to the nature of the study and the vulnerability of the study participants, I carefully considered the ethical issues throughout the study process. In sensitive studies, researchers are sometimes faced with difficulties that they did not expect. Qualitative research can pose many challenges for the researcher (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). I will discuss here some of the ethical dilemmas I faced when interviewing family members and give examples of how I dealt with them.

4.13.2.1.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

The code of ethics for professional and academic associations insists on safeguards to protect people’s identities and the research location (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Confidentiality and anonymity are crucial in sensitive studies. Confidentially concerns the access to data whilst anonymity refers to the concealment of participants’ details and any related information such as their location and work. In order to maintain the identity of the participants, they were assured that they would be given a code for their research identity. No records contained their real names or any personal information apart from the agreed code.

In this study I interviewed family members who knew each other and also MHPs who worked with the families, so there was a possibility of identifying the participants if I discussed some contextual data (such as their residence or names of the victims). My strategies were to not mention any detail about the names of the interviewed families or
their locations in order to avoid identifying them. When interviewing participants I was keen to ask broad and general questions about victims, and when I wanted to validate some of the themes I was cautious when asking questions in order to minimize any potential possibility of identifying the victims or their families. For example, some participants said that their powerlessness and their limited relationship with people of power affected the way other people dealt with their daughters’ behaviour, so I asked whether they had the same experience.

To ensure data protection, pseudonyms were used. Names were assigned a special personal code, and the code key was known only by the researcher. Code numbers were used on all study documents, including audio recordings and interview transcripts, and all identifying details were removed from the transcripts. The recordings were kept in an encrypted file and the code for this is only known to the researcher. The recordings will be erased after 4 years and the transcripts (which will have code numbers only on them) will be kept for 10 years. All files are stored on a computer which is password-protected. The data from the study was processed by the computer in accordance with the University of Manchester’s regulations’ under the Data Protection Act, 1998. Any information gathered will be used for research purposes only. I made it absolutely clear to the participants that I had interviewed many people and family members so that any clarification of themes (which occurred in the theoretical sampling stage of the research) could have arisen from any number of families.
4.13.2.1.2 Protecting participants from harm

The researcher has an obligation to consider how the research could impact on participants (Murphy and Dingwall, 2001). One of the main potential harms that may arise when research findings become public is the identification of the location of participants, particularly in studies that are highly dependent on the provision of contextual information (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

Some researchers consider that ‘confirmability’ (the documentation of all activities in the research) may create an ethical dilemma, and violate the right of confidentiality and anonymity (Orb et al., 2001). To deal with this ethical dilemma, some researchers suggested that participants have to be informed that other researchers may review the process and data (Orb et al., 2001). Others, such as Kvale, suggested that researchers might need to change participants’ characteristics to protect their privacy, but they should not make major changes to the relevant information (Kvale, 1996). Therefore, attention was paid to the use of direct quotations from the participants, to be presented in a way that does not identify them. In order to counter the possibility of identifying participants or victims, the location of the families was anonymous, details about families such as education and number of siblings were reported in a way so as not to identify them, such as categorizing education in a rudimentary way (illiterate, basic (elementary education), medium (preparatory and secondary education) and advanced education level (graduate study)) and number of family as small (less than 5), medium (6-10) and large (more than 10). Many details about some circumstances of the murders were not mentioned. Furthermore, some participants asked me to keep some of the information confidential and to delete it from the transcript, so I was keen to respect their preferences and such information was duly deleted from the final transcripts and not included in the findings. I also gave the participants code names in order to not be identified; Family Member: FM Female Family Member: FM- Number of the interview- F. For Male Family Member: FM-Number of family member interview-M. For Mental Health Professional: MHP and number of the interview). For Neighbours: Neighbour then number of the interview and his or her gender.
Alty and Rodham (1998) stressed that the study focuses on sensitive issues may raise emotions of such intensity that not providing participants an opportunity to talk about their feelings may be perceived as irresponsible. It was expected that family members would talk about problems which may cause some anxiety, discomfort, distress or fatigue resulting from the interview. Rosenblatt (1995) stressed that the most ethical action he could take was to allow coercive and sometimes not fully informed interviews to take place, since such situations may be catalysts for grieving families to heal. In his experience of researching bereaved families, Rosenblatt realised that he caused pain to participants when asking them to retell the fatal trauma of family members. He stated that:

‘From the perspective of the cost-benefit analysis that is at the heart of most Universities’s IRB (Institutional review board) reviews, some reviewers consider the grief that people may experience during a loss interview too high a cost to justify the research’ (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 144).

Rosenblatt argued that the hurt experienced and expressed in interviews could be part of the healing process; however, he also noted that sometimes he did not feel this way, and he sometimes steered the interview away from the painful matters. He suggested using process consent as a supplement to traditional informed consent, in order to give participants opportunities to stop the interview or to avoid particular questions. I implemented Rosenblatt’s (1995) advice. Sometimes I faced the same experience with participants who were in intense pain when remembering the traumatic murder, therefore I used the following strategies to deal with these situations. I made a lot of effort to treat participants in an empathetic manner. I also observed the participants for any sign of anxiety or distress during the interview, and I used techniques such as stopping the interview, and providing time and support. My academic supervisor’s feedback on transcription and questions were used with an interactive style in order to enhance my sensitivity and avoid biases. On-going and process consent was also one of the main strategies maintained during the interviews with the participants.

All the participants were informed that they had the right to stop the interviews or audio recording at any time if they no longer wished to proceed. I also told them that if they
wanted to retract their testimony, it was possible to erase their contributions from the transcripts. I also offered them the choice to delete the whole interview after transcription or if they wanted to delete it. None of the participants either in individual or group interviews asked to remove their testimony. I also provided families with information about the address and telephone numbers of women-related organizations in order to call them if they need anything.

4.13.2.1.3 Dual role between researcher and therapist and potential for harm

The issue of the dual role between being a scientist or a researcher and a therapist has been discussed by a number of researchers (Scerri et al., 2012; Allmark et al., 2009). There may be tension if interviews have the potential to harm or be therapeutic, and if researchers desire that they are the latter, then they may drift from research to therapy when conducting interviews (Holloway and Wheeler, 1995; Allmark et al., 2009). Some researchers may try to obtain good quality material by using counselling techniques in order to draw out the participants (Allmark et al., 2009). Sometimes, researchers who are social workers or nurses may find themselves drawn into that role, away from the role of researcher (Allmark et al., 2009).

Rosenblatt suggested that the researcher should avoid therapeutic interventions (Rosenblatt, 1999). Similarly, Smith also stated that the researcher interviewer’s role is not a cathartic one (Smith, 1992).

Sometimes, particularly in the early interviews, I found myself moving from the researcher role to therapist role, but the strategy used in this study helped me to build awareness of these pitfalls. Following each interview I transcribed it directly and sent it to my supervisors for comment; they provided me with their feedback and asked me to be aware of this tension and to avoid being a therapist. Therefore, in the following interviews I maintained the researcher role and if any therapeutic issues were raised during the interview I discussed them after the interview terminated with the participants, furnishing relevant resources and how to contact MHPs in order to receive counselling sessions.
4.13.2.1.4 Harm against the researcher and ethical considerations

Most of the literature discusses the vulnerability of the research subject; few studies addressed researchers’ vulnerability. Tisdale considered the researcher to be vulnerable because the researcher is often susceptible to harm during the research process (Tisdale, 1999). Punch also stressed this possibility:

A solo enterprise with relatively unstructured observation, deep involvement in the setting, and a strong identification with the researched. This can mean that the researcher is unavoidably vulnerable and that there is a considerably larger element of risk and uncertainty than with more formal methods (Punch, 1994, p. 84).

Punch stressed that the strong involvement with the participants may cause emotional harm for the researcher. Some scholars noticed that the researcher who worked with sensitive topics reported their feelings of guilt, as some researchers were concerned about the effect of the interviews on the participants (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007).

Access to supervision is suggested in the literature in order to deal with these emotional difficulties and to prevent the potential of emotional exhaustion and burn out by the researcher (Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). Warr (2004) noticed that if the researchers were not given the opportunity to debrief they may carry their stories around with them (in their psyche), which may be detrimental to their emotional well-being. Supervision in this study helped me to debrief; it monitored and developed my skills, scheduled rest breaks between interviews and enhanced my abilities to undertake the research without harming my health and wellbeing.

The physical safety of the researchers during sensitive studies is also mentioned in the literature. Scholars advised researcher to prepare themselves by anticipating and mediating danger (Hayes et al., 1996). Others have suggested researchers should equip themselves with strategies to diffuse threats to their safety (Paterson et al., 1999). Some suggested that the researcher who interviews perpetrators or conducts research in high-crime areas should use escorts (Sluka, 1990).
Therefore, I anticipated and developed strategies to manage these potential problems. First, the interview location was decided according to the interviewees’ preference. The participants freely decided whether they preferred to have interviews at their home or at the offices of NGOs. According to Code of Practice for the Safety of Social Researchers (SRAS, 2003), it is preferred that research interviews are conducted in public areas to maintain the safety of the researcher. Risky situations may be minimized by contacting respondents in advance, to ask about preferences and expectations and to enable the researcher to assess the risks and to handle them properly (SRAS, 2003). Secondly, the staff from the women-related organizations were informed about the time and the location of every interview, and a phone call was made to them (the staff) before and after the interview to ensure that I had arrived safely. Thirdly, I kept a mobile phone with me for any possible emergency situations. Fourthly, it is also advised that researchers do not divulge any personal information such as home address and home telephone number, or other information that may lead subjects to their home (Paterson et al., 1999). I did not give any details about my address or home telephone number; I only gave them the telephone number of the institution in case they wanted to call me.
4.14 Data analysis

Strauss and Corbin define data analysis as ‘a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge’ (Strauss and Corbin, 2008, p. 1). Corbin, in her recent review of her book with Anselm Strauss, added that some formalisation of method is needed, whilst the analytic process should be flexible and driven by insights built from interactions with data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

The grounded theorist is an instrument of the research process, therefore data analysis is dependent on the researcher’s analytical skills and creativity, so that meaning and interpretation will be used to develop theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). In this study I utilized the analysis procedure described by Strauss and Corbin (1998) for analysis. Open coding provides a tool for the first and the beginning of the second phases of the study. Axial coding addresses most of the second stage of data analysis and selective coding addresses the third stage of data analysis, leading to the generation of a tentative theory. Comparative analysis is an essential feature of the GT and will be discussed in the next section. As mentioned previously, data analysis started simultaneously with data collection, but the initial stage of the analysis was focused on open coding, and this ongoing process continued into the second stage of data collection, so open coding in this stage will be discussed. Carrying out GT procedure in the current study was very beneficial to the development of concepts which helped me to understand HK in natural rather than experimental settings; in this case what effects and consequences of the HK of women are problematic for the family as individuals and as a group?
4.14.1. Analysis procedures

4.14.1.1 Comparative analysis

Strauss and Corbin (1998) identified comparative analysis as an essential feature of the GT methodology. Throughout the analytical process, the constant comparative method was used to compare incident with incident, codes to other codes and to identify the similarities and differences in order to facilitate the development of concepts (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Constant comparative analysis assists researchers in grouping concepts under higher order categories and on identifying the patterns (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Theoretical sensitivity can also be used to make comparisons, as discussing past experiences and the literature related to the data is also part of this comparison and was used in this study. Theoretical sampling is also an important element to make a comparison. Constant comparative analysis was used in this study, as suggested by Strauss and Corbin, in order to validate the theory and to understand the fit between particular events and its context (Ezzy, 2002), and this technique allowed comparison of the data against itself, and against other data, and ultimately this aided conceptualization (Duchscher and Morgan, 2004).

4.14.1.2 Open coding

In open coding the labels were mainly descriptive, with some being the actual words of the participants. The labels either consisted of participants’ actual words (Nvivo codes) such as ‘feels guilty’ or other words that reflected understanding of the data such as ‘sense of ownership’ and ‘paternal responsibilities’. During the process of the open coding, awareness was placed on the relationship between GT and symbolic interactionism. Therefore, the meaning given to a particular situation or event, by participants, needed to be reflected in the code labels that were assigned to the data. An example of this was provided in the following brief discussion. Participants mentioned two different approaches in dealing with victims’ actual and potential infidelity based on the attitudes of the families: families did not want the public to know about victims’
behaviour, therefore ‘silence’ was their strategy to deal with this. Victims also used the same strategy of ‘concealment or silence’ when the victims were either raped or had sexual relations out of marriage and did not want their families and the public to know.

MHPs also used concealment when dealing with both the abuse against victims by their family and also when the victims were raped. Concealment took different forms; for families, it could be to not tell others (such as neighbours) but to tell relatives. This movement between disclosure and concealment was not clear to me, so I used probing and extensive discussions during the interviews with families and professionals in order to determine the meaning of silence ascribed by participants to this concealment and disclosure. These meanings were then assigned a code label during open coding.

Interpretations of data were made by constantly asking: what is going on here?/what does this mean?/what was the value of this?/what is happening here? (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). As the codes were gathered I began to find patterns or groupings with them, such as: ‘emotional effect’, ‘social effects’, ‘families’ background’ and then these became what Strauss and Corbin term ‘categories’. At this stage the categories were collections of labels with some common characteristics; the connections between categories remained unclear, and were not sought until the analysis moved to axial coding. This stage was not a linear process; it needed a high level of abstraction in order to condense the collected categories (Benton, 1991). The researcher has to be intellectual and seek a conceptual rationale for the clustering of codes into categories. In practice, this means moving between levels of analysis from open coding to conceptualisation whilst maintaining sensitivity to the context of the data.

NVivo programme (QSR, 2008) provides a storage and link to the data but it does not analyse data. When I started using NVivo I was confused with changes in terminology, as in NVivo the code named nodes and categories were arranged within a coding hierarchy, but in time I got used to them. Meanwhile, coding started to become easier through NVivo, as coding just needs a click of a mouse, but this often overloaded me with a lot number of codes (produced by 250 nodes and 1419 tree nodes). At that stage I consulted one of my supervisors who
helped me define the properties of the developed codes. We also discussed regularly the code list and made definitions of codes until finally my analysis started to be meaningful. Using computer programs for analysis is perfect for creating an audit trail (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Corbin and Strauss (2008) clarified that computer programs work as a mirror indicating flaws in logic and insufficient and undeveloped categories, which enable the researcher to check if she has achieved saturation or not. So it could give researchers direction in their methodological problems and direction when coding. It also preserves the integrity of multiple constructions, which enables researchers to analyze the data in different ways (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Therefore it is considered a perfect way for establishing dependability through audit trial (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The use of academic supervisors highlighted biases and ensured that I could justify my abstractions and that I could support my developing conceptualization.

As more interviews were coded. The codes were modified and verified through application to further interview transcripts. Subsequently, the codes were keyed into the NVivo software to allow searching the interviews, re-sorting of material and consistent redefining of codes in order to support the analysis process. Appendices 15 and 16 show a summary of the coding process in NVivo software.
4.14.1.3 Axial coding

The second stage of data analysis incorporated axial coding. Corbin and Strauss (2008) described axial coding as the process of cross-cutting and relating categories and concepts to their subcategories. A coding paradigm involving conditions, actions and interactions, and consequences actualizes this process. The relationship guide assists in the development of the subcategories that answered Strauss and Corbin’s questions about the category, such as ‘when, where, why, who, how and with what consequences’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 125). The following box (1) represents the meaning and definition of the paradigm

**Box 1: Definition of terms related to coding paradigm**

| Paradigm:  | an analytical strategy for integrating structure with process. |
| Context:  | structural conditions that shape the nature of situation, circumstances, or problems to which individuals respond by means of actions/interactions/emotions. |
| Contextual conditions:  | sets or patterns of conditions that range from the most macro to micro. |
| Causal condition:  | the factors that lead to the occurrence of the phenomenon, the subject under study to which people respond through actions/interactions. |
| Intervening condition:  | refers to a broad host of factors that can bear down upon the phenomena. |
| Actions/interactions:  | the responses made by individuals or groups to situations, problems, happenings and events. |
| Consequences:  | the outcomes of actions and interactions in response to the events |

Source: Corbin and Strauss (2008, pp. 87-89).
Conditional matrix provides ‘cues for how to identify and relate structure to the process’ (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 90). Using conditional matrix enables the novice researcher to identify the wide range of conditions that enter into a situation and define problems. Conditional matrix represents the philosophical beliefs that Corbin and Strauss hold about the nature of events and human response to these events (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). This means that Corbin and Strauss (2008) believed that researchers should analyze the data for context as well as for concepts or categories. Therefore the researcher who carried out the conditional matrix strategy needs to look at a reason for the behaviour, the event or the action, and then the consequences to understand what happened as a result of actions or interactions (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Finding a link or relationship between events is complex and difficult to establish and to find the subsequent interactions the researcher needs to follow a nonlinear or a multi-dimensional path (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

A conditional matrix was sought in this study to help understand the circumstances that surround HK, which enriched the analysis. However, Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 90) argued that ‘analysis is not coding for only the conditions and consequences per se, rather uses the tool to obtain an understanding of the circumstances that surrounded an event and therefore enrich the analysis’. Therefore, I did not use this conditional matrix in the beginning of the analysis so as not to encapsulate or frame the analysis in a rigid structure, which therefore allowed flexibility and creativity.

The conditional matrix has also been criticized for its rigidity (Keddy et al., 1996). This strictly structured approached is inconsistent with the original emphasis in GT on the freedom of the researcher’s imagination and the important process of developing meanings from the emerging data (Heath and Calwey, 2004). However, for Strauss and Corbin the conditional matrix is a guiding framework which allows processes as well as structures to develop in relation to the context of the social phenomenon being studied (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). Indeed the exploration of structures and processes enabled me to explore why certain events happened and how they happened. It was used as an aid to locate the scope of this study and the conditions that emerged from the data were identified.
The following box 2 represents an example of an early diagram of one of categories and its actions, interactions and consequences:

**Box 2: Conditional matrix of one of subcategories of category 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 2: Poverty</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Asking for inheritance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Make a request for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Family restless/defensive/anger/aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>Abuse/murder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At first, codes were related to concepts then these concepts were analyzed for common themes. The concepts then were grouped together according to these themes and assigned a higher order label (Corbin and Strauss 1990; 1998). Grouping concepts together under a higher order label marked the commencement of category development (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998).

During axial coding, four analytical processes occurred: (a) continually relating subcategories to a category; (b) comparing categories with the collected data; (c) expanding the density of the categories by detailing their properties and dimensions; and (d) exploring variations in the phenomena.

The following box 3 represents concepts that related to contributing factors to HK:

**Box 3: Conditional matrix of male domination**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Honour code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causal condition</td>
<td>Family reputation/gossip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervening condition</td>
<td>Surveillance/ segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>Family defend honour by abuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another important point in the matrix is that it does not exist in a vacuum; the relationships between conditions, interactions and consequences are complex and sometimes difficult to examine (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). Another important note is that those conditions or interactions and consequences do not follow a linear path, which means that the interplay between macro- (wider social issue as stigma and political conditions) and micro-conditions (individual or personal conditions as family unit, characteristics and relationships) has to be explained. For example, I had to explain how
micro- and macro-conditions affected each other, and how consequences feed back into conditions through a set of actions and interactions. This was how the emerging theory was developed at an early stage of the analysis.

4.14.1.4 Selective coding

As soon as data collection was completed and I was ready to enter a phase of synthesis, I moved to selective coding. Selective coding is the most difficult stage in analysis, and builds upon the groundwork of the previous open and axial coding efforts. Selective coding is ‘selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships and filing in categories that need further refinement and development’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 116).

This process differs from axial coding in that it is done at a higher and mostly abstract level of analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 117). According to Strauss and Corbin, the core category may meet the core criteria: it must be central and easily relate to all other categories, it must recur frequently in the data, it must make sense to people in the setting and it must be sufficiently powerful to explain the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

The core category labelled ‘social death’ appeared in all of the interviews to some extent. This allowed for a logical and systematic explanation of the experience of the families and what was occurring with them following the murder through relating the subcategories to the core category. Through this, it became apparent from the data. Once the basic theoretical scheme had been identified, the theory was refined through theoretical sampling and data analysis until saturation of data was achieved (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). Selective coding allowed the researcher to account for the variation within and between the categories and continued until the completion of the write up of this thesis. It may be considered that the theory is tested against the data. For me this was achieved though writing brief versions of the story and checking it against the original transcripts. The use of supervision, peer support and presentation was crucial here.

Incidences of the story which failed to fit precisely with the participants’ accounts and negative cases were noted and incorporated into the story. Negative cases analysis looks
at whether hypotheses have been refined to account for all known cases. Researcher has to ask herself if a reasonable number of cases fit with the appropriate categories (Bitsch, 2005). An example of the negative cases was the single participant (mother) who spoke about her continuous anger at the victim and her inability to forgive her. Negative cases had been encountered to identify sufficient conditions and were tested again in the field. When I placed this incident in the storyline as another part of the social death and another facet of families struggling with the strains in the relationships with the close community, then this part of the data was adequately incorporated into the story. A review and revision of the details of other incidences of the story was required in order to ensure that the emerging theory fit the data (see figure 4, representing the conditional matrix and its relation with social death). Therefore, researchers should frequently validate the relationship in the selective coding stage, once again moving up and down the data from raw text through to axial codes and categories. This cyclical process ensures rigour and trustworthiness in the analytical process.
Defending honour (to prevent social death)

condition

- victims
  - Against orthodoxy
  - Escaping suffering
  - Actual and perceived infidelity
- familial
  - collectivism
  - Domestic violence
- structural
  - poverty
  - Under education
  - Religious interpretation
- institutional
  - gap
  - Limited facilities
  - Inadequate legislation
  - Support male domination
- cultural
  - Male domination
  - Honour code
  - Normalisation

Intervening factors:
- Shame
- Reputation
- Stigma
- Continuing bonds
- silence

Effects of honour killings

Facing reality

Circumstances related to honour killing

Consequences (social death)

Intervening factors:
- Shame
- Reputation
- Stigma
- Continuing bonds
- silence

Figure 4: Conditional matrix and social death
5.14.1.5 Storyline

Strauss and Corbin suggested five main steps in order to achieve this level: explicating the theory line, relating subsidiary categories around the core category, relating categories at the dimensional level, validating those relationships and filling in the categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, pp. 116-142). Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) also stressed that these steps are not linear or sequential; rather they are stages that rely heavily on the structures and processes which constitute axial coding.

When I interviewed family members and professionals I found that this could not reflect the essential nature of their experiences, as their lives could not be plotted as linear causal conditions or causal relationships. The victims’ and families’ experiences and lives were characterized by interference of other conditions and interactions and by other individuals in their lives. In understanding the effect of murder on the family members’ lives, I found that there was a spiralling return from good to bad times as sometimes family members forced themselves to do things in order to move on. The participants mentioned a time when they moved forward, but they were set-back again because of their interaction with their close-knit community. Similar conditions happen when analyzing the contributing factors of HKs as the family members’ interaction and actions for victim’s behaviours was not only affected by familial background but other circumstances (such as pressure by relatives), which may affect their decision to punish or to not punish the victims. Therefore, the murder was not only about the honour code, but also sometimes it was structural, institutional or the extended family network that were major intervening factors in the motivation behind the murder.

This means arriving at a GT, the conditional matrix did not sit well with the nature of the data or the phenomenon, therefore I carried out some of the principles suggested by Benton (1991) to synthesize the component parts into a coherent entity. These principles are: the theory must be more than a collection or list of concepts, there must be clear relationships between the categories, and a visible storyline is crucial whilst any pattern or connections that are claimed to have significance must be validated against the data.
(Benton, 1991). This indeed moved the analysis from lower to higher level of abstraction by using logical analysis.

At this level of the analysis, my academic supervisors advised me to compose a few sentences that made up the main plot of the story which enabled me to formulate a strong storyline. From time to time I was being asked ‘what is your study about?’ to which my answer was: ‘to explore or to investigate the effect of HK on victims’ families’. This short answer did not reflect what I really examined. This vague answer helped me realise that I should commit myself to a story and to pinpoint my story more faithfully. I had investigated the contributing factors to the occurrence of HK, the way that family members lived with and reacted to the murder; their eternal quest to find the reasons for the murder of women and why it happened to them. It also uncovered their frustration when their attempts to go through their grief failed, the guilt that lay beneath the surface in so many aspects of their experience and their frustration at not being able to honour the victims.

The storyline acts as a precursor of the central phenomenon of the study (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). The emphasis on the storyline is ‘at the heart of the integration process and it is the essential cement in putting together all the components in the theory’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 124). Therefore, by this time the central phenomenon in the study was not to investigate the effects of murder but living with the effect of murder and particularly living with social death. The next stage in Strauss and Corbin’s procedures involves relating other categories to the core category. It requires fitting subsidiary categories into a story to reconnect them in a way that forms and integrated narrative. These categories should have a conceptual linkage and not just a nominative list of items. Examples of my analysis will be presented in the following two sections.
4.14.1.6 Making sense of the storyline

Early in this study a number of categories had formed which related to the effect of murder on the family members. These included (among others), the physical pain of grief, preoccupation with the victims, lasting pain, anger, self-blaming, feelings of insecurity, community rejection and social stigma, longing to leave and becoming different. Categories that related to the factors that were contributed to the occurrence of HK also emerged and were related to the core category social death. The contributing factors were considered conditions or situations that explained why, where, how HK were committed. By the end of the study these had been reviewed and conceptualized and reformed into two categories: facing reality and social ostracism. These two categories were reformed into one category of ‘social death’. Social death was a vital part of the storyline of living with the effects of murder. Other items followed from it, but this was the beginning of the story.

4.14.1.7 Links between categories

‘Social ostracism’ was found to be a particular difficult aspect of social death for the participants. It indicated varying degrees of difficulties in interactions within interpersonal relationships and within the close-knit society. Participants spoke frankly about ‘community rejection and social stigma’. This matched with part of the category ‘facing reality’. Strauss and Corbin (1990; 1998) suggested taking one of the bolts of analytic lightening in order to see the obvious links between categories. When family members felt ‘socially stigmatized’ they were less likely to face the society (concept seen in the subcategories: ‘social isolation’ and ‘desire to escape’), to tolerate the loss and to find meanings in their loss. When, for whatever reason, family members felt they were more tolerated or accepted by their close-knit community and less mystified by the loss they found themselves better able to socialize with people around them.

This ‘desire to escape’ was a continuous and lengthy episode and matched with the part of the category of ‘facing reality’. Facing the reality of social stigma led to family
members desire to escape through being alone or even extremes like hurting themselves and wishing to die. I was unaware of these links until I started to refine a network of conceptual relationships, whereupon I was able to group the data items appropriately. The links between ‘community rejection’ and ‘desire to escape’ and more broadly the two categories ‘social ostracism’ and ‘facing reality’ were clear to me, as family members, in response to feelings of disrespect by their society, carried out self-protective behaviours in order to save face and to deal with the process of stigmatisation.

4.15 Enhancing the rigour of the study

It is generally accepted that qualitative studies cannot be judged by the same criteria as quantitative studies, as they are underpinned by different epistemological assumptions. Therefore, using the positivistic criteria such as validity, reliability, objectivity and generalizability for evaluation may be inappropriate (Cormack, 2000). A number of different criteria have been suggested as a way to judge qualitative studies, for example transferability, credibility, confirmability and truthfulness (Cormack, 2000; Ryan et al., 2007). Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided a new opportunity for Naturalistic inquires to explore other methods or ways of expressing validity, reliability and generalizability outside the linguistic confines of a rationalistic paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; 1981, p. 329). Therefore, in this study I ensured rigour and trustworthiness by drawing on the principles of Lincoln and Guba (1985), including credibility, transferability, confirmability, dependently and auditability.

4.15.1 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed that the criteria in the qualitative paradigm to ensure ‘trustworthiness’ are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). They recommended specific strategies be used to attain trustworthiness such as negative cases, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement and persistent observation, audit trails and member checks. Also important were characteristics of the investigator, who must be responsive and adaptable to changing
circumstances, holistic, having processional immediacy, sensitivity, and ability for clarification and summarization (Guba and Lincoln, 1981).

Lincoln and Goba (1985) posed that trustworthiness is supported by the amount of time spent in the field and with triangulation of data (exploring data from different sources, methods, investigators, and theories), an alertness to the subjective lenses and subsequent biases that the qualitative researcher brings to the study, and mapping what works within the boundaries and limitations of the study (Denzin, 1978; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Ensuring trustworthiness in this study maximized the chance of obtaining accurate information about HK, which relied on the experiences of the families and professionals and their ability to communicate their experiences. In this study, I interviewed family members (extended and nuclear), MHPs, a lawyer, police officers and neighbours, which enabled me to present fair accounts. Therefore, when presenting the data, quotations reflected different perspectives rather than using a few well chosen sampling. Additionally, field notes and verbatim quotations provided sufficient information to locate them in the context of the study.

4.15.1.1 Credibility

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a ‘credible’ conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data, as according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), ‘the data speak to the findings’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 296). Lincoln and Guba (1985) advised that the key is a thorough description of the specific setting, circumstances, subjects and procedures. Analytic credibility depends on the coherence of the argument which will be attained by using evidence from the interviews to support the main points (Cutcliffe, 2003; Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

Peer debriefing, such as reviewing the coding of data, clarifying the interpretation of data and uncovering biases, enhances credibility and dependability of the analysis. To enhance credibility of this study many factors were taken into consideration by the research team from the outset. Robson described peer debriefing as ‘exploring one’s analysis and conclusions to a colleague or other peer on a continuous basis’ (Robson, 1993, p. 404).
Peer review assists in clarifying aspects of data analysis that may have been missed by the researcher (Brown et al., 2002). Holloway and Wheeler noted that academic supervisors have a key role in ensuring rigour in their students’ studies (Holloway and Wheeler, 1996). Regular meetings with academic supervisors during data collection and analysis were held. Recruitment procedures were addressed by research teams and their advice was acted on by the researcher to ensure issues of confidentiality and free participation. The second step was reviewing the transcripts to ensure theoretical sensitivity in order to free my mind from one conceptions and to uncover biases. The reviewing of the transcriptions helps in testing emergent designs and hypotheses to ‘keep the inquirer honest’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 77). Three of the interviews were coded by the research team separately and then compared in order to enhance credibility, transparency and dependability of this study. Additionally, a review with colleagues and other PhD students aimed to stimulate consideration and exploration of additional perspectives (Long, 1999). The presentation of the data at conferences was helpful to the researcher as I had the ability to submit the method and findings to other researcher and to receive their comments and to have the opportunity to answer their critical comments.

Credibility also can be strengthened by member verification, namely returning interview transcripts to participants for verification (Oweis et al., 2009). Using member verification was debated in the literature. Lincoln and Guba considered respondent checking as the most critical techniques for establishing credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 314). However, Glaser (2002) warned against over-emphasising the use of participants to evaluate the theory as a test of validity. He suggested that participants may not fully understand the abstract theory which may explain the bigger picture and patterns of behaviour, of which their own is only a part. Morse (1998), Morse et al. (2002) and Hammersley (1992) argued that this process is not a verification strategy, and Glaser (2002) warned against using participants or potential users of the research to judge the analysis, because this process will threaten the validity. This issue is still debated in the literature, so I followed Glaser’s advice, because in sensitive studies such as this one it would be inappropriate to return back to participants for verification. Kirk (2002) argued that researchers cannot assume that participants will be unbiased evaluators as they also
have their own agenda, which might affect the validity of this study. Similarly Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) warn against placing too much faith in the results of participants’ validation. They noted that ‘we cannot assume that anyone is a privileged commentator on his or her own actions, in the sense that the truth of their account is guaranteed’ (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p. 227).

Mason (1996) also concluded that each individual participant does not have true insight into the experience of other participants. Whereas Hammersley and Atkinson stressed that member validation may be problematic (e.g. in determining whether they are enthusiastic, indifferent, or hostile), thus their reactions cannot be taken as direct validation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). As I mentioned previously, member-checking was used to validate the themes and categories that emerged from the data so accuracy of the findings was checked with members of the study participants in the emerging design and simultaneous data analysis and generation. Therefore, respondents’ validation was not undertaken in this study.

Checking the generated construct theory was done through the checking and verification of the developed codes. On different occasions I changed the interview guide, based on the incoming data and the developed codes. As discussed previously, checking and verifying the codes by asking direct questions to the participants enabled me to check these codes against the original meaning in the raw data. These two measures added more credibility to the data.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) considered that using the actual words of the participants at all levels of the coding would further GT construction and add to the credibility of data. Therefore, I often supported words, relationships and actions with excerpts, as I also wanted to avoid any potential distortion or inaccurate representation of the participants’ meanings, as was suggested by Chiovitti and Piran (2003).

Another element that was used was deviant case analysis or the examination of why some cases contradict an emerging pattern or appear to be the exceptions in the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Negative cases can strengthen theory building and provide more variation and a sophisticated analysis to the phenomenon thereby enhancing
credibility (Glaser, 1978; Brown et al., 2002). In this study, negative cases were examined closely because it strengthened the analysis because of the complexity of honour killing phenomenon and it also allowed the individual voice to be heard. Please see page 138 for examples of the negative cases and how I used them in the analysis.

4.15.1.2 Dependability

Dependability can be arrived at when the researcher determines the credibility of the findings (Streubert and Carbineter, 1999). As argued by Lincoln and Guba (1985), there can be no dependability without credibility. To ensure dependable findings the researcher has to establish clear and repeatable procedures for the research and to reflect on the position she takes as she performs them (Gasson, 2003). Therefore, I provided detailed descriptions of the data collection procedures, sampling decisions, analysis and synthesis procedures were constantly reflected on and the means by which I reached the theoretical construct have been described.

In order to assess the degree of dependability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) advised researchers to look for accurate and adequate documentation of changes, surprise occurrences, and the like, in the phenomena being studied. If change is to be expected, has it been thoroughly described. For example, in GT, sampling was mainly theoretical so the researcher could not determine the size or other features prior the beginning of data collection and consequently the researcher should explain and rationalize how and why participants were selected. In-depth coverage of the research design enabled the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed and to develop understanding of the method and its effectiveness (Shenton, 2004). Therefore I explained in detail the research design and its implementation and explained what was planned and what was executed on a strategic level. I have provided the operational details of data collection and I have addressed clearly what was done in the field. I have reflected and evaluated the effectiveness of the undertaken method and I have presented this to the reader in this chapter.
4.15.1.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is a process criterion which is a recording of activities over time that another individual can follow (Streubert and Carbenter, 1999). The researcher has to record and illustrate as clearly as possible the evidence and thoughts and processes that led to the conclusion (Streubert and Carbenter, 1999). Conclusions depend on the subject and conditions of the study rather than the researcher (Gasson, 2003). Triangulation or using multiple and different resources promotes confirmability, so researchers are usually advised to use different data collection methods and to explain the reason behind the decisions made and how the methods were adopted. In this study I explained the reason for favouring interviews and the reason for using group interviews. I explained the weakness and strengths of these two approaches. I provided adequate documentation of the background and explained the attitudes and behaviours of the participants in both individual and group interviews.

Triangulation is often associated with the combined use of multiple methodologies within a single research project. However, both Guba and Lincoln (1981) and Belk et al. (1988) suggested that triangulation can also include the composition of the researcher’s and the academic supervisors’ education and expertise represented by each member. I have a nursing and mental health background and the academic supervisors have health, psychology and mental health backgrounds; two of them are primary researchers. Accordingly, the multi-disciplinary nature of the team is one of the project’s assets that will provide checks and advantages in the data collection and analysis processes of this study. The findings of the study were represented regularly to academic supervisors for analysis and evaluation.

In this study I interviewed family members (nuclear and extended family members), neighbours and professionals, which added more variety to the data sources. I also provided rich descriptions of the attitudes, needs and behaviours of the participants under study, which enhanced the contextual data relating to the fieldwork sites. I further
provided an explanation of the wider context of the data by examining organizations and other community members. As an attempt to reduce the effect of a particular local factor to one institution I interviewed MHPs from different organizations, different specialities and districts. This strategy enabled me to obtain a variety of perspectives and to get a better and a stable view of reality that was based upon a wide base of viewpoints.

4.15.1.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to how far the findings/conclusions of the study can be transferred to other contexts, and how they help to derive useful theories (Gasson, 2003). Transferability can be obtained through thick description and reference to the social context from where the data is collected (Streubert and Carpenter, 1995). Thick descriptions ‘richly describe data that provide the research consumer with enough information to judge the theme, categories or construct of the study’ (Byrne, 2001, p. 904). Thick description could be done through providing the context, intention and meaning that gained from the experience, and expose the experience as a process (Popay et al., 1998). The researcher has to collect a detailed description of data that includes field notes together with a rich mix of the participants’ quotations (Oweis et al., 2009). Furthermore, field notes and the writing of memos throughout the analysis process was very helpful in the process of reflexivity. Nonverbal signs reflecting the families’ suffering such as eye contact, tone of voice, mood and gestures were recorded by the researcher in her written field notes.

Using purposive and theoretical sampling added more variation to the sample and maximized the range of information obtained and provided verification of the findings. The choice of theoretical sampling to test the emerging hypotheses and choosing deviant cases to test theory enhanced transferability (Smith, 2004). Transferability can also be attained by providing description of the context and site of the study (Smith, 2004).
4.15.1.5 Auditability

An audit trail provides the necessary materials to confirm authenticity of the research (Brown et al., 2002, p. 10). The origin of audit trail process can be traced back to the work of Lincoln and Guba in 1985 (cited in Carcary, 2009). Lincoln and Guba, in 1985, suggested that by implementing an audit trail other readers can audit the research decisions and the methodological and analytical processes of the researcher on completion of the study, and thus confirm its findings (cited in Carcary, 2009). According to Sandelowski (1986), who first proposed techniques of an audit trail, a study’s findings are:

‘Auditable when another researcher can clearly follow the decision trail used by the investigator in the study. In addition, another researcher could arrive at the same or comparable but not contradictory conclusions given the researchers data, perspective and situation’. (Sandelowski, 1986, p. 33)

An audit trail includes the raw data (audio recordings, verbatim transcripts, and researcher notes from the interviews), and the coding and memos from each round of interviews, the transcribed and translated interviews are available for scrutiny. Kirk and Miller included the recording of field notes in the sort of audit trial strategy (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p. 55). They emphasized that it was important to avoid socially undesirable and irresponsible entries and to distinguish verbatim respondent items from researcher interpretation (Kirk and Miller, 1986). The aim of declaring the audit trail is to allow others to decide on the worth of the study. In this study, the discussion of the audit trail is to be found in this current chapter where an account of the working methods used, such as sampling, and in the detailed exposition of data analysis and within the discussion section of the findings and in the background to the study further details of the auditable nature of the study can be found.
4.16 Summary

The whole of this chapter is an attempt to articulate and justify the decisions taken from the outset of the study. Clear and honest accounts, using examples, have been presented so that the reader of the study will be able to follow an audit trail. In doing this, judgments can be made about the credibility and trustworthiness of the theory which I took pains to ensure was ‘grounded’ in the data. In this chapter I presented the working method that I carried out during this study. In the next chapter I will discuss the findings of this study.

I have attempted to provide details on how I conducted the research and to provide the readers with sufficient information about the sensitivity of the research and how I observed ethical principles throughout the study process.
Results of the study

The Conditional Matrix Part 1 - The underlying Factors that are associated with the Occurrence of HK (Socio-Cultural and Familial Factors)
Underlying factors associated with the occurrence of HK

5.1 Introduction

This and the following chapter present the findings from an analysis of the practice of HKs by examining the connections between cultural, social, legal, structural, institutional and familial factors. These two chapters aim to broaden our understanding of the links between the personal, familial, legal, structural and socio-cultural factors that combine to provide a motive for HK as presented by family members and professionals. Figure (5) presents the main factors that were found to be associated with the occurrence of HK in Palestine.

Figure 5: Model of factors associated with HKs in Palestine

Although male family members in most cases were the perpetrators of the crimes, the findings in this study showed that other individuals, relatives, neighbours, and governmental and non-governmental institutions were indirectly
or even directly responsible at different levels for the murders. Key actors in the social environment placed external pressure on perpetrators to kill their female members through gossip, rumours and legitimizing crimes, whilst others indirectly participated by silence, fear, or inaction toward the murder.

This chapter discusses the socio-cultural and familial factors that were reported by family members and professionals as the main roots of leading to the murder of victims.

5.2 Socio cultural factors:

Male domination and the ‘honour code’ were key themes identified in this study.

5.2.1 Male domination:

Palestinians are governed by a traditional patriarchal ideology (Abdo, 1999; Kevorkian, 2009). Many Palestinian scholars believe that the patriarchal structure of the Palestinian family and society is considered a primary contributing factor in regulating social behaviours, relations, roles and the responsibilities of the members of the society (Abdo, 1999; Barakat, 1985). Like other societies, Palestinian society is based on traditional unwritten norms and rules that are used to strengthen the subordinate position of women (Abdo, 1999). The major reason why patriarchy is reproduced in and transferred to generation after generation is the learning of the gender hierarchy roles and power relations associated with the patriarchal structure of society, which enhances the honour code and formalizes beliefs that men are more worthy than women.

Participants (family members and mental health professionals) in this study reported that conservative patriarchal customs and practices guide society in Palestine, whereby men have authority and are responsible for women, whilst women’s expected roles are those of childrearing and the care of men in the home:

‘Patriarchy: in our community males have the right to subordinate females inside homes’. (MHP- M1)

‘I did not work because women have to take care of their children and their house. Believe me I do not go outside even to see my neighbours because my work at home is taking all of my time. My husband is also working from morning till afternoon to feed us’. (FM10-F)
As a result of this patriarchal ideology men are in charge of women and they can and do make decisions on behalf of women; men have authority over the course of women’s lives and roles both outside the family and in the home:

‘Cultural beliefs are still strong and difficult to change. They still ignore woman’s right of choosing her partner and want to force her to marry a man against her will…’. (MHP-F1)

If women try to make their own choices, family members often use violence in order to force the woman to submit to their control. From participants’ accounts, it was clear that extreme levels of violence were known and accepted, and sometimes even expected forms of manipulation for those who disobey the control exerted by men.

‘Her family tortured her and broke her pelvis when she insisted to marry the man of her choice’. (Police officer1)

Both men and women are socialized to adapt to the norms of a patriarchal society and its institutions. Men believe that they are the protectors of women’s honour, and women come to accept, in the main, their own subordinate position and thus uphold it. This is exemplified in the following quote:

‘Other causes are social culture and the inherited social beliefs: Men have the authority over women and have the responsibility over them. They are the saver of the “honour”. Women are also passive and have no power to resist or may even feel that men's authority over them is normal’. (MHP-F2)

Within Palestinian society, a women’s main task is reported as reproduction and accordingly women have their ‘value’ enhanced by producing many children, thus the situation is perpetuated from generation to generation. The status of women in the family improves according to the number of children they have, especially giving birth to boys, as the following typical excerpt indicates:

‘One of the women who I worked with faced problems with her mother-in-law and her husband because she had only two sons. No matter how many girls she had the most important to them was boys’. (MHP-F1)

The socialization of girls in Palestinian society was discussed by mental health professionals who cited the privileges enjoyed by men, such as living independently,
doing many things that women are not allowed to do, and even having more financial support than women. This gender discrimination was exemplified in the following quote:

‘When I was a child I remembered that they used to treat my brothers different to me. He had the right to go where ever he wants and they gave him money more than me’. (MHP-F3)

These actions increased the power of male members and correspondingly their control over female members and, therefore, privileged males. It also showed the discriminatory ideas that society holds about the futures of women and men, as the former are expected to marry early whilst many men would be supported to have wider experiences and higher education. Family members described how they strived to cover any educational expenses for their sons who represented their future security:

‘I love both my sons and my daughters. My eldest son meant a lot to me when he had accident I affected too much and till now when I remembered what happened to him I felt distress. He used to work and took care of his brothers and sisters. I taught my other sons in the university and hopefully they will work to help their father. My youngest daughter wanted to study but I told her I could not afford her education because her father has no job now. she is beautiful and clever and I really hope that she will marry soon, all of her other sisters were married at age 17’. (FM18-F)

As a consequence of the privilege afforded males in Palestinian society, women were most often left behind men, as the latter quotes indicate, even if they were more than capable of pursuing options other than marriage and childbearing. Securing an early marriage was often the best option for families. Single, divorced, and widowed women were often the most marginalized people in this patriarchal society, and families would do their utmost to prevent a female becoming marginalised:

‘Single or unmarried are marginalized in their society. Why single? Because they are treated as a servant or maid in their house. There is too much censorship practised over them and they are prevented from working or going outside’. (MHP-F4)

‘She was not educated, had no job and was poor so my brother used to give her money to feed her children. She had only us’. (FM11-F)

The above quote illustrates that gender roles imply that women are restricted and were only seen working in the domestic sphere. They were invariably excluded from the economic sphere within Palestinian society. Consequently, women were heavily
dependent on men. Widows and divorced women became a burden to their own relatives and were usually housed in their father’s homes for social and economic reasons. Divorce was considered a cause of shame for the family, as the following excerpt by one of the interviewed brothers indicates:

‘After her second divorce my eldest brother took her to live with his family because she will not have peace inside this city, our relatives will keep interfering in her life and will talk about her if she goes to any place’. (FM16-M)

In contrast, marriage gives women enhanced social standing in their society, because women in patriarchal society gain respect from their husbands’ honour. However, when a husband is weak, this will affect his wife, as noted by an experienced mental health professional:

‘Those cases show that the husbands’ weaknesses affected how people treat their wives for sure; if they are strong no one will dare to harm their women... People’s attitudes to women change according to power (relation with authority and being strong) and the wealth of their family or husbands’. (MHP-F5)

Furthermore, when the husband or brothers are perceived as weak or poor, the woman’s other close relatives may hold the responsibility for discipline or punishment of her, as highlighted in the following quotation:

‘Her aunts also said she was rebellious, never respected her family, or accepts their advice. She always went to places and did not tell anyone where she was. She was a troublemaker and she beat her husband. People used to say that she was the man not him. Her brother was poor and she was hard on him. She used to laugh loudly and behave like a man. Those behaviours such as going outside for long time and talking with strange men provoked many stories and rumours about her, so my sons went to her and threatened her because she ruined our reputation. No one would respect us if we did not stop her’. (MHP-F5)

It also interesting to note that the above mental health professional shared the beliefs of the wider society, as she also showed understanding about the way that the victims were socially judged. It is clear in the former quote that this woman was perceived to break many of the cultural norms associated with her domination by the male members of her family, and it shows the extent of the rules which act against women. When her own close relatives were unable to prevent her transgressions, brothers and relatives were seen
to hold the responsibility for punishment and discipline. The wider family, as a unit, would strive to defend their collective honour. Participants and mental health professionals reported that usually fathers, cousins and brothers carried the role of punishing the woman, because potential shame and dishonour of the alleged behaviour of the women would devastating to them and their reputation:

‘When our neighbour was accused by her husband of having relations with men, her cousin and her brother came from another country and killed her not him’. (FM8-M)

The overall discussion shows that the structure of patriarchy regulates social behaviour in Palestine. It also noted that boys are highly valued in Palestinian society and therefore mothers felt happy to have more boys, as this gave them more social standing. The patriarchal structure of Palestinian society grants men power in the family sphere as well as in the public. This power gives men the right to control and even to abuse women if they behave against their will. The discussion also showed that the birth family carried the responsibility of their female relatives, even after marriage when closer family member failed to control women.

In order to maintain men’s domination, Palestinian society has to enforce the honour code because the code serves the purpose of maintaining social power through the regulation of women’s behaviour, including sexual behaviour, marriage and education. Therefore, the ideology of honour could be said to be a culturally ingrained and ultimately determines gender roles. The defence of honour becomes particularly important when honour is the only perceived attribute they have to exchange when avoiding the trap of poverty. The definition of honour and its related concepts is discussed below.
5.2.2 Honour code

Whilst the previous section outlined how gender inequality discriminates against and oppresses women, the concept of honour is an expression of how control is enacted. Some of the participants (mostly mental health professionals) saw honour as good moral behaviour, honesty and dignity:

‘I could define honour as honesty, having morality and clarity with yourself. Generosity. Loyalty and commitment to your work. This is my own definition’. (MHP-F4)

The above personal definition implied that people have different concepts of honour. However, this does not mean that they were not fully aware of the common societal norms. Others related it to social standing:

‘If I think of the meaning of honour, I could not differentiate between men and women. My wife and I are concerned about our honour and this honour means faithfulness, honesty and to be highly respected by others’. (Neighbour 1-M)

A universal understanding of honour among family members in this study relates the idea to women’s modesty:

‘Honour is important to men. The man walks honourably when his wife and his sisters are honourable. We were respected in our society. Everyone in the town showed respect to my father-in-law and my husband’. Maya (FM9-F)

The preservation of women’s chastity and modesty elicits respect for men. The data suggested that the concept of honour was inextricably linked to the behaviour and actions of women within the family:

‘People’s honour connects with the behaviours of their women. Society judges families according to their ability to protect such honour’. (Police officer)

The way that people viewed honour reflected that they were leading more collective lives. A family’s honour was connected with its womenfolk’s purity, chastity and virginity. This means that family as a whole perceives itself as injured as a result of actual or perceived transgressions of sexual purity by female family members.
5.2.3 Enforcing honour code

Communities and families in dealing with honour-related issues took one of two actions in order to enforce the honour code. Protecting honour describes the measures that were undertaken by family members to anticipate any potential damage to their honour by female family members. Restorative actions describe attempts at repairing the damage to the family image. Both are continual measures and aim to keep family honour intact. Both strategies are discussed in the following two sections. Figure 6 describes the dynamic of families’ strategies in enforcing the honour code as revealed and emerged from the data from this study.

Figure 6: The dynamic of families’ strategies for enforcing honour code
5.2.4 Protecting honour

The previous discussion about the honour code has suggested that male family members such as fathers, brothers, uncles and cousins are understood to be responsible for the behaviour of women as reported by the participants from this study. The consequence of this is that they (family members) have to observe, monitor or control women in order to preserve and maintain the honour of the family.

Mental health professionals and family members were aware of the honour code as the main reason for violence, aggression, and even the murder of women. Therefore, they universally emphasized that the honour of men was determined by women’s behaviour:

‘Cultural causes: girls are treated as a source of shame or a burden on their family. One of the sayings goes: “worry about girls will be forever”. Doing something wrong such as having sexual relations with men will dishonour the whole family’. (MHP-F1)

The link between the honour code and shame was clearly emphasized by the above participant, who reported that fear of having a baby girl originated from the fact that honour was the main issue in a girl’s life. This fear of honour requires many actions by families, such as watching and controlling girls closely in order to ensure that they do not dishonour the family. Therefore, families perceive the upbringing of girls as a difficult enterprise. This emphasizes the influence of women’s reputation and sexual purity and its connection to the honour of the family. This fact also explains the position men hold in the same society, reflecting a double standard when men and women are treated differently in respect of honour, since whatever men do will affect only themselves, and does not have the same effect on the wider family. This fact was criticized by one of the young women:

‘Why is honour only concerned with women? If man stole he will still be honourable. Why is “honour” only connected with women’s body?’ (Neighbour 2-F)
Despite the tendency of the above participant to distance herself from the dominant social discourse, which related to the link between honour and women’s chastity, it is often internalized by women, young and old:

‘Yesterday my daughter came to tell me about her friend who wanted to commit suicide because she had kissed her fiancé. Her friend was desperate and cried because she felt she dishonoured her family. This obsession about virginity terrified our girls’. (MHP-F6)

One experienced MHP admitted that the honour code was also internalized by professionals in the society and indicated the reality of the threat for women, whereby the ultimate sanction is death:

‘Society bears the responsibility because we reared our children in such a mentality, we think too much about our reputation, honour, what others will talk about us and how we could face the society. Worrying too much about our image inside the society leads to murders’. (MHP-F7)

The concept of honour is deeply ingrained into the cultural practices in Palestine and is transmitted through the family. The above excerpt emphasized that the whole society plays a major role in strengthening the traditional moral norms of the honour code. Children are indoctrinated into the code of honour at a very early age and this socialization becomes part of the fabric of family life. Thus, the whole society participates in controlling and suppressing women and their freedom.

In order to sustain and protect honour, elaborate systems of surveillance for the close observation of female members were used by the families, the community and society:

‘Connecting honour with women’s virginity led to the continued surveillance, controlling of women and preventing women from education, working and travelling. Women’s value is measured by her honour which is her virginity’ (MHP-F6)

Surveillance not only included policing and watching women, but also preventing them from having their rights to an education or working and even the right to live freely. The desire to protect the honour of the family meant that many families prevented women from going outside except under the protection of their brothers or mothers, so that they could be observed and controlled:
‘We only go outside with our mother’ (FM4-F)

‘Once my daughter hanged the wet clothes outside but her uncle saw her and beat her. They prevented her to go outside and even for shopping as to prove that they had honour, they never say the truth’. (FM3-F)

Participants also noted that the honour of girls was reflected onto their mothers. Consequently, mothers used surveillance and often violence as a way of disciplining their daughters and in order to avoid criticism from their community. This is exemplified in the following quotations:

‘We always blame women for everything. Even the empowered women do this. If a girl behaved or dressed in unacceptable way we will say where is her mother? Why she did not care for her daughter? Sometimes the mother becomes the abuser, who harshly physically abused her daughter for any unacceptable behaviour. She did this to her daughter to protect herself from criticism’. (MHP-F3)

‘She made people talk about her family. If anything happened with her they said that this was because of her mother. All of them blamed me for that, when a girl did any mistake; people often said that this happened because her mother did not raise her in a proper way’. (FM7-F)

The data showed that the value of women was related to their virginity and marriage, and fidelity was an expected and accepted cultural norm for women. For many participants, this explained why families, and the women themselves, considered their female relatives’ marriage as the ultimate goal in their lives, as represented by one of the interviewed mothers and a senior MHP:

‘She married for the first time when she was 16 years old because we did not want anyone to talk about us. The marriage for a girl is “ sutra” (protection of girls)’. (FM6-F)

‘In Arabic societal culture, honour is connected with women’s bodies, and women are considered men’s possessions that could not make any decisions without asking them. This makes a woman responsible to protect her body and to stay a virgin till marriage’. (MHP-F8)

The general community concern about women’s virginity put a high burden on women and their families, both of whom preferred early marriage to save their honour from any potential gossip. The level of this concern was greater within conservative and closed societies, where neighbours and relatives did not respect or value individual freedom. The previous controlling measures such as surveillance and early marriage stemmed from
the value of honour in the society, and the data have shown that this prepares the ground for the suppression of women and gives the family the right to treat women as property.

Under certain circumstances, (mostly when no one knows about the transgression) a family’s reactions to actual infidelity can be settled by silence or secrecy in order to avoid publicising the matter, and to avoid social stigma:

‘I told him that he should be a wise man because many stories happened here and we solved it by marrying them to each other and ending it. The stories are buried if we did this and I suggested to marry them and to let them go out of the town’. (FM17-M)

‘Some mental health professionals work according to their own beliefs. They sometimes do what families want, and may suggest other solutions that suppress women, such as seclusion or marrying the women to old men for the sake of protecting the victim’s life they suggest those solutions to families. Some of the activists considered this as another form of killing. We also become part of these social killings’. (MHP-F2)

As mentioned above, some may think of moving to another city. Some MHPs may collude with families in order to control women’s behaviour. In this case it is clear that victims’ voices were not heard, and their interests were inevitably devalued in the protection of honour. The insights from the above discussion are that the honour code is not only a social moral or a standard in Palestine but rather the code, which is symbolized by virginity and purity, ensures that women are ever mindful of their actions and how their behaviours are perceived. Men and women felt obliged to monitor women in order to preserve their purity and modesty. Consequently, women’s sexual modesty, particularly the virginity of unwed women, becomes the ultimate measure of a family’s reputation:

‘Killing happens because of scandal not because we are against adultery. When people knew about it families act. In one case, I worked with a girl who was pregnant from her brother. Her mother knew about it and took her with her father to the doctor and aborted her. They did not kill her because no one knew about it. So people are not concerned about virginity, but only about scandal and family reputation’. (MHP-F8)

The above quotation showed the complexity that the honour code played in the lives of both the families and women. The meaning of the honour code in the
above case was different, as it was not linked with the ‘modesty’ of the girl, but rather with the public knowledge about the rape. The family’s strategy of dealing with their daughter in the above case was changed by fear of social scandal that might lead to ‘social death’ (including exclusion, humiliation, stigmatization and social ostracism) if the close society knew about the incestuous rape. This was due to the fact that public knowledge about the rape would raise many questions about parents’ ability to protect their daughters and about the whole family’s morale, honour and modesty. This means that the families’ measures of violations of the honour code and their own perception of sexual purity varied from one context to another, depending upon the nature of the ‘dishonourable conduct’.

The data consistently suggested that women are viewed as having little control over their own bodies, but they have the full potential to destroy the families’ reputation by their behaviour. Such things make men and senior women the guardians of women’s chastity, and elevate both the senior women and men to the position of protectors of family honour. In this instance, it might be argued that a good reputation, the burden of protecting family honour and the avoidance of the social consequences of shame falls heavily upon women. This will be discussed broadly in next section.

5.2.5 Restoring or repairing honour

The effects of the honour code on the lives of women in OPT show how far-reaching the practices of surveillance are within the society. The perception of sexual purity that the families hold is central to the defence of honour, and ultimately the social status and the reputation of the family within the whole community.

The close-knit society of neighbours and the local communities has a role in supporting the honour code. In many situations, the concept of honour is not one of individual morality but rather it is a measure of the relationship between a family and the community. Therefore, one of the interviewed neighbours noted that close associates and
friends were part of the cycle of pressure over the family, which aimed to restore their honour:

‘My sister-in-law who lived beside them said that her family did not deserve to have “such a bad girl” who contaminated their face. In this case the main cause was the pressure of the neighbourhood. Community pressure, gossip and rumours affected the family, also families cared about their relatives, friends and what they will say and sometimes you did what community wants not what you believe in’. (Neighbour 3- F)

Family members were fearful of any possibility of gossip and rumours directed at them, as the community might question the value system of the family, which might lead to their social death (describes the process of rejecting, stigmatizing, humiliating and disrespecting of family members by their close knit society). Thus, in order to avoid any possibility of excluding families from society, they preferred to have strict control over women’s lives. The direct community and societal pressure bears heavily on individuals who break the honour code. The public (neighbours and relatives) attitude toward violence against women was also discussed by one of the MHPs, who stated that:

‘Social environment is important factor, I mean that neighbours and close community (relatives) are motivated and encouraged abuse by not interfering. When neighbours heard the husband beating his wife and did not report it to police or stop it, I considered them as collaborators with the husband. My analysis of this because of their acceptance of the abuse’. (MHP- F2)

In the above quote, it is noted that the social environment (public acceptance) may perpetuate violence against women. Gossip and rumours were one of the social controls that were used by the community to control the behaviour of women and ultimately sanction extremes of violence in an attempt to restore honour.

Furthermore, the data also indicated that in Palestinian society there is no room for the toleration of any acts that were perceived by the community to be shameful, often related to sexual misconduct, such as infidelity, whether perceived or actual. These behaviours may include engaging in premarital sex, losing virginity, pregnancy out of wedlock or sometimes even being raped. For example, after disclosing a victim’s pregnancy, her family was extremely angry with her and physically abused the victim in order to
discover who the adulterer was. In this instance, the victim was the only one who was blamed for the pregnancy, and the only one who was punished:

‘Her sister asked her about pregnancy and she confessed to her and told her about the name of the man then her sister beat her. But I tried to settle them down because the father was too furious at her. The family believed that she deserved what happened to her’. (FM17-M)

This behaviour by the family shows how the woman was the one who was expected to protect her body (i.e. to preserve family honour), and the family only had the power to deal with their female members, and did not have any intention of persecuting the man. This was commonplace, as the effects on family reputation differ between men and women. For example, when male members engaged in socially unacceptable behaviour, they were rarely punished by their families:

‘The mother told me that her son killed her daughter because she was raped by her father. The father moved to another city and the girl was killed’. (MHP-F5)

Furthermore, the data suggested that not only were families affected by the honour code, but also mental health services were also constrained by the machinations of the code, as highlighted in the following, disturbing quotation:

‘The concept of family is controlling our society. We could not see family goodness because of our fear of preventing family fragmentation. Social development will force to and must change such concepts that women have to be killed in order to maintain family bonding. Family is destroyed because of holding such fears and beliefs about family reputation. As for example, a girl complained to the social worker that her father abused her physically and locked her on a balcony during the night; her body was blue because of the battering. If I hold the previous belief about the concept of family and family bonding, so I will tell her that “father is a father” and you have to return to your home, then he may burn her and after that the social worker will start thinking of sending her to an institution. However, the problem is that victims are always sent back to their home again because social workers and the director of the institutions feel sorry for the family and the father and want to protect family reputation the victim is persuaded to go back to her family because family will remain family. And the father will remain the father...social workers’ feelings of guilt and sympathy with the family and holding such beliefs will lead to the murder of women’. (MHP-F7)

As seen above, the social service system often tried to keep families united, and therefore the procedures carried out by social services, such as returning women to their home, was
done to ensure the integrity of the family and to restore honour, sometimes at the women’s expense. Family reputation was the main cause of the normalizing of violence against women, with the explicit aim of protecting the reputation of the family, and as a consequence women were frequently returned to violent situations. In the eyes of the family and the community, and even professionals, the use of violence and punishment were acceptable ways of restoring honour where violations against the code occurred.

Others suggested that retuning the victim to their home was a contributing factor in the HK murder, but not because MHPs did not sense or assess the danger, but due to other circumstances that were out of their control:

‘We discussed her problem with her family. They all wanted her to come to celebrate the Eid with them but suddenly her brother, the one who threatened her before, came from abroad. When all of family were outside he took the advantage of this and killed her immediately. I don’t know if I could say that this is just fate and destiny condition’. (MHP-F5)

It is also interesting to note the words used by the mental health professional in the above quotation: ‘fate and destiny’ were descriptors which essentially vindicate the mental health professionals and the perpetrators, and they judged this situation to be unavoidable or unpreventable. This is clearly not the case, as another senior mental health professional admitted that they did not make the right decision when they agreed to return the victim back to her family:

‘This experience taught me to only trust my senses and to not leave decisions to others. We made mistake because we trusted the family’. (MHP-F2)

The honour code and the preservation of family honour was not the only concern of some of the mental health professionals. The data also showed that law enforcement personnel colluded with families to keep the reputation of the family protected in an attempt to restore honour. They blamed women for breaking the honour code and put pressure on them to behave according to family norms. For example, one of the two participating police officers indirectly rationalized the murder because the victim challenged and refused to obey her family’s interest and to stop her relationship with the man:
Some women provoked their family and challenged them. She escaped from her family home three times prior to her murder. I told her that she should not challenge her family and should be respectful but she never listens and continued her relations with the man. She said that it is her life they have not the right to interfere with her and finally her family gave up and killed her. (Police officer 1)

As seen previously, the data illustrated that the community plays a major role in motivating murder through gossip and rumours. The data also showed that the practice of HK was related to feelings of shame. To remove the shame, the family does what the culture and tradition requires. When a woman brings shame by violating the norms of the honour code, the whole family experiences shameful feelings, so at that time the killing of women it is considered an act of the purification for the family:

‘How do you think we reacted when she told us this? Everyone in the town heard about our story and her brothers did not go out of the house, she shamed us. We started to be as “the sheep that are infected with scabies”. All the people did not talk with us because of her. We were left with no other choices except killing her to clean our reputation’. (FM7-F)

Protective and restorative measures are mainly directed toward controlling women, largely to minimize their chances of contact with men. Therefore, measures of control such as seclusion were used to protect women from male advances. In this case, the idea of man’s honour, which lay primarily in the purity of women, was central in Palestinian society’s beliefs in this study. To shed a light on family members’ roles in perpetuating HK, the following section discusses the structure, nature and dynamics inside the families in this study.

5.3 Collective discourse and families’ role in perpetuating HK

Family is the key social unit in Palestine. Family structure has been described as patriarchal, patrilineal and extended (Warnock, 1990), and Palestinians conceptualize their lives as parts of a family group, not as individuals (Warnock, 1990). The Hamouleh (often translated as ‘clan’ or ‘tribe’) is a group of extended families claiming decent from a common ancestry (Warnock, 1990), which traditionally fulfilled many functions such as the protection and the support of individuals, as well as the maintenance of law and
order. From the accounts of our participants, it was clear that, even in a contemporary context, the extended family still provides status and maintains group honour:

‘We live in tribal society where the individual depends heavily on extended families and clan’s support’ (MHP-F9)

Loyalty to family influences all aspects of Palestinians’ lives. In Palestinian society, people are judged by their family (clan) name, which means that they gain their status from their family pride and good reputation. However, this means that every individual, whether male or female, is obliged to protect family reputation. Therefore, family honour and pride is more important than individual honour.

‘The first thing the father said was: what will I tell my brothers? Because any behaviour or accusation against women will not only affect him or her but the whole family’ (MHP-F1)

‘Her cousins told me that they went to her and asked her to stop her behaviours because she ruined their reputation’. (MHP-F5)

Village societies are more conservative and people are closer to each other than in urban societies. Therefore, even when families go to urban areas, they usually take their traditional values to the city and maintain their conservative close-knit society as much as possible in the new context, keeping contact with their relatives who still live in the villages:

‘My father in-law always visits his relatives and participates in all family gatherings there’. (FM2-F)

‘This is our tradition and we could not neglect it. Although we live now in the city but we should not forget our roots and from where we are. My son is nine now but I always take him with me in Eid because he should know our tradition and to know how to respect it. Boys have to respect their society but this generation does not respect anyone. Our society starts to be more free without boundaries. Development in technology destroyed our society and corrupted girls who started to use mobile phone secretly and let them involved on relationship with men. The society lost... that’s it’ (FM8-M)

The above participant comes from a very rural background and he expressed his fear at the direction of society and his intolerance of women’s conduct, which might threaten the traditional norms of modesty. It seems also that urbanization has frightened conservative
people, because it increases individual autonomy and freedom. Therefore, some perceived such changes as one of the causes of eroding traditional boundaries between women and men, encouraging corruption and socially unacceptable relationships. Thus, people preferred to continue their relationship with their relatives from rural districts, as an attempt to protect their traditional norms. These extended family members had the potential to be involved in the killing when nuclear family members were perceived as powerless, or when they did not resolve the situation, or even when they were reluctant to commit the killing. One of the methods that was used by families to maintain strong relationships was marriage. Participants mentioned that marriage was considered one of the social institutions that was affected by the culture of patriarchy in Palestine. Marriage to a cousin or other relative was often a forced decision:

‘Conservative societies may also force cousin marriage. Families always prefer this kind of marriage in comparison to others; this will keep the family together’. (Police officer 1)

The data suggested that the wider family prefers close relative marriages to maintain family unity, or sometimes to keep assets and family property within the family. Families may prefer this kind of marriage because of the greater stability of blood-related unions, as both families know each other very well, and this could ease the relationships between the female partner and her in-laws. However, when a woman refused to marry her cousin, this might be perceived as an insult and might lead to murder. For example, one of the victims refused to marry her cousin when she was seventeen years’ old. Her family argued that her murder was a revenge killing, as reported by one of the interviewed police officers:

‘We also believed that his family was angry at her because she refused to marry him when she was seventeen years’ old, before marrying to her first husband and this could be one of the causes’. (Police officer 2)

Another victim refused to marry her cousin and accused him of collaboration:

‘She refused to marry one of her cousins so after my son was released from prison they convinced him that she had relations with men and he believed them and killed her, he and his family hated her for refusing to marry him and planned to punish her’ (FM15-F)
Both victims refused to marry their cousin, which was perceived as an insult by the extended families. Both men and their families felt that their ‘personal honour’ had been sullied by the refusal of marriage, which was perceived as an attack upon their social standing.

Upon marrying, women lost their possessions and inheritance, as control of them passed from one patriarchal family to another. The social norms may hinder married women from asking for their ancestral property rights, because in patriarchal traditional societies, families are keen to keep hold of property within the patriarchal lineage. This is exemplified by one of the participants in this study:

‘Her family of origin owned a large piece of land. The land gives a lot of money to the family and they did not want another strange family [husbands from other families] to share their family inheritance’. (MHP-F5)

Ironically, in order to keep their money, family members could go so far as to spread false rumours about female family members who dared to ask for their inheritance. For example, the woman in the case mentioned above by the mental health professional was accused of engaging in unacceptable relationships, behaving against the traditional norms by joking with men. Additionally, the victim was tortured by her brothers and her nephew, because they sought to keep hold of the assets. They also threatened her other sister with the same fate:

‘Her sister who lives in… [-] was also threatened with murder by them if she did the same. She was killed by her brothers because of inheritance. She had many problems with them because she asked for her right in having the inheritance. They accused her of ruining their honour. She was an honest and kind person. They confabulated the whole story about her misconduct because of the inheritance’. (FM12-M)

The three above cases (the two victims who were killed because they refused to marry their cousins and the third victim who was killed because of the inheritance) represented the variation in HK. The three cases contradicted the issue of a collective discourse and its link with HK, because the perpetrators of the crimes made up stories about their female relatives, indicating that they had put the reputation of themselves and their family at a stake. However, it is still observed that, in the three cases, honour was only a rationale that was used by the perpetrators (the two cousins and the brothers) to justify
the murders. It is also observed that the perpetrators convinced other female and male relatives and kin members of the victims’ misconduct, and thereby secured their support. Those cases showed that in some circumstances, family members put their personal needs above their families, but still the honour code enabled them to control, misuse and kill women whilst at the same time gaining sympathy and support from community and relatives; in short, they harnessed the honour code to win social approbation for acts of murder for financial gain. Women were chosen because they had a cheaper social price within the family:

‘Our relatives believed them (the cousin and his family) and did not even come to console us’. (FM6-F)

‘One of my nephews wanted to marry her and his brothers collaborated with him and convinced my son that the accusation about his sister was true.’ (FM14-M)

‘When I interviewed people from the village, some of them were unsure about the story and thought that the woman behaviours were unusual because she let men entered her house while her husband was away. They still believed the brothers despite of all the evidence that she was innocent because women are the weak one in our society and the one who was always blamed’. (MHP-F5)

The data suggested that families who adhere more to traditional cultural norms, and those attached more to extended families, are more willing to perpetuate HK. Furthermore, the data also showed victims not only suffered from the interference of extended families in their lives, but also the relationships between them and their nuclear family members were characterized by a lack of communication and fragmentation, as explored below.

5.4 Lack of communication, loss of boundaries and improper supervision inside the nuclear family

At the level of the family and relationships inside the family, participants in this study reported that some of the families had problems that played a role in motivating the crime. They observed that the dynamics inside the family were sometimes characterized by participants by a loss of communication and fragmentation that led to a lack of supervision of children:
‘Most of those families had problems even before killing. Murder happened as a result of causes. One of those problems was separation between mother and father as a result of divorce that led to fragmentation and a loss of supervision of children, as the girl from… [-] she used the internet and no supervision of her and this put her in troubles’ (police officer1)

Additionally, participants noted that one husband was married to more than one wife. This can also create conflict within the family or may lead to an absence of the father as he maintains two households simultaneously. This is exemplified in the following quotation by a mental health professional with long experience of abused women:

‘Those families live in unstable social situations: polygamous. Living with two wives could lead to deprivation from father’s love, care and also may lead to discord and lack of communication inside families’. (MHP-M1)

Not only could the marriage of the father lead to a lack of supervision and care of the children, but also the mother was often blamed for neglecting their children after their marriage:

‘May be our mum did not raise us properly. She did not teach us how to face troubles. No one controlled us. Our dad died when we were children and my mum was busy with her husband and left the house for a while, so we had no one to take care of us or to advise us’. (FM16-M)

Similar to the observations made by MHPs, this participant reported that some of the parents, particularly the father, had no ability to supervise their children because of their carelessness, mental inability and weakness, particularly when they had large families:

‘They are careless. When you have seven sons and one married daughter and another engaged one, a large family, you should observe them carefully. He did not do that because he is not capable to do that neither mentally nor physically’. (FM17-M)

The data suggested that when fathers are unable to communicate with their children, they resorted to physical and verbal violence as the only way to discipline them:

‘He was an abusive father. He never talks to his children. His only way in communicating with them is shouting or even by using physical abuse’. (MHP-F1)

A father’s behaviours could also reflect the communal perspectives about mothers, who were often blamed for being too passive and having no power to control their children.
Therefore, fathers believed that they should deal with their children harshly or distance themselves emotionally from them in order to discipline them:

‘Her father only used physical violence with her siblings. This was his only way to solve their problems. Some fathers thought that this will keep children respect them’. (MHP-F1)

‘Father’s situation is complicated. I believe that father did not have space in our society to raise his children. Mothers only handle this role but I believe that fathers could give different ideas and perspectives but their sons and daughters seek only mothers’ advice which made space between fathers and their children’. (MHP-F5)

Ironically, the consequence of this (being absent emotionally, using strict rules, and power to control) would separate fathers more from their families, as both mothers and children rarely told the father about their troubles:

‘We only told our mother for our troubles. She understood and solved our problems without telling our dad, we loved our dad but mum was different’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

It also suggested that fear of punishment and tension in the relationships between a mother and her daughter was sometimes tense:

‘Daughters will feel afraid to talk to their mothers about anything that has happened to them. This culture of fear forced you to raise your children to be weak will lead to the lack of communication between family members. No honesty between the mother and her daughters, no awareness in this family they are ignorant, naïve, and very simple’. (Lawyer)

A lack of communication and the simplicity and naïvety of some mothers may lead to a lack of honesty between them and their daughters. The pejorative perspective was shown by many others in this study. Bearing in mind that mothers may resort to harsh treatment of their daughters because of the fear of being blamed by the community (as mentioned above), the loss of communication between mothers and daughters could be understandable when the role of the former was redirected from giving love to controlling or even punishing the latter. The consequences of this tension in relationships, as suggested in the data, may put daughters in more danger:

‘In one of the cases, which I told you about, I considered her mother indirectly responsible because she used her daughters and did not support her. Why she said that she would not go back to her family because she knew that her
mother would abuse her also. This is indicated the kind of communication inside this family. Mother was also passive. She saw the sexual abuse against their daughters and did not speak’. (MHP-F3)

As seen above, improper supervision (leaving children alone for hours) could lead to sexual assault and violence by brothers, and later pregnancy. However, in this case the mother blamed her daughter for being raped by the brothers, and then murdered her:

‘They did not face the reality and just blamed the woman. When she came back her mother blamed her for not telling her about the abuse but this means there is a lack of communication in this family. The victim told me that she was afraid of their reaction and her fear of being blamed for the abuse upon her’. (MHP-F9)

Some mothers also acknowledged that their daughters were not close to them and never told them about their secrets or inner thoughts:

‘I am her mother and she never told me anything about herself. Did you think that I know where she was and what she was doing while I am here and if she did not tell me?’ (FM7-F)

This mother clearly tried to defend her actions by blaming her daughter, saving face with her close and extended family, and maybe even the wider community. As a result of this unbearable pressure from relatives and the community, along with the anxiety about the overall survival of their families, a mother may commit the crime as a consequence of intense social pressure, continual blaming and an acute awareness of the possible social ostracism by her kinship network and the local community:

‘I met a woman who killed her daughter. She told me that she knew that her daughter was innocent and was a victim but if she did not kill her daughter the community will kill her and her other daughters socially because all the community blamed the mother for what happened with her daughter’. (MHP-F2)

Although families believed that their daughters were innocent, the fear of social death (being socially rejected and stigmatized) masked the families’ reaction toward perceived or actual accusation against the victims.
A woman’s fear of her family’s reaction to hearing about the sexual abuse led the latter mentioned case to hide the sexual abuse committed against her when she was nine years’ old from her parents:

‘It was a shock to me to hear that she (the victim) hid from her mother that she was raped while she was only nine years old. She begged me to not tell them because she was afraid that they may hurt her. From my review of her file I had knowledge that she was abused physically several times by her brother and her mother because she was getting home late. This way of treatment was the reason why she was extremely afraid from them’. (Police Officer 1)

One of the mental health professionals who worked with victims for more than ten years observed that in some circumstances the absence of the mother, because of working long hours, exacerbated a lack of communication, lack of clear boundaries and improper supervision:

‘Mother did not do her job. She did not protect her daughter. She left her sons and her daughters alone for hours without proper control and guidance and this led to abused her sexually by her brothers. No values and principles in this family. Family was poor and the mother was working in the farm and spent many hours there’. (MHP-F9)

It is interesting also to note here that mental health professionals and the community also blamed the mother for what happened with her daughter as women, even when they worked, were the ones who should be responsible for domestic work and for taking care of their children. Consistently, another senior mental health professional criticized the mother for not protecting her daughter from abuse and even suspected about the mother’s claim that she did not know about the abuse or the pregnancy, which demonstrates how women are expected to manage the care of their children:

‘Where was she when she was raped? How she did not notice that her daughter was pregnant? She was seven months’ pregnant when the medical staff discovered the pregnancy. How she could not discover rape till that time? Was she stupid, ignorant? What kind of mother is she?! I felt suspicious about her claiming that she did not know about all of that. I could not understand it or accept it’. (MHP-F4)

This could imply the extent of the pressure that mothers face from the community at large and may help to explain why this mother killed her daughter.
Another MHP added another dimension, reporting that some husbands also neglected their wives emotionally and had very limited communication. Consequently, these wives looked for another relationship in order to have love:

‘Her husband worked in ‘Israel’ and slept there for many days. His work kept him away from home for all of the week, he had no communication with her, did not listen to her troubles, or share her responsibilities at home. She had seven children who had many demands, but her husband put the entire burden on her. Therefore, her unhappy marriage meant her leaving the house for many hours because she had relationships with a man who understood her and gave her love’. (MHP-F5)

The significance of the above information was that in such circumstances children were also neglected. The level of supervision by both parents would not be enough, rendering parents unable to know the problems that their children faced, how they solved them or even where they went and who they met. Such things would place children at risk of being involved in unacceptable behaviours or to being unable to make good judgment of character of people they associated with.

The overall discussion in this section has shown that a lack of communication between both parents and their children, improper guidance and supervision along with the use of physical violence, were suggested to lead to victims’ reluctance to tell their parents about any abuse against them, and more particularly about sexual abuse. It also showed that victims of rape were blamed by their families, who were themselves in turn blamed by the community for not protecting their daughters from abuse. The fear of being killed socially (ostracised and excluded by the close community) worked as a motive of the families to kill their daughters. The effect of the family environment, honour code and society on victims and how this led to their murder is discussed below.
5.5. Outstanding characteristics of the victims and breaking the orthodox code of modesty

In Palestinian society, women are treated as subordinate citizens, whose identities are defined mainly by their marital and familial responsibilities (Kevorkian, 2000). Consequently, there is a pattern of female behaviour characterized by compliance to authority (i.e. male family members and the patriarchal society), passivity, obedience, self-deprecation and self-sacrifice.

When some of the victims went against the cultural norms, for example being independent or being strong, this led to the disapprobation of their communities and/or conflict with their families:

‘Strong personality usually provokes rumours and gossip around them. Her brother claimed that he did not know the source of her money and how she earned it. She was the breadwinner of the family. She faced a lot of difficulties because of his restrictive rules and abuse against her, and when she resisted this he killed her’. (MHP-F7)

The above case showed that when women were strong, their family and their community perceived them as being ‘abnormal’ or behaving against what was considered to be normal. It also showed that power relations inside the family were also one of the causes of conflict, as the brother felt threatened by the strong personality of the woman, her financial contribution to the family and her authority within it. The data showed that strong women faced difficulties in a society which constructed around the predominance of masculinity, which confines women in a feminine (domestic) role. Brothers used abusive means in order to prevent women breaking away from the domination of the family towards a form of social integration. One of the examples which provides an illustration of this was when the victims were described as secretive, ‘rebellious or strong’ and different, when they refused to submit to the families’ command:

‘But she was discrete because she did not tell anyone about her life or her work. She was always alone. I never felt comfortable with her behaviours because she never listened. If I asked her to not go to downtown she goes without listening to me. She was different than her sisters’. (FM7-F)

Children were also taught to respect orders from their parents without explanation, and this may explain why parents used violence when the children challenged their orders,
and could also explain why families considered those who challenged these rules to be different and potentially subversive.

When the honour code and family rules were challenged, families suppressed women because they feared for the futures of the women and indeed of themselves. In the case referred to below, the mother’s accusation that her daughter was ‘rebellious’ or ‘different’ was dangerous, as this contributed to rationalizing the use of violence against her, as suggested by her brother:

‘She brought this (the murder) on herself. She never carried our advices and her stubbornness led to all of what happened with her. I told her to not work but she insisted and finally the man exploited her. She never listened to her mother or to me. My brothers were young and could not handle people’s gossip about their sisters; their friends at school humiliated them and talked badly about her and they just could not stand it and finally killed her’. (FM8-M)

When a women’s behaviour was perceived as a threat to the stability of their families and society, they were labelled as deviant. The labelling of women as deviant legitimized the use of control. Consequently, women were perceived as outcasts or pariahs:

‘All the neighbours excluded them and preferred to not talk or interact with them. They used to sit outside with men at night and joking and laughed in a loud voice and therefore all of the neighbours whether men and women did not respect them and preferred to keep a distance from them... people usually isolated them and treated women who did this as a pariah’. (Neighbour 4-F)

‘My sister supported my uncle and his family when we fought with them and refused to return back to our house. She married her husband without telling us and therefore my father in-law-suggested excluding her from the family. So I did not see her before her death’. (FM16-M)

The data also showed conflicting perceptions of the characteristics of victims. Most victims were described by family members and professionals as naïve, simple and uneducated, whilst simultaneously being regarded as rebellious, strong and independent. Both clusters of characteristics were considered problematic by families and professionals. For example, one of the participants (a mother of a victim) acknowledged that the simplicity and lack of experience of her daughter put the latter in danger, but at the same time she also mentioned twice that her daughter, prior to the murder, advised her sister to stay close to her mother and to stop ‘misbehaving’:
‘She was uneducated, simple and had no experience of life. They exploited her and convinced her that the man married her and because she was illiterate she thought the paper that they gave to her was her marriage contract. After returning my daughter home by her uncles, she met her sister at her uncle’s home and told her to stay close to mum and to not escape as she did’. (FM3-F)

In this case, the mother wanted to stress that her daughter’s attempt to escape from the house and to rebel against the violence against her put her in danger because she could not be independent, and in such circumstances (i.e. lacking experience, being under-educated and lacking proper support) it would be difficult for a woman to live independently. At the same time, when the mother was asked by the researcher to talk about her experience she stated:

‘It was my fault because I was not strong I brought this to my daughter. They exploited her because I was weak’. (FM3-F)

The mother indirectly expressed her feelings of guilt because she was not able to protect her daughter from others’ violence. However, she also insisted that being close to the mother would provide her daughter with protection and security. However, ironically, this was not what happened, as in this case both the mother and her daughters were continuously physically abused by male family members. This could also explain why the victim’s sisters were pulled from school directly after the murder, as the family tried to avoid any potential problems later on. Another brother stressed that his sister’s decision to stop her relationship with him and his mother and her stubbornness led to her troubles and murder:

‘She was stubborn, even if you tried to persuade her on the opposite but she will never be convinced. If she carried on our advices bad things might not have happened to her. She married our cousin and after that we did not see her for a year. If she was close to us may be this did not happen with her’. (FM16-M)

The brother also wanted to illustrate that women have support from their paternal family even after marriage, and only the loss of this enables their murder.

Another participant mentioned that the victim was inexperienced in life, uneducated and not as strong as her sister, who was a teacher, but at the same time he described the
victim’s behaviour as madness, because she had relations with a man and got pregnant and did not take actions to solve her problems:

‘The girl was not insane when she had this relationship with the man. She thought of one minute of happiness. I know that her deprivation led to making mistakes. She was deprived emotionally and financially but unfortunately the man used her and exploited her. She made mistakes because of ignorance, simplicity and the lack of experience. She was not as educated as her sister, her sister was a school teacher and strong. I asked her “why you waited for this long time, you were a married woman and should know how to deal with this thing”, she answered: “I did not know what to do”. Is this answer?! This means that she was insane and unaware’. (FM17-M)

Similar to other participants, this participant mentioned that the victim was exploited by a man and had relations with him because of her emotional and financial deprivation, simplicity, lack of experience, low education and also because of her need to feel happy. He also mentioned that she was under-educated, had a weak personality in comparison with her sister, and was divorced. All of these factors, as suggested by the participant, made her susceptible to anyone who increased her self-esteem or expressed love to her. So the conflict here was that he expressed that being strong is good for women but to behave against the orthodox rules was considered ‘madness’. Both the head of clan (FM17) and the mother (FM3) wanted to illustrate that both victims were vulnerable to exploitation by people because they were weak and inexperienced. This strategy of focusing attention on the perceived responsibilities of victims’ characteristics and conduct diverts consideration from the conduct of the perpetrators. Therefore, it is not surprising to find a victim who blamed herself for abuse, and a community that legitimizes violence against women particularly when she was accused of behaving against the orthodox rules of modesty and transgressing against the honour code.
5.6 Escaping suffering and the struggle between living independently and returning home

Some of the victims tried to escape the suffering by attempting suicide, escaping, having relations with a man in order to marry and to have better life away from their family, and even by talking about their abuse to others and seeking help from professionals. These actions break the honour code and the general silence surrounding issues of abuse and control. Any chance of rebellion, fight against the code or family violence met with resistance and punishment:

‘You know sometimes women break the silence and this mostly happened when there is an extreme threat on their lives; once two sisters from one of the villages approached us asking for protection from their father who threatened to kill them. I allowed the girls to enter the centre and shut the door tightly. The father came and wanted to break the door in order to punish them because they told us about his violence against them’. (MHP-F6)

A third of the victims in this study had made an attempt at suicide. One mother reported that her divorced daughter wanted to bomb herself in Israel because she was helpless and had enough of the social pressures and interference in her life:

‘She wanted to bomb herself because of pressure. She went to Jerusalem in order to do suicide bomb. Everyone was watching her and interfering in her business’. (FM15-F)

The mother reported that her daughter was trying to take her own life to escape the suffering from the social consequences of her divorce, which in fact did not save her from murder by her family. The victim was divorced due to her husband’s physical abuse and maltreatment. In this instance, escaping suffering by divorce also increased her emotional and social difficulties. The data in this study showed that victims who had tried to kill themselves were either single or divorced victims. Honour demands that the women should be watched closely, leading to the widespread surveillance. Single and divorced women were unhappy as this censorship forced them to stay at home all the time and to carry on all responsibilities at home. Living in this atmosphere of fear and questioning negatively affected their emotional stability and increased their desire to commit suicide, as the following disturbing quotations highlighted:
‘Why single? Because they treated her as a servant or a house cleaner in their house. They are too much into censorship. They have too much stress and pressure from their community. Most of them attempted to commit suicide because of life stressors’. (MHP-F4)

‘Once she held a knife and tried to kill herself and said that she was unhappy in her life’. Maya (FM: Sister-in-law)

‘Her grandfather hit her hard so she tried to escape but she could not, after that she opened the window and tried to jump and kill herself but I held her. Poor her, she suffered a lot’. (FM3-F)

Some victims who lived in continuous physical and emotional violence may have wanted to talk about their abuse to others. One of the victims confessed in public about her grandfather’s abuse. The woman advised the victim to leave and offered her a secure shelter in another city:

‘She was talking on a radio with a woman who encouraged her to escape. The woman told her to escape because this was the only way to help her and after that she would make a pressure on the family to not abuse her, so she decided to leave’. (FM3-F)

In an attempt to save herself from violence or even being killed, the above mentioned victim escaped from the family home. However, data also showed that victims who escaped their family house and did not seek help from women’s services may have found themselves in more difficulty, such as exploitation by other people. This woman was trapped by the woman who professed to offer her help and who then gave her to the men who had a conflict with her father, and tried to use her to have their revenge:

‘The woman, who encouraged my daughter to escape, was afraid and sent her to those people who took advantage of her and wanted to make a pressure and a revenge for her father. So they anesthetized her and took a picture of her and convinced her that they raped her and let her sign a paper that one of the men marry her and because she could not read, she did not know that this is not a marriage contract’. (FM3-F)

Other victims tried to escape suffering by having a relationship with men in an attempt to get married and to have better life than that within their own families. However, they were often exploited by the same men. For example, in the following disturbing case, one of the victims, who lived in severe isolation because of her father’s restrictive rules of not allowing her to leave the house, had a relationship with a man over the telephone. The man convinced her to escape and then raped her:
‘She was deprived emotionally. She told me that she never remembered that her father hugged her. She had empty life and nothing to enjoy herself with. She was prevented from going out of her house. She was isolated. She had no education and was very simple maybe because of feeling of boredom she looked to have relations with men in order to marry or even to change her life. She was sexually abused by a man who she knew through telephone and had history of absence from her house. From my work with her I observed that she was complainer and had emotional problems. She tried to kill herself twice. She was unstable psychologically’. (MHP-F3)

It is interesting to note the words that used by MHPs in describing the victim, such as ‘complainer’, which showed that mental health professional also sometimes judged the victims and did not understand the extent of their suffering or their mental health, describing them as ‘unstable psychologically’. The consequence of this may affect victims’ ability to break the silence and entrenches their helplessness, as MHPs compound the lack of understanding they receive from their families.

Fearing for the future of the family and the stigma that was associated with victims’ desire to escape were a great concern for the victims, who did not want to bear the burden for the social death of the family as a result of their breaking of the honour code:

‘Working with women themselves was challenging also because they were judged by their community and had internal conflicts and psychological problems such as guilt feelings and frustration. They blamed themselves every day for leaving the house and for the consequence of this on family reputation’. (MHP-F3)

Furthermore, the fear for family reputation may lead to the abandonment of the girl by her family because she broke the family code by reporting the abuse to police. For example, the mental health professional mentioned the story of one threatened girl who was raped by her father and mentioned that her mother and her sister were supporting her, but when the case reached the court they testified against her in order to save the family reputation and to avoid the social consequences of a prosecution:

‘Once, a girl was sexually abused by her father. She had strong feeling about her family, and risked her life to see her mother because the father tried to kill
her. On the other hand, in this case, the mother and the sisters were sympathetic towards the girl, but when the case reached the court and the judge asked for the mother and sisters testimony they did not tell the truth. They were afraid at their lives and at family reputation. They said that the father did not abuse the girl sexually in order to not be ostracised by the society. It was difficult experience for her to lose all of them. (MHP-F2)

As seen above, it was hard for family members to support victims when the issue affected the whole family’s reputation. Therefore victims were left alone in their struggles against the abuse. The consequence of disclosing the abuse would cost the victims a high price, such as losing their relationship with their entire family. This case emphasized that family was bigger than the individual, therefore sacrificing the individual to save the family was the only perceived possibility to keep the family position protected in system wherein reputation and scrutiny by the close community was commonplace.
5.7 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the link between women’s subordinate status in the society. Male domination in Palestine is reproduced on a daily basis. The data suggest that honour killings were committed in order to dominate and oppress females. The control of women in both the private and public spheres was part of a broader framework of their subordination. The data further suggest that the honour code was a determinable factor that contributed to the murder of women. Therefore, honour killing is linked to the regulation of a woman’s sexuality and is prioritised over and above the life of women. Living in a male-dominated environment and abiding by the honour code of strict controlling instructions inevitably broke the spirit of many women, encouraged passivity and led to their inability to break their silence against violence. When women broke the silence they were often forced to return to violent situations because of the lack of appropriate intervention and protective measures provided by social service organizations. Victims were ill-prepared to deal with life challenges outside their home, which made them more vulnerable to exploitation. Palestinian society does not condone women living alone outside of the family, and so the honour code further militates against women in restricting their options. The families’ actions toward breaking the rules and honour code were characterized by punishment and even murder. However, murder was usually the culmination of a long process of both mental and physical abuse.
Results of the study

The Conditional Matrix which Supports and Perpetuates Violence Against and the Murder Of Women
The conditional matrix which supports and perpetuates violence against and the murder of women

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the socio-cultural root that contributed to the occurrence of HK. It focused on the interplay between belief systems, male domination, the honour code, and how they interact to affect the system of HK in Palestinian society. This chapter discusses the structural context in which poverty, under-education and religious interpretation interact to support HK. It will also discuss the role of stakeholders, namely state actors, service providers, women’s organizations, religious leaders and law enforcement systems.

6.2 Structural context

6.2.1 Poverty and under-education

OPT has limited means and resources as a developing country. The on-going occupation was noted by participants to be one of the underlying conditions leading to unemployment among Palestinian men and, as a consequence, the occupation has given rise to a number of problems for Palestinian people. The loss of land, the restriction on movement and the complete dependence on Israel, whose repressive measures have increased significantly, have all resulted in the deterioration of the Palestinian economy (UN, 2011). The prevention of Palestinians from entering Israel has led to the loss of many jobs in the Israeli employment market:

‘My husband is not working. He was working inside Israel and after the second Intifada they did not give him permission to enter Israel and now he is jobless’. (FM18-F)

Participants in this study noted the effect of the occupation and the second intifada on the economic life of the Palestinians and how this had frustrated both men and women:

‘Political causes such as the occupation and the second intifada: we have no authority. We still haven’t a real Palestinian Authority that has power and can make changes because Israeli took off its strength. Palestinian Authority has nothing. No economic autonomy. People have not enough opportunities of a
Most of them were unemployed, poor, and frustrated because of poverty’.
(MHP-M1)

There was a consensus among the participants, which emphasized that the rising rate of unemployment, which was the main cause of poverty, affected both women and men.

Data from this study revealed similar characteristics among families, which may have an effect on the extremes of violence against women which can lead to HK. The majority of the families who were interviewed in this study belonged to lower socioeconomic groups and mentioned clearly their financial hardships:

‘No incomes, below zero, both of us are living in a very difficult situation’
(FM1-F)

Two-thirds of the male family members in this study were unemployed, and three of the interviewed men worked in a daily paid job (the lowest-paid and least secure form of employment). The majority of the female participants (who were family members) were also unemployed. This significant finding presents a challenge to the participants, who generally had large families. Poverty when combined with unemployment and a large family leads to financial stress and consequently the inability of the parents to provide their children with basic needs. Family members (usually males) have to leave the house for many hours in order to search for a job. This leads to problems with support and communication within the family, a lack of supervision and a deterioration in the relationships between close family members. This is exemplified in the following quote from a police officer:

‘I noticed some of the characteristics on families such as chaos in family, polygamy, large numbers of family members, loss of familial ties, treating women as sexual organ only, loss of concern on females inside those families, emotional deprivation. I interviewed the mother from... [-], she said that she did not know or notice her daughter’s pregnancy, she was focusing on financial need for the family... this took all of her effort and concentration, her family lack open communication. The communications was absent, interrupted or even marginalized. Living in low education, low economic status and poor environment led to instability in the relationship inside family. You could not live naturally in such difficult, deprived, and harsh environment’. (Police officer 1)
Living in poverty meant that their chances of finishing education and improving their opportunities for employment were severely restricted. Families were typically large or above the average for a Palestinian household size (5.6% in West Bank; PCBS, 2011b), which put further pressure on scarce financial resources:

‘Did not study and have no job. Sometimes her son worked in the rocks’ factory but for daily job and tried to help me with the expenses. My daughters also did not finish their studying and do not work’. (FM7-F)

‘Families have too many children. They are poor and live in poverty and low education’. (MHP-M1)

When a family was large, daughters were expected to help their mothers in domestic work, therefore it is unsurprising that they were withdrawn from school when the mother was sick, died or was unable to take care of the house:

‘My eldest sister was 16 years old when our mum died. We were large family. She took care of us after my mother’s death because no one of our relatives helped our father. She was dreaming of continuing her studying but this could not happen’. (FM19-F)

The hierarchical structure allowed fathers and brothers to withhold women’s access to education and employment, which mainly happened because the women were completely dependent on men for their survival:

‘After returning back to her family she asked them (her father and her brothers) to work. She was not educated. She did not finish State exam and was insisting to work but her father refused’. (FM17-M)

A low income (earning less than US$1.25 per day; Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2010) undermined many men’s capacity to meet their family needs, which creates more stress within families, as economic problems, large family size and poor housing conditions often produce friction within the family. Marital tension and intra-family relationships often deteriorated and conflict situations resulted. This is highlighted in the following excerpts:

‘When I interviewed the families and saw their house, I felt that there was something uncomfortable there. Household living. Small and limited rooms. Very narrow corridor, you’re just overwhelmed by this limited, crowded and deprived environment. I believe that all of this added to the conflict and violence inside the house’. (Police officer 1)
‘People do not have enough opportunities for jobs or employment. Most of them are unemployed, poor and frustrated because of poverty. This will let them project their anger on the weak inside the family who are usually their women’. (MHP-M1)

Participants also stated that financial hardship increased feelings of jealousy and unhappiness, which intensified their feelings of dissatisfaction:

‘Because of the financial difficulties she started to be jealous of the people around her. Her sisters-in-law were happy... they got everything they asked for but she did not. She wanted to live, to have fun, to wear clothes like other women’. (FM1-F)

Structural conditions such as poverty and under-education (illiteracy or basic education) were thought to affect the decision-making abilities of the families. Many participants made the link between poverty and the lack of education and the ability of the person to interpret the situation accurately, which led to a misunderstanding of religion and legislation:

‘I connect poverty with low education. Education gives person the knowledge and broad cultural understanding. It helps him how to identify the truth. It is absent because of low cognitive abilities. They even lack the knowledge about their religion or legislations’ (Neighbour1-M)

The opinion of the participant cited above, a neighbour of a victim, expresses the common professional opinion in Palestinian society; that low education is linked with naïvety and simplicity often found among some of the poorer families in the study:

‘No awareness in this family they are ignorant and very simple. You talked with them before you see how simple they are. Not one of them finished the elementary phase of education. They are naïve family and “stupid” if I can say this word. They are stupid because they are not aware of the consequence of their crimes’. (Lawyer)

Both of the above quotations emphasized the families’ ability to understand choices and that the consequences of their behaviour were affected by their educational level and their economic conditions. The value of honour for poor families is discussed below.
6.2.2 Value of honour for poor families: struggling to regain status

The findings from this study showed that the value (significance) of honour increases among poorer families, as honour is perhaps their only source of dignity and pride. Thus, this could imply that poor people may be more concerned about social stigma and social image, as mentioned by one of the participants:

‘Poverty is not easy for people. They see themselves under the microscope from their neighbourhood, whether this is right or not but this affected them negatively’. (MHP-F6)

In contrast, richer families could be immune to the potential of shame and dishonour, because wealthy families usually had the ability to find alternatives or ways of avoiding the judgement of others in their community:

‘Families generally are poor because rich families have more alternatives. One of Arab sayings gives a very interesting reflection of our situation in Palestine: “the death of the poor and the fornication of the rich – no one knows them”’. (MHP-F6)

Family members’ actions against the female members of their family were affected by living within these structural hardships. Therefore, when their female members engaged in unacceptable behaviour (either perceived or actual), families punished them severely in order to regain the respect:

‘It was a simple family; they were all ignorant in their society. When the family was ignored this led to an increase in their anger at their society and then who do you think will be blamed? For sure the woman who is often the weak one in the family. We abuse them to be accepted, we kill women to please society, and this is the naivety’. (Lawyer)

The significance of the above discussion is that family members felt that their close-knit society judged and discredited family members because of their poverty and illiteracy, and consequently they became marginalized within the community. Similarly, the family members believed that their poverty and their weak status inside the society in terms of having no power or relationship with government figures undermined their position inside the society, and led to exaggeration of their female relatives’ behaviour:
‘We are poor and have no power or relation with Palestinian Authority like them so our relatives did not care about us. They all supported the perpetrators and talked about my daughter, she was innocent. Their daughters had mobile phone but no one talked about them because they are strong but they criticized my daughter for using the mobile and accused her that she had relation to a man and called him in her mobile’. (FM15-F)

‘My sister-in-law is strong and rich so no one dares to question or talk with her daughters’. (FM3-F)

From the perspective of neighbours and some of the mental health professionals, the family members’ poverty and a weak or weakened social status in their society was associated with the killing of females. They also stressed the complexity of analysing HK, as every single case was unique, depending on factors including families’ own perspectives of the meaning of honour, level of education, naïvety, early marriage, poverty and interpersonal difficulties:

‘I worked with these cases [HKs] for fifteen years and what I noticed that most of families were poor. It happened among middle class but less frequent’. (MHP-F6)

‘I documented many cases what I could say from that every family has its own story and different perception about the killing. They live in unstable condition; some of the victims lived in poverty, under educated. They are simple families. They had social accumulations and difficulties (such as conflict with in-laws and domestic violence). Many problems happened with families before as their females members were married at young age and not educated and faced problems’. (MHP-F5)

This means that HK is predominant in families who faced economic challenges. As reported by the interviewed family members, the meaning of honour for families who were poor and had no power in their society and their extreme fears could be understood and seemed legitimate when they faced the possibility of social ostracism within their community. Family members felt that in order to secure the future of other family members, women who were perceived to have or who had actually transgressed the honour code had to be punished.
6.2.3 The consequence of poverty and under-education

6.2.3.1 Lacking alternatives

While lacking alternatives referred to an inability of the families to find other solutions, it also suggested that HK was viewed as inevitable. Such constructions were undermined by the fact that many women who were accused of perceived and actual infidelity were not killed. At the same time, it also indicated that people who expressed their feeling of hopelessness and powerlessness (mostly family members and close-knit society who supported the murder) were unable to find any other actions to stop the murder. Therefore, they rationalized the behaviour of the perpetrators, accepted the HK, or saw it as a matter of fact that was unquestionable:

‘Whilst I believed that we could always find a solution to such problems, I could tell from my experience with working with threatened women of the killing and their families that lacking hope for the victim to change her behaviour and feeling that there is no alternative were causes of the killing’. (MHP-F1)

Participants in this study mentioned that family members felt unable to find alternative solutions to their problems when there was an actual or perceived transgression of the honour code. Many of the families indicated that the murder of their female relative was inevitable. They also mentioned that their family had no other alternatives or options:

‘They felt that they did not have any other choice. When the girl left her house choices became very limited, as people will question if she still virgin or not. Her uncles were extremely worried about this thing and made a lot of pressure to kill her’. (FM18-F)

‘My husband did not support the killing but he said this was the only alternative that her brother had’. (Neighbour3-F)

Although the two participants above were against the killing, they indicated that for some people inside the society there were no other alternatives, under the rule of honour code and the pressure of close-knit society.
The data also indicated that poor, uneducated families usually asked for help from other people within their community to solve their problems. They believed that other people could give them an option or choice that they could not see for themselves, which reinforces the idea that they were highly influenced by the views of the close-knit community, in which they lived. A consequence of this was that the very people they seek help or advice from might ultimately pressure the families into taking extreme action against a woman:

‘The mother told me that she will not forgive her brother, her mother-in-law and her sister because they pushed the uncle to murder her daughter, she said that her sons were young and therefore relied on their uncles who betrayed them’ (FM18-F)

‘Their fear of failure, as a result of lower education, their young age and naivety, means that they consult others, who were mostly from outside nuclear family as friends or relatives, in their problems who may deceive them or encourage them to murder. I worked with those brothers closely and believed that this played a major role in motivating them to murder their sister. From my close work with families I observed that closest one, and the most trusted person to family, i.e. family friend, neighbour or relative, was consulted and they built their decision depending on his or her advice’ (Police officer 1)

‘My sons were not educated and inexperienced; people pushed them to commit the crime. Those people manipulated my sons who trusted that they would help them. My sons were kind and simple but our relatives deceived them and they listened to their advices’. (FM7-F)

Within the common structure of the nuclear family, many family members faced pressure from extended family members to act against their daughters who were accused of immorality. When the head of the nuclear family was poor and had little power or authority in the community, powerful male family members often coerced the potential victim’s father by using financial and social punishment measures if they did not do what they asked him to do. Consequently, fathers submitted to their own father’s demands and killed their daughters, as in the case narrated below:

‘I heard her asking her father to help her to run away from her uncles. They covered her eyes with a small tie and then the tie fell down and she saw her father holding a knife. She was thinking that her father was trying to save her from her uncles but when the victim realized that he wanted to kill her she fainted and then he stabbed her. My husband had no power to kill her but his father threatened him to not give him any money from inheritance if he did
not kill her. His father and his brothers said that they would not talk to him if he did not do it’. (FM3-F)

Consistently, other participants in this study noted that some of the relatives assured the perpetrators that they would take care of their families when they went to prison on the relatively rare occasions when they were successfully prosecuted. They also promised to pay their bail when they were in prison, thereby condoning and rewarding their actions. Financial reward was noted to be an incentive to rid the family of dishonour:

‘His cousins convinced my son to confess that he did it alone and they said that they will help them financially when he was in prison’. (FM15-F)

The above information indicated that a lack of alternatives interplayed with other circumstances, such as the pressure exerted by extended family members, financial support and the fear of ‘social death’, which could undermine their position more in their society and perpetuate their powerlessness. This places considerable pressure on families, and it is clear to see how this would affect their decision about HK. The vulnerable, the inexperienced, and the young could be pressurized and exploited into taking radical and extreme action, including murder, by their families. This is exemplified by one mother of a victim:

‘You see how young both of them were... People pushed my sons to kill her... They played with their minds... They did not know what to do... Both of my sons who killed her were under 11 years old’. (FM7-F)

Participants made the link between their poverty and finding alternatives to killing and stated:

‘I am not educated, had no good work. If I was rich and had money I might send her to another country and then the story will end and no one will know about the pregnancy’. (FM8-M)

It was this participant’s opinion that prosperity and education made it easier for a family to seek alternatives to killing, such as sending the woman away to another country. This also implies that not only the tradition and the pressure of the community directed the actions of family members, but also their individual and familial characteristics that would give them power or alternatives to solve their problems, some family members tried to anticipate any potential accusation against women who were perceived as
‘vulnerable’ or ‘potential victims of HK’, such as divorced or raped women, by sending them to another city or marrying them to an older man. Consistently, mental health professionals also noted that families from middle-class families often found an alternative to killing in the form of paying for surgery to restore the hymen. In this way, they could protect their family name and honour if allegations of sexual impropriety ever arose. These alternatives were not available to poor people who lived in close proximity to others in their close-knit society.

Some mental health professionals suggested innovative ways to relieve this apparent stalemate experienced by poor and pressured families. They suggested alternatives to HK. The following is an example from one MHP who worked with a threatened person in a murder case wherein the victim was forced by her family to throw herself on the highway:

‘Early interventions could prevent killing. I worked with the family after the victim had approached the centre asking for help. We suggested spreading another rumours against the previous rumours that had been spread in the village that she escaped with her boyfriend. The new rumours said that the girl was betrayed by a man who harassed her sexually and that he was a collaborator with the Israeli. By the way, this is the right story, but her family did not believe her at that time. It worked and the girl was not killed. Following this, I worked closely with the father and extended family members to change their attitudes toward her and focused on their emotion; their love and compassion for their daughter and then I discussed with them the consequences of killing for them and fortunately we succeeded in convincing them to not kill her’. (MHP-F2)

This plan succeeded and the girl was saved from murder. This situation highlights that alternatives can be found which can counteract the powerful effect of the extended family and close-knit society on families. However, this was not always the case, as on most occasions the victims and their families did not seek the help of mental health professionals, and relied more on their relatives’ or friends’ help, as discussed below (see page 238&239). As mentioned in the previous chapter, public knowledge about the actual or potential infidelity and the pressure from the close-knit community made it difficult for the family members to face their society, therefore they resorted to murder in an attempt to save or regain face.
Whilst structural factors, including a lack of education and poverty, have been identified as playing a pivotal role as precursors to HK, there are also other external forces which affect the outcome of dishonour. Religion is considered to be one of the major determining factors of women’s status, as discussed in the following section.

6.2.4 Religion and its interpretation of HK

The role of religious leaders in reinforcing cultural norms about the ideology of honour and indeed of patriarchy was evident in this study. Sex segregation (seclusion) and veiling (the restriction of women’s dress) are part of the Islamic gender system. Restrictive codes relating to women’s behaviour and dress were encouraged by religious leaders and was linked with the honour of men. For example, participants (family members and professionals) reported that religious leaders also hold the same patriarchal and gender-biased ideology and supported oppression:

‘Religious figures effect: clergymen mentioned only the negatives in the society and did not focus on positives... they focus only on women and forget men, never discuss the social and political problems and only talked about women. They left our daily obstacles and focused on women’s behaviours. They looked at women as only sexual body. In last Friday’s speech in mosque, he talked about women’s way of dress in one of the institutions, and accused them of immodesty. He did not respect the history of that institution and that it helped many people in the camp. He only got the negative. So this religion is affected by patriarchy. People used religion for their own purpose and more over to reinforce patriarchy and the honour code. Religion is fair and equitable but people misinterpreted it’. (MHP-f3)

From the perspective of MHPs, who shared their ideas with lay people in this study, clergymen adopted the same controlling mindset, reinforcing and imposing the ‘honour’ code, and they therefore had a significant effect on the position of women in Palestine. Although the participants also stressed that religion itself is equitable, they noted that clerics tended to misinterpret it. These misinterpretations supported the honour code.

It is the opinion of the following two participants that both religions (for Palestinians, Islam and Christianity), encouraged the subordination of women in Palestine, and permitted violence against them:
‘Religion encourages men’s authority over women. Even if there is clear, statement in Qur’an to not kill women who committed adultery, religion indirectly imposed it by giving the man the right to physically abuse women. By giving the husband, the right to prevent women from work and going out of their home it encourages surveillance of women. Religion does not prevent murder’. (MHP-F2)

Religion gives power to men and gives the control to men over women. Both religions in Palestine, Islam and Christianity, treated women the same. They are subordinating women’ (MHP-M1)

These data suggest that religious fundamentalism which has been growing rapidly since the recent intifada as a result of people’s attempt to gain psychological relief against the tyrannies of the occupiers and their need to preserve some sense of self (Kevorkian, 2009) has further encouraged surveillance and control over women and recommended early marriage in Palestine. Other data from this study supported this. People seldom dismissed these extreme and oppressive dictates, and when they did, they faced severe consequences:

‘The spread of religious fundamentals as a result of political conflict was one of the causes because women are forced by these religious fundamentals to wear head cover. They encouraged families to marry their daughters early and this is one of the most difficult challenges that we face’. (MHP-F10)

‘Religious men as tribal leaders have different perspectives toward women. To tell you the truth some of them helped us in protecting many women. They also referred some of threatened women to our centres. However, other religious leaders showed different attitudes and encouraged oppression of women. In one of the occasions, we were in a workshop about early marriage in Palestine and we were surprised to see one of the mothers served sweets to attendants because her daughter, who was only 14 years old, was engaged to one of the men. She said that her husband insisted to marry her after consulting the Imam in the mosque who encouraged him to do so in order to protect women from having any sexual relation with men. As I told you, some of them used and interpreted religion to their own interests and even encouraged violence against women, they influenced simple people too much and they usually carried out their advices’. (MHP-F5)

MHPs mentioned that religious leaders accused their help centre of ruining family values, and denounced them from the pulpit after they tried to do workshops about sex education. She reported that they incited people to close the centre because it was seen as encouraging the corruption of girls:
‘The Imam talked about us in the mosque and said that we wanted to ruin families and spread the westernized culture, we were also accused of encouraging immorality and frailty of girls. They threatened to close the centre’. (MHP-F6)

However, it could be that religious leaders feared losing their own status and power, buttressed by their monopoly as custodians of family values and commentators on social issues:

‘Both are causes for religious behaviours, the first one is wrong interpretation of religious instructions and the second the culture of fear and their fear of their position. One of clergymen told me when I tried to let him make a great move in addressing violence against women in public. He said: what do you want? To pull the chair from me! Community will reject me if I do this. They will think that I encourage infidelity in the society. No hope for any change in the society that was built on fear’. (MHP-M1)

Another mental health professional stressed the potential role of clerics in stopping such acts, but also stressed that she never sought their help:

‘Religious figures also have some responsibility because they only discuss socially acceptable issues in the mosque. They could do many things but they did not dare to, therefore, I seldom ask for their help’. (MHP-F1)

On other occasions, it was reported that their decision could be swayed by influence and wealth:

‘My daughter was innocent and my relatives asked one of the religious men for reconciliation but he neglected all the evidence that she was innocent and supported my brothers and my nephews because they were wealthy and had strong relations with the authorities. I asked him to bring her to tell her story to people but he refused’. (FM14-M)

It is the opinion of this participant that the religious leaders play a small role in helping threatened woman, and a significant role in oppressing them and silencing women’s voices. This situation maintains the position of men and condones violence, and ultimately sanctions the murder of women.

Whilst some religious leaders played a favourable role (such as supporting women), the data also showed that others had a major role in supporting oppression of women (by encouraging veiling, early marriage and controlling) and in affecting families’ behaviours with their daughters.
In order to broaden the discussion about the nature of mental health services and women’s services, their measures in dealing with threatened women and the main obstacles they faced, the next section focuses on the context of mental health services, since the responsibility for tackling violence against women has mostly rested with women’s organizations (Department for International Development, 2012).

6.3 Women’s services context

The Ministry of Social Welfare and women’s institutions in Palestine have worked together to provide services for abused women. In the last 18 years since the establishment of the PA in 1994, the number of women’s non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has expanded. Because of the occupation of Palestine since 1967 by the Israeli forces and the resulting economic difficulties, most of those institutions are funded by international governmental and women’s NGOs. Women’s institutions and governmental institutions (such as the Ministry of Social Welfare Institutions) in Palestine offer counselling, shelter and protection to abused women and are typical of many of the organisation operational in Palestine (Songco et al., 2006).

6.3.1 Structural barriers and duplication in work

Some of the professionals noted that there was no cooperation between governmental and non-governmental institutions, and this has led to duplication of work:

‘There is duplication of roles between governmental and non-governmental institutions that provide counselling to women’. (MHP-F6)

Some MHPs reported that the lack of cooperation was related to competition among institutions. For some, services often depended on the agenda of funders. Consequently, institutions lack the specialist skills to deal with threatened women, as they have no clear plan to follow. This leads to a lack of reliable information about HK:

‘No speciality in our institutions. We work in everything with no planning. My role should be complementary not competitive to other institutions. Lacking of proper documentation in HK cases happened because some institutions do documentation according to funder’s agenda and this led to mistake and incomplete data. Some carry western counselling approach and
strategies that are inapplicable in our country. Another problem is that the national strategic plan for combating of violence against women, which was established in 2008 by Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Women’s affair, is still in papers and till now we do not see the implementation of this protecting strategy on the ground. One of the main challenges is the competition which is weakening us’. (MHP-F7)

Another participant blamed the funders of women’s institutions because of the limited funding period for projects, which did not enable them to achieve their goals, and consequently this has affected the quality and the services offered to women:

‘In my case I faced more particular problems but also other social workers faced it which is the limited contract that limits our interventions with cases and work to very limited time frame in which we could not intervene appropriately’. (MHP-F12)

It was also suggested that the agenda of the funders affected the kind of services that were provided to women. From the following participant’s perspective, these kinds of services may be culturally insensitive in that they did not take victims’ cultural norms and the differences among people into consideration:

‘NGOs relying on the fundraiser’s agenda which sometimes did not succeed in addressing community needs because our needs may differ from western country’. (MHP-F8)

Some gave examples of culturally insensitive services, such as engaging boys and girls in workshops in rural districts, which is not acceptable in such areas. Others mentioned that using hotline services as the only way to target abused women was not enough, and this should be accompanied by other interventions to reach women inside their homes. They also stressed that some institutions hold the view that victims of abuse have to contact them first, and that they cannot provide any services if the women do not solicit it. Such services, many of the participants claimed, did not take into account the nature of the society and that many women have no awareness of how and where these organizations are. Therefore, some MHPs suggested that women’s services should modify these Western strategies in order to be accepted, not only by women but also by society:

‘I worked with one of the organization that was funded by a European institution, once the coordinator from that institution asked me to do workshops to school students about sexuality. The problem that they wanted me to include both boys and girls but this is impossible, people will not accept
to send their children to our institution but she insisted and this made a lot of problems between me and her’. (MHP–F12)

Other services adopted an apparently naïve approach to offering their services which, given the data so far, would hardly address the problems encountered by the women in this study, as the following participant acknowledged:

‘I could not agree with that institutions’ vision and way of working. They said that they could not go to any women in their community and if the women wanted them they would come indeed. But poor women from rural areas have no idea about them or us so how can they come or even call them on their hotline while they have no phone at their home’. (MHP-F10)

Some other participants were pessimistic about the work of women’s organisations, and reported that the main problems were sometimes internal, reporting that there was a lack of theoretical knowledge, capabilities and professionalism in dealing with threatened and abused women, as exemplified in the following excerpt:

‘Lack of capabilities and professionals: they do not rely on theoretical knowledge. Also there are no clear boundaries and professionalism between them and the women’. (MHP-F12)

MHPs also mentioned that the Ministry of Social Welfare worked with women’s institutions to open shelter homes in Palestine. These shelters succeeded in protecting the lives of many threatened women. However, participants noted that the shelter homes typically lack clear vision, facilities, resources, and policies, which has an impact on the quality of the services they provide:

‘Problems in the shelter homes: a lack of clear vision, they need development of procedures, policies, rehabilitation and treatment measures. They lack well-trained mental health professionals and they have a limited budget’. (MHP-F6)

Additionally, the facilities were identified as not being either women- or family-friendly:

‘We have only two shelters and this insufficient because sometimes victims can be there with their children, not enough space for children to play and this limited the ability to admit other threatened women’. (MHP-F5)

For some, even the very purpose of protection was questionable in what was achieved:
‘Shelter home is a very necessary service but we should have long vision when planning such service. It is necessary but now it is another prison to women. Psychologically it is unhealthy because it increases their sense of weakness and isolation’. (MHP-F7)

A consequence, participants suggested that this would lead to mistrust and to women’s reluctance to ask help for help from the shelters. Another significant observation by the MHPs was that many women who were admitted to the shelter had children, necessitating a lot of effort from the staff to reintegrate the latter into the community. In the light of social judgment against women who entered the shelter, it would be difficult for those children and their mothers to be accepted in the community. The result of this is that there are many reasons why women would not wish to engage with women’s services for help in times of need.

6.3.2 Working with honour cases is risky

Whilst the previous section examined some of the participants’ perceptions about the likely barriers to women in contacting services, this section gives an account on the risk faced by workers in dealing working with threatened women. MHPs acknowledged the fact that working with family violence is risky work, and they reported that many of them were threatened by family members:

‘I worked with most dangerous cases such as family violence, sexual abuse, pregnancy out of marriage and family incest. It is dangerous because they are sensitive issues in our society, have difficult interventions and they are considered a family matter that no one should interfere with and also need a lot of efforts. We faced many difficulties and were threatened by many’. (MHP-F2)

The data indicated that MHPs were not protected in collective societies as society is seen as more important and above its individual members, who prioritize clan or tribe interests as the primary unit of reality and standards of values (Miller, 2009). The risk for mental health professionals is intensified as they were not only targeted by nuclear families, but also by relatives and tribesmen of extended clan networks. There were obvious risks and considerable safety issues in dealing with this type of work, not least of which were threats of physical violence:
‘Fear from the side of mental health professionals: in honour issues and in domestic violence matters we need protection. We have this concern because families usually threaten us when we address such issues. For example, one social worker in one of the schools worked with one of the sexual abuse cases. In that case, one of his cousins abused the boy. The boy told his father about the counselling session with the social worker. In the next day the father came and threatened the social worker to kill him if he continues working with his son. Who will protect him from the father and his extended family in this collective society maybe the head of school can help inside the school but when he leaves his school who will protect him?!’ (MHP-F1)

It was found that sexual abuse cases for boys and girls were treated in a similar way by family members in the matter of concealment, but differed in punishment. The strategy of ‘concealing’ the abuse was not only directed at the victim, but also at the mental health professional who tried to help. The cultural sensitivity towards discussing sexuality and sexual abuse, along with the fear for the reputation of the family, might be the reason behind the fathers’ approach, and also might be a cause of the limited services offered to victims. However, one mental health professional analyzed this case differently, and noted that although parents felt shame for the sexual abuse of their sons, they usually do not punish boys for being raped as they do to girls:

‘A mother knew that her son was sexually abused by her neighbour. She knew but she feared and denied what she heard. She has no courage to challenge, she thought of her son’s reputation and how this will affect his masculinity. Later she acted as if she did not hear anything. Whilst in another story that happened with a girl, her family threatened her and now she lives in the shelter home which seems as another prison to her’. (MHP-F7)

This can be related to the Palestinian context, wherein the prevailing culture is strongly masculine, precipitating hiding the sexual abuse of boys.

Another participant highlighted the effect of a conservative tradition on the life of mental health professionals who worked with cases of threatened murder and the reputation of women’s centres:

‘Judgment by society. Community perceives it as a centre that encourages prostitution, encourages corruption and disintegration, they always accuse and attack us’. (MHP-F2)

‘We have no protection legislation of mental health professionals from harm and risks; if families threatened us no one can protect us’. (MHP-F8)
Furthermore, professionals reported that when they organized a workshop about sex education, families, political affiliations and others not only attacked them, but also the police officers who were trying to keep control:

‘They attacked the police officers and threatened to burn our centre and the attendants’. (MHP-F6)

The significance of this information is that, when police officers who should provide protection to professionals and women were attacked, this may lead to a reluctance of victims to approach police officers. Additionally, the women’s centre and the mental health professionals may feel afraid to provide the necessary help to victims in the light of this real danger against their lives. One of the police officers admitted that people in Palestine hold stereotypical ideas about the police, highlighting their weaknesses and powerlessness and that they have little or no power to protect people. The feeling of powerlessness was not only perceived by family members but also professionals, who felt that their inaction with victims was affected by the socio-political context. As the following quote indicates, this led to a mistrust of the police:

‘We need to develop the weapon system in police. We should change the stereotyped ideas about police officers because people here we did not trust police because we have no power before because of the occupation so we need time to let people trust us again’. (Police officer 2)

Whatever were the reasons for the threats against women’s services in Palestine, this fact left threatened women with no help, and consequently they remained trapped in abusive relationships.

6.3.4 Gap between women’s institutions and women

As a result of the previous discussion about the structural and cultural difficulties that were faced by women’s institutions, findings in this study showed there was a gap between these institutions and the women they should serve. This limitation was reported by some participants who described women’s institutions as distant from the needs of women. The sister-in-law of one victim noted that she was distressed following the murder, but she had never heard about women’s services or where they were:
‘I live just five minutes away from the city but believe me not me or other women know about this women’s service. I was severely affected and wanted help but did not know where to go. They are too far and unknown to us, maybe they avoided us like other people’. (FM10-F)

However, professionals related this gap between them and women mostly to women’s fear of their reputation and that they were prevented by their family from going outside the house, and to geographical location (live in district areas):

‘Women asked for help from her neighbourhood at first and lastly asked for help from women’s institutions. Women approached women’s institution at the end. After they used all of the alternatives and when they failed, they came to us. Maybe because they did not hear about us or because of a lack of trust in NGO’s or may be if she lives in the district area and she is unable to get to our place or because she is not allowed to leave her house. Sometimes there are serious problems in transportation because of blockades and closures or it could be because of social stigma, this made us the last hope for her and complicated our work with the women in general and all of this made gap between women and NGO’s and some of women did not trust women’s institution’. (MHP-F4)

The data suggested that sometimes women failed to reach services, and women’s services often fail to reach women who need their help, or (as suggested above) sometimes the complications of the cases that result from delayed help-seeking may affect their abilities to save the victims. The consequence of this, as noted by the participant above, was the increase in mistrust on the part of the women about the women’s centres.

Some of the mental health professionals highlighted that one of the problems of the services they provide was that their attempts to empower the women only might have created more conflict, because they did not engage with families:

‘Without providing the necessary rehabilitation and counselling you could not return victims back to their family. You have to prepare the family. They empowered women but do not work with her family and this means there is a gap and more conflicts’. (Police officer 1)

It is clear that women’s institutions faced many obstacles when they assisted the victim of abuse. Some of these obstacles were related to shortcomings in risk assessment, limited funding and other structural reasons, while other obstacles were related to the nature of society and the inherent honour code that limits help-seeking and increases the risk to the professionals’ own lives. It was also suggested that law enforcement personnel are the
ones who should provide protection for both the victims and professionals, however, data suggested that police roles are limited (in terms of facilities, power and staff). The reasons for these limitations were addressed by a police officer who reported that women’s institutions did not liaise with the police department when they discharged the victim, therefore she mentioned that she failed to do a follow-up for the victim after being discharged because of their ignorance of her advice:

‘I worked with her brothers and he told me that pledges will not prevent me from killing her. I refused to work with the victim, to do follow up or to visit her at her home. Later, they returned her back to her family again because of their improper assessment procedures and interventions. They said: she wanted to go home, but I told them that I would not sign for her release. Because I could not trust her family. Then the director called me again to say that she had a lot of pressure from responsible people who insisted on discharging her. Then the victim signed her discharge form by herself and they accepted that at a centre despite of all risks’. (Police officer 1)

As seen in this quote, the police believed that the victim was left without the provision of the necessary follow-up measures, which contributed to her subsequent murder. This suggested that there was also a significant gap between women’s services and the police department when it came to working collaboratively with threatened victims.

In order to have a broader understanding of the role of the legislative system and personnel from the law enforcement agencies in dealing with HK issues, the next section considers the context of state intervention, the shortcomings of the police and their perspectives about violence against women.
6.4 State context

6.4.1 Weak state and weak legislation

Some professionals described the political situation in Palestine as chaotic, due to the fragmentation of legislation and the practice of law:

‘It is chaotic situation I have considered the political chaos one of the obstacles in implementing the law and in having clear and organized legislative system’. (Police officer 1)

The structure of the PA is based on three branches of power; the legislative, the judiciary and the executive (Euromed Gender Equality Programme, 2010). Participants in this study emphasized that the complicated political situation, which they suggested was largely due to the occupation and the internal conflict, had affected the roles of these systems and their ability to act for women.

The suspension of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) in 2006, because of internal conflict inside Palestine, led to an inability to modify family law, the penal code law in general and laws concerning violence against women in particular:

‘Internal conflicts among political affiliations: it hindered the work of Palestinian Legislative Council that had worked previously for the modification of laws and legislation regarding violence against women, family, and penal code law but unfortunately the suspension of its work affected attaining this goal’. (MHP-F6)

Participants also mentioned the problem of multiple legal codes in Palestine, which also compounded the situation, as noted in the following excerpt:

‘We are governed by Jordanian, Egyptian and Ottoman legal systems that make judges sentence according to their tradition and their masculine view’. (MHP-F3)

The Jordanian, Egyptian, and Ottoman legal systems are challenging to women, as they are affected by traditional beliefs about women rather than a balanced system of law:

‘For example, Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code considers murder a legitimate act of defence when the act of killing another or harming another
was committed as an act in defence of his life, or his honour, or somebody else’s life or honour. This penal code reduces penalties to husbands or male blood relatives who kill or assault female relatives on grounds of family honour as you see in this draft about legislations’. (MHP-F4)

The Jordanian Penal Code is still active and implemented in Palestine, and this particular legal system legitimizes murder that is committed in the name of honour (Euromed Gender Equality Programme, 2010). The significance of this penal code is that it provides complete exemption from penalty in certain circumstances. It also focuses upon justification and the excusing of HK (HRW, 2004).

Most of the professionals blamed the occupation for the deterioration of women’s situation in Palestine. They reported that it imposed restrictions on movement by the Israeli authorities, which impeded their efforts to save the lives of many women threatened with HK:

‘In reality the working of the police is affected by many factors such as the political situation, they could not practice their authority in the whole west bank because of occupation as you know district A which is governed by Palestinian Authority while district B and C are governed by Israel following the Oslo Accord. So this has hindered and halted their work inside such areas. Many people were killed because the police could not reach them as they were in B or C areas’. (MHP-F4)

The Oslo Accord of the early 1990s between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel led to the creation of the Palestinian Authority (Abu-Qtish, 2009). The PA has security and administrative control over area A and administrative control over Area B. Consequently, people who live in districts B and C remain under the control of Israel (see map that explains the Palestinian security control in page 35). Thus, Palestinian law enforcement forces cannot enter those areas freely, which leaves people in those areas with no security other than the Israeli authorities, who generally devolve such responsibilities to the ‘Makhateer’ or clan leaders:

‘Clan leaders and Makhateers have power in Palestine, people consulted them always, and particularly in the areas that are not governed by Palestinian Authority. To say the truth their roles were not always negative as few of them helped in persecuting perpetrators
Moreover, the present deteriorating security situation because of the Israeli occupation and the internal conflict mentioned above has affected the role of the Palestinian Authority within Palestine:

‘Political causes such as the occupation and the second intifada, we have no authority, we still have not a real Palestinian Authority that has power and can make social changes because Israeli took off its strength, our authority is distorted. Old legislations, having no authority in our land and our authority has no abilities and no vision of future because of the occupation’. (MHP-M1)

The latter participant noted that political instability has curtailed the ability of the PA to make moves towards social development and changes. Furthermore, the mental health professionals also noted that the PA has no clear vision about development.

6.4.2 Perpetuating violence against women by law enforcement personnel and judicial system

Amongst professionals and family members, almost all reported that the perpetrators of the HKs were not prosecuted or were nor sentenced adequately. This was seen as problematic because it was suggested that people would continue killing if they know they will not face conviction:

‘The judge postponed the case every time for six months they procrastinated about it every time. They will be convicted later but this postponing will not stop people from killing because the legal proceedings are not a deterrent. In my experience I did not see any one sentenced for HK’. (Lawyer)

The length of jail sentences, when they were given, ranged from one week to a maximum of seven years; the majority of the perpetrators in this study were jailed from three to eight months.

In direct terms and in relation to this study, the data showed that there was no consistent approach to dealing with the violence against women; multiple codes interplayed with each other. In some cases, the victims of abuse were blamed by some of the police officers for the abuse, as noted by a MHP:
‘This woman was abused by her family and when she went to the police they also abused and blamed her. They told her why you come? Go solve your problem with your family for sure your father will kill you for your behaviour. Sometimes the police also could not accept some behaviour by victims as if the women insisted to marry or see someone or any other behaviours they treated her as defendant not as a victim this causes women to be reluctant to seek their help’. (MHP-F2)

In this study, it was reported by the participants that women reported being blamed by police for escaping the violence and for behaving against accepted norms. Although police attitudes toward women are similar to other countries, the fact that police facilities and power in Palestine were limited forced them to rely on informal interventions from tribal leaders or community figures, the latter form of help was accessed through desperation rather than choice:

‘In reality we seek the help of the head of the clan always and they facilitated our work and some provide secure places to the victims’ (Police officer 2)

‘Clan leaders were consulted by the police, professionals, and the families and mostly in rural areas where police power is limited’. (MHP-F5)

Data from this study supports the above comments regarding police attitudes towards the victims of abuse. It shows that police officers were reluctant to prosecute adulterers or abusers. Families noted that police officers often kept silent despite having knowledge about physical abuse and the threats made against victims by their families. Two victims were killed days after being threatened by the family:

‘She was severely beaten by her brothers just around one week before her murder. She was admitted to the hospital because of that and they threatened to kill her if she asked again for her money. The police knew about that but did not do anything to protect her’. (FM12-M)

Some participants noted that societal misconceptions, acceptance, and a reluctance of the law enforcement officials to ever investigate domestic violence cases was noted to create an atmosphere where such violence was acknowledged but rarely punished:

‘The Interrogation process of domestic violence victims is an abusive process for women, it’s a process of continuous psychological pain where women are treated harshly and this has increased their inferiority, despair, frustration and
self blaming because they complained to the police. Part of the police blamed them and asked them to return back to their families’. (MHP-F3)

This situation was perpetuated by clear and deliberate breaches of confidentiality:

‘The lack of confidentiality, privacy, ethical considerations and professionalism among mental health professionals and police officers: one of the victims who was admitted to a shelter home and one of the police officers called her brother to tell him that they found his sister’. (MHP-F3)

This situation might have dramatic consequences for the safety of the woman. The data in this thesis thus far has demonstrated how, within an honour culture, honour can and is used as a justification for murder when criminal proceedings are taken against the perpetrators. Some of the judges hold the same patriarchal mindset about women, and therefore they sometimes sanction HK and do not treat it as seriously as other crimes in Palestine when making a judgment. This is exemplified in the following quotation:

‘We finished a report that reviewed cases of killing which occurred in Palestine in 2004-2006; the report addressed how to deal with such cases at the judicial level. Killing cases that reached the police and Public Prosecution were investigated and when it’s clear that the situation of killing occurred in the context of the family’s honour they close the file. None of these cases were sentenced and the killers continue their life and the victims’ life ends’ (MHP-F7)

Participants generally stressed their concern about police sympathy with the perpetrators:

‘I fought with general prosecutor because he sympathised with the perpetrator, he talked at her badly and criticized her behaviours and he was tough on us and gentler with the murderers, but hope God helps us’. (FM16-M)

One participant emphasized that treating crimes against women as a ‘fit of fury’ or a ‘crime of passion’, supports the excuses given by the families who choose to kill their daughters:

‘A woman was divorced from her husband then after a year he killed her. The judge treated the case as a fit of fury and sentenced him for only months. The legislation legitimizes murder and this gives the family the permission to kill even if the cause was built on only rumours’. (MHP-F2)

The court did not consider this as premeditated murder, as it was mentioned that the husband killed her a year after divorce. Consequently, the judge reduced the penalty for an honour defence claim. Where passion and jealousy were used as a justification, the
punishment was lessened, similar to a ‘crime of passion’, which is sometimes used as a justification in western countries:

‘HK happens everywhere even in Europe or western countries but holds another name as a crime of passion. Here people sympathized with the husband when he killed his wife if she is accused of having relations with other men and her family who felt ashamed of her behaviour in many cases dropped the charge and did not insist on persecuting the husband’. (MHP-F7)

As noted by the sister, the victim was brutally shot by her husband all over her body. Despite her separation from her husband two months before the murder, the judge released him from prison and treated it as an honour defence, and ultimately as a fit of fury:

‘I was surprised to hear that he was jailed for only eight months. I told him that his brother shot her with ten bullets (seven in her legs and three in her abdomen). You know in interrogation he said that he did not want to kill her so why did he shoot her with all of these bullets. You know there are many documents that were taken from her bag which proved that she asked for divorce, I asked the police about them they said that nothing was with her except her wallet’. (FM1-F)

As well as short sentences for crimes, the interrogation procedures were insufficient and they did not do enough to investigate the cases. As an example, one MHP reported that one of the victims was threatened by her brother several times, but police did not take her complaint seriously:

‘I worked with one threatened case of killing. She complained to police that her brother threatened to kill her but after months I heard that she was killed. The police bear the responsibility of the killing because they did not take her threatening seriously…’ (MHP-F7)

Another participant reported how one family planned a murder carefully. She recounted the story of one of the victims who had escaped twice from the house where she was trapped. As a response, her brothers sent the mother (who supported her daughter’s attempts at leaving) to another country so that they could murder their sister:

‘Victim’s brothers planned to kill her and sent her mother to… [-] because she supported her daughter and then forced their sister to take poison’. (MHP-F3)
Another participant mentioned that his wife’s brother planned her murder and chose the time when he was away in his work and his children were at school in order to commit the crime:

‘They waited till her sons left to go to school. I was also away for work. They surrounded the area around the house and held their weapons to prevent anyone to come or to save her’. (FM12-M)

That information about the careful planning is significant as it demonstrates that many of the crimes were premeditated and therefore should realize the prison term and punishment of offenders rather than being punished as a spontaneous act of passion or fit of fury. According to one of the police officers, this fact will definitely affect the convictions of the perpetrators who claimed that they were out of control when they committed their crimes:

‘I could not agree that this is HK and that he was angry because he saw her talking on a mobile with a man, this case should not be considered like this because he planned carefully for the killing. Understanding this will affect the sentence upon him as he may be persecuted for long duration I guess not less than 10 years... after this murder I changed personally and professionally...my sense of security increased. I should have a keen power of observing the suspect carefully, that we should interfere more with such cases, and that we have not to believe families. We usually do intensive interrogation with family members, we collected information about the causes of suicide, but the problem is that the family agreed upon the same story’. (Police officer 2)

The police officer acknowledged that he must be sensitive to any suicide cases and to treat every case as suspicious but he also admitted that families’ collusion obviously affected the police investigation procedures negatively. This significant experience emphasized that gaining understanding about the nature of the HK and what the motivating factors of these are would help the police officer to offer adequate protection measures and resources to threatened victims neither than sending them back home.

The data presented in this section have demonstrated that the legal and judicial system works with the honour code and prevents the legislative system from having a substantive effect in stopping murder, and therefore supports or reinforces the cultural practice of violence against women. In this instance, it could be argued that whenever there is
leniency towards criminals under the pretext of the defence of honour, society as whole and the judicial establishment are belittling crimes against women within the family. The discussion also showed that the police faced difficulties in saving the victims for political reasons, due to their inability to enter districts that were governed by the Israeli authority and as a result of the limited facilities that they had, which were also suggested to increase the power of Makhateer clans chieftains. Multiple penal codes have created an unstable legal environment in which there is a lack of an effective judicial and legislative system.

6.4.3 Political affiliation and the collusion with families

The data in this study showed that not only family members were reported as the perpetrators of the crime, but also people with political affiliations were reported by the participants to commit or to aid in murdering women accused of behaving against the social norms and of collaboration with the Israeli Army. The power of the political parties has increased during the second Intifada, whereby they imposed a certain code of moral practices and behaviour. Participants noted that political parties considered themselves the ‘defenders’ of the national honour, as mentioned in the following quote:

‘Because of the political chaos during the second Intifada, the political parties implemented the law by themselves. They interfered in people’s lives and in their reputation and talked about their honour. Sometimes they killed if one of the family asked them for, or they decided to kill by themselves if they were suspicious about woman’s behaviour and or if she had any connection with the Israeli authorities. All of the parties gave themselves the right to talk about people’s honour and to accuse women of misconduct and to punish them as they wanted. They considered themselves as the protector of the honour of Palestine’. (MHP-F5)

In the process of this occurring, the greatest crime against the honour code would be the infidelity of a woman with an Israeli or an Israeli collaborator:

‘They accused her of collaboration and that “Israeli” took her and made something with her to force the girl into collaborating with them’. (FM18-F)

It is noteworthy to mention that any accusation about collaboration is perceived as an attack at community as a whole:
‘People are sensitive to anything related to their identity as Palestinian and therefore collaboration is considered a crime against Palestine. People feel dishonoured if any one of their relatives is accused of collaboration’. (MHP-F6)

This explained why the politically affiliated colluded with family members to punish the accused women, and why many relatives, mostly those politically affiliated, supported the murder or encouraged family members to punish victims harshly:

‘They used this murder to prove that her family are patriotic and they are honest and clean, both are from same political parties but someone tried to smear the reputation of victim’s family by accusing her of collaboration’. (FM18-F)

This case emphasized the previous discussion about patriotism and that families do not forgive or forget these accusations. In this case, none of the paternal family members had the power to oppose the uncles. The girl was in contact with a politically questionable person. Her extended family considered that this relationship was sufficient grounds to condemn her. Her extended family insisted that she was caught by the Israelis (suggesting that Israelis recruited her to be a collaborator), and whilst she rejected all the accusations and insisted that she was still a virgin, the family sacrificed her in order to keep their social standing. Collaborating is considered to be a betrayal against the country (national honour), as the following graphic quote illustrates:

‘They came and fired a shot inside the house and asked about her. They pushed me away when I tried to save her. They beat her and broke her legs and they insisted that she was a collaborator then after three days they came again and shot her. We would not dare to go out of the house, they threatened all of us and prevented us from burying her properly, and all neighbours ostracized us and destroyed her grave because of this accusation’. (FM11-F)

The consequences of the alleged or actual collaboration meant that even the remaining family members were prevented from leaving their houses and were effectively imprisoned. However, the data also showed that people with a politically affiliated role changed dramatically when the case involved one of their own members. In one example, one of the participants mentioned that political parties stopped the police investigation procedures of a rape victim because the perpetrator was member of one of these political parties; the system acted to protect the man:
‘They tried to cover the rape case and hide the file; some of them gave false testimony to close the case for ever. When the case involved political parties, it is always suspended or covered by all-purpose. I blame the society. I blame the occupation that turned people into opportunists. Politician is a big lie. Selfishness from the side of government turned people into being hard. I blamed political affiliations who took advantage of the whole situation, which closed the case because “very important” people were involved. “People who had high status in the government”; the family left to their destiny and the victim was killed and I lost my belief in all parties’. (Lawyer)

As seen above, there was an added layer of protection for some men, which acts against women. The action of law enforcement personnel was changed according to their relationship with the adulterer or perpetrators. This was also consistent with family members’ insistence that people’s position and power inside the PA played a major role in solving their problems, stopping interrogation and closing their file in the court and ultimately enabling the re-abuse of women.
6.5 Summary

This chapter showed that HKs were not individual acts; rather they were committed, perpetuated and motivated by whole sections of the community inside Palestine. Furthermore, the role of civil institutions and legal institutions perpetuated and sanctioned these acts through inaction, misunderstandings of women’s suffering, and putting the wider family’s interests and reputations over the needs of vulnerable women. The normalization by society of violence against women was a major contributing factor in the practice of HKs and other controlling measures by families. The data also suggested that the inability of service providers to recognize the link between violence at home as an indicator of murder was one of the factors that contributed to their inability to prevent the murders. On the other hand the other contextual conditions such as poverty, under-education and political instability added more complications to the condition of women in Palestine. Poverty and the weaker position of families inside the society intensified some families’ reaction toward breaking the code of honour. In order to restore or defend what little honour they have, families directed their actions against women. The central point here is that the honour within families was located in the purity of women. Whilst families blamed society and their economic conditions and powerlessness for the murder, others blamed families, the conservative tradition, governmental and nongovernmental organisations, service providers and community figures, the PA, the legislative system and religious leaders for their support of the honour code and the sanctioning of violence against (and ultimately murder of) women. Therefore, this chapter presented a boarder picture about the motivating factors of HK and clearly suggests that HK could not be reduced to one single cause. The pressure from the community was a significant contributing factor, but also the reality that social sanctioning of crimes bestowed by the legal system was also a
significant factor that can explain why perpetrators commit their crimes and why
the practice of HK continues to be judged with leniency in punishment, both at
the organisational/institutional level and at the level of the community and
neighbourhood. Fear of social death and the need to defend family honour
worked as the main motivations to commit, to tolerate and to sanction violence
and to condone the murder of women.
Results of the study

Effect of HK on the Families of Victims:

The theory of social death
Effect of HK on families of the victims: the theory of social death

7.1 Introduction:

The previous findings chapters focused on the factors that contributed to the occurrence of HK in Palestinian society. HK was found to be a multifaceted phenomenon grounded in the interplay among personal, familial, situational, and socio-cultural factors. Familial factors and their relationship to their environment, community (where the family and victim live) and societal influences (cultural norms and values, legislative and institutional systems) are suggested to contribute to HK.

This chapter presents the emotional and social effects of HK on victims’ families. It was found that grief was an individual experience that differed from one family member to another, was not time-limited and was most often unpredictable. It was found that most family members experienced difficulties and disruption to almost every aspect of their individual and collective lives, but the background of this was significant. The background, context and the situational factors affecting grief was central to understanding how families grieved, and will be presented in the beginning of the discussion. In order to have a boarder understanding of the effect of the HK, I also examined the close-knit community experience concerning witnessing and hearing about the killing. Consequently, the experience of neighbours was explored.

At the centre of my understanding of the effects of HK on family members is the core category of ‘social death’ which is the process that explains the experience of family members who lost a female relative due to HK. The contributing factors to this are the direct effects such as ‘intrapersonal effects’ (a range of emotional and somatic concerns) and ‘interpersonal and societal effects’ (relationship between family members, social stigma, social isolation and interaction with community in general). The consequences of social death such as ‘struggling with marriage’ and ‘becoming different’ make the resolution of
the grieving process and the coping with grief more difficult to achieve. Figure 7 presents the basic social process of social death.

The concept of social death has some empirical support in the sociological literature. Studies on the plight of slaves in the past and people who have been trafficked for sex work have noted that in the process of importation they experienced a form of social death (Patterson, 1982; Brown, 2009; Androff, 2011; Marshal, 2012). Others have found a process of social death occurs in people in the later stages of dementia where social ostracism and avoidance by their close knit society occurs as the disease progresses (George, 2010). There is also a literature about long term caregivers who experience a form of social death (Holley and Mast, 2009). Social death in these circumstances reflects elements of the ostracism and stigma that this study has highlighted. However, studies specific to honour killing and the aftermath have not addressed the process of social death to any great extent and therefore this thesis contributes to a new understanding of this process. Three studies about honour killing (Ali, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Kevorkian, 2009) and a further three studies of bereavement (Asaro, 2001; Wisley and Shear, 2007; Burke et al., 2010) mentioned briefly the experience of losing family members as a result murder is associated with some level of stigma and perhaps ostracism. The studies indicated that bereaved family members felt isolated, sometimes stigmatized and that they might be viewed more negatively by others in their social network where stigma is often accompanied by shame. The data presented in this study have offered an in depth examination of these processes which form the core category of this grounded theory.
Figure 7: The basic social process of social death

- Intrapersonal: Facing reality
- Interpersonal: Social ostracism

Circumstances related to Honour Killing

Intervening factors:
- Shame
- Reputation
- Stigma
- Continuing bonds
- Silence
7.2 Factors and circumstances of the death that affected the effects of HK

7.2.1 Violent murder

HKs are violent and often sudden events. Such violent deaths leave family members with the reality that their loved one was killed at the hand of another person, who in most of the cases, was one of family members which brings with it more difficulties for bereaved family members in dealing with the loss of their loved one:

‘She was killed in cold blood, she went to buy stuff for the house and they shot her. Our mum had gone for nothing she was not ill or sick, she was young’ (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

‘A victim’s mother told me about her experience. Her daughter was killed by her son after discovering that she was raped by a man. The father killed the adulterer and fled away but the victim’s brother killed the girl. The mother was too angry and distressed, too nervous. She was angry at the society it was the hardest case I worked with. I was affected emotionally too much to see the extreme psychological pain inside the mother who not only lost her daughter but the tragedy of killing her daughter by her son was too difficult for her to handle’ (MHP-F5)

These events are often very public, and the whole community knows about the murder, and this affects the family. When a homicide is reported a number of agencies move into action, such as the police, who generally start an investigation. Such experiences intrude into the privacy of family members and bring them social stigma:

‘Shame and stigma by society are following them wherever they go’ (MHP-F5)

‘When the police sent my sister’s body to the mortuary everyone knew about the murder and after that my youngest sister refused to go again to the university because her colleagues started talking and gossiped about her’ (FM1-F)

This makes it difficult for bereaved families to grieve normally. Family members’ bereavement and grief process (discussed broadly in ‘intrapersonal
effects section’) tended to be heavily controlled by the social milieu, social stigma and social judgment they encountered.

7.2.2 Witnessing the crime

Witnessing the crime was suggested to be one of the circumstances that complicated the experience of family members who had lost one of their relatives through murder. In this study, participants reported that family members present at the time of the murder generally experienced extreme horror, and (simultaneously) intense fear for their own safety:

‘I sat and asked myself, who is next? This is terrifying’. (FM1-F)

The above mentioned participant’s extreme fear for her safety was understandable in the light of feeling powerless after losing her mother and her sister and being present at the time of the killing, as reported in the following harrowing story from her other sister:

‘My brother opened the door then a man entered holding his gun and started shooting and shooting. At that time I could not see anything. My eyes were blurred may be because of fear. I could not see his face. I held my mum too hard and my eldest sister hid under the small table. I said to myself: no one hurt it is just shooting. Maybe someone tried to threaten us or something, then I looked to my mum, she was numb laid with no movement. I called her but she did not reply’. (FM2-F)

This terrifying experience reflected the reality faced by many participants when they witnessed the HK. This thirteen year-old girl witnessed the violent attack, which was particularly terrifying because the perpetrator attacked the whole family and not just the mother. The perpetrator was masked and unknown to them, and they could not know when or if he would come again. Knowing later that he was a person with political affiliations introduced another terrifying element, as it was an attack against the whole family and made them convinced that he (or they) might come back again for the survivors:

‘I was too afraid to sit in the home because I was afraid that he may come back again and shoot me so I went outside and shouted loudly’. (FM2-F)
The concern and worry in these situations meant that some family members lived with continual fear. However, being physically distant at the time of the murder was also difficult and traumatic in itself. Hearing about the HK from the police was suggested to be also traumatic to family members (particularly for those who had a close relationship with the victims), as with this participant who did not see his sister for more than a year prior to the killing:

‘Suddenly I received a call from the police. He said your sister was killed. My father died and I did not cry, my grandmother died and did not cry even if I loved both of them very much. However, for her it was different. I just cried with no stop’. (FM16-M)

And another account:

‘Then while we were sitting and waiting for her at home I received a call, the man asked me: “are you… [-]?” I answered: “yes”. He asked: “is your mum around?”’, I said: “no, she died”. He: “your father?” Then I said “our dad left us. Who is speaking? What do you want?” [During that her son suddenly woke up and cried, and said “mama mama, where is mama?”] He answered: “I am from a hospital is your sister’s name… [-]?” During that, I felt that something wrong happened to my sister. I felt that I lose my legs’ strength. Then I said: “Yes, she is my sister”. He said: “your sister was shot by her husband, come directly”. Then I said: “are you sure?” I did not know how I arrived to the hospital’. (FM1-F)

Receiving the news about murder was a great shock and was difficult to handle for family members, and even when the victim was in hospital after the crime they lacked the resources to cope with the crisis. The family members were left without emotional support:

‘We were outside and they refused to let us see our mum. They were security men at her door then my father heard a machine sound he said your mum has died and we started shouting then a doctor came and said that my mum passed away and left away without a word. They did not let us see her’. (FM2-F)

This is an extreme form of psychological deprivation. The above mentioned data shows the unique circumstances of violent murders, as families were surrounded by police and medical doctors, who offered no help or support, and compounded family members’ grief
reaction. This is not surprising, as the findings from the previous chapter showed that both the police and the professionals often blamed the victims of HK (similar to other people in the society, who tended to avoid families with questionable reputations).

Witnessing and hearing about the HK not only affected family members, but also the wider social network, such as neighbours. Their reaction toward threatening and committing the murder was suggested to be significant in perpetuating HK and sometimes justifying the crime. The data showed that the close-knit society, such as neighbours and relatives who witnessed the crime, feared for their own lives, which might be one of the reasons for their reluctance to save the victims:

‘My neighbours were watching the crime but no one tried to save her because they were afraid for themselves. My father-in-law and his sons are hard and trouble makers and neighbours fear them’. (FM3-F)

Some also reported that neighbours did not interfere because people usually consider such cases to be a private, family matter:

‘Neighbours saw her running and shouting but they did not interfere because they considered it a family problem and that her family was the only one who has to make decisions...’. (Neighbour3-F)

However, HKs could also happen because neighbours actively supported the murder, as reported by the one of the neighbours below:

‘My sister-in-law lived near their house and she told me that she deserved the killing because she tarnished her family honour. She said also that her family did not deserve to have such a bad girl. She “contaminated” her family’s face and my sister-in-law and her husband supported the murder’. (Neighbour3-F)

The emotional effects of committing HK, which were usually the result of extreme brutality, not only affected family members but also the close-knit society, particularly neighbours. Some reported that their neighbours who witnessed the crime and or knew the victims were affected emotionally:

‘My neighbour told me that he was against the murder and was affected emotionally by her violent death. She used to have good relation with her neighbour and people loved her. Once a neighbour told me that she always dreamed of her’ (FM12-M)
Another neighbour suggested that this experience affected her relationships with the victim’s family, because she blamed them for the killing. Interestingly, this neighbour started to use controlling behaviours for her daughters, despite her obvious disapproval of the killing. Similar to family members, neighbours believed that fostering dependency would protect the women from engaging in any socially unacceptable behaviour. Again, this showed that the whole society, even if they were against the killing, generally blamed the victims for the killing and emphasized the suggestion that women always bear the burden of not protecting their body:

‘I was upset when I know about it. Since that time, I avoided looking at her mother because I believed that she supported and motivated the killing. I started to be more cautious and protective of my daughters. I told them to not cross boundaries with boys and to be careful. I know that I was tough, hard and controlling but I felt afraid for them. It was not easy for me, sometimes I remembered her; she was elegant and beautiful woman and wondered why she did not abort herself, why she kept this pregnancy?’ (Neighbour3-F)

It is interesting to note the conflicting statements that were used by the above participant, who ‘started to be protective and controlling’ while wondering ‘why she [the victim] did not abort herself’. This reflects the internal conflict and the complexity of the phenomena of HK and the struggle that women face every day, as the community wants them to be independent, self- assertive and at the same time to remain under control.

Although the participant below and his family did not witness the crime, he mentioned that the murder of his neighbour affected his female relatives who told him that they were extremely afraid and distressed:

‘I felt a great anger from my sister on society and I felt that she was afraid. She told me no one asked men where they go women only asked to do things and no one listen to them. People make decisions for her, she was extremely angry, and this caused bitterness in her. For me, I sympathized with the victim and this experience taught me to love my family more and more and because of that talked to my wife and my sister and other female relatives to calm and to support them’. (Neighbour1-M)
The responses of the close-knit community, which were characterized by either supporting and sanctioning or failing to intervene, gave a strong message to families that they should accept the crime and their punishment. This is in the context wherein people customarily perceive HK as an inevitable murder that people cannot stop, which reinforces their inaction when they witness crimes of this nature. This raises many questions about the behaviour of the community toward the HK in comparison to other kinds of murder, such as blood feuds between clans or between individuals. In the latter cases, it is always reported that people in Arabic societies habitually intervene as peacemakers between both parties, perceiving this to be socially virtuous, to stop bloodshed and dispute; conversely, they stand idly by in HK cases (Pely, 2010).

### 7.2.3 Suppressing mourning rituals

Since mourning is an on-going process that demands working actively to respond to the loss, it requires that bereaved family members (particularly in Arabic countries) should practice the traditional mourning rituals, such as bathing of the deceased body and wearing black clothes with no makeup. Additionally, relatives and the close-knit community generally provide a great deal of support for the bereaved and should visit the family in the first three days after death (Gatrad, 1994). In this study, it was reported that one of the effects of the community witnessing and sanctioning the HK is the theme of suppressing mourning rituals, which is common to HK crimes. The data from this study showed that there were two sources of suppression of mourning rituals: the first one was internalized, as family members were forced to suppress their feelings because of threats against their life if they expressed their pain; and the second was overt threats of action by the perpetrators and the relatives. When families did not practice death-related activities such as commiseration and funeral rites, they may not have the chance to grieve openly and to ventilate their psychological pain, which will intensify their grief reaction. Grieving normally after HK would, in effect, go against the general consensus and judgment of the community:

‘They prevented us from opening a mourning house and threatened me with killing’. (FM14-M)
Family members have to be seen to manage these grief reactions. Thus, they were deprived of solace and consolation. The data showed that female and male members were excluded from participating in funeral preparations and saying goodbye to the deceased:

‘Her brother did not bury her in family graves. They did not bring her to the house and directly took her from the hospital and buried her’. (FM9-F)

It was found that in matters of honour crimes, families prefer to bury the women immediately, sometimes in aberrant ways (e.g. without ritual bathing or outside the family’s cemetery). They intended to punish the victim before and after the murder, as a means of dishonouring her rights to be buried with dignity; some would say that this is the ultimate insult:

‘When we arrived we heard people talk badly about her and named her dead body as a cadaver. I look to her grave its dust was full of blood, it was awful to see such a view in our country where we cared to much when burying any person. She died and was buried with no dignity. Her uncle buried her immediately after murder without bathing’. (MHP-F4)

Perpetrators usually also prevented family members from building monuments around the grave, to disable family members from showing respect to the memory of the victims:

‘Every time we tried to build the grave they destroyed it and they prevented us from visiting her grave, we planted flowers around it and someone came and broke them. My mother-in-law died without visiting her daughter’s grave because the political affiliation threatened to harm us if anyone goes there’. (FM10-F)

In the above case the restrictions continued five years after the death. It was not surprising that many participants found this a deeply distressing form of treatment. Another participant mentioned that she was deeply hurt because only two neighbours came to give consolation:

‘I had many friends at the University, but no one came to console me. In my sister’s consolation no one came. I was sitting alone in the tent and no one came, just one neighbour, they said [it was because of] HK’. (FM2-F)

The community did not acknowledge family members’ loss, which resulted in the lack of solace and care from the community, and many participants indicated that they felt disrespected. The previous participant cried heavily during the
interview when she remembered her sister’s consolation (mourning house) and the lack of support from her friends.

In a defence against the possible judgement from the community, some family members suppressed their grief to counteract feelings of shame associated with murder:

‘I feel suppressed, this is killing me, and after all of that I could not walk in front of people. I felt of low self-esteem and low self-worth’. (FM14-M)

Although this father was against the murder and was affected emotionally by his daughter’s death, the social consequences of HK made it difficult for him to express his sorrow at losing his daughter. Therefore, he tried to counteract the pressures, which came from the community, the blame from others and his feelings of negativity by constructing a view which enabled him to have some pride:

‘I felt proud of her. I am honoured that she was my daughter. I am honoured to have such an innocent and clean daughter: I consider her a martyr’. (FM14-M)

It is noteworthy here that considering the deceased as a victim or a martyr helped this father deal with traumatic loss, as according to Islamic religion the martyr is considered to be living after death. It also indicated a form idealization of the victim, who was violently murdered by her brother, the latter of whom made accusations against her honour and her family. However, the fact in this situation was that the family were not being allowed by the community to grieve openly for her. Many of the families, like the latter family, had conflicting emotions and loyalties towards the victims and the perpetrators, particularly when the perpetrator was a member of the family. This complicated grief reactions among family members, particularly the parents. The expression of feelings of pride enabled the family members to respect the memory of the victims, and sometimes helped them to deal with social death and its painful consequences. The intrapersonal and interpersonal effects of HK on family members is discussed in the next section.
7.3 Effect of HK on family members: social death

The intrapersonal effects, which emerged from the data, included grief reactions in response to the loss of female relatives to HK and the intrapersonal losses that were associated with the killing. These intrapersonal effects are discussed in the following section.

7.3.1 Intrapersonal effect of murder on family members: facing the reality of the death

7.3.1.1 A preoccupation with the victims and the keeping of bonds

In the light of the violent nature of HK and the fact that some of the family members were present at the time of the murder, it is not surprising that some participants became preoccupied with thoughts of the victim. Some of the participants reported recalling upsetting memories, yearning, longing, and searching for the victims as the following heart rending excerpt indicates:

‘We miss her always. I could not forget her. She is always around. In the last feast I and my sisters were here dancing and laughing and suddenly we remembered her and the three of us started crying. We miss her always. I could not forget her’. (FM2-F)

Their longing and yearning were deeply rooted emotions. The participant above expressed strong emotions during her interview as she reflected on the intensity of the loss as many others reflected the fact that they were deprived of the right of mourning. This grief was seldom expressed publicly, and most often occurred in solitude.

Many participants reported strong attachments with the deceased relative. In this case, meeting her sister’s children was thought to increase the psychological pain and the longing for her sister:

‘When I see her daughters I feel too much pain inside, I missed her every day, but seeing her children reminds me more and more of her. I felt happy to see them so I often bought them stuff and begged their aunts to bring them always but she did not agree. We were four sisters and just like this we became three, this is unfair’. (FM11-F)
The latter participant also reported her deep anger and feelings of injustice at the murder of her sister. Despite the pain of losing her sister, she felt solace by seeing her sister’s children (when it was allowed), which enabled her to keep a connection with the deceased.

Bereaved family members felt guilty as they continued with their lives. One of the mothers gave the victim’s name to her new child, and named the room where the victim used to sleep with her name, maintaining a continuing bond with her daughter. Many looked at surviving relatives for characteristics of the deceased:

‘Look at my youngest sister, she looks like her. My mother named the room where my sister was sleeping with her name’. (FM4-F)

In my field notes I wrote my observation about the association bereaved families made between the victims’ characteristics and their similarities with relatives, which I found to be delusional:

‘The mother and her daughters asked me to look at the youngest sister because she looked like the victim. The mother showed me the victim’s picture and said that both of them looked the same. I observed that the youngest sister was similar to her other sister and not to the victim. They also said that the victim was beautiful, whilst I observed that all of her sisters were more beautiful than her. The explanation of this could be that the family wanted to honour the victim and wanted to continue their bonds with her by this youngest sister who was considered by the mother (FM3-F) to be “a blessing from God”’. Researcher’s field note on May/2010

Keeping connections and maintaining bonds constituted a means of acting against social rejection and continued stigmatization by the community, and was evident among many of the participants. Thus, keeping a connection gave the family members emotional energy emanating from the pain of losing both the victims and their social status.

Mementos of the deceased were commonly used to maintain a sense of connection with the person who was taken suddenly and violently:

‘Every day I look at her pictures and remembered her’. (FM11-F)

‘She was the closest one to me in the family. I remembered her always if I saw a girl in her age, wearing like her clothes or walking as her I remembered her’. (FM9-F)
The following participant had not seen her daughter for more than a year before the murder, because the victim was married to her husband (the perpetrator) without her family’s permission. This continuing connection or relationship with the deceased was maintained by possessions and memorabilia:

‘I remembered her laughs, her jokes. She was different from her sisters and brothers, she was special, clever, and I asked the police to give me her ID because I want to keep something from her’. (FM6-F)

Keeping victims’ photographs was also consistent with one of my observations when I visited families:

‘Many families have hung pictures of the victims on the wall. During the interview they talked about victims’ characteristics and said that they were beautiful and special. Some of them brought their pictures and let me see them. What did families wanted me to see in reality? Is it a way to maintain a bond, longing, idealization or something else??’ Researchers’ field notes on 20th of May 2010

‘Families may want me to see that they honoured the victims because they might want to avoid shame and guilt feelings, or to counteract excessive gossip and rumours about the family reputation’. Researchers’ field notes on 22th of May 2010

Whatever the reason, the disruption to the normal process of acknowledgment, consolation, and acceptance of the death meant that participants had to develop other ways to maintain connections and to restore the destroyed honour of the deceased and ultimately themselves. The bereaved relatives seemed to get some solace in talking to me about their loved one:

‘It was strange to me to observe two conflicting emotions on family members. Some of them were in deep sadness and then when they talked about the victim I saw this brightness inside their eyes. They felt happy to tell me about their loved one and to tell me that they remember the victims always although remembering the events and the circumstances around it were painful. But they kept talking about that with no stop’. Researcher’s field notes on 15/5/2010

What this emphasized for me, as my field notes consistently noted in the process, was that respondents had had little opportunity to talk about the victims to the people from whom that would normally gain solace, such as the
community or family. Thus, inability to gain solace leaves family members fixed in their grief process, sometimes for many years.

The findings also showed that attachment to the victims was maintained by keeping physical attachment, through visiting the grave when this was allowed or sanctioned by the community:

‘I watched the mother of the murdered girl walking every day to the cemetery barefoot with a black dress for two years. She was unaware of herself as she lost her mind. She slept there for nights, too sad. She had unstable emotions’. (Neighbour1-M)

It is noteworthy here that this mother was labelled as mentally ill, as she contradicted the expectations the community had of her. The mother also dressed in black for more than two years, which was significant information, as in Palestinian society people usually wear black clothes for one year only, which reflects a feeling of sadness and respect for the memory of the deceased. Wearing black clothes for more than two years reflected that this mother might want to send a signal to both the perpetrator and the community that she did not agree with the murder – as noted previously, the corpse of the victim of HK was sometimes dishonoured (denied proper funeral rites), so the ostentatious observance of grieving and funeral rites function as a way of signalling love of the victim and disapproval of the killing – indeed, a form of resistance to the prevailing mores of society:

‘The mother and the sister wore black dresses for two years – could you believe that she slept in the cemetery for a year?’ (FM18-F)

‘One of my sisters always wears black clothes. She cares about people’s talk when all of us are going to visit her grave; we wear black because we walk through the camp’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

The prevailing expectation was that the bereaved families of HK victims should not grieve openly. Continuing bonds with the deceased were reported by some of the participants as a significant element in their grief process, whereby family members continued to relate to the victims as active and living memories at times of success, happiness or even personal distress or crisis. For example, one
of the participants mentioned that her son was in prison at the time of his sister’s murder, and immediately after his release he went to her grave. She also noted that when her son fights with his father he always goes to her grave:

‘Her brother visited after he was released from the prison. You know once my son fought with his father and disappeared. We looked for him for a whole day then discovered that he was there, he was in the cemetery. He always goes there when he is stressed’. (FM3-F)

For many of the family members, they had to develop ways of maintaining often hidden or unique connections with the deceased, in contrast to those who were allowed and or able to visit the grave in the usual way to show respect and continued contact.

7.3.1.2 On-going suffering (lasting pain)

Painful, negative emotions are natural and potentially adaptive responses to adverse situations. Feelings of despair or deep sorrow were commonly expressed by participants. Despair occurred when family members realized that there was no prospect of regaining their lost relative. Some of the participants described severe emotional effects of murder on their own mental health. However, data also showed that the severity of symptoms changed over time because of age, situational factors, gender and their family members’ previous relationships with the victim. One participant reflected:

‘She was our mother. We lost the best thing in our life; my brothers also were affected negatively. My eldest brother is always outside and the youngest deprived of her love, our father isolated himself and is depressed since that time’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

Losing their mother was suggested to be a major trauma for all family members. They presented their emotional pain at losing their mother and various emotional and social effects on the male family members, such as emotional deprivation, isolation and separating the self from other family members by staying outside of the home. The same participant also reported that her youngest brother and sister were affected the most by the murder, because they were only thirteen and seven years old (respectively) when her mother was murdered:

‘I felt sorry for my youngest sister and brother, they deprived from my mum’s nurturance. My eldest sister always cries and is sad. Losing mother is too
difficult the responsibilities are increased at her, too much burden on her’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

This was compounded by the change in family structure, whereby roles were readjusted, which caused more difficulties, mostly for the eldest female family members who were given new responsibilities. Some described these responsibilities as more than they could handle:

‘After my mum’s death I had been the responsible person at the house I lost the dearest one but I had to take care of it all. I was young; this was unfair to me to have all of these responsibilities alone’. (FM1-F)

Another participant, a mother, noted her inability to feel happy and talked about the desolation she felt as is seen in the following emotional and painful excerpt:

‘I could not feel happy I rarely feel happy after those families gathering, I always cry. If you open my heart you will see the darkness inside it. I tried to hide my pain; I did not want anyone to see my pain’. (FM6-F)

Feelings of sadness and distress continued and persisted, which might be related to the social consequences that constrains the lives of the family members, who have no ability to express their sorrow and remorse at the loss of their loved one, sometimes either inside or outside the home:

‘Do you think that I did not feel sorry at her loss? Sometimes I cried alone because I did not want my sons to see me crying about her’. (FM7-F)

Sadness was one of the symptoms of despair, and the data showed that family members reported their feelings of sadness years after the loss of the victims. This participant mentioned that the mother of her cousin was sad five years after her loss, and stated:

‘You know, till now if you look to her mother’s face you will see sadness, she tried to laugh in front of us but you will feel that’. (FM18-F)

In my field notes, I wrote:

‘After conducting more than half of the interviews with the family members I found that their pain was intense years after murder, although some literature mentioned that family members reached recovery and coping after years. I had also previous experience with researching bereaved family members. Since that time, I had made a turn in my professional experience and understanding of the experience of the bereaved family members who could not be able following many years to forget or to go on in their life. In that research, one mother described herself as a skeleton who has no soul after the murder death
of her son by the Israeli army. She also said that she thinks of her son every
day and prays to God to take her to her son [i.e. suicidal ideation]. However,
she also mentioned that in front of her family she behaved normally and did
not let them see her emotional pain, because they sometimes showed no
understanding to her continued suffering. When I interviewed that father, he
said that he managed very well but after several years of this interview, I
heard that this father died from heart attack. He also had hypertension and
diabetes mellitus immediately after his son’s death. This let me understood
that pain is on-going and will not stop, but people tried sometimes to hide it
from others, which lets people around them think that they recovered’.
Researchers’ field note in May 2010

When family members faced the reality of social stigmatization years after murder and
the constant realisation that society blamed them or the victim, and could not understand
the victims’ suffering, they continued to grieve, mostly alone. Many participants
ruminated over the constant questions about the crime and the brutality of the murder.
Many found it difficult to understand why victims were unjustly harmed by other family
members. Therefore, episodes of grief may recur many years after the actual loss:

‘Why he shot her with all of these bullets? Who has the right to kill a human
being like this? This is not fair, if he did not want her he just has to divorce
her’. (FM1-F)

Participants also ruminated over the facts and the process of the murder often
with incredulity, sadness and despair. Participants consistently expressed
difficulty in accepting the traumatic nature of the death of their loved one or the
manner in which they were killed, and expressed their need to know why it
happened to them. It seems not only that the violent loss of the victim increased
their pain, but there was also an inability of the family members to explain the
cause of the killing to their siblings five years after the killing:

‘She just went to bring food to her children and they killed her, no one could
accept to kill a mother like this. They shot her from her back. Why she was
killed? No one faced such experience. Why this happened to our mum? She
was kind to everyone. She helped many people. Why they betrayed her? What
I have to tell my youngest brother and sister about it when it is extremely
difficult for me to understand it?’ (FM: Sister’s focus group)

Feelings of shock, questioning and disbelief were observed above. This participant, like
many others, lived with the constant struggle of attempting to understand the
incomprehensible. Participants were often locked in a seemingly endless search for

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answers. For many, this on-going, painful and often harrowing experience was mostly done in isolation, furthering their distance from their close-knit society and thus escalating their feelings of abandonment.

7.3.1.4 Anger and vengeance

Anger was frequently experienced as a result of a loss. Anger was mentioned by almost all family members in this study, and was often described as problematic and troublesome for participants. Anger and resentment were cited as the most extreme and severe reactions to loss and the murder:

‘I was angry about her murder. I am still angry at him [the murderer] but I suppressed my emotion when he came to our house’. (FM19-F)

This participant lost her sister fifteen years previously when she was a child, and she did not even remember her sister. Whilst she had intense feelings of anger, the presence of the perpetrator in her life prevented her from expressing it because she was frightened of him. Anger was mostly directed at the perpetrators, and the unjustness of the neighbours and local community. Some people directed their anger at the society, and they blamed it for not preventing the murder and for complicity in it:

‘My neighbours were watching her murder but no one interfered or tried to stop it; they were our friends and they had a good relationship with my wife, but no one dared to help her. I did not want to have relationship with them’. (FM12-M)

Family members generally internalized the social stigma and behaved in ways expected of them. They perceived themselves not only as mourners but also as victims. They had lost their loved one in a violent death and the society was stigmatizing and treating them as ‘deviants or outcasts’ (MHP-F5). Facing the reality of those intense feelings may be the reason why some family members secretly wanted to take revenge, as they connected their emotional resolution and healing with revenge, as the following highly charged excerpt demonstrates:
‘I am a mother who wants the justice. I want him to be punished but I know that there is no justice in this life. My only hope to see him hanged in the middle of the city’. (FM6-F)

This need was observed among both female and male family members who were against the murder, who showed more anger and resentment, and who longed to take revenge personally:

‘I think to take revenge against who killed her. My mother was afraid for me when she knew this but this desire for revenge comes and goes in my mind. I could not handle all of these suffering alone’. (FM16-M)

‘I went to the judge and asked him to jail him forever in the prison. I told his mother if I ever see him in my house I will kill him’ (FM14-M)

Preoccupation with revenge and justice became the norm for many participants, who found a raison d’être in seeking retribution. This was, however, seldom expressed publicly:

‘During my interview with a mother and a father who lost their daughter five years ago, their married daughter came and they asked me to change the subject until she left. Both of them were afraid that she may tell her husband or his family, who was one of the inciters of the murder that they talked to strangers about the circumstances of the murder’. Researcher’s field note in May 2010

The mother told the researcher after:

‘In reality we did not like to speak in front of her, to not tell her husband that we talked about the murder to other people. We did not want further problems with them’. (FM15-F)

Being afraid to speak in front of their married daughter was strange, and this might have happened because talking about the event to others might bring shame on her daughter and her husband’s family. This behaviour is also understandable in the light of the previous discussion about the powerlessness of poor families, and their inability to defend themselves from strong and rich people (their daughter’s husband in this case).

The family members’ desire for exacting revenge on the perpetrator was often their only attempt to re-establish honour, safety and justice within and for the family. Some family members insisted that the victims were innocent, and that
they were virgins, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The family members also mentioned that God took revenge on the perpetrators, and those who motivated the murder, because the victims were innocent:

‘My Lord avenged me because my father-in-law married for the second time and my mother-in-law had the same experience as me; she could not take it and died shortly after that. He neglected her and abandoned her. God took revenge on them last month, another one ran over a girl in his car while he was drunk and my youngest brother-in-law, the one who my daughter trusted and who betrayed her, also had a car accident and killed a child. He also became a drug addict. She was innocent and God took revenge from all of them’. (FM3-F)

The situation surrounding the murder was further complicated, adding to the difficulties families faced in securing justice, because in most cases perpetrators were not punished, as mentioned previously. Additionally, most of the crimes were committed by more than one perpetrator, some of whom were from political affiliations:

‘We know who did this to our mum and police know but they did not arrest them. They are part of them. They walk freely and do whatever they want but we will not surrender and one day they will be punished’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

Family members still carried their anger and bitterness in their relationships with people around them; the intense feeling of anger and vengeance implied that family members turned their anger inward when they were prevented from directing it outward. This intensified their reactions and relationships within their close-knit society, and hindered their grief process.

The injustice of the criminal justice system increased the distress among family members as a result of dissatisfaction. As noted above, the participant connected her coping with revenge, and presented her intense anger and pain at this. The effects on family members of the reality that perpetrators were not punished included intensifying their anger and dissatisfaction, but also increasing their feelings of insecurity, as discussed in the following section.
7.3.1.5 A loss of security

When the perpetrators were not punished (i.e. in most cases), this had a significant effect on the family members. For some, the relationship with the perpetrator and his continued presence with family members intensified family members’ feelings of insecurity. Living under the threat from within their own social network exacerbated the suffering they experienced. In two situations, where the perpetrator was either a blood relative (such as father or brother) or husband, or a politically affiliated person, their presence within the family amplified feelings of fear:

‘I lost the sense of security even with all the family around I could not feel safe’. (FM2-F)

Participants mentioned that they did not trust people (relatives, neighbours and strangers) easily and felt intense wariness, expressing their fear as a consequence of the HK event:

‘I lost the trust in people around me because I am afraid that they may leave me (or run off) I don’t trust anyone’. (FM2-F)

‘We lost our sense of security our mum used to take care of us. My father started to be afraid for us too much. When he goes out, he always calls to check on us’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

Most family members still lived with or near to the perpetrators, and this had a continued impact on them. For example, the participant below, FM10-F, mentioned that her eldest daughter was so affected by what happened and by the overprotection of her that her daughter was actually developing an anxiety about going outside or meeting her friends:

‘She usually comes directly to home after school and never goes outside. She did not have any close friend since that time. I lost security. I felt afraid for my children, I was afraid to open the door to anyone’. (FM10-F)

Some family members expressed their fears, not only for themselves but of their surviving relatives being hurt:

‘I started to be overprotective of my children. I told them to not to ride in any car and asked them to walk to school even if it’s far from the house, maybe
this is better I always check on my daughters, I moved my children from school three times, I don’t know why I did this. My daughters feel as afraid as me’. (FM3-F)

Excessive fear for her children was related to feelings of insecurity as a consequence of the murder. When family members felt that life was not safe they often preferred to withdraw from their community. In addition to reporting new behaviours, such as becoming more controlling (see p. 253 for example of using controlling behaviour by the mothers), participants also mentioned other new behaviours as a result of the realization that the world was unsafe, including avoiding any social interaction with the community:

‘Then one of the daughters interrupted us to say: “I was afraid when this happened to my sister. I woke up at night and thinking of what happened. I was distressed all of the time and decided to not go outside the house”, then the mother said: “I begged her to go to down town to buy things but she usually refused, both of my daughters did not like to leave the house”’. (FM7-F)

Both the daughter and the mother noted that female members were afraid of leaving the house and chose to stay at home. This might be because they also felt that the world outside was not safe, and also that the murder of their sister changed the world around them and made them afraid of having the same experience, or of being accused in the same way. In this case, as in others, it was the dual problem of social judgment by the community and the fact that the perpetrators were nearby that prevented them leaving the home. The issue of social judgment and the family’s efforts to save face and to regain their reputation led to reinforcing more restrictive measures on female family members.

Many of the family members reported that they discovered who their real enemies were, as reported by the following participant:

‘This experience let me understand people. I started to change the way I see people around me and I realized now their lies and manipulations. I started to recognize very well who are bad to my family. I lost the trust in them. I realized that our relatives are bad to us. I did not want to visit any one of them. Most of our relatives did not come to her consolation’. (FM6-F)

This mother suffered a lot when she discovered that her daughter was killed by her cousin and other family members, who were trusted by her and who were supposed to protect her daughter, but who were in fact the main instigators of the murder. Although people in
Palestine put high value on their extended family members’ support, this mother found peace by stopping her relationships with her relatives who betrayed her daughter. They also did not give any emotional support to the mother after losing her daughter. This family, like others, took the safest option and reacted to the imposed social isolation by isolating themselves further. This was another step towards social death.

7.3.1.6 Fearing the future

One of the consequences of perceiving the world as unsafe is a fear for the future. Participants noted that they could not predict their future, and they also reflected their vulnerability and feelings of insecurity:

‘I sat and asked myself “who is next?” This is terrifying’. (FM1-M)

It is common for family members who lost their relatives to murder to feel the fragility of life:

‘In a second you lose the dearest thing in your life, could you see how life is nothing? Life is a temporary journey’. (FM11-F)

Since one of the factors associated with HK is that it is perceived as a deterrent to other women inside the home, it is unsurprising to find that female relatives of HK victims were themselves actually threatened with death. Consequently, some of the female members expressed their fear of being murdered, as this experience reinforced the reality that they may be the next to be murdered:

‘He threatened me to kill me like my sister. All should know that he will be my killer’. (FM19-F)

And another:

‘She told me that she has fears about being killed like her mother was if she continues her behaviours’. (MHP-F7)

Fear for female relatives’ lives was articulated clearly by MHPs. From their perspective, working with the family also has to be directed toward preventing further killing, not only in the families who killed their daughters but also with other threatened cases:
‘Preventive measures through working with women and girls to build awareness about resources and how and what kind of services we provide. Because many cases were helped by institutions and we could prevent a life disaster to families. Second, when a murder occurs we have to work quickly with families in order to evaluate what kind of help we could provide to them and when to provide it’. (MHP-F5)

This professional suggested that strategies of help should be directed at two levels: the first should combat HK by working with threatened cases; and the second should provide professional help to bereaved families.

Fearing for the future of victims’ relatives involved not only a fear for their own continued safety, but also that they would subsequently face the sanction of not being able to marry:

‘Both of her brothers and sister faced problems in getting married. The youngest brother was engaged to a girl from another village because no one in this town wanted to marry him to his daughter’. (Neighbour3-F)

Both male and female members faced difficulties in marrying because of the social stigma. Female members showed intense fear of being unable to get married and frustration because the murder of their female relatives made people judge them and avoid considering them for marriage:

‘My youngest sister is now twenty-one and did not marry. Two men came and ask to marry her but when they knew our story they cancelled it’. (FM1-F)

‘We failed in everything, we could not marry; those kinds of stories are very sensitive in camps, people will not forget’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

As mentioned previously, the importance of marriage to women in Palestine must be borne in mind, as marriage is considered to be her and her family’s ultimate hope and so a protection from sin (see ‘male domination section’ for more clarification). Due to the occupation and other factors, unemployment is extremely high in Palestine, thus marriage is often a matter of survival for Palestinian women and their families. The fear of being killed and remaining unmarried constrained family members’ aspirations for a better life in the future. As a consequence, it is suggested that this hopelessness might lead to their inability to go through their life and it complicated their future. It is another contributing factor on the road to social death where the chance for escape is limited.
7.3.1.7 Guilt and facing the reality of social death

Guilt represents a sense of responsibility for having harmed others, in this instance, the loved ones murdered in HKs. Facing the reality that killing their female relatives did not change their social status, but rather led to social death in regard to the community, was not easy for family members, which intensified their feelings of guilt for supporting and not preventing or warning the victims. As a consequence of guilt, individuals may face suffering and distress. Some of the families mentioned their shock relating to the murder. The suddenness of the murder can sometimes feel like a physical assault. Sensing the danger before murder among family members and their inability to anticipate and prevent the killing might contribute to guilt afterwards:

‘Maybe if I told her about that dream she will be alive now because she will be careful. I feel guilty because of that I am the only one who did not see her in my dreams. I cry always because I could not. My conscience torments me’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

In the example above, the origin of the guilt was linked with the participant blaming herself for not telling the victim about an inauspicious dream she had. In turn, participants talked excessively about their sensing of danger and that there was evidence signalling the murder. Some of the participants, mostly female, mentioned that they felt that the victims were in danger before their murders. Family members were often sensitized to the threats that occurred before the murder and were frightened for the safety of the victims. However, sensing danger (which means sensing or feeling that the victims were in danger) does not mean that family members were well prepared for the violent death, despite the severity of the anticipated danger. Most family members did not expect the extent of the family reaction or that they would kill the victims, as exemplified by the following quotation:

‘He came and told my mother that he will cut her body and bring her in a bag but my mother thought that he was not serious but he did it’. (FM19-F)

Whilst for other family members who supported or participated in the murder, family members reported that their feelings of guilt were expressed indirectly by reporting that these HK could be prevented. This was compounded by the fact
that their close-knit society abandoned them and left them alone in their struggle:

‘They started to blame each other for the killing after discovering that she was virgin. I told them that I trusted my girl but they did not believe me and insisted to kill her’. (FM3-F)

‘I believe that they became killers by chance, they were shocked and found themselves in social circumstances that forced them to kill. After that they had conflicting emotions, I met a perpetrator who was psychologically affected because he killed his sister who was raped by one of her husband’s uncles. Another one said that at first he was not sorry for killing her but after that he started to think of her always, feel sorry to kill her and always cried at her’. (Police officer 1)

‘Their eldest brother came many times and cried heavily at this sofa. He said that people pushed them to kill but rejected them after. This family was executed from the society and destroyed completely’. (Lawyer)

In all of the previous cases it is clear that the desired result, the restoration of honour, did not occur. Instead, following the pressure to murder in effect led to social ostracism and ultimately social death.

7.3.1.8 Desire to escape

Whilst some participants showed a high level of attachment to the victims, others reported different reactions to the murder, such as avoidance and loneliness. Both reactions were used as a means to escape the reality of murder and its painful consequences. Some of the participants used avoidance and were aware of the harmful consequences of murder on them. Some also reported their desire to isolate themselves from the world. Some reported a wish to die as a way of escaping what was reported as an unending process of scrutiny, judgment, humiliation and ostracism by the community.
7.3.1.8.1 Loneliness

One consequence of their isolation was loneliness. Loneliness was observed in the family members following the murder. The findings indicated that families experienced severe reactions to the loss when their relation with the victim was over:

‘The most difficult thing to me was telling the information about her murder to my brother, who was in the Israeli prison, he had no chance to see her like us. He was crazy when he heard about the murder. When I told him, he said: “please H-, do not say that ... tell me that she is in a respirator but please do not say this”. After that he isolated himself and refused to talk to anyone for two months. He was desperate he loved her too much, he was the closest to her and this is the most thing difficult to me because he could not say goodbye to her like us’. (FM1-F)

In essence he was locked up (psychologically self-isolated) with the intensity of his feelings. His inability to say goodbye to the victim was suggested to be the most harmful experience to affect his reaction. This man was isolated for months (particularly notable as he was in prison), and refused any visits from his family members during that time. His reaction was no doubt exacerbated by the cultural norm that brothers are supposed to provide protection to their sisters, and are responsible for them even after marriage.

Other brothers or male members who were against the murder felt an acute sense of responsibility and failure as a result of their inability to protect their family. They often withdrew from involvement in relationships with others and life in general. Therefore, this decline in their social involvement was yet another form of social death:

‘For months I did not speak to people. I trained myself to be silent’. (FM16-M)

This response to shame was common and was a result of the close-knit society, who also invariably expected them to be the protectors of the victims, even when they may have sanctioned the murder as a community in general:

‘You know I felt tired to tell people about my story so I isolated myself in my house I did want to see them’. (FM6-F)
The above participant indicated how her relatives blamed her excessively for her daughter’s behaviour (see page 182 for more clarification), and therefore it is unsurprising that this mother avoided interacting with the community as an attempt to avoid hurt and ostracism. This social isolation led to self-removal from the community (as a response to societal attitudes) and social death:

‘Most of the family members preferred to withdraw from society life and from people because of stigma’. (MHP-F2)

The abovementioned participant stated that the isolation was linked to stigma. People might also choose to isolate themselves in order to restore their energy for personal coping:

‘I do not want to see anyone it’s better for me, I have no strength to talk with anyone’. (FM7-F)

‘Most of them preferred to withdraw from society life and from people because of excessive blaming and humiliation by society. They silenced or preferred to not respond to such kinds of social attack, and isolated themselves from society’. (MHP-F5)

Keeping a distance from others was an internal reaction as a result of the violent death and experiences and a way of dealing with shame and guilt resulting from public knowledge of murder. The danger, as mentioned by the participant above, was that they preferred to remain silent (to not interact with others) as a way to avoid social judgement. The effect was isolation and loneliness.

Making the decision to avoid social interaction as a result of being humiliated by the community was a difficult decision, but female members preferred it in order to save face and to avoid constant shame and humiliation. It also demonstrated the outward compliance with the community’s expectation of their behaviours. The consequence was that families became socially isolated, sometimes in the extreme, whereby interaction outside the family was severely restricted.
7.3.1.8.2 Wishing to die and self-harm

Some family members felt so desperate in the aftermath of the murder that they could not see a way forward. Losing the will to live was mainly observed among parents and other family members who lived in severe despair, longing and psychological pain, and who felt that they could not go on in their life and expressed their desire to die:

‘It just a matter of time and I will be with her’. (FM14-M)

Extreme despair, hopelessness, guilt and blame sometimes led to contemplating or even attempting suicide:

‘I was her oldest sister who should take care of her but I failed. I tried to kill myself three times. My sister’s murder broke my heart’. (FM1-F)

The participant still has self-destructive impulses, which still endanger her life. She lost her sister a year ago and her mother seven years previously, and this impulse increased as a result of familial conflict and intense grief at losing them as is demonstrated by the following heart rending excerpt from a very emotional interview:

‘I used to crush glasses in my hands until I saw the blood. I never hurt anyone I just hurt myself because of problems with my father who married to another woman and the continuous grief of my mum and my sister. Many times I think to kill myself’. (FM1-F)

Wishing to die was also associated with feelings of helplessness as a result of extreme social stigma and community rejection of family members:

‘I wish to die when this happened with me. No one respects us since that time’. (FM8-M)

Their feelings of a loss of respect, along with longing for the victims, played a major role in their desire to die, and this reflected how murder impacted on their social standing and their continuous struggle were suggested to intensify their grief, bearing in mind that vengeful feelings and the anger that were discussed previously also had their effects on the family members’ desire to die. They could not find a meaning in their life when they felt powerless to take revenge or
to combat the stigma they endured. It also indicated that when family members lost hope that things would improve, and when they realized that the murder dishonoured their reputation rather than restored it, they internalized feelings of emotional distress and isolation. Feeling of helplessness both for the present and the future acted as a trigger to feeling suicidal for some participants, and was largely attributed to the judgements made about them by the close-knit community and their social isolation. Isolation, both self-imposed and communally endorsed, contributed to their social death within the community.

7.3.2 The interpersonal and societal effects (the effect of social ostracism and exclusion)

The violent deaths associated with HK affected inter-familial relations and led to changing roles inside the family, which disturbed normal relationships. One of the themes was ‘social ostracism and exclusion’ which has permeated this chapter so far. Family members found themselves in a new challenge that affected their relationships with people around them, and led to changes in their way of life. This is discussed in the following section.

7.3.2.1 Altering communication among family members

As mentioned in the previous chapters, family members endured difficulties in relationships with each other. However, some of them also mentioned that they were close to each other before the murder. Findings from this study showed that following the murder, relationships changed dramatically. A loss of communication among family members was stated clearly by participants:

‘My husband did not say anything and I did not ask him about anything. In reality we lost communication among us after what happened and no one discussed anything with anyone’. (FM7-F)

Another participant also mentioned that her communication with her husband was affected, and he kept silent following the murder, and kept isolated from his family:
‘He did not speak with anyone. He changed and did not talk with his children also he even did not tell his feelings to me he is away from me in these days’. (FM9-F)

The data also showed that bereaved family members had little ability to provide emotional help to each other, and despite understanding the importance of open communication, all of them preferred avoiding the subject:

‘My sister does not talk too much and I don’t like to talk about the past to not hurt them. We were distant from each other emotionally. Look to tell the truth I was not close to my mother before that because she sometimes talked nonsense things’. (FM16-M)

Mental health professionals also mentioned that murder led to divorce, and noted that one of the fathers divorced his wife after the murder of his daughter and prevented her from seeing her children:

‘Family function and its interactions patterns are affected badly because of pain inside family, divorce of the mother or sisters, mental disorders or illness, isolation of the family and boycott of them and preventing mothers from having contact with her children after divorce’. (MHP-F6)

Some families blamed female members for the behaviours of the victims, and consequently the father in this case projected blame on to the mother. For many of the family members this further exacerbated their isolation within both the family and their close-knit society. Their isolation was evident both within and outside of the family and further contribution to their apparent social death.

7.3.2.2 Social stigma and community rejection

Shame is a reflection of how others think of us, so families felt shame because the community judged them negatively, although some family members felt that they had done nothing wrong. Feeling socially stigmatized induced shame:

‘Look they were stigmatized before and after the murder’. (Police officer 1)

Although HKs were sanctioned and encouraged by the community at large, following the crimes the community stigmatized family members, because crime is always treated as deviant behaviour by the community, and consequently individuals label people involved in these crimes (either family members or perpetrators) as deviants:
‘After murder all people talked about them and rumours spread fast no one went to their house after the murder. Maybe they avoid them because of fear of their own reputation if they interacted with those families or because it’s not their business. People always avoid families who have stories like this or even if females inside family have moral misconduct’. (Neighbour5-F)

The latter quote illustrates that the local community were fearful that association with the family might tarnish their own reputation and social standing, thus they considered it safer to avoid them. For the families who were the target of these efforts to maintain a distance, they felt stigmatized and acknowledged that they were very different from the rest of the society. Feeling like a pariah was expressed by the participants:

‘People treated us as criminals - they look at us differently’. (FM1-F)

‘You always feel that their extended families did not show respect to them. They do not sit in public gathering with the family and in reality families of victims were withdrawn from society and the society did not show any respect to them and they lost their social identity in their neighbourhood’. (MHP-F5)

As seen above, the relatives placed no value on family members. The sense of differentness arose because family members felt publicly insulted by the victim’s murder. Therefore, their loss set them apart from other people. Family members felt that they were the only ones to whom this had happened, and this kind of feeling was suggested to increase their feelings of exclusion. In their isolation they felt that:

‘No one faced such complicated experience as us....’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

In general, friends and relatives should have been the major source of support for bereaved families. Problems arose when families were unable to express their own suffering and pain in front of their friends and their family, and when friends showed a lack of sympathy, support, and toleration of the families’ grief:

‘I asked another woman who lives in the first floor and said that she will think about this and did not come back to me so I decided to go for consolation alone in reality I never see any one of their neighbours visited them or even like them, they are alienated’. (Neighbour4-F)

As noted in previous section, this perceived judgement and the fear of the close-knit community and being ostracised contributed to the social death of the families within the
community. Findings in this study showed that families were usually left alone in their struggle with grief, often because they lacked support from their close friends:

‘No one cares or shows kindness toward us. I do not care about any one of them, because no one pitied or showed compassion to us. We were shocked because of our neighbours’ reaction; they did not support us they just gossiped about us’. (FM: Sisters’ focus group)

Some friends and neighbours also actively blamed the family members and avoided them:

‘They blamed me for what happened, no one came to visit me not even my closest friends’. (FM12-M)

One participant mentioned that the social rejection, ostracism and rumour-mongering of the local community extended into the employment arena, citing that the stigma of her sister’s death led to people refusing to employ her:

‘I could not find a job since that time. When people knew the story they refused to hire me’. (FM1-F)

Sometimes when people knew that one of the family members was killed for HK, they fired them from their jobs because of their fear about their reputation; this further contributed to the progression toward social death:

‘I did not work now. I left my work before two days. I fought with the owner because he was treating me badly since I worked and after he saw my sister H- and knew our story he changed, and finally fired me’. (FM2-F)

Additionally, another participant mentioned that female members faced difficulties in the community because of stigmatization that was associated with the murder. She said that one of the female members confessed to her that she was harassed by men when they knew her story:

‘She could not find a job, she told me also that she was harassed by men in her work and because of that she left her work. You could not underestimate how this society looks at her because of what happened with her mother and also she is young and alone so men will see her as an easy target and this is difficult for her’. (Neighbour 5-F)

Excessive judgment and humiliation devastated female members who not only lost their loved one for HK but also their future and respect inside their society. ‘Social death’ and
its consequences hindered their ability to move towards a productive or bearable future. The findings also showed that communities put a lot of pressure on victims’ family members and young children through humiliation and blaming:

‘Unfortunately, till now in the street you will hear children talking about the honour killing to each other, particularly when they fight. The victim’s brothers are children and they faced problems with their friends as I heard from family. Community still blamed them for killing their daughter. (FM17-M)

Another participant also stressed the continuing humiliation of his children and its effect on their emotional stability; the stigma was widespread and touched the lives of many:

‘My children were kind they did not like to hurt anyone after that they fought with children, they abused them my daughter fought with her cousin who used to irritate her by accusing her mum’s behaviour she started to be complicated since that time she was always afraid, she did not go outside. She is 14 years old and urinated in her bed at night’. (FM12-M)

The bullying and criticism of children was observed and this intensified their grief and suffering and led to many difficulties. Some children started to be aggressive, whilst others isolated themselves from the surrounding community or had regressive behaviours such as enuresis. The extent of social ostracism by the community even affected the youngest of family members. It is clear to see why families responded to this intense stigmatizing process by withdrawing and avoiding contact, which further compounded their social death within the community.

Mental health professionals also mentioned that male children raised in this kind of family may learn that killing is the only way to discipline female members who engage in ‘immoral’ behaviour:

‘The problem with children inside family will increase more when they grow up and realized what happened and this will complicate them psychologically and may lead to more crimes inside families and misconduct behaviours’. (MHP-F5)

This could be a significant observation from this senior MHP about male children, who were unable to express their anger outwardly or at the local community; when they grow up, they may turn this anger onto other female members in an attempt to avoid social
ostracism at any cost (see page 218 about male children who committed an honour killing). Consistently, some MHPs reported that mental health services have to be provided in order to prevent other female members inside the house from being killed, as young people may learn that killing is the only way to solve their problems (or at least that this has a precedent). A number of the participants highlighted such concerns:

‘We made a mistake because of not working with families because female members are suffering and committed suicide because of frustration. We have to offer all kind of help medical and social help this will help to start a new life. Other risks that I am thinking of are that this kind of experience may create other killers in the society. Children inside family learn a new values and concepts that are dangerous so being close to them and providing therapy could be helpful to prevent further murders’. (MHP-F8)

‘We have to work with them in order to prevent further killing because families may repeat it again. There is risk to other females inside family…’. (MHP-F10)

‘I think the irrational thinking by the perpetrators and their families and the fact that they gave no room or tolerance for female members’ mistakes make female family members at risk of being killed by family’. (Police officer 1)

Community rejection and the exclusion of family members not only intensified the family members’ emotional reaction to losing loved ones, but also indirectly put the life of female family members in more danger. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that self-isolation (along with community ostracism) seems to be an important self-protective mechanism. The threat of social ostracism and the consequences of social death within the community were motivators to continue the practice of threatened or actual harm to and the killing of women. This point was widely acknowledged in the data.

7.3.2.3 Cutting off children’s relation with victims’ family

Findings in this study showed that victims’ children not only faced difficulties with their siblings and close community, but were also prevented from having any kind of relationship with victims’ families (as reported by most of the interviewed family members and professionals. Preventing the victims’ children from seeing victims’ maternal family members left a lot of psychological pain, as mentioned by one participant:
‘When I saw her eldest daughter I remembered her she looks like her. I felt happy when see all of them. Their uncle and aunts sent them to one of the shelter and refused to let me see them even there’. (FM11-F)

Although those children lost their father and their mother, their father’s family prevented them from having contact with their mother’s family and preferred to send them to one of the shelters rather than keeping them with their grandmother. This showed the extent to which some families would go to distance themselves from their in-laws, meaning that not only the victims were punished, but also their children and their family.

Another participant mentioned that the victim’s children were taken from her family and sent to live with their father following the murder. He noted that the brother and the father sent the victim’s daughters to their father, which had painful consequences for the children and their grandmother:

‘I feel sorry for her daughters because after the killing of their mother. the deceased’s father and the brothers refused to keep her children with the grandmother and sent her daughters to their father who has married and his wife is not good with them. It’s painful to those children’. (FM17-M)

Preventing victims’ children from visiting their mothers’ families intensified participants’ emotional pain and feelings of social stigma, as children were often told that the victims were not good (behaved immorally) and were encouraged to stop their relationship with them:

‘I raised her children not their father. They lied about me and when I asked his brothers to bring the children to my house, they said that the children were in Amman with their grandmother but I discovered later that he was released from prison and since that time he did not bring them here and told them that he killed their mum because she was bad one’. (FM1-F)

Such behaviours meant not only that victims were treated as moral transgressors, but also their families were stigmatized and were considered as bad models for children to be raised with. This left family members with more suffering and struggling within their close community, which is another significant step in their social death as their families disintegrate.
7.3.2.4 Longing to leave

The process of ‘longing to leave’ was described by participants in this study because of feelings of rejection by their community and their social death within the community. ‘Leaving’ in this study does not only mean the desire to leave the home, but also their desire to leave schools and universities. The role of family members is understood here as the pattern of social interaction of the person in relation to others in society. The family members’ ability to maintain and fulfil their prescribed role in the society was seen as the impetus to make dramatic changes. Two sub-processes were observed: the desire for leaving their home place and the desire to withdraw from schools to avoid or escape the continued social ostracism and stigma from their communities.

7.3.2.4.1 Desire to leave home

Feelings of shame and stigma resulting from social judgment and rejection adversely affected the families. Consequently, family members expressed a desire to leave their homes following the murder. One participant mentioned her desire to leave the village, because she did not feel secure because of her relatives’ interference in her family life:

‘I told my husband to leave but he did not want, we will not live normally in this village. Everyone is looking at us. We are surrounded by our relatives who abandoned us and this is difficult’. (FM15-F)

Another brother mentioned that his city was conservative, and people do not respect individuals’ privacy, therefore living in another city would give him more freedom. He also said that following his sister’s death, people around him were unsupportive emotionally, and gossiped about the family, which increased his longing to relocate:

‘Any city is better than this city; too much restriction and people do not respect your privacy. They all gossiped about us. Living in Europe is better. Maybe to leave to any place may give some relief’. (FM16-M)
Longing to leave implied that family members felt helpless to face the society and to change the situation around them. When they faced a social death, the desire to escape the community was strong.

7.3.2.4.2 The desire to withdraw from schools and university

Another form of longing to leave mentioned by family members as a reaction to the social impact of death was leaving schools and universities. Social stigma and gossip, and the humiliation of family members, particularly children by their peers, led to their decision to withdraw from schools and universities:

‘They lost their sense of security and their colleagues in school gossiped about them but the teachers supported them and protected them in the school, their academic performance deteriorated and both of them left school early. I will not let any one of them go to study in the university we have finished with education they stay inside the house all the time no need to go outside the house’. (FM15-F)

Here again we see the basic social process of self-isolation in response to community pressure. Another participant mentioned that her sister left university after the murder of her sister, because her colleagues gossiped about her:

‘When they sent her for autopsy to the university and her friends knew about her sister, they started saying bad words about her and her sisters and she did not go there after that. She heard from her friends who called her and told her about the rumours’. (FM1-F)

As noted above, leaving schools and university could not be understood in isolation from social interaction with the wider community. Rumours and gossip played major roles in making family decisions concerning their future life. The rumours and gossip continued for many years after the murder:

‘As you know murder itself opens too much questions inside their society and lot of rumours. Children at school faced problems and decided to withdraw from school because of their friends’ criticism’ (MHP-F5)

Other participants indicated that this could continue throughout their children’s education.
Participants explained clearly that social effects of murder led to leaving schools and under-education among family members; consequently, family members have limited opportunities for work. Therefore, unemployment and under-education increased the risk of poverty, as noted in the following quotation

‘From my point of view, the whole family was destroyed after the killing; they lost their jobs. They did not finish their education and are unemployed and live in poverty now’. (Lawyer)

The above discussion in this section shows that inter-personal relationships were very important to the participants in the study, and when they became sources of stress, this added to the pain and suffering they were already experiencing. The findings also indicated that economic and financial hardships increased following HK.

7.4 The effects of social death

7.4.1 Becoming different

After experiencing the violent killing of their female relatives and the unbearable intrapersonal and interpersonal difficulties, some family members felt that in order to survive, they should change their behaviours, beliefs and their personalities. Participants noted that some family members uncharacteristically started to break family and community rules. Others reported that their experience made them stronger and more in control of their lives. Some found that their marriage made them stronger and able to survive. Whatever the strategy adopted, it was clear that these strategies often collectively reinforced the march toward social death and ostracism by the community.

7.4.1.1 Breaking rules and losing fear

Participants noted that some family members, mostly the youngest (adolescents) who had lost their relatives while they were children, started to exhibit troublesome behaviours and started to develop new values. One professional said that one of the family members who lost her mother when she was a child went against the rules, and resisted family boundaries:
‘She refused any restraints or boundaries, she trusted people quickly if they showed any interest on her’. (MHP-F7)

The professional also added that the girl had many relationships with men, which might increase the possibility of bringing more troubles to her and her family:

‘The younger are more open, looking for love as any other adolescents. Sometimes I felt that the younger has no feelings; she lacks sympathy with others’. (MHP-F7)

As noted above, changes in personality were observed, as the girl also exhibited indifference and lack of sympathy for others; this might reflect feelings of deep sadness.

Another participant also mentioned that one of the brothers started to behave in an unacceptable way, harassing girls by phone, which shamed his family:

‘Her brother had problems, he tried to talk with girls on phones and her family made a trap for him and we paid money to save him, he was a reckless boy who did irrational things. He was mad and did not think of his behaviours and caused embarrassment to his family. He was ignorant and did not think of his behaviour as unstable’. (FM17-M)

It is noteworthy that the latter participant’s description of the brother’s behaviour as ‘madness’ reflected social judgments of any behaviour perceived as socially unacceptable. The circumstances of the murder and the violent nature of HK might be the cause of these changes among adolescents who lost their loved one and their sense of security.

7.4.1. 2 Becoming stronger by feeling in control

Some participants experienced positive changes as an outcome of the aftermath of the murder, albeit very rarely. One positive change observed in this study was ‘becoming stronger’. A small number of participants, as the following excerpt highlights, noted that the experience was educational, and taught them their inner strengths:

‘Everything changed in me. I am a different person now. I do not pay attention to my grandfather and my uncles. I started to be stronger. I am now separated from my husband and do not even care about that. Before I was weak, if I wanted to go to down town I will go without asking for their permission. I have more power I just do not care about anyone, I don’t care about his or her
perspective about me and I will never give attention to their comments. Maybe her death made all of these changes’. (FM5-F)

Whilst participants reported the intensity of their suffering and how it affected their view of the future, they also acknowledged the reality that life must go on. For example, one participant mentioned that this fear taught her to pick up any opportunity from her life in order to survive:

‘Why be fearful? After one year, I asked myself why I fear people and I told myself that this is my life and I have not to give my opportunities to anyone. I decided to care only for myself and to not lose any chances because of fear. It took me more than a year to be better. I will never forget my sister, but this is life, you have to go on’. (FM11-F)

It took the participant one year to stand again and to look to her future despite her Continuous suffering and yearning for her loved one. It seems that after a time, some family members found other alternatives to deal with social death by learning how to live in and within the reality of their social situation.

Some participants reported that their life experience might be the reason for having strength during the grieving process. For example, one participant acknowledged that losing her sister was devastating, but she could handle the situation because she had lost her mother before, which experience taught her how to manage:

‘Maybe because of my past experience with mum’s death. We faced many difficulties after our mum but this helped me to cope faster after my sister’s death maybe I got used of this thing’. (FM1-F)

Although this participant felt that she managed by becoming stronger she also reported that this experience taught her that it was safer not to love people in order to avoid any emotional pain associated with loss. She has managed to live and adapt in an environment in which she was ostracised:

‘You will lose the trust of people. You will never love any one like your mum or brothers or sisters. You will stop loving anyone because you will be afraid of this love and you will feel afraid of losing the one you love. I loved my mum and my sister and lost them’. (FM1-F)
This hard experience also taught her to keep away from people in order to avoid hurt. Another participant noted that after losing his sister he started to be more autonomous, and lost his trust in his society, and decided to challenge authority:

‘I decided to take my rights from anyone, no matter who he is or the extent of his power. If the dearest thing has gone, for what do I have to be afraid of them?’ (FM16-M)

The ability to withstand the disapprobation of society reflects the participant’s ability to develop new behaviour, not just within his family but also in the larger community. His sense of power increased when he regained his sense of control or spirit for his life. However, these data also showed that his experience was difficult for him in the matter of his place inside the society, and also showed that people, following a tragedy, develop new meanings that might be potentially harmful to them in the future. Indeed, his cavalier attitude to challenging authority could be interpreted as a consequence of nihilistic despair – even of suicidal ideation – as he no longer found any satisfaction in life following the HK and the loss of ‘the dearest thing’. What remained remarkably consistent was the community’s’ continued social judgment and ostracism, which led to social death, even if people adapted to it in these ways.

7.4.1.3 Becoming stronger by marriage: escaping the void

A common theme in this study was the effect that transgressions against honour had on the potential of family members to marry. Many participants linked their future with marriage. When one of family members succeeded in getting married, this gave him or her and other family members a message: that close-knit society respected them and forgot what had happened to them. It is a form of social forgiveness, and although rare, it affords some escape from the vacuum or void of social death. One participant said that her sisters were able to go on with their lives when they decided to get married, and their adjustment increased after having children:

‘They told me that they forgot by the time and coped because of forgetting they got married and go on with their life they said that their children compensated for their loss and who were gone’. (FM19-F)
Another participant supported the above idea, and said that her relative started to interact with people after the marriage of her sons, which was a rare but significant event leading to a process of revitalization in her life:

‘She started to go out of the house just a year after when her sons got married’. (FM18-F)

Not only female members felt that marriage helped them in their adaptation; male members also mentioned that their marriage helped them to prove to people that they were strong and could survive and that they were honourable:

‘We proved to the world that we are strong and could face difficulties. They also supported my marriage. She was the blessing for all wounds. She took care of my children and treated them even better than their biological mother’. (FM12-M)

The participant quoted above wanted to illustrate that support from people, in addition to the inner strength and determination of himself and his children, helped them to stand again after the murder. It is important to note that this participant tried to get married three times after the murder of his wife, but people refused his proposal because of the social stigma associated with the HK, therefore remarriage was a signal to the community that he was accepted and honoured by other people inside his own village. This marriage meant a lot to him, as it was his way to regain some social status. However, as this case suggests, the power of social judgment is extremely strong, and the price he paid in dowry was excessive. For him it was a small price to pay to regain a semblance of social acceptance.

7.4.2 Struggling in marriage

It should be stressed that the previously mentioned case was the exception rather than the rule; in reality, very few family members succeeded in getting married, and although marriage was reported as a step toward social reintegration, others reported that marriage did not change their condition, as post-nuptial social stigma persisted:

‘I am now living in my father’s house because every time I fought with my husband he talked about my family and my sister. He said that my family is deviant and drug addict, and he said that people blamed his father for
marrying him to a daughter from this family, the family without “honour”’.
(FM5-F)

The past and social judgment would be used as a powerful method of control:

‘My sister’s husband prevented her from coming to my house because of the
rumours against my sister. When we went to visit her, the people who live
beside her house looked at us as criminals. You could not defend yourself to
people who did not bother themselves to listen to you or to see what you were
suffering of. My other sister who lived in… [-] just came to visit us in the feast
[Eid] and without her children. My sister faced many troubles with her
husband, and when they fought he started talking about our mum and our
sister’. (FM1-F)

The above quotations illustrated the extent of struggling that female members face with
their husbands, in-laws and close relatives, who kept blaming and criticizing them years
after the murder of their loved one. The above interviewed sister, ‘FM1-F’, lost her sister
five years previously, yet the related strife with her husband and his family persisted.
The murder was used to castigate women and keep them under control. Married sisters
were often prevented from continuing their relationship with their families or were
sometimes limited in their visits to only specific occasions such as festivals. They were
constantly reminded of their association with the dishonour of their female relatives.

Feelings of shame and embarrassment induced by public knowledge of the HK, and the
possibility that family members violated the social norms or failed to live by familial and
social ideals, created anger at the victims among the married sisters:

‘What was surprising to me was her sister’s reaction I was shocked because
she said that she wanted to forget her name and talked badly about her. She
wished that her sister had been dead before doing such behaviour’.
(Neighbour3-F)

‘My sister who is married has a callous heart; she said that our dead sister is at
rest now and all the family is at rest also by her death, but this increased
emotional pain inside me when you heard this from one of your family; she is
distant from us emotionally and physically’. (FM16-M)

The married sisters thought of their own reputation and feared that their husbands may
blame them for their sisters’ behaviours. This was a way that women were kept subjected
within the family. Facing a social death and being killed socially was a constant feature
of life following the murder.
7.5 Summary

This chapter has shown that family members were systematically ostracised, avoided, judged and neglected. In response to this, family members consciously or unconsciously found alternative methods or strategies to deal with their pain, sorrow and to find solace, as commiseration from community and society was non-existent.

Over time, family members learnt from the tragedy of the loss and learnt how to deal with its consequences (such as social death) rather than recovering from their loss. They learnt how to mediate their suffering, but they could not find a meaning to attach to the loss or a positive outcome. As time moved on, their pain may have lessened, but it never left, which means that families bereaved by HK suffered continual pain and lasting psychological damage. For the families of murder victims, the road to social death was a painful and continuous experience, which for many never abated. In the aftermath of the murder, this often meant facing the reality alone without the support of even the closest of family members and the community. This was a key feature of the social death they experienced. HK failed to restore the honour of the family, and in fact did the reverse. Killing a family member in the name of honour set the family on the road to inevitable social death.
Discussion Chapter
Discussion of the findings

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I draw together the stands argued in the previous findings chapters to articulate the final synthesis of my thoughts on the phenomenon of HK and its emotional and social effects on family members. In retrospect, the pragmatic approach of feminism served well to guide my thoughts and actions in data collection and data analysis, and of course my attitudes towards other aspects of the study. The constitution and location of the phenomenon of interest were well suited to investigation through this approach.

8.2 Model of factors associated with HK

The primary aim of the study was to explore the contributing factors to the occurrence of HK in Palestinian society from the perspectives of family members and professionals, and its main objectives were adequately fulfilled. This study revealed that HK is a multifaceted phenomenon that is complex and difficult to understand and describe. The analysis of the data revealed the different dimensions of the phenomenon, which have indicated the complexity of HK, as no single cause was observed; rather, varying factors interplay in the manifestations of HK. The data analysis creates a more holistic understanding of the nature of HK. This discussion will address the dimensions that were exposed from the analysis as the main explanatory factors in HK.

8.2.1 Contributing factors to the occurrence of HK in OPT

The socio-cultural dimension included two main cultural beliefs associated with HK; the first one was male domination, and the second one was the honour code. The prevailing culture in OPT views the subordinate status of women to men as the ideal social construction. For the sake of preserving this ‘ideal’ social construction, violence against women (in the most severe form, HK) is justified
by many members of society and statutory and voluntary organizations in the OPT.

Motivations for killing women differ among various cultures and countries (HRW, 2006; Kardam, 2008). These arguments include honour, passion, financial reasons, and ‘loss of control’. However, all of these motivators reflect expressions of male superiority and the manifest power of males over the actions, lives, and deaths of women (HRW, 2006). These ‘explanations’ have serious implications in a legal context, as the legal system is biased in favour of men in societies where HKs are prevalent, and this is used to excuse and enable murder (HRW, 2006; Kardam, 2008).

Based on the findings of this study I have argued that HK was strongly supported by patriarchal beliefs. This issue has been discussed broadly in previous literature and is still debated. Ishaq (2010) examined the factors that contribute to the occurrence of HK among South Asian women in Canada, and aimed also to examine whether or not HK is similar or specific to crimes of passion and other forms of domestic violence, suggesting similar findings to those reported here. Ishaq (2010) found that all forms of violence, including so-called HK, are patriarchal and traditional methods of disempowering, threatening, and subjugating women. The current study has argued that HK in OPT is an instrument for not only dominating women, but also for oppressing them. Therefore, this study clearly highlights the gender dimension of HK due to the relationship between females’ subordinate status in the society and their increased vulnerability to HK. This study added that HK in OPT cannot be explained by one single factor, rather it is a combination of several complex and inter-related factors including the dominance of institutionalized patriarchy and patriarchal norms within the family, the society, and the culture. HK is deeply disturbing and problematic simply because of the gender component embedded within it.
The findings of this study have indicated that gender norms in OPT are characterised by hierarchical and asymmetrical power relations between men and women. A male-dominated perspective prevails over every social institution in the state. It was seen that there is major institutionalised oppression and control of women. Due to the fact that violence against women is socially acceptable, men feel entitled to abuse or even to kill women if they violate the prevailing cultural norms of the honour code. These findings were consistent with several studies that have examined HK in OPT society (Kevorkian, 2000; Hasan, 2002; Abdo, 2004) and in other societies (Faqir, 2001; Kulwicki, 2002; Kardam, 2008; Goksel, 2011). Kevorkian (2000), Hasan (2002) and Abdo (2004) agreed that the control of women served as a criterion through which Palestinian society judged itself in terms of its ability to preserve its uniqueness as a result of their occupation by the Israeli Authority since 1948. The intensification of the social control of women serves as a vehicle of cultural continuity and identity and, in addition, as a response to men’s insecurity. Consequently, the central concept of family honour has been bolstered (Hasan, 2002). These gendered practices reaffirm, collectively, men’s masculinity, defended patriarchy, and patriarchal connectivity as the basis for personal and community identities, as found in this study. Therefore, this study suggested that the hierarchy (dominant-submissive) mode of relationships between women and men was seen as a prerequisite for social stability and not as a form of repression. This could explain the rationalization of the murder of women for honour causes by the close-knit society and even by some of the professionals, as largely seen in this study.

One of the examples of how male dominance affected the life of women as found in this study was the cultural prohibition against women obtaining independence. With such a gender construction, it is not unusual to abuse women when they seek their inheritance or refuse to submit to an arranged marriage. Therefore, when a woman chose her husband, thought to love, or thought to study or to have a career outside the home, her family most often
punished her harshly, secluded her, and observed her closely. In extreme cases, they killed her, as described in the data in the current study. This finding is consistent with other studies that were conducted in OPT, Turkey and Jordan (Kevrokian, 2000; Ali, 2008; Karadam, 2008; Goksel, 2011), which also concluded that male dominance in the family remained unchallenged along with cultural prohibitions against women as a means to limit their access to public spaces. The current study found that framing HK as a private and family matter led to state and public ignorance about various forms of violence against women (such as threatening, physical and emotional violence), particularly HK. Thus, the common tendency to relate HK to the loss of virginity is a naïve assumption, as controlling the bodies of the women within public and private spheres is part of a broader framework of the subordination of women that fosters HK. These are new findings in the relation to the literature.

The concept of honour was found to be one of the determinable factors in leading to HK. The association between the honour code and shame was found to depend largely upon the control and objectification of women and the maintenance of a strict code of gendered behaviours associated with sexuality. This finding is consistent with other studies, which emphasized that ‘honour’ adheres differentially (and unequally) to men and to women (Kevorkian, 2000; Hasan, 2002; Ali, 2008, Ishaq, 2006; Kardam, 2008; Reddy, 2008; Ouis, 2009). Women are responsible not only for their own ‘honour’, but for that of their male family members, and women who transgress ‘honour’ codes are treated far more harshly than their male counterparts (Baker et al., 1999; Reddy, 2008). Similar to the findings of this study, researchers such as Reddy (2008), Hasan (2002), Kevorkian (2000), Welchman and Hussain (2005) and Sen (2005) concluded that the upholding of ‘honour’ is inextricably aligned with concepts of masculinity. Since concepts of ‘honour’ and ‘shame’ largely revolve around female sexuality, and violence against women in general has been closely linked to the regulation of female sexuality, the victims of HK were mainly female victims killed at the hands of male perpetrators. My study extends these
findings by suggesting that HK is a product of both patriarchal ideology and the prioritization of the honour code over the life of women.

Based on the findings of this study, it is naïve to say that ‘honour’ has nothing to do with the murder of women inside Palestinian society; but it is unfortunate to polarize the debate about killing a woman by blaming it only on culture. Linking the honour code with patriarchy and the patriarchal practices provided a substantive analysis of the root causes of HK in OPT. According to the findings of this study, the traditional values concerning women’s role and chastity was maintained by the male head of the family and through the honour-shame complex. The honour of the family was determined the conforming to certain behaviours. This finding was widely discussed and supported by many studies (Kevorkian, 2000; Hasan, 2002; Edvardsson, 2006; Ali, 2008; Kardam, 2008). However, a new finding that this study added is that the honour code is more than a value or a norm; it has functions and is expressed through very complex social practices.

A novel finding from this study revealed two main functions of the honour code: preserving and restoring honour. Both functions provided the grounds to control women and silence both women and professionals, as the first aimed to prevent any chance of women breaking the cultural norms of modesty, by enforcing various methods of control (including early marriage, torture, and threat of killing, seclusion and surveillance); and the second function aimed at punishing women suspected of having engaged in socially unacceptable behaviours, most often by killing them. Ouis (2009) and Belge (2009) considered the honour ideology to be a fundamental cultural trait determining gender roles in several countries in the Mediterranean region. However, both Belge and Ouis did not mention in detail how family members enforced the honour code on a daily basis, and the effects of such measures on women’s well-being, security and their decision to escape suffering, as found in this study. Therefore, the findings from this study revealed that the enforcement of the honour code reflected how women were treated, raised and how both men and women internalised and
constructed gender roles. It also accounted for the norms of behaviour they enacted, and I highlighted in detail families’ strategies and how these strategies led to the desire to escape suffering, which included attempted suicide, and leaving the family home. These are disturbing and worrying new findings. Therefore, this study has argued that the honour code is not only a set of rules about how male and females should behave, but also it should be understood as a model or a framework for discourse worked out in the dynamic context of social life and basic social processes.

One of the important findings of this study that was specific to the context of OPT, and indicated a particularly disturbing aspect of HK was the involvement of political parties in the killing. An implicit patriarchal complicity among political parties can be discerned in the action and rhetoric around HK. A new finding of this study showed that women were killed by persons from political affiliations, sometimes with the collusion of family members. These women were accused of collaboration with the Israeli Authority and of engaging in sexual acts with other men. Similarly, researchers such as Kevorkian (2005) discussed the relationship between national honour (honour of OPT) and HK, and found that the politically active men who victimise their female relatives could be exempted from penalties for their crime. Kevorkian (2000) concluded that serving a nation under a political banner becomes a license to kill women in order to preserve the honour of those who claim to have been part of the larger struggle for nationhood. One of the policy implications of this study is the need to invest in political parties’ awareness and sensitivity towards women’s needs. These findings add to the debate by highlighting the complex reality that women are exposed to, and call for action by political parties, given the significant role that they can play in combating HK. Through gaining an understanding of how complex and sensitive this issue is, political parties could participate in the search for more humane, legal and non-legal, official and non-official methods of intervention. Whilst this has been referred to in the literature, the current study added greater depth of analysis and complexity to the debate.

Another important factor associated with the practice of HK revealed from the results of this study was the inaction of religious leaders in combating HK and in
dealing with issues of violence against women. Previous studies have also addressed this and concluded that in cases of illicit sexual affairs, Islam clearly states that one must have four witnesses in order for a case to be brought forth in a court of law (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006; Ali, 2008; Ishaq, 2010). The more restrictive approach of Islamic jurisprudence towards cases of illicit sexual relations contrasts strongly with the cultural phenomenon of murdering female relatives upon suspicion of such activities, or from a desire to cleanse family shame, even when the murderer believes the victim to be innocent of the supposed crime (Ali, 2008). Nevertheless, perpetrators of HK frequently cite religious justification for their murders, and it was also used by many family members to further their own agendas and to justify their collusion. In this study, a new important finding was that participants (family members, neighbours and professionals) argued that HK was against religion, and suggested that it should be combated through religious sanctions. Thus, religious leaders have a societal responsibility to inform the public of such occurrences within the private and public spheres of society.

Although HK occurs among all socioeconomic classes, there is strong evidence that HK is more common in families with low socioeconomic status and uneducated families. In this study, poverty and lack of education of family members were consistently mentioned by the participants (mostly family members of victims) as one of the factors associated with the killing of their female relatives.

The literature examining what variables predict patriarchal beliefs is limited and has largely emphasized predictors for men rather than women (Smith, 1990a; Haj-Yahia, 1998b; Patel and Gadet, 2008). Lower educational attainment has been correlated with stronger patriarchal beliefs in both men (Smith, 1990; Haj-Yahia, 1998b; Araj and Carlson, 2001) and women (Haj-Yahia, 1998a). Patel and Gadet (2008) also found that HK in Pakistan also predominantly occurs among poor families. However, poverty was rejected by professionals in this and other studies as one of the main contributing factors to the killing, as HK in
OPT and other Arab countries is committed similarly among all social classes (Kevorkian, 2000; Faqir, 2001; Hasan, 2002; Kulwicki, 2002; Ali, 2008; Miller, 2009). It is not clear how low socioeconomic status operates to increase the risk of HK. It may not be the lack of income, but rather some other variables associated with the experience of living in poverty, such as crowding, limited inheritance, frustration and hopelessness. Other researchers have also emphasized that honour is more important in some communities than in others, and there are differences between urban and rural areas and among social classes (Al-Khayyat 1990; Andersson, 2003). In this study, family members clearly associated HK with their poverty, because poverty limited their alternatives, undermined their status inside their society and allowed people interfere in their private lives. This is a new finding in relation to literature in the field of HK.

Additionally, as well as undermining families’ status in the society, poverty made family members more obsessed by their own honour, as their honour was the only thing families had to protect. According to Araji and Carlson (2001), the decision concerning HK in Jordan was highly influenced by the social and political standing of the family in the community. In their study they found that male university students whose fathers held high-status occupations viewed family violence as a serious social problem because of the damage it could do to their families’ social and political standings, whereas the lower class viewed violence as normal, not deviant (Araji and Carlson, 2001). Once again, the data presented in this study expanded on previous, limited literature.

Poverty has long been a feature of Palestinian economy and society, with roots in the unequal distribution of land, assets and resources intensified by the occupation. Poor households in OPT are also characterized by large families, which contributes to frustration, anger and violence. This was one of the novel findings in this study. Most of the families interviewed had a large number of children, which led to lack of supervision, overcrowding and lack of open communication among family members. It undermined the role of the family as a unit of social cohesion, a shared sense of identity and a key socializing agent.
This study argued that poverty was regarded as a multilevel causal factor for HK because it incorporated social, cultural and psychological dimensions. Thus, it can be reaffirmed that economic and sociological conditions combine to produce this phenomenon, and it is not the sole occurrence of one or the other which propagates this violation. It is clear in this study that marriage was a key way for large families to escape the trap of poverty. For many families, securing the marriage of their daughters was a key way to survive; consequently, any dishonour or shame would tarnish the family reputation and their abilities to achieve this successfully. Honour, shame, and dishonour figure highly among families who have little to exchange in attempting to escape poverty through marriage. This study demonstrated that in analyzing HK it is necessary to remark that researchers should embrace the multifaceted nature (having complex and several contributing factors) of HK and it is nor justifiable to limit it to one single factor.

When working with women threatened with HK, MHP faced many difficulties that were found to be significant factors affecting their interventions. The real danger posed to MHP’s lives, their adherence to patriarchal beliefs about women and the importance of family reputation, in addition to limited availability of facilities and professional experience made them unable to provide help when needed, which consequently contributed to the murder of women. Whatever the reason, the role of MHPs as revealed from the findings of this study was insufficient to secure their safety, and in some situation put women in more danger. Despite researchers’ agreement about the obstacles that faced MHP in working with women under threat of the HK (Kevorkian, 2000; Hasan, 2002; Haj-Yahia, 2005; Ali, 2008; Kardam, 2008; Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2009), they differed in their explanations of the causes of these obstacles. For example, Ali (2006) blamed the government for not opening shelter homes in Jordan, which affected service providers’ abilities to help the victims. Haj-Yahia (2005) argued that the humiliating treatment of abused women by the social, health, legal and other services is an outcome of the patriarchal ideology and masculine
orientation of those services, attitudes which are even expressed by women who work in those services. For Haj-Yahia (2005), such treatment prevents many Palestinian women from approaching existing services for help, thereby perpetuating the cycle of violence against them. Similarly, Kardam (2008) found that even some men who were against early marriage, supported full education for women, and worked in NGOs with progressive democratic agendas, believed that women could not be equal to men in all respects, and that they required some male control. My study contributes to this debate by highlighting the major obstacles that MHPs faced and stressed that the role of civil institutions perpetuated and sanctioned violent acts through inactions, misunderstandings of women’s suffering and prioritizing the wider family’s interests and reputations over the needs of vulnerable women. The normalization by society of violence against women was a major contributing factor in the practice of HKs and other controlling measures by families. The data also suggested that the inability of service providers to recognize the link between violence at home an indicator of murder was one of the factors that contributed to their inability to prevent the murders. These were new perspectives about the role of MHP and service providers that were not addressed clearly in previous literature.

Although the political situation in Turkey is better than in OPT in terms of the latter being under continuing occupation and political instability, Kardam (2008) found similar results to this study, and concluded that professional help was insufficient because victims seek the help of their relatives in rural districts, rather than that of professionals. She also found that the failure of organizations to protect women, support them psychologically or help them to stay on their feet also plays a negative role in the sense of exposing them to all kinds of risks. The similarities between Turkey and OPT concerning the experience of MHP is an interesting finding which could be related to the entrenched patriarchal social and cultural norms in both Middle Eastern countries due to their shared history.

In the case of OPT, the findings from this study also revealed that the state was accountable for HK in several ways: because it tolerates the murders, because it
fails to intervene in the murders, and because it does nothing to solve the murders or to protect its citizens. The findings clearly revealed government inability and negligence in investigating the murder of women. Additionally, the criminal codes were markedly gendered, by which I mean that the definition of and penalties for HK reflected societally sanctioned notions of appropriate sex roles. This is most obvious in the police and judicial practices in dealing with HK and threats thereof, which were widely recognized to reflect social mores about female and male sexuality. Despite attempts made by the police to help women since the establishment of a Family Unit Department in OPT, generally the police covertly encouraged the practice of HK in OPT. Appointing the heads of clans and villages (Makhateers) in the role of mediators proved to be ineffective and led to the murder of many women. This result is consistent with Kevorkian’s (2000) findings, that police usually seek the help of the tribal notables and related this to three main causes; first, the marginalization of the formal judicial system in cases related to the sexuality of women; second, the inexperience of the newly formed Palestinian police in working with HK; and third, the existence of different security units that failed to intervene effectively with HK cases.

This study was conducted ten years after Kevorkian’s study and fourteen years after the establishment of the PA in 1994, and therefore different reasons were identified. The possible explanation for the police delegating responsibility to tribal leaders, as found in this study, was that the police encouraged the cultivation of patriarchal customs, guarded the traditional norms of suppression of women, and therefore perpetuated the occurrence of HK. My study adds to literature by finding additional limitations in the legal system, such as the lengthy procedures of trials, as participants clearly observed that judges sometimes unnecessarily delayed the court proceedings in order to bury the case. Indeed, understanding this specific situation is necessary in order to improve prosecution and to reduce the time spent to prosecute and convict perpetrators. Additionally, it was found that political chaos and internal conflict played a
major role in hindering all efforts made by civil organizations to submit and approve the draft for new penal codes to the Legislative Council, which was suspended due to internal conflict between political parties in 2005. The above mentioned shortcomings on the part of the police and legal services highlight the importance of multi-sectoral capacity building and a reform strategy inside OPT.

In her analysis of criminal law and judicial practice in Jordan, Warrick (2009) concluded that both of them demonstrated the persistence of areas of law that disadvantage women by privileging social interests, including the interest of maintaining traditions over the interests of the individual crime victim when that victim is female. She further explained that in the case of ‘honour’ justification, the state redefined the victims as perpetrators in order to resolve the problematic situation to best serve the interests of the community (Warrick, 2009). Her findings are similar to the situation in OPT as supported by the findings of this study and other studies in OPT, such as those by EUROMED (2010) and Kevorkian (2000, 1999). The recent report of EUROMED (2010) about women’s situation, based on in-depth interviews conducted with a representative sample of stakeholders from government and public institutions, civil society and the international community indicated that the weak rule of law has a particularly detrimental effect on gender equality and women’s empowerment, especially as related to domestic violence and family law. The provisions of the Penal Code in both the West Bank and Gaza related to rape, adultery, and HKs display unambiguous discrimination against women (EUROMED, 2010). Thus, law must play a more important role in protecting women from violence.

The unique contribution this study adds to the debate is that HK was found to be a multifaceted phenomenon. HK results from a combination of several complex and inter-related factors, including the institutionalized patriarchy within the society, the culture, and the family, the honour code that functions as an instrument to control female sexuality, political instability, institutional shortcomings, poverty, low educational level and the inaction of religious leaders.
The fact that some of the findings of this study (particularly in relation to legal factors) are similar to those of previous studies in OPT, particularly the first study that was conducted in 2000 by Kevorkian, is interesting. This clearly indicates that despite various efforts and a tremendous amount of work in this field undertaken done by feminist activists, researchers and organizations to improve the situation of women, women still suffer and HK is still practised. The data from this study also indicated that service providers such as MHP, police and organizations may fail to recognize the multifaceted nature of HK, and thus it is inferred that their prevention strategies and support are insufficient. Therefore, this study provides a new understanding and broader body of knowledge about the complexity of HK and highlights the need to adopt a multi-level and multi-faceted approach. For example, in order to prevent HK, service providers have to establish prevention and responsive measures as soon as possible. Building awareness and empowering women is an urgent necessity. However, as this study found, some interventions with women led to major gaps between women and their communities and families, inducing increased conflict inside homes. Therefore, protecting women from abuse and killing means that society must provide a wide range or provision more sheltered accommodation, including emergency services and cultural sensitivity measures that take into account the full extent of the problem.

**Effects of honour killing on family members**

This study also addressed the effect of HK on family members. The key finding in this thesis is that, contrary to the expectations of perpetrators, killing female relatives for ‘honour’ generally did not achieve the goal of restoring family ‘honour’. Close examination of the family members’ lives and views revealed that their social standing and their family honour did not improve subsequent to the murder; conversely, HK weakened the families’ reputation, isolating them from their close-knit communities, compounding their social marginalization, rejection, and stigmatization. Thus, following HKs, families found themselves having to face their emotional suffering at losing their female relatives, and their
failure to garner the appreciation that they had anticipated from broader society. This detailed account of the effects on the multiple voices of the families is relatively rare.

The findings of this study concerning the overwhelming emotional effects of HK on family members were consistent with the findings of other homicide (other than HK) studies (Redmond, 1989; Parkes, 1993; Harris-Hendriks et al., 2000; Asaro, 2001; Kaplan et al., 2001; Asaro and Clements, 2005; Clements et al., 2005; Hardesty et al., 2007). These studies emphasized that the suddenness and the violent nature of the murder complicated and compounded the grieving process (Harris-Hendriks et al., 2000; Asaro, 2001). A review of the bereavement literature notes that those deaths involving suddenness, interpersonal violence, trauma, suicide, and, most importantly, acts of ‘human design’ are more likely to create exaggerated and potentially complicated grief responses. These deaths are perceived as ‘untimely’, ‘unfair’, and ‘unnatural’, often intensifying the feelings of disbelief, shock, rage and anger (Redmond, 1989; Asaro, 1992; Rando, 1993; Asaro, 2001; DeRanieri et al., 2002; Burke et al., 2010). As concluded by Asaro (2001), while the victims’ pain and suffering ends with death, it is only the beginning for those left behind in the chaotic aftermath. The study reported here is one of only a few that explores the psychological consequences in depth and therefore adds to the debate.

Burke et al. (2010) emphasized that one of the worst difficulties faced by bereaved families was undergoing mourning alone or with less than adequate social support. Both Neimeyer (2005) and Hagman (2001) emphasized that grief experience is highly individualized, but the pathway through bereavement almost always must include others. Therefore, bereavement becomes problematic when supporters fail to embrace the grief process alongside the bereaved (Hagman, 2001; Burke et al., 2010). In their meta-analysis of both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies on the influence of social support as a buffer against a difficult and protracted response to loss, Stroebe et al. (2005) determined that social support does not necessarily influence recovery speed or
the overall grief trajectory of the bereaved. They concluded that that social support is not a definitive factor for those exhibiting a normative reaction to grief. Findings from Burke et al. (2010), Dyregrov (2004) and Wilsey and Shear (2007) suggested that unkind, hurtful comments and unhelpful, rude behaviour from network members might actually make the process of mourning more difficult than would be otherwise expected. Many examples of this occurred in the study.

In the case of OPT, it is necessary to mention here that the Palestinian community is similar to other Arab and Muslim countries, with distinctive social support characteristics including large network size, and mourning ritual systems whereby large groups of visitors pay their respects to the deceased (Hedayat, 2006). Displays of sadness indicate to the community the loss of a valued family member. Others habitually look after and relieve the bereaved from basic duties during a mourning period, such as by cooking (Hedayat, 2006). Therefore, social interaction and social support are deemed necessary for grief resolution. However, similar to the findings from previous studies of homicide (Dyregrov, 2004; Wilsey and Shear, 2007; Burke et al., 2010), bereaved families of HK in this study were abandoned, humiliated and socially ostracized from their communities. In this study, community judgment and interactions with family members raised many issues concerning family members’ reactions to the loss of their loved one, which together created new complications for the bereaved and process of grieving. The prevailing and deeply ingrained traditional norms about the ‘honour code’, which associated female sexual purity with the ‘reputation of families’ were believed to be an intrinsic part of the bereaved family members’ attempts to reconcile attitudes against them with the social relationships they were trying to manage. At the same time, it was noticed that the participants’ context and culture might lead them to expect social acceptance and support after the murder of a woman. However, this did not happen. Few studies have reported on the process of social ostracism highlighted in this thesis. Because the existing literature on
family members’ experience after HK is limited, the current study provides valuable preliminary information for future research and practice. More comparison research is needed to examine whether families bereaved by HK are more stigmatized than those bereaved by other causes, and further research can also examine the extent to which the bereavement associated with HK is harder to bear than that of other deaths.

Consistently, in Steeves and Parker’s (2007) hermeneutic qualitative study of 47 adult survivors of uxoricide (murder of a parent by another parent), and the studies of Asaro (2001) and Redmond (1998), it was found that in cases where victims had engaged in high-risk behaviours before the murder, the victim and family were blamed by others (family, friends and the general public). Asaro (2001) documented feelings of isolation from others and disenfranchisement from the right to grieve among family members.

The findings from this study supported those of Asaro (2001), Redmond (1998) and Steeves and Parker (2007) and revealed that family members could not always find someone in their social networks prepared to listen to them talking about the deceased; they were often prevented from talking about the loss. This study highlighted the intense loneliness that bereaved families experience with regard to communication inside the family and with the wider social network of friends, neighbours and relatives. A unique finding in this study was that death from HK complicated grief by adding shame to other painful emotions associated with bereavement. Over time, family members learnt from the tragedy of the loss and how to deal with its consequences (such as social death) rather than recovering from their loss. They learnt how to mediate their suffering, but they could not attach a meaning to the loss or find any positive outcomes of their loss. Over time their pain may have lessened, but it never ended, which means that in bereaved families’ experience of HK, time does not heal and wounds remain. For the families of murder victims, the road to social death was a painful and continuous experience which for many never abated. This is the first study which details this tortuous process for families.
To summarise the theory, figure 7 in chapter 7 (page 245) highlights the basic social process of social death which explains the experience of the bereaved family members and what happened to them following the murder of their female relative. It explains how family members live with the effects of honour killing. As a consequence of social death they face a new reality and experience social ostracism as sub-processes of social death. Facing reality describes the experience of family members as they encounter the emotional effects of HK. It indicates that following HK, family members have to face their emotional suffering of losing their female relatives and their failure to achieve the anticipated respect by their close-knit society. Social ostracism describes the varying degree of difficulties in interactions with interpersonal relationships within close-knit society such as humiliation and social stigma. In response to this, family members carried out self protective behaviours in order to live with their own social death. This is the core category of this thesis.

Whilst most research studies on homicide emphasize that MHP can provide much help for bereaved family members (Barrett, 1996; Asaro, 2001; Paterson et al., 2006; Rynearson, 2006; Burke et al., 2010), this study contended that the obstacles that faced MHPs, including the risk and real danger to their lives, lack of trust between MHPs and family members significantly hindered their abilities to help victims and their families. Similarly, Paterson et al. (2006) in their study about homicide in the UK mentioned several helpful and unhelpful qualities that support-givers should have in order to be accepted by bereaved families. One of the important qualities was family members’ confidence in the professionals and supporters’ ability to provide the required psychological help. Thus, mistrust between bereaved family members and professionals could lead to the families’ resistance to accepting their assistance. It was noteworthy that in this study it was found that some women’s organizations were accused by some of family members and religious leaders of spreading immorality among girls, this could explain the mistrust among family members of their services. My study contributes to this debate by finding that bereaved families were blamed, not
only by the close-knit society, but also by the MHP. This led to MHP’s anger at family members and to their resistance to the provision of any kind of supportive help to bereaved families. This suggests that there is still a long way to go in identifying and meeting the needs of families bereaved through honour killing.

8.3 Theory of patriarchy and perpetuation of the HK

The analysis of the data from this study showed that ideologies of gender inequality and the practice of HK were inextricably linked. Therefore, I took a feminist perspective on HK, which points to the necessity of including the larger structural and socio-cultural aspects of a society. It is also provides the framework for various forms of violence against women, including HK. The notion of contextualised varieties of patriarchy makes it essential to analyse social constructions of masculinity and their relationship to HK.

According to Hartmann (1986), patriarchy is ‘a hierarchal organization whereby certain people take certain roles and it is stressed that it is through studying patriarchy that we learn why and how women are dominated’ (Hartmann, 1986, p. 33). In a wider sense, Lerner (1986) observed that patriarchy refers to ‘the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in society in general’. Patriarchy implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society and that women are deprived of access to such power (Onsongo, 2005). Walby (1990, p. 19) defined patriarchy as a ‘system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women’. She emphasized that the use of the term ‘social structure’ is important because it implies the rejection of both biological determinism and the notion that every individual man is in a dominant position and that every woman is in a subordinate one (Walby, 1990).

Radical feminism claims that ‘...men as a group dominate women as a group and are the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women’ (Walby 1990, p. 3). They do not believe that this is a product of capitalism; instead, they see
sexuality as the major reason for male domination over women. Through sexuality, men force their view of femininity on to women (Walby, 1990). The main source for patriarchy according to this perspective is reproduction and sexuality (Wahl, 1987). In the case of OPT, and in my study, the data showed that men want to control women, especially their sexuality (Haj-Yahia, 2009).

Therefore, honour killing could be related to men’s intention to control, suppress and subordinate women.

Patriarchy believe that men considerate it to be their business to make sure women do not bring shame to the family by losing their virginity and by not engaging in extra-marital sexual or romantic relationships; by controlling their sexuality they are controlling the women (Kevorkian, 1999, 2000; Ouis, 2009; Abu-Rabia, 2011). It is obvious that through the upbringing of children, the data in this study suggests that patriarchal norms are reproduced in OPT. In Palestinian society, from a very young age, boys are educated to preserve their masculinity and to be ashamed of behaviour that society perceives to be feminine or childish (Haj-Yahia, 2005). Consequently, boys begin developing feelings of superiority toward girls and women, and they learn to compulsively hold on to their masculinity (Haj-Yahia, 2005). For some men, their superiority over their women is accompanied by a strong desire to oppress and humiliate them, to view them as inferiors, and to treat them aggressively (Walby, 1990).

The sociologist Al-Khayyat (1990) from Iraq noted that there is a specific ‘social belief’ that consists of a notion that females in Arabic countries must be controlled from a very early age; otherwise they could bring shame on their families. Thereby, several female rights are violated by certain groups (families, tribes, clans etc.); this is how violence against women, including HK, is constructed. Therefore, it is not surprising to find in this study that women had no chance to become independent individuals, since men make all decisions for them. Girls in OPT, as these data have showed, were raised to serve and obey men. As found in this study, men limited women’s development and freedom.
and if one of the women, as described by many participants in this study, gained higher education, worked and was a bread winner of the family, male family members, both extended and nuclear family members, felt threatened, and tended to abuse the independent women psychologically and physically. Women are also not expected to express their thoughts and feelings, therefore the male side of the family decides whom the daughter is to marry (Garemani, 2003). According to Rich (1977, p. 57). Patriarchy is a system in which men use various means or strategies such as ‘force, direct pressure or ritual, law and language, custom, etiquette, education, and the division of labour’ to determine what part women play or do not play in society. The male inside the family is also in charge of deciding if the girl is to be killed if they believe she has damaged the family’s honour in any way (Garemani, 2003). These findings are supported by the data in this study.

Walby (1990) identified two forms of patriarchy: private and public. Private patriarchy is based upon household production, as some writers think that women’s subordination is due to their confinement to the domestic sphere (Rosaldo, 1974; Onsongo, 2005). The private/public dichotomy is significant to understand how HK phenomenon is motivated. Feminists consider that the division between public and private spheres paves the way for discrimination, as one sphere intersect with the other one, but at the same time it is considered that one sphere does not have any link to the other (Zia Ullah, 2010). In private (domestic and family) sphere, where the male gender is assumed to lead the family, the head of the family influences other family members, especially the females, in making decisions and work allocation (Zia Ullah, 2010). Consequently, men have the ultimate power to violate the rights of women in the private sphere. The public sector is considered to have no jurisdiction in family matters. Man only holds authority at the domestic level because the violation of rights is neglected by the governments in the private or domestic spheres (Okin, 2000; Zia Ullah, 2010). Therefore, men’s violation against women is mostly seen in the private and family sphere, and this concept is a suitable concept to
understand how different forms of violence against women are perpetuated and motivated. These prepositions were supported by the data from this study and could explain the inaction of the legislative system, professionals and communities toward HK, and their lack of sympathy with the victims. In different situations participants (family members and MHPs) reported painful stories about women killed in the street or in front of neighbours, whom no one provided help to. One reason is that the majority of men and women still believe in families’ right to punish their womenfolk when they break the honour code, and another reason is their belief in families’ right to solve their problems without the interference of strangers.

The private/public dichotomy of HK is significant and has been heavily criticised and analysed by feminists (Walby, 1990; Okin, 2000; Smartt, 2006; Terman, 2010), who have emphasized the fact that many view HKs as an essentially ‘private’ matter, in which the state has no business interfering, in contrast to legally defined murder. Therefore, feminist activists call for increasing women’s access to the public sphere, changing the nature of that public sphere, and enhancing the rights of women in the private sphere (Moghadam, 1999).

As outlined above, feminism sees patriarchy as a social structure in which women are systematically dominated, oppressed and subordinated. This system is characterized by men’s power over women. According to Hartmann (1986), men create solidarity regardless of social status due to their common domination of women. Haj-Yahia (2009) found that there was a tendency among Palestinian physicians to perpetuate male prerogatives by the approval of wife abuse, and to legitimize such behaviour in order to see that women maintain an inferior status to men in society. Therefore, it is not surprising that this study found that violence against women, including HK, was approved by the public and by some professionals. This general phenomenon is compounded by the meaning of honour to people in OPT.
Researchers of HK in the Middle East have emphasized that women’s issues in general and domestic violence in particular need to be examined within the context of patriarchy, because honour is usually associated with the males of a society (Hasan, 2002; Ertürk, 2004; Agarwal, 2008; Haj-yahia, 2009). Studies of domestic violence against women by Haj-Yahia (1998a, 1998b), of honour crimes by Hasan (2002), of sexual abuse by Ouis (2009) and Kevorkian (1999) further emphasize that violence against women is connected to patriarchal belief systems which emphasize the need to control women, especially their sexuality. They outline how this practice embodies notions of honour and female sexuality, whereby abusing women is symptomatic of the sexuality of everyday life, as women experience this in the context of marriage and the family. This is consistent with the findings from this study, which suggested that the honour code is not only a social moral or a standard in OPT, but rather the code, which is symbolized by virginity and purity, ensures that women are ever mindful of their actions and how their behaviours are perceived. Both men and women feel obliged to monitor women in order to preserve their purity and modesty. Consequently, women’s sexual modesty, particularly the virginity of unmarried women, is the hallmark of a families’ reputation.

Drawing upon the experience of Palestinian women inside Israel, Hasan (2002) argued that constructions of female sexuality and honour operate to determine the subordinate position of women. This male sense of honour leads to gender role socialization, so that those who transgress the gender-based norms ought to be socially and physically sanctioned. The gender roles not only help to narrow woman’s role to her sexuality and reproductive capabilities, but limit her cultural image to that of an object or property (Ouis, 2009). The data from this study strongly supports this.

Understanding masculinity is central to analyzing how husbands represent their familial, economic and social status and exercise their power within the family (Haj-Yahia, 2005). Therefore, suspicion within marital relationships is used by men to control female independence (Hasan, 2002; Haj-Yahia, 2005). A
husband may accuse his wife of promiscuity, calling into question her honour in the name of family honour in order to assert his superiority both within the community and family. This could explain why husbands used honour justification to escape punishment in court, as found in this study, as despite a lack of evidence to support their claims, judges typically sympathized with the husbands. Therefore, some individuals use the traditional honour values and norms, which remain highly respected by a large sector in the society, as a shield in order to justify self-serving criminal behaviour.

It is not surprising therefore to find in this study that women were killed for causes not related to honour, such as asking for inheritance or seeking divorce. Radford (1992, p. 6) suggested that ‘femicide’ can be used to control women as a class, in which capacity it is ‘central to the maintenance of the patriarchal status quo’. Therefore, when a woman refused to submit or did not measure up to men’s standards of proper femininity, they were sent a message: ‘step out of line and it may cost you your life’ (Radford, 1992, p. 6). The reply to men from society is: ‘You can kill her and get away with it’ (Radford, 1992, p. 6). Interestingly, in the case of OPT and in this study, the message often sent by society includes the legal system. In this kind of common law, violence is an accepted method of maintaining control over women. Article 340 of the Jordanian Penal Code (Law No. 16 of 1960) in force in the West Bank, which deals with crimes committed on the grounds of ‘family honour’, enshrines discrimination within the law (EUROMED, 2010). It grants exemption from prosecution and reduced penalties to husbands or male blood relatives who kill or assault wives or female relatives on the grounds of ‘family honour’ (EUROMED, 2010). The fact that the perpetrators of some HKs in this study were punished by only a few months or years in prisons seems to have led to the creation of a social problem in OPT. Thus, an important reason for its perpetuation in OPT is the institutionalized gender bias that pervades the criminal justice system, which serves both the government and the guardians of tradition. This is a unique finding in this study.
It must be mentioned here that women may themselves collaborate in the killing, sometimes under coercion, producing the perpetuation of violence by women against other women (particularly senior women). Given the impact of gender on social behaviour, it is unsurprising to find in this study that women killed and also motivated the killing by men, as they also had the same fears for family reputation and the future matrimonial prospects of other females inside the household. In this study, it was suggested that most perpetrators were male, but in one of the cases, a mother committed the murder. Other roles of women were motivating and inciting men to kill the accused women for perceived or actual infidelity. Glazer and Abu-Ras (1994) indicated that female participation is expected, because gossip associated with honour also benefits higher status women, who can use it to maintain dominance over others (Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994). Lerner (1986) claimed that patriarchy cannot succeed without the cooperation of women. Faqir (2001), and Sen (2005) emphasized that older women participated in the murder because they had a stake in maintaining family honour and social status. Sever (2005) also clarified that women also collude with patriarchal practices, possibly because men’s authority demands their submission. Similarly, Jasam (2001) and Kandyoti (1998) suggested that women’s compliance and consent are the basis of classic patriarchies. The ‘patriarchal rules’ set older women against young, rich women against poor, and women associated with grooms against women related to brides (Brown, 1997). Labelling women’s sexual behaviour as ‘respectable’ and ‘not respectable’ creates an artificial divide and prevents women from forming a cohesive group, thus pitting woman against woman (Lerner, 1986). Margaret Kornitzer (1972) explained the process whereby “girls” who have babies out of wedlock must pay the price for their illicit sexual activity by parting with their children (cited in Cole (2004) p.8). This had the effect of not only pitting one group of women against the other, but placed the declassed woman outside of society’s rights and protections, thus casting her as a non-citizen. This non-citizen/unwed mother was deemed not to have rights to her children (Reid, 1957). The patriarchal notions and judgments about women were commonly encountered in the data.
presented here. Indeed, the communal identities prevalent in Arab society (i.e. tribal, or in the Palestinian case, political) override and inhibit the development of other sectional identities, such as among women, or among professionals.

Women’s interference was suggested to be significant in motivating the murder, as supported by the findings of this study and others (Glazer and Abu-Ras, 1994; Faqir, 2001; Ali, 2008). This added another dimension to the obstacles that this issue played in combating the crimes. As suggested from the literature discussed previously, violence against women is used as a ‘policing mechanism’ to keep social hierarchies in place and to perpetuate inequality, and was evident throughout this study.

The above discussion does not mean that patriarchal attitudes are the only explanation of violence against women in general and HK in particular. There are indeed other individual, familial, psychological or socio-cultural factors that intersect to contribute to this phenomenon, as revealed from the findings of this study as the findings of this study suggest to a lesser extent.

In this study, it was found that poverty posed another challenge, as most households are headed by a husband/father who is the sole breadwinner of the family. Additionally, women can take up work only with the permission of their husbands or fathers. As a result, most Palestinian women are unemployed and economically dependent on men. Women’s participation in the economic arena is disproportionately low in comparison to other Middle Eastern countries, with women constituting only 15.2 percent of the country’s labour force (Kamal, 2010); the unemployment rate for males was 16.4% compared to 28.6% for females (PSBC, 2011a&b). According to Haj-Yahia (2005), such economic constraints leave women with limited alternatives and comprise one of the factors that forces abused women to continue living with a violent spouse. For them, divorce or separation means poverty. Sev’er (2005) indicated that economic dependency increased vulnerability, as women who have no control over economic reproduction are saddled by traditional views that exclusively
define them in their reproductive roles. Sev’er (2005) related HK to women’s economic worthlessness. She clarified that in bride-price societies; only virgin girls bring money and land or goods. Rituals of ‘honour’ barely hide the fact that ‘tainted’ girls become worthless (Sev’er, 2005). Ironically, these so called ‘honour’ systems fail to protect women from male transgression. The consequences of these are evident in the data presented in this study.

8.4 Major contributions of this study

There has been no prior research that examines the experiences of family members following HK. This study highlighted the theory of social death that describes the level of humiliation, social exclusion and ostracism that family members face following the death of their female relatives for honour-related causes. This is the first report on such difficult emotions among family members who lost their relatives to HK, and thus expands the awareness of MHP and the public about their unique experiences, which can help in addressing their needs and voicing family members’ concerns and needs. HK does not achieve that which has been anticipated.

This study supports the position that HK in OPT cannot be explained by a single factor. It results from a combination of several complex and inter-related factors, including the institutionalized patriarchy within the society, the culture, and the family; the honour code that functions as an instrument to control female sexuality; political instability; institutional shortcomings; poverty; low educational level; and the inaction of religious and political leaders. Therefore, this study shows the importance of paying attention to the need to provide holistic inter-organizational and inter-agency efforts that focus of promoting participation of people of concern, and collaboration and coordination across key sectors, including (but not limited to) psychosocial, legal and protection measures.

This study also brings attention to the role of persons from political parties in committing HK. By exploring their roles, services providers and policy makers
will be able to utilize this unique knowledge in finding suitable strategies to combat the practice of HK in OPT. Additionally, this study extends the HK literature by expanding what past research has shown on victims and families’ characteristics, dynamics within families and how these factors contributed to the practice of HK. This study provides an accurate account from many voices of concern in HK and past experience in working with families and victims of HK. Hopefully, this thesis can enlighten decision-makers and politicians about the need to address the factors contributing to the occurrence of HK in OPT. It may also contribute to the information available to academic researchers and students. This new information can inform national authorities, leaders at all levels in political offices, religious authorities, local community and services providers about effective interventions and how to change social tolerance.
8.4 Implications for practice, implications of further research, limitations, and strengths of the study

8.4.1 Introduction

Although the findings in this study are potentially applicable to Palestinian women, they may have implications for other Arab women living elsewhere in the world (not only in the Arab world, but worldwide) where traditional patriarchal systems of authority are in place. The implication for practice and further research will be discussed in this section. The limitations and strengths of the study will be addressed.

This study has tried to provide answers to two questions. The first question concerns the root causes and factors that contribute to HK, as reported by the participants. Based on the findings of this study, the HK phenomenon is multifaceted, and thus necessitates multiple efforts to combat the occurrence of these crimes, and it also showed that combating HK is extremely difficult. Altering the attitudes and behaviour of those who still believe in HK is not an easy task, but it is one of the first and crucial steps in combating this issue, and responsibility for this ultimately lies with the state. In the whole thesis I showed that most participants, especially family members, were concerned about family reputation and made great efforts to keep family problems within the family; this makes solving the problems inside families more difficult for any external party. Therefore, it is necessary, though difficult, to find ways to work with families. This is inhibited by observations presented in this thesis, which reflected that working with threatened victims puts the lives of MHP in danger.

The PA does not have gender equality on its agenda (Klein, 1997). It continues to stress that national liberation is the primary and overriding aim, and that the liberation of women can only be achieved through national liberation (Klein, 1997). It must be conceded that the occupation and the absence of a state means
that the regulations regarding the status and rights of women in OPT are different from those of other Arab countries (Klein, 1997). As discussed by previous studies, feminist aims have been viewed as potentially undermining and dividing in the united struggle for liberation (Klein, 1997; Belge, 2008; Abu-Rabia, 2009). These facts led to the limitation of their roles as a result of mistrust, because of questions about their hidden agenda. Therefore, Palestinian women activists are always advised to invest their energy in the national struggle against occupation and not to endanger national unity. Similar to other occupied societies, Palestinians often conflate the defence of their national and cultural identity with the defence of patriarchal tradition (Klein, 1997).

The confused political situation within OPT and the inertia of the PA with regard to women’s rights compelled NGOs to assume responsibility regarding combating HK. However, their interventions were fragmentary, depending upon fundraising and foreign agendas, which gave the impression that they were alien and potentially subversive to Palestinian society; such interventions have a high likelihood of failure. These conditions make it too hard for them to work with families, particularly those who live in more conservative and remote areas not under the authority of the Palestinian government. Bridging the gap between governmental and nongovernmental organizations is needed in order to address and work to combat HK simultaneously and cooperatively. Clearly, the extraordinary political situation in OPT – a pseudo-state struggling to prevent its complete dissolution into isolated territory within Greater Israel – militates strongly against the prospect of successfully addressing issues such as the murder of individual women.

Nevertheless, to prevent the absurdity of ignoring systematic homicide against women, in order to change the issue of HK in OPT, concerns at the policy level must be addressed. The Palestinian legal framework is made up of multiple and conflicting sources, predominantly the Jordanian Family and Penal Codes (in the West Bank) and the Egyptian counterparts in Gaza. Weak rule of law has a
particularly detrimental effect on HK. If some of the Jordanian Penal Code, such as article 340, remains in the Palestinian Constitution, the message to both families and women is straightforward: the life of a woman has no value, so any woman can be killed. This legal implication should not be tolerated by the Palestinian government, community figures and the society at large. Therefore, they have to take a necessary step to address these issues in their future national plan.

In light of the association between poverty and HK, an additional guiding principle is connecting the end of HK with other social development goals, such as public health, social justice and poverty reduction. At the project level, this requires a macro-vision of anti-violence work, which is connected to overall social development in the community. At the institutional and governmental levels, this entails making clear and strong the connections between ending HK, men’s responsibilities to this end, and the achievement of national and international commitments.

This study also involved exploring the effects of the HK on family members. The theory of social death that emerged from the findings from this study provided substantive evidence about the experience of family members after the murder of their female relatives. The main result was that although family members killed their female relatives primarily in an attempt to re-establish their honour, the murder in fact made their situation worse, and failed to restore honour. Gaining understanding and knowledge about this significant finding will give a clear message to family members and the public that HK harms the people who committed it emotionally, and further damages family honour, leading to social death.

The findings of this study and the supporting literature substantiate the need for MHP to gain understanding of the lived experiences of losing female relatives to HK. Despite the fact that none of the family members receive any professional help from mental and health professionals in the aftermath or at the time of the
killing, family members and close-knit community descriptions of the experience of the bereaved family members provided useful information that MHP can utilize to better meet the needs of the bereaved families. By providing and explaining the psychosocial process of social death, it becomes apparent that MHP must gain awareness and understanding of the lived experiences of the bereaved families from HK, in order to provide the proper and additional professional help to assess their needs and to facilitate their dealings with grief.

8.4.2 Strengths and limitations of the study

One of the strengths of this study is using a feminist analysis in explaining the HK phenomenon. Feminism is, in my opinion, the best approach to explain HK, as its elements in patriarchy are instructive in explaining the gender nature of the phenomenon. Models other than feminism of theorizing and addressing violence against women could be applicable to the case of HK, including Goffman stigma theory, conflict theory, psychological, and neurobiological models (O’Neil and Harway, 1997). However, using feminist analysis in this thesis was valuable because of its focus on the political and structural problems that affect people at the personal level. Without the feminist focus on structural issues, the problem of HK would return to the realm of interpersonal relationships, which indeed would exclude the power analysis from the discussion. The feminist perspective was also credited in this thesis because it connected HK to larger socio-cultural issues, such as poverty.

Using GT approach and method proved to be useful for achieving the research aims and objectives and in discovering new findings that contributed significantly to the existing literature and knowledge in the field. Using GT enabled me to generate theoretical insights which accounted for family members’ experiences following the murder of female relatives to honour causes. That is, following the murder of female family members, family members faced social exclusion, humiliation, lack of respect, and ostracism that was suggested to exacerbate their grief reaction as they journey along a road to
social death. As clearly mentioned in chapter seven the concept social death was generated from the analysis of the data from this study and did not explored yet in literature.

The use of GT in feminist research, as used in this present research, contributed to emphasizing the significance of elaborating and continuously re-elaborating the material of the interviews. This process allowed me to produce a theory, in order to understand the psychosocial process of losing female family relatives as a result of HK. Using GT also allowed identification of the slightest differentiations among the family members participating in the research. Using GT enabled me to focus on the broader structural influences on the HK phenomenon rather than concentrating only on the immediate contextual factors that impinge upon the phenomenon.

This study adopted Strauss and Corbin’s (1990; 1998) approach, which is guided by Strauss’s pragmatic theory of action (Kushner and Morrow, 2003). This enabled me to undertake a dialectic and active role in the field, and thus the theory that emerged was based on the existence that cannot be conceived but can be interpreted (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

On the other hand, the accuracy of gathering data through individual and group interviews has the potential to be distorted by the participants. Participants may have problems in remembering, feel embarrassed to talk about their experience or even lie to the researcher (Long, 1999). However, other data collection techniques such as questionnaires and psychometric tests also have potential to bias. All attempts were made to ensure that the interview process was rigorous, including the use of multiple sources of data collection, the presence of an audit trail, member validation and conducting the research under the supervision of academic supervisors.

This study succeeded in giving voice to marginalized individuals who could not share their experience with others, while it also recognized that a more complex understanding of HK might require involving skilled professionals who can deliver nuanced clinical assessments and a range of theoretical perspectives and
interventions. Therefore, this study gave an excellent picture of the current situation in OPT regarding HK, as many voices were involved. I interviewed an eclectic, multiple voice cross-section of the society, enabling the identification of the complex perpetuation of HK. Additionally, I carried out a rigorous approach to data collection and analysis, as explained in detail in chapter four.

Given the frequency of its occurrence and the obvious deleterious effects of HK, it is surprising that its emotional and social effects have not been comprehensively explored by previous studies. The findings of this study provide an interesting beginning in the description of this complex phenomenon. The study examined the experience of family members in losing their female relatives and the experience of MHP of losing the victims, which adds a fresh perspective.

Whilst this qualitative study has provided a detailed account of the experience of family members’ aftermath, as with any study, it is subject to limitations. Qualitative studies are relatively small in scale, and focus on a limited number of individuals in a particular setting, context, and time. Thus, the transferability of findings to other settings may not be guaranteed. The developed theory is specific to the study sample from which it was developed. In an effort to enhance the theory, I included a wide demographic of participants in order to ensure variation in the developed theory. The theory presented here can be developed in other contexts which may allow for transferability and further refinement and enhancement.

Lack of control for socioeconomic status is problematic when determining the broader applicability of the findings from this research. I faced difficulties in recruiting families from middling and higher socio-economic groups, and also to access families from religions minorities. However, a concerted attempt was made to solicit participation from various age groups, genders, settings, families and professionals, ensuring that the resulting sample was diverse. The sample may be enhanced by inclusion of male and female MHPs and other key
informants from the society. Additionally, family members who refused to participate in this study may have recovered better than those who agreed to participate in this study, and therefore future research may examine the validity of this assumption.

Throughout this study, I made many efforts to respect the mandate of maintaining ethical principles in order to protect the identity of the participants. However, I also acknowledged that this led to withholding some pertinent details in order to protect the anonymity of participants, which might create problems related to the meaningfulness and validity of the data. Overseeing the consequences of revealing the identities of participants is a moral obligation that should be respected by any researcher (Orb et al., 2000). Therefore, I prioritized participants’ benefits over those of the research in compromising cases.

One deeper limitation is that the researcher is a part of the study, and no researcher is completely objective (Charmaz, 2005). I am a mental health professional and the tension between my outsider and insider roles was presented in chapter four. Throughout this study, reflexivity, self-awareness, and constant comparative analysis of the data was utilized along with the discussions with the academic supervisors in order to minimize any methodological limitations.
8.4.3 Implications for further research

Although the phenomenon of HKs occurs in several countries, the scope of this study is limited to the occurrences in OPT. This study could be improved by comparing and contrasting various countries and their efforts in both understanding and eradicating this phenomenon. In addition, this study is not representative of the entire Palestinian population, since only twelve families were interviewed. If further research included interviews with the women being ‘protected’ in sheltered accommodation in OPT, or living with other family members such as perpetrators, this would expand our contextual understanding of the phenomenon of HK and its emotional and social effects. Additionally, further research is needed to gain preliminary information on the extent and the nature of agency responses to HK in OPT, with emphasis on assessing the extent of multi- and cross-agency collaboration that exists currently in order to give information on how to better deal with this specific area of violence against women.

In the light of the limited data available concerning HK, further research is recommended to explore it type, frequency and severity. The measurement of the extent of HK can be important in ascertaining the scale of the problem and in raising consciousness about the issue. Feminist researchers such as Walby (2005) emphasized that the notion of prevalence captures the particular and specialised nature of domestic violence as a coercive course of conduct, a series of related occurrences, rather than a one-off event. However, prevalence is not a concept widely used in related domains, such as crime (Walby, 2005). Therefore, it is important to avoid underestimation of the extent of HK, and to include the prevalence rate in crime statistics, along with the repetition and frequency of attacks, in addition to the number of incidents.

Further research has the potential to increase our understanding of other social factors and processes involved in HK, which would enable concerned parties to
better craft effective intervention strategies. This study showed that there were women who were not killed even though they engaged in illicit sexual relations. Therefore, I also recommended that further research could provide statistics about them, to explore their testimony in depth, to examine interventions, supports, preventive factors, and other issues that can easily be translated into changing the status quo. The accommodation of real and perceived dishonoured women needs further investigation.

This study revealed that political parties were involved in HK, therefore social and political struggles behind the different meanings of honour (personal and national honour) inside Palestinian society and its impact on violence against women is another area of future research. From an intersectional perspective, in countries ravaged by institutional violence and armed conflict, women with ‘multiple subordinated identities’, such as women who are in poverty, tend to be more affected by the nexus of violence (Cabrera, 2010). This calls for a radical re-examination of the interaction between women’s social positions, family members’ political power, multiple structures of power and the perpetuation of the subordinated status of women in OPT. As HK is related to women’s position in multiple systems of inequality, it would be significant for future research to examine how these systems intersect and create layers of discrimination against and exclusion of different groups of women.

The professionals’ point of view regarding the lack of strong association between HK and poverty mirrors the view of many researchers of HK, such as Kevorkian (2000), Terman (2010) and Hasan (2002), who emphasized that inequality and feelings of relative deprivation, more than poverty, are significant influential factors in HK. Hasan (2002) agreed that more often than not economic interests are hidden behind the cultural explanations of violence against women. However, I argued that notions of honour and shame have varied meanings attached to them, therefore their significance is inevitably ambiguous and dynamic. As mentioned by Stewart (1994), honour in the Mediterranean countries is not a clearly defined cultural area. For Sterwart
(1994), all societies have a certain notion of honour, even if these differ greatly. Therefore, in this study I found that poor families had their own notion of honour, HK means re-establishing their credibility as protectors of female chastity, which in turn saves the future of other females inside the family by preserving their matrimonial opportunities. Further research is recommended to uncover the economic correlation between income and HK.

Quantitative studies can also examine the impact of HK on family members’ symptoms of depression, traumatic stress and the prevalence of anxiety in family members. Longitudinal studies would allow researchers to assess long-term consequences of symptoms, such as complicated grief or PTSD reactions in family members. Interventional studies would allow researchers to test strategies to reduce symptoms in family members that may prevent long-term consequences of these symptoms. Research is also needed to learn more about perpetrators and other family members and to describe the experiences of others who work with these survivors. Future research can assess psychopathology and personality disorders among perpetrators and the effect of family conflict rooted in the everyday stress of family life and their relation with HK.

Thinking about my own experience in conducting research about this sensitive issue, in this study I tried to provide an accurate testimony on ethical challenges that I faced during the entire research process that I believe will provide guidance to researchers who interested in doing such studies. However, many areas and questions are still unexplored or discussed as a result of the dearth of research studies that addressed ethical consideration in violence against women. I recommend further studies regarding interviewing vulnerable populations, such as children, issues of addressing retraumatization during the research process, and studies that could supply researchers with adequate guidance to make informed ethical decisions in their work on HK.
8.5 Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that a combination of several complex social factors, along with the ingrained patriarchal system of belief, explain the phenomenon of HK. However, given the scale and the complex nature of HK, it is very difficult to make a claim that an example of best practice is universally applicable. One of the conclusions of this study is that eliminating HK in OPT is a difficult task. However, this does not mean that HK is inevitable and cannot be prevented. This study highlighted the crucial role that the PA can play in combating HK and the urgent need for their sensitivity toward women’s needs and for a reform of the political and economical system with regard to women. Nevertheless, the political unrest and the PA’s preoccupation with the Israeli occupation and Human Rights violations means that the entire legal, environmental and security system has little scope and few resources to address the needs of Palestinian women. Without becoming an independent state and without a stronger legal and judicial framework, there seems little prospect of justice and protection for Palestinian women.

The study also focused on family members’ experience after HK and highlighted that in addition to dealing with the loss and change, family members have to cope with emotional effects, fear, humiliation, and stigma surrounding HK. HK divided families and their social network and left them with lack of social and emotional support. It gave a clear message to the public and family members who may face the same experience that restoring their honour could not be achieved by killing their female relatives. Therefore, this study concluded that understanding this specific consequence of HK (i.e. social death) could provide both family members and service providers with a body of knowledge on how HK affects people actually involved in it. Further research could provide professionals and family members with proper strategies and measurements to address the short- and long-term requirements and needs of individual survivors of the killing.
Research suggested that effective help requires interventions that respond to all aspects of loss in the bereaved families’ lives, and it should be based upon an understanding of the bereaved families’ need to maintain a connection with the deceased. However, MHP still need to understand the nature and scale of the problem as the basis for family members’ suffering. Whilst being cognizant of the social shame and ostracism that occurs, health providers need to be aware of the detrimental effect that profound grief experiences can have on the psychological and physical well-being of the bereaved families.

Whilst I acknowledge that mental health needs are crucial to family members, I also admit that meeting the needs of bereaved family members is a very difficult task, based on the following findings: first, there was an actual risk to the lives of MHPs; second, some family members refused help as they blamed MHPs for the murder of their relatives; third, some MHPs felt anger at family members and refused to provide psychological help to them; fourth, some family members refused to seek help because they did not want to show their suffering to others, and to admit that they were mistaken by killing their female relatives in order to avoid further social death; fifth, MHPs lacked the skills, knowledge, and experience to meet the needs of the bereaved families. Therefore, by understanding how family members situated their reality surrounding HK, MHPs can better develop programs and interventions for bereaved family members, regardless of how the interaction between them and family members occurs, reducing the social stigma surrounding the issue and working to finally break the silence regarding their experiences. Consideration should be given to the actual risk to the life of MHPs and to the fact that they themselves are also embedded in the same complex political and societal situation; it is therefore the PA’s responsibility to protect MHPs’ lives through the implementation of strategies that clearly indicate guidelines and protocols to ensure their safety. MHPs should be given the education, tools, and skills to adequately respond to the needs of bereaved family members and to the cases of HK.
8.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed findings and integrated the findings of existing literature. Literature has been used to substantiate study findings and in instances where findings of the current study are not supported by the existing literature, argument is presented to justify them. Contributions to knowledge were discussed and implications for practice were presented. Limitations and strengths were outlined and accordingly recommendations for future research were presented.
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# APPENDIX 1

## Hawker’s Assessment Tool

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1. Abstract and title: Did they provide a clear description of the study?

Good: Structured abstract with full information and clear title.
Fair: Abstract with most of the information.
Poor: Inadequate abstract
Very Poor: No abstract

2. Introduction and aims: Was there a good background and clear statement of the aims of the research?

Good: Full but concise background to discussion/study containing up-to-date literature review and highlighting gaps in knowledge.
Clear statement of aim AND objectives including research questions
Fair: Some background and literature review.
Research questions outlined.
Poor: Some background but no aim/objectives/questions, OR Aims/objectives but inadequate background
Very Poor: No mention of aims/objectives
No background or literature review.

3. Method and data: Is the method appropriate and clearly explained?

Good: Method is appropriate and described clearly.
Clear details of the data collection and recording
Fair: Method appropriate, description could be better.
Data described.
Poor: Questionable whether method is appropriate
Method described inadequately.
Little description of data
Very Poor: No mention of method, AND/OR Method inappropriate, AND/OR No details of data.

4. Sampling: Was the sampling strategy appropriate to address the aims?

Good: Details (age/gender/race/context) of who was studied and how they were recruited.
Why this group was targeted.
The sample size was justified for the study.
Response rates shown and explained

**Fair**  
Sample size justified.
Most information given, but some missing

**Poor**  
Sampling mentioned but few descriptive details.

**Very Poor**  
No details of sample

5. Data analysis: Was the description of the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

**Good**  
Clear description of how analysis was done.
Qualitative studies: Description of how themes derived/respondent validation or triangulation.
Quantitative studies: Reasons for tests selected hypothesis driven/ numbers add up/statistical significance discussed.

**Fair**  
Qualitative: Descriptive discussion of analysis.
Quantitative

**Poor**  
Minimal details about analysis

**Very Poor**  
No discussion of analysis

6. Ethics and bias: Have ethical issues been addressed, and what has necessary ethical approval gained? Has the relationship between researchers and participants been adequately considered?

**Good**  
Ethics: Where necessary issues of confidentiality, sensitivity, and consent were addressed.
Bias: Researcher was reflexive and/or aware of own bias.

**Fair**  
Lip service was paid to above

**Poor**  
Brief mention of issues

**Very Poor**  
No mention of issues

7. Results: Is there a clear statement of the findings?

**Good**  
Findings explicit, easy to understand, and in logical progression.
Tables, if present, are explained in text.
Results relate directly to aims.
Sufficient data are presented to support findings.
Fair Findings mentioned but more explanation could be given. Data presented relate directly to results. 
Poor Findings presented haphazardly, not explained, and do not progress logically from results. 
Very Poor Findings not mentioned or do not relate to aims.

8. Transferability or generalizability: Are the findings of this study transferable to a wider population?
Good Context and setting of the study is described sufficiently to allow comparison with other contexts and settings, plus high score in Question 4 (sampling).
Fair Some context and setting described, but more needed to replicate or compare the study with others, PLUS fair score or higher in Question 4.
Poor Minimal description of context/setting 
Very Poor No description of context/setting 

9. Implications and usefulness: How important are these findings to policy and practice?
Good Contributes something new and/or different in terms of understanding/insight or perspective. 
Suggests ideas for further research 
Suggests implications for policy and/or practice 
Fair Two of the above (state what is missing in comments). 
Poor Only one of the above 
Very Poor None of the above
### APPENDIX 2

**Synthesis Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First author</th>
<th>Protocol</th>
<th>Abstract and title</th>
<th>Method and data</th>
<th>Introduction and aims</th>
<th>Sampling</th>
<th>Data analysis</th>
<th>Ethics and bias</th>
<th>Finding s/results</th>
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## Appendix 3

### Characteristics of the included studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Author and date of publication</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Objectives and purpose</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Location and date of field work</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Limitation of the study( researcher’s view) and future recommendations</th>
<th>Reviewers comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Family Honor Killings: Between Custom and State Law  
Abu-Rabia 2011 | Qualitative study | Review some attitudes and perspectives regarding family honor killings, mainly in the Arab/Bedouin population in Israel, Sinai, and the Middle East in general. What is the difference between sharaf and ‘ird? What deviant sexual behavior is considered a capital offense? How widespread is the use of honor killings, and what alternative sanctions are employed? Under which circumstances are compassion and mercy exercised? What kinds of solutions exist for such cases? It also analyzes the conflicts that exist between custom and state law vis-à-vis family honor killings, and examines how court | Interviews with community leaders, lay arbitrators and legal officials, social workers, and governmental and non-governmental representatives. Visits were made to community centers and facilities, including clinics, hospitals, and schools. The sample population consisted of 210 men and women from the Bedouin community of the Negev region of Israel – both residents of Bedouin towns and rural Bedouin communities, ranging in age from Bedouin society inside Israel | The Bedouin sheikh usually plays a critical role in saving the lives of young women who have been accused of having illicit sexual relations, and whose lives are in danger. The sheikh serves as a judge, arbitrator, mediator, and peacemaker. Bedouin had two contradictory legal systems, their traditional tribal system and the legal system of the state, sometimes this help in saving the life of some women Sometimes, mixing old and new norms and mixing personal and public spheres have contributed to the murder | Education can create the milieu that can immunize, that can forge the moral vigor among all those who are part of Arab and Muslim society (and other societies) that will make it impossible neither for a man nor for a woman - to commit such a crime a parallel trend afoot: a return to Muslim religiosity and stricter fulfillment of Islamic religious practices and codes of behavior among Arabs (Bedouin and rural). So further research can examine how the | Findings discussion was not clear or consistent. Minimum discussion of how themes were emerged and minimum discussion of sampling. Related the findings to literature but the discussion lost of its fruitfulness by not mentioning clearly what were the findings of the study and other literature. |
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<tr>
<td>Explore the origins of the crime, the concept of suitor rejection, honor and shame, their societal and legal implications and the responses of the legislative and judicial systems of these nations. Look at the socio, cultural, political and economic reasons for the perpetuation of honor crimes against women in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India while attempting to shift the focus from associating honor crimes with Islamic cultures. Analyze the legal framework and the ways in which existing</td>
<td>Court cases</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>To make the protection of human rights a reality for women, activists need to move beyond the ‘clash of civilizations’ perspective and instead focus on interactions between actors and institutions, on domestic power struggles and other forms of political contests.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used several human rights reports, country reports on status of women Sample not mentioned clearly</td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong comparative analysis but the methodology was not clear. There is little discussion of the case study methodology or why this form of research was used. In many instances there is no information given on how the data were gathered or from whose perspective the case study is written</td>
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<td>Employ the international human rights framework because it offers a methodology for determining government obligations to promote and protect the human rights of women.</td>
<td>India</td>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>The study argued that honor crimes do not always amount to murder but can take various manifestations and should be recognized as such. Three case studies: honor killings in Pakistan, acid attacks against women in Bangladesh and use of rape as a weapon of war during the internal conflict in Gujarat, India. All of these crimes were manifestations of unequal power relations that reinforced men’s control and domination over women. It was further perpetuated through a</td>
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</table>
laws, meant to protect women from violence, are interpreted and implemented by the courts. Use the works of Mandelbaum and Dube as my starting point for a comparative understanding of ideas of honor, shame and the status of women in South Asia.

<p>| Killing of Women on the Basis of Family Honor | A’jlouni 2002 | Survey | Analyses people trends about crime of honour and how the local community view and deal with the practice and incidences of crimes of honour | Not mentioned clearly | Palestine City, village and camps | Duration of the study is not mentioned | People perceive the practice as part of an &quot;inherited culture&quot; | a high percentage of both men and women consider the practice of 'honour killings' to be a serious social problem. Men support killing more than women (25.9 to 16.3) respectively. 43.9% of men agreed that family members have to kill the women who commit an absence acts. Highest percentage for support of killing exists in the refugee camps with 37.9% while it drops down to 27.4 in the villages. 63% of women (strongly) oppose the killing, while 42% favor the killing. No relationship between the educational and religious commitment and the right of the family to kill their | Not mentioned by the researcher | No analysis description but a descriptive tables were used to represent every variables that examined and cross tabulation was used. The survey was Not methodologically sound because there are no mentioned details about the analysis method, sample size, age and data collection method |
| Honour, the state, and its implication: An Examination of honour. Killing in Jordan and the effort of local activists | Qualitative study: ethnographic study( case study approach) Semi-structure interviews Participants observations To examine the social context of patriarchy, women’s right in Islam, theoretical notions of honour and the perspective of local activists and their efforts in combating this phenomenon By engaging in participants observation the researcher tried to collect data about cultural, social, religious, and demographic information that affect the study topic | Jordan-Anman Summer 2007 [Key informants]5 Local activists and participants observations in local mosque in Amman Honour killings are predominantly apparent in low income class [ Transforming]Altering attitudes and behaviors of Jordanian society is not simple task that needed governmental and more specifically the ministry of social affairs effort to establish shelters for women as women re-victimized twice because of keeping them in prison in order to protect them. Other strategy of transformation is the religious leader’s[imam] role in informing public about Islamic legislation and opposing of these acts Other method by educating younger children] about human rights issues There is a need to compare and contrast between Jordan and other societies in the matter of the used measures that may help in eradicating these crimes Focus on selected informants rather than random sample which may affect the representativeness of the study to the entire population Strength: using case study provide more comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to particular incidents. Using triangulation |
| Honor Killings – the Survival of Patriarchy in Different Societies Andersson 2003 | Theoretical-empirical discussion about honor killings To unravel the hidden reasons behind honor killings. To describe the differences in and between the two Book called Hedersmordet på Pela (Swanberg 2002) is chosen. Kurdistan and Sweden Honor killings occur because men in patriarchal societies used to control and dominate the family and especially the female The thesis has not presented any final solutions to how we can make the integration within Sources and materials used were related to the context of the study. Strong analysis and comparison |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Araji, S. K. And Carlson, J 2001</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>To assess perceptions surrounding the seriousness of domestic violence, including ‘honour killings’ among the students in Jordan. To investigate if the students from lower social class perceive family violence as a more serious problem than students in higher class strata.</td>
<td>Stratified random sampling of two major universities in Jordan [923 female and male students]</td>
<td>More than half of the students considered all forms of violence including honour killings a serious problem in Jordan at level of 63%. More than 60% of them believed that emotional abuse, physical abuse and wife abuse are serious problem. Social class of father’s occupational status and mothers’ education significantly influence students’ perception of violence against women.</td>
<td>The researcher recommended the need for to extended research and offer support for Jordanians who call for legal and social reforms related to family violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whose Law?: Clans, Honor Killings, and State-Minority</td>
<td>Comparative study</td>
<td>Examines how and why clans within the Kurdish and Palestinian minorities of Turkey and Israel have 99 in-depth interviews, archival research in court houses and other.</td>
<td>Turkey and Israel</td>
<td>The ability of clan leaders to carve out informal spheres of authority depends, in turn, on. Scholars miss the predicament of individuals on the ground, who often</td>
<td>Strong and thorough analysis of the two cases which provide professionals f</td>
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Comparative study between Kurdistan and Sweden thesis

articles from different newspapers, magazines and journals

members of it. In Sweden this changes and the children and women become aware of their rights. The man loses control over the family and this sometimes turns out to be too hard to handle.

Sweden society function satisfactory.

Minimum description of the method used.
Relations in Turkey and Israel

Belge 2008

This dissertation builds on the literature on citizenship regimes by examining the ways in which Turkey and Israel’s citizenship regimes—assimilationist and separationist—shaped contestations over authority at the local level.

Interviewed parliamentary members in Ankara. In Israel, interviewed Palestinian feminist organizations, human rights activists, lawyers, prosecutors, police, and Bedouin sheikhs, primarily in the cities of Haifa, Nazareth, and Be’er Sheva (32 interviews).

Collected 275 court decisions in Turkey maintaining the material base of their power through the control of female sexuality and the skill with which they navigate the conflicting jurisdictions of the state and the minority community.

Feminists’ activist deliberately chose to cooperate with the state at the risk of substantial exclusion from their community. Their use of state law, moreover, did not consist in cynical avoidance or instrumental manipulation, but in appeals to its undelivered promise of equality.

face a variety of clashing authorities, each demanding their obedience and loyalty. Therefore, individuals try to navigate a mine field in which multiple sources of authority compete with one another for the allegiance and obedience of a population. In order to combat honour killing this should be understood by feminist’s activists in the ground.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Study Title</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Case Study Location</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Strength</th>
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<td>Beneath the surface of honour: a study on the interplay of Islam and tribal patriarchy in relation to crimes of honouring Jordan</td>
<td>Phenomenological case study</td>
<td>Will examine the underlying social dynamic possibly contributing to the continuation of honour norms and to the acceptance of honour killing. By investigating the interaction between two aspects, tribal patriarchy and religion. Concept of honour is analyzed in term of gender, power and sexuality.</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Written sources: dailies as Jordan Times and campaign speeches from organizations that fight crimes of honour.</td>
<td>Using qualitative study in social research that concerns about marginalized individuals is valuable as it focuses on “experiential” methodology in which the researchers in this study have the opportunity to represent their deep understanding of honour killings and allow the cultural perspective to emerge from the participants' own words. Reflexivity maintained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpreting Honor Crimes: The Institutional Disregard Towards Female Victims of Family Violence in the Middle Eastern countries</td>
<td>Secondary analytic research</td>
<td>Explores how the institutional disregard toward perpetrators of honor crimes are rooted in conventional values and policies that are justified by social norms and existing penal codes.</td>
<td>Review penal codes in Jordan, Palestine, Egypt and Syria</td>
<td>Middle Eastern countries</td>
<td>More immediate research is needed to understand the various types of social control that is geared towards women and why these types ofLimited the discussion to one reference (Kevorkian) and to the case of Palestine so using more recent references could help.</td>
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Middle East
Devers and Bacon 2010

controls lead to
death. As noted
above, the
prevalence and
frequency of data on
such crimes
further research is
needed to test how
individual
predictors of gender
threat effect
attitudes towards
punishment.

to understand the
issue more broadly

| Crimes of Honour: Females right for support in the multicultural Society | Qualitative research | To highlight the legal and practical support of victims of honour killings in Swedish community | Eight local agent in Malmo city in Sweden
Women affected with honour killings[ number of women not stated] | Sweden | The legal support is very limited and the victims lack information how to access this support. Swedish penal code has no any uttered criminal classification of such crimes. | Legal agent must have responsibility toward combating these crimes | Interview only 8 of these centers and very limited sample of the interviewed females may affect the generalization of the study |

<p>| Intrafamilyfemicide in defence for honour: the case of Jordan. Fadia Faqir 2001 | Secondary research: The study analyze the Arabic and English source material about the | Analyze the crimes of honour as a particular type of intrafamily femicide. Analyze the role of rumors, social values and other dynamics in moralizing | Jordanian women | Jordan 2001 | Characteristics of the perpetrators: adult: age 19-30 Illiterate and live in densely populated areas Increase of number of crimes of honour in Jordan could be seen as a | Implement a comprehensive programmed for socio-legal and political reforms in order to change the discriminatory | Shedding the light over the central mechanism of honour killings but it is not methodologically sound study |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On Aggression, Human Rights, and Hegemonic Discourse: The Case of a Murder for Family Honour in Israel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glazer and Abu-Ras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It aims to test Nader's theoretical framework of complementary concepts of hegemony, true discourse and positional superiority for understanding dogmas of female subordination in a dynamic perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined sample: Israeli Palestinian women who live inside Israel since 1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case analysis of the women gossip’s network in the Masdar El-Nabea- village in Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: Not reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The paper contends that Arab village women’s gossip facilitates the act of honour killing. Israeli state &quot;respects&quot; the cultural relativity of &quot;tradition&quot; by meting out light punishments, by not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
interdiscursive where discursive of family, women, virginity and the ethnic identity become tools of managing people.

4 interviews with lawyers

patriarchal discourses. the multiplicity of actors produced multiple conflicting and contingents discourses over the issue of honour killing.

Code of honour is not imposed rather it is internalized by government actors and therefore it functions as a tool for normalization.

HK is transformed as a crime of tradition in the penal code which means that HK is a governmental tactic for othernization of to Kurd.

Inability to conclude

| Inductive research interviews | Explore the ideologies and mobilization strategies of organizations in the 10yrs in the oPT. | NGO’s and social affairs institution Sample size: Not stated clearly No details about participants | Palestine: West Bank (Ramallah, Tulkarem, Nablus) The police are not properly trained to deal with domestic violence. Murder is understood as disciplinary action rather than a crime, which reduces or eliminates the perpetrator’s punishment. The work performed by | Limitation of statistics: Political condition which affect having an accurate prevalence rate of violence experience serves as

These positive results may not be representative of all study population no analysis description |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Shame of Preserving Honor: Why Honor Killings Still Plague the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the 21st Century Hartman 2010 | Analytical studies                               | Adopted modernization theory to explain honor killings in Jordan To explain the correlation between the stagnant economy and the role of NGOs in dealing with this issue | There is a correlation between the stagnant economy and circumstances of economic condition and the prevalence of honor killings. The consequences of detaining women with the goal of saving them from violence related to violence and the feeling of shame to disclose the problem from abused women | No description for data collection method data obtained from proxy lacking of research and supported figures may affect the validity and reliability of data strength: the researcher mentioned the potential biases for her study about the inability to have reliable statistics and data related to sensitivity of the topic no publication bias (strength) | The primary source of data with no supported figures Difficulty in obtaining accurate account through interviews about violence related to perceiving abuse as a normal behavior against women and feeling of shame to disclose the problem from abused women.
| The politics of honour, patriarchy, the state and the murder of women in the name of family honour | Secondary research | Explore the politics of honour bounding up with interest of the state. Why honour killing is committed by family members so intended to interpret and analyze honour killing. Explore the patriarchal politics of honour. | Not relevant but it based on the previous research by the researcher | Palestinian society within Israel | The entire matter of honour is a rationale for maintain men control over women. The existence of HK is buttressed inter alia by legal system. The encounter between patriarchal politics and state politics leads to the perpetuation of HK. Israel ensures economic and political control of the Palestinian thorough encouraging the old tradition. | Not stated clearly | Strong theoretical analysis. |

<p>| Honoring The Killers: Justice Denied For “Honor” Crimes in Jordan | Report 'present case studies | Describes the social context in which “honor” crimes take place presents four case studies of women under threat from male family members, demonstrating the destructive, paralyzing effect of Jordan’s continued | 4 women in prison Sample not mentioned exactly but they interviewed lawyers, police, judges, parliament members and MHP | Jordan | Many women who are threatened by family members end up imprisoned for their own safety. Existence law did not protect women form killing. Police usually mistreated women and family unit at police excluded honour | The need to re-examine laws and legislation. Police should carry their responsibilities. Providing shelters for women. Increase | Method of data collection and analysis not mentioned. No description of how cases were chosen. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Question of Security</th>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Qualitative research</th>
<th>To examine the reasons for the PA’s continuing failure to respond effectively to violence against women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence against Palestinian Women and Girls (HRW) 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>In depth Interviews</td>
<td>More than hundred but did not specify the interviewed participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Palestinian government officials—including police officers, prison officials, civil and family court judges, public prosecutors, municipal governors, representatives of the ministries of health, justice and social affairs, and the former head of a Palestinian forensic institute—and lawyers, social workers, doctors, women’s rights activists and non-governmental</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palestine-W.B November and December 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Follow up done by telephone, email or new interviews in June and July 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>two primary obstacles enhanced protection against domestic violence for Palestinian women and girls: discriminatory laws that condone and perpetuate such violence - virtual absence of institutionalized policies to prevent violence, assist victims, and hold perpetrators -police officers lack specialized expertise to handle family violence -MOH has no medical procedures or protocols to guide medical in dealing with domestic violence cases</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Israeli occupation has weakened the criminal justice system in Opt.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The PA should also train all government employees (including police officers, doctors, governors, and forensic experts) who come into contact with victims of physical and sexual violence on how to deal with such cases appropriately and establish clear and explicit guidelines of intervention in line with international standards.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No recommendations stated for future research</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher did not mention analysis method</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>No explaining for the purpose of follow-up check</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The overall result are like the result of previous research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No description of the exact tool of data collection or justification of sampling strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No description of participants characteristics as age, demographic data</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It comprehensive report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Title</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>Findings</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Honour Killing and Silence of Justice System in Pakistan</td>
<td>Qualitative study Master thesis</td>
<td>To investigate why the justice system in Pakistan has failed to eradicate the practice of HK to examine personal cases and perceptions about the practice through interviewing the threatened victims of honour killing</td>
<td>Honour killing is purely a cultural practice, historically evolved and a salient part of patriarchal feudal structures. There is no concept of HK in Islam while religion is being used to legitimate practice. In Tangir community honour is viewed as power and strongly associate with it. However, in case of Sindh, honour has week relationship with power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing in the name of “honour”: The South Asian Community in</td>
<td>Secondary research- Analysis of case studies</td>
<td>Exploring the phenomenon of —honour killing occurring within the South Asian communities living in Canada</td>
<td>Combination or the inter-relatedness of several complex factors that can lead us to carefully analyze</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strength of this study is that it is the First study that addressed HK in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ishaq 2010</td>
<td>Analyse or pre-assess the social contributing factors or social conditions that enable the sacrifice of girls and women for honour's sake within the Canadian context.</td>
<td>and examine the phenomenon of honour killing within a Canadian perspective.</td>
<td>Canada. Strong analysis and interpretation of the causes of honour killing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assist policymakers, community and religious leaders, and other social organizations in the implementation of new legislations, and adequate strategies for preventing and eliminating honour-based violence against women and girls.</td>
<td>Criminalization of all forms of violence against women and girls perpetrated in the name of honour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and existing literature</td>
<td>Implement new legislative reforms that would help prevent, protect, and detect or identify ―at risk‖ families, communities, groups.</td>
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<td>Initiate community discourse to combat HK.</td>
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<td>Training professionals</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Future research exploring the social representations, perceptions, and attitudes of immigrant communities, especially the South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dynamic of honour killings in Turkey</td>
<td>Kardam 2008</td>
<td>Qualitative research</td>
<td>To place honour killing in a wider framework of perception of honour and related values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping and Analyzing the landscape of femicide in Palestine</td>
<td>A qualitative study- Action to examine the landscape of femicide in Palestine.</td>
<td>Defined sample: - 30 Police officers - 3 judges</td>
<td>W.B: Police from Ramallah, The clinicians have inadequate understanding or “guidelines” on how to help - Non-Respect of Confidentiality by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tradition Effect: Framing Honor Crimes in Turkey</td>
<td>Analytical study</td>
<td>Provided analytical framework for examining honor crimes and other so-called traditional practices.</td>
<td>Build her analysis on Foucault’s. Her discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examine the factors and variables that lead to femicide from an action-oriented research perspective. Breaking the historical social silence on the issue of femicide</td>
<td>-20 Tribal notables and village Mukhtar. - Attorney General -Chief Forensic Officer - 69 women and girls who review by social unit of the center services and who were threatened to be killed or killed actually</td>
<td>Victims in distress. Feeling of threat to killing is related to rumours, gossip and social unacceptable behaviour 89.6% of women blame self for the abuse Interview with doctors of forensic medicine revealed that their role was influenced by family members to change the reports if it recorded that woman was virgin before the killings The overall findings show that patriarchy, masculinity and control measures affect court decisions in such matters Intervention that used by the centre is legal, therapeutic and medical 92% of female received therapeutic intervention) The subjection of threat for killing is not bound by socioeconomic status</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevorkian 2000</td>
<td>oriented research Interviews guide Review of police records Questionnaires</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Tradition Effect: Framing Honor Crimes in Turkey

Analytical study

Provided analytical framework for examining honor crimes and other so-called traditional practices.

Build her analysis on Foucault’s. Her discussion

Turkey

discursive dynamic in explaining honour crimes unfolds in several institutions simultaneously.

Solving honour killing problems lie heavily in government and

Strong theoretical analysis and debate
<p>| Author                   | Year | Methodology                              | Analysis Approach                                                                 | Data Collection                                                                 | Findings                                                                                      | Context                                                                                     |
|-------------------------|------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kogacioglu               | 2004 | Tried to shift the focus from “tradition” or “culture” to an examination of the effects of various institutional structures. Naming the ways in which the tradition effect comes into play within a select group of institutions. | Based on interviews from previous field work.                                    | The confusion in understanding honour crimes is related to multiple work by many organizations leading to tradition to be the thing that is hard to pinpoint. | International bodies                                                                       |
| Religion, Culture and the Politicization of Honour-Related Violence: A Critical Analysis of Media and Policy Debates in Western Europe and North America | Korteweg and Yurdakul, 2010 | A cross-country Comparative and analytical study                                   | Analyses how media, parliaments and other state institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) conceptualize honour killing and honour-related violence in order to uncover how such conceptualizations inform policy responses. | Gathered transcripts of parliamentary debates, newspaper articles, guidelines and research reports; conducted 20 interviews with key informants. | Netherlands, UK, Germany and Canada                                                                 | Calculations of honour-related violence that stigmatize are more likely to lead to general anti-immigrant policies or policies that impede settlement. Debates that frame honour-related violence as a variant of the generally widespread problem of domestic violence and violence against women are more likely to lead to policies that directly target these forms of violence. | The authors suggest that policy responses will be effective only insofar as gendered violence is understood within its social, cultural and political context and if that context is not seen as foreign but rather as part of the new social relations in the immigrant-receiving society. | A cross-country comparative approach, rather than single country case studies, can most effectively show how the variations in debates and the proposed solutions are embedded in the specific political climate and the interaction between political and civil engagements of a given country. Each of the four countries focused on has seen public debate on honour-related violence. |
| Kulczycki and Windle, 2011 | Systematic review | a critical synthesis of the research literature on honor killings within the MENA region. It draws several general and methodological observations concerning this research literature, summarizes and interprets 40 studies (9 primary study and 11 secondary study) source: 6 electronic data base and international development agencies (UN, UNFPA, WHO, Middle East and North Africa (MENA region)) | Very little is known about the incidence, correlates, and predictors of honor killings in the region, the characteristics of victims and perpetrators, public opinion, and paths to reducing and eliminating | Much more primary research is required on this subject, which remains deeply sensitive and difficult to study. In several countries, there | Did not use quality assessment tool but develop their own checklist to assess the quality which may be not rigorous and prone to biases. | Did not use quality assessment tool but develop their own checklist to assess the quality which may be not rigorous and prone to biases. | Did not use quality assessment tool but develop their own checklist to assess the quality which may be not rigorous and prone to biases. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The practice of honour crimes: A glimpse of domestic violence in the Arab World</th>
<th>Quantitative study</th>
<th>To investigate the incidence of violence against women in Jordan. To determine the cultural context, and the social and legal implications of these crimes</th>
<th>Review of the court records of women murdered in 1995 [89 homicide cases reviewed 38 of them involved female victims and 23 were reported as ‘honour crimes’] 16 cases of the 23 were examined</th>
<th>Jordan Review records in 1995</th>
<th>The review revealed that the majority of the murdered were young (age:17-25). Reason for killing: adultery, premarital sex and questionable reputation. A traditional patrilineal family provides men with power to control women’s sexual behaviour. Therefore male benefit from legal and social advantages in case of crime of honour.</th>
<th>The researcher recommends to expand investigation in domestic violence as the gained knowledge will be helpful for mental health nurses to improve and increase their multicultural competences</th>
<th>Did not mention inclusion and exclusion criteria Their review is narrative not systematic review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kulwicki 2002</td>
<td>Qualitative and survey study</td>
<td>analyzes the traditional notions of patriarchy in Jordan, and the contexts by which they are surviving in the milieu of democratization examines the influence of higher education (in the College of Law at the University of Jordan)</td>
<td>12 interviews with academics, legal professionals, judges, and tribal sheikhs Survey 35 students in the college of law</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>It concluded that despite a wealth of political rhetoric promising the ideals of egalitarianism, Jordan still harbors a patriarchal society that does not apply benefits of equality (especially sexual equality) to all of its citizens (especially women) education alone is not the key to change, but a social revolution based on modernization and social change in all aspects of Jordanian society may help to produce</td>
<td>Using mixed method gives this study more strength and validity Interview different participants give multi-perspectives</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Sociological Analysis of Crimes of Honor: Examining the Effects of Higher Education on the Concepts of Honor and Notions of Gender Equality in Jordan</td>
<td>Qualitative and survey study</td>
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<td>Jordan</td>
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389
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miller 2009</th>
<th>University of Jordan) on the cultural mindset which perpetuates these crimes in traditional societies.</th>
<th>(1st year) 39 students (4th year)</th>
<th>in traditional areas of the country). despite literature and public discourse from academics, political leaders, and human rights activists which advocates the use of education to steer social change, the results of a survey at the University of Jordan do not reveal any significant difference in introductory level and advanced level students’ traditional notions of gender equality and family honor collective change. and credibility Found contradictory findings to other studies in comparison to the effectiveness of education in changing the mindset of the public toward women’s issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The epidemiological patterns of honour killing of women in Pakistan Nasrullah, Haqqi and Cummings 2009</td>
<td>Epidemiologic study focuses on the epidemiological patterns of HK of women using data systematically collected by HRCP through newspaper reports in Pakistan</td>
<td>Epidemiologic study Data is collected from Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. From large newspapers in Pakistan Pakistan HK of women constitutes at least 21% of all homicides A total of 1957 events of HK were recorded during the period of 4 years. Age was available for 978 events (50% of 1957): 803 of these (82%) were adults (&lt;18 years), 175 (18%) were minors (&lt;18 years). Minorities were victims of HK in 14 instances (13 Christians, 1 Hindu). (88%) were married, 131 (9%) unmarried, 20 (1%) widowed and 27 (2%) divorced Perpetrators were mostly husbands the state is failing to punish those guilty of HK more research is needed in this area to find the relation between HK, education level and socioeconomic status more research is needed to help in designing effective strategies in HK there is a need for systematic data collection that might facilitate analysis for research on honour crimes in Pakistan. In particular, studies must address culture-specific factors in HK in more research is needed to help in designing effective strategies in HK it is the first to document the epidemiology of HK in Pakistan newspaper surveillance is useful to identify where HK are occurring most frequently, but they are likely to be underestimates of the true incidence. However, the number of incidents detected is large enough that the events detected may be a fairly representative sample. The information provided in many newspaper reports is certainly limited. The data set in many of the reports is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honourable Traditions? Honour Violence, Early Marriage and Sexual Abuse of Teenage Girls in Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Yemen Ouis 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative research (Situational analysis) Comparative study</td>
<td>Focus group with 384 teenagers girls (12-18) More than thirty life stories were collected.</td>
<td>Palestine, Yemen and Lebanon</td>
<td>Honour ideology and the religious and moral rulings do not protect teenage girls from sexual violence and abuse in the region, but rather the opposite. This conclusion was confirmed in the Lebanese study in which 66% of the male teenagers and 80% of the girls “concurred that the culture of honour begets sexual harassment and violence against girls.” In Yemen, some children stated that the honour ideology and gender segregation makes girls easy prey for male romantic approaches and sexual harassment The three situation analyses give examples of laws that discriminate against women and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karo-Kari: A Form of Honour Killing in Pakistan</td>
<td>Patel and Gadit 2008</td>
<td>Descriptive systematic review</td>
<td>Examine the motive underline the Karo-Kari killing and other forms of violence against women in order to gain insight into the relative roles of socio-cultural attitudes and psychopathology in shaping these crimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Key aspects</td>
<td>Author/Reference</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Name of Fathers: Honour Killings and Some Examples from South-eastern Turkey</td>
<td>Qualitative research (case study)</td>
<td>Explores the control of girls/women under classic patriarchies, particularly virginity, forced virginity tests and honour killings. 11 case studies were presented Source: 10 Court transcripts and local and national media coverage</td>
<td>Sev'er, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender, Culture and the Law: Approaches to ‘Honour Crimes’ in the UK</td>
<td>Secondary / analytic research</td>
<td>examines the debate on whether to analyse ‘honour crimes’ as gender-based violence, or as cultural tradition, and the effects of either stance on protection from and prevention of these crimes</td>
<td>Reddy 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows a comparison of approaches to honour crimes in different studies. The table includes details such as the methodology used, key aspects examined, and the context in which the studies were conducted. The studies focus on examining the debate on whether to analyse honour crimes as gender-based violence, or as cultural tradition, and the effects of either stance on protection from and prevention of these crimes.

The article argues that the categorization of honour-related violence as primarily cultural ignores its position within the wider spectrum of gender violence, and may result in a number of unfortunate side-effects, including lesser protection of the rights of women within minority communities, and the stigmatisation of those communities.

He recommended that greater focus on the gendered aspects of honour-related violence would place it more firmly within the spectrum of violence against women across all communities in the UK, with less risk of stereotyping and stigmatising ethnic minority communities.

He strongly emphasized the importance of international and national investigations and accountability for States that fail to protect women from violence. States that fail to protect women from violence must be held accountable. If they systematically fail in their responsibility, there should be international investigations and strong analysis and appropriate to research objectives.

Strong analysis and multiple-case design enhances and supports the previous results. This helps raise the level of blindness assessment, which is necessary to examine the reliability of data extraction and minimise selection error. Lack of intention to treat analysis which is helpful in amplify confidence in the study result.
| Terman 2010 | Analytic research | This article works to lay the groundwork by presenting both sides of the debate over the term ‘honor killing’ and analyzing the arguments various groups use in order to justify their particular definition of the term, and if and how they support its use in public discourse. | include perspectives from academics, scholars and researchers; women’s rights and other non-governmental organizations; leaders and spokespersons from Muslim, Arab, and/or Asian communities both at their origins and in the Diaspora; politicians and policymakers; and law enforcement officials. | North America and European Diaspora | Connotation of “honor killing” less as murder and more as a private, family or cultural matter, engenders the need to make a clear distinction between domestic violence and HK. Honor killings are rarely put into context in media reports; it is no wonder the public discourse is confused as to the nature of honor killings. Second, media reports tend to portray honor killings in a misleading way, focusing on the immigrant status of the perpetrators rather on the criminological or cultural dynamics of honor. The reasons for HK could be that immigrants who come to a foreign land are so scared of losing their identity that they hang on tight to cultural or traditional practices. | Law enforcement must receive culturally appropriate training on honor crimes in order to best serve those they should be protecting. Because of the extent of the conspiracy that often surrounds honor killings, potential victims need special protection from social welfare agencies. It is not enough to return the woman to her family home after a time of “cooling off” or to send her to the care of relatives; either option puts her in grave harm. By avoiding the dynamics of honor, we risk the failure to bring many perpetrators to justice. | Careful consideration of the references and sources. Thorough and strong analysis. |

**Vitoshka 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study (comparative examination)</th>
<th>Historical discussion</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyze case studies to illustrate the three types of honor killings—murder, forced suicide and murder for a fabricated offense. Analyzes the factors that permit and encourage honor killing.</td>
<td>To determine the role of religion (Islam, Christianity and Sikhism) in honor killing.</td>
<td>It juxtaposes the cultural roots of honor assaults with current data on their occurrence, focusing on cases that do not fit the patterns and motives traditionally attributed to honor killing</td>
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<tr>
<th>Iraq</th>
<th>Turkey</th>
<th>Pakistan</th>
<th>Syria</th>
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<tr>
<td>15 case studies</td>
<td>Gender discrimination and religious perceptions, conventionally accepted as explanations for honor killing, are not the only and most significant factors behind this phenomenon but rather, that poverty, political structure and insecurity, and lack of appreciation for human life play a big role in it. Significant factors, such as financial gain, covering up crimes, achieving forced marriages, and attempts to preserve an ethnic identity are found to motivate and promote honor killing.</td>
<td>Honor killings penalize as unacceptable is well illustrated by excerpts from religious scriptures. Due to the strong connection between financial realities and honor killings, formal legislation should aim to eliminate the opportunity for conducting monetary transactions in relation to honor crimes such as disinheritance of perpetrators and policies that prohibit dowry to be given to husband also recommended.</td>
<td>Using other theoretical paradigms such as feminisms and conflict theory may provide a stronger explanation of the case studies that was used. Comparative examination of the data gave strength to the analysis. It depend on secondary data not primary so this may affect the validity of the data. There was no information on how the qualitative data were analyzed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Gender discrimination and religious perceptions, conventionally accepted as explanations for honor killing, are not the only and most significant factors behind this phenomenon but rather, that poverty, political structure and insecurity, and lack of appreciation for human life play a big role in it. Significant factors, such as financial gain, covering up crimes, achieving forced marriages, and attempts to preserve an ethnic identity are found to motivate and promote honor killing. | Honor killings penalize as unacceptable is well illustrated by excerpts from religious scriptures. Due to the strong connection between financial realities and honor killings, formal legislation should aim to eliminate the opportunity for conducting monetary transactions in relation to honor crimes such as disinheritance of perpetrators and policies that prohibit dowry to be given to husband also recommended. | Using other theoretical paradigms such as feminisms and conflict theory may provide a stronger explanation of the case studies that was used. Comparative examination of the data gave strength to the analysis. It depend on secondary data not primary so this may affect the validity of the data. There was no information on how the qualitative data were analyzed |
| Honour killings in Pakistan under Theoretical, Legal and Religious Perspectives An Analytical Study of Honour killings Abuse and Disconnecting Islam from This Ancient Brutal Tradition Zia Ullah 2010 | qualitative method (case study) with the supplementary help of quantitative method | To discuss the idea of “honour killings” by looking at trends and patterns in this kind of homicides in Pakistan. Explores what legal and judicial obstacles stand in the way of putting an end to the abuse of killing women in the name of honour. Secondary statistical data from Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP] and focus on the time period from 2004 to 2009 Document and books were also used. | Pakistan | The statistics of Pakistan regarding “honour killings” show that only Muslims families are not committing this crime in the society. Double standards of domestic laws trigger the phenomena of “honour killings” in Pakistan Government of Pakistan wants to remain away from the private and familial sphere of the society Patriarchy permits the females’ male kin to choose their fates. There is need for practical initiatives to exempt Qiyas and Diyat ordinance for the “honour killing” crimes, so that no family member could compound the crime. | Based his analysis on statistic from one institution in Pakistan, which may be inaccurate or incomplete. Based his qualitative analysis on secondary data sources without mentioning why he chose these sources, their reliability or they may be out of date. |
APPENDIX 4

A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on victims’ family members - A Palestinian family perspective

University of Manchester, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work

Participant Information Sheet

You have been invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take some time to read the following information and talk about it with others if you wish. The information provided below will hopefully give you a good understanding of what the research is about and how you could help. There are three people from The University of Manchester involved in this research project; Shaun Speed, Dawn Edge and Salam Alkhatib. If you want anything to be explained you can call of Salam by email at Salam.Alkhatib@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk. Please take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The study aims to understand the effects of honour killings on the families of victims and to identify the strategies that may help the families that experience honour killing to deal with their emotional and social stressors. And also aims to explore the role of mental health professionals in reducing the impact of honour killing. It is hoped that the findings from this project will inform decision and health policy makers of the voice of families. It is hoped that the findings may
help to reduce the incidence of these crimes against women and will help in improving the quality of women’s services in healthcare settings.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because someone in your family has been a victim of honour killing and because we want to understand how these crimes affect the families of the victim.

Do I have to take part?

No. The decision to take part is entirely up to you and whether or not you agree to participate it will not be discussed with anyone. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen if I agree to take part?

If you decide to take part in this study you will be given the choice of taking part in an individual interview. The time and location of the interviews will be organised according to your preferences. The interview will involve questions about the emotional and social effects of honour killings on the victims’ families. The whole interview should take about one to two hours.

The interview will be tape-recorded with your permission so that we can ensure that we have recorded your ideas accurately when we write them up. If you would not like to be recorded we will just take notes. If you do agree to be recorded you can ask for the recorder to be turned off at any point. If you decide
after the interview that you said things you would rather were not included in the study or you would like to add something to what you have already said you can telephone Salam and she will remove anything you are not happy with from the transcript of the interview and you will not be asked why.

What do I do if I want to take part?

If you want anything to be explained you can contact Salam by email at Salam.Alkhatib@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk or you can call her at the Psycho-Social counselling Centre for Women on 022750895. Then you will be given this information sheet which you can keep and you will be asked to sign a consent form but you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The study is being funded by the Ford Foundation. The School of Nursing Midwifery and Social Work is organising the study. Dr Shaun Speed and Dr Dawn Edge are leading the study and Salam Alkhatib is the chief investigator of the study.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. You will not be identified in any way. Code numbers will be used on all study documents and all identifying details will be removed from the transcripts. The recordings
will be kept in an encrypted file and the code for this will only be known by the study team. The recordings will be erased after 4 years and the transcripts (which will only have code numbers on them) will also be kept for 10 years.

The data from the study will be processed by computer in accordance with the University of Manchester’s registration under the Data Protection Act 1998. Any information gathered will be used for research purposes only.

Who has reviewed the study?

The University of Manchester, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work research ethics committee has reviewed this proposal and has approved the procedures.

What will happen with the results of the study?

At the end of the study the findings will help to inform how and what we provide to the families of honour killing victims. Having full understanding of local information related to honour killings such as causes, social context and people’s perception of violence will help improve mental health professionals’ skills in reducing such crimes and assisting the victims with safety plans. The findings of this research may help to inform the future mental health professionals training, strategies and models for services provision related to domestic violence and crimes of honour as well as providing services for bereaved families where necessary.

The results will be written up for publication in professional and academic journals, conference posters and/or oral conference presentations. However no participants will be identified within these publications.
What are the risks to me if I decide to participate in the study?

During the interview, you may want to talk about your own reactions and feelings about what happened and this may be difficult for you. The researcher and chief investigator will be trained to deal sensitively with these issues and will ensure that you are safe and supported during the interview. You may also wish to continue talking to someone about what happened to you and the research team can help you get support from social workers who work in organisations that provide emotional and social counselling and treatment if you want or need this.

What are the benefits for me if I decide to participate in the study?

You will have a chance to share your experiences and contribute to the knowledge of honour killings and how these affect the families

Who should I contact if I require further information about this study?

If you have any questions about the study or taking part please call Salam on at the Psycho-Social counselling Centre for Women on 022750895 or by email at Salam.Alkhatib@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

What shall I do if I have any complaints or concerns about the study process or procedures once I have agreed to take part?

In the first instance you can contact SalamAlkhatib to discuss your concerns. If you are not satisfied with this then you can contact Dr.Shaun Speed in School of Nursing
Midwifery and Social Work, University of Manchester who would be more than happy to discuss your concerns. He is contactable on +44 (0)161 306 7694 or by email Shaun.Speed@manchester.ac.uk.

If you cannot speak English you can call Dr. Muna Ahmead at her mobile (00972599992543) and she will be more than happy to discuss your concern and to pass your enquires to Dr. Shaun Speed.
APPENDIX 5

A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on victims’ family members - A Palestinian family perspective

University of Manchester · School of Nursing · Midwifery and Social Work

Consent Form – families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I confirm that I have been given a full and detailed description of the project and I am willing to take part in this research.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I also give my consent for audio recording during the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that any information I provide will be treated as confidential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I confirm that anonymous quotations from tape recordings may be used in publications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I confirm that I have one week to consider participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree the study to be published.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed........................................................................ Date........................................

Please write your name and address: below

.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

Researcher Signature

................................................................................................................................. Date........................................

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher file
APPENDIX 6

A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on victims’ family members- A Palestinian family perspectives
University of Manchester, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work

Consent Form – Health care Professionals

I confirm that I have been given a full and detailed description of the project and I am willing to take part in this research.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving a reason.

I also give my consent for audio recording during the interview.

I understand that any information I provide will be treated as confidential.

I confirm that anonymous quotations from tape recordings may be used in publications.

I confirm that I have one week to consider participation.

I agree the study to be published.

Signed........................................................................ Date...................................

Please write your name and address below:

..............................................................................................

..............................................................................................

Researcher Signature

................................................................. Date.................................

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher file
APPENDIX 7

Individual interviews sheet

**Research Title:**
A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on victims’ family members - A Palestinian family perspectives

**Note:**
This interview schedule is divided into two parts: **part (1)** explores the participants’ demographic data and **part (2)** for the individual interview data. To gain broad facts about honour killings and to identify in depth the emotional and social effects of these incidences on family life. In order to make the interview more relevant, the questions in **part (2)** have been concentrated on the study theme however, these may be changed, removed or added to, based on the participants’ responses during the interview.

**The interview will be run as follows:**
At the beginning of the interview, participants will be verbally reminded of the following points:

1. This interview is conducted as part of the data collection methods for a PhD research study which aims to identify the strategies that may help the families that experience honour killings to deal with their emotional and social stressors.
2. If you agree, the interview will be audio-taped and fully transcribed into text. These will then be documented in the results section of my PhD thesis, published as academic journal papers, conference posters and/or oral conference presentations.
3. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw any time without giving a reason.
4. Confidentiality and anonymity for your data will be assured throughout the study and after. This mean that none of your names will be mentioned in the transcripts and nobody will have access to the data except me and my supervisor. All tapes will be stored in a separate locked cupboard. The recordings will be erased after 4 years and the transcripts (which will have code numbers only on them) will also be kept for 10 years.
5. Please, if you do not feel comfortable answering any of the questions that question will be omitted and the discussion will move on.

6. The questions in the interview will be focused on the main topic of the study. However, these may be changed, removed, or added to, based on your responses as the interview discussion progresses.

**Note:** Participants will also be asked to provide their verbal and written approval regarding the above points before the interview starts.
APPENDIX 8

The roles of psychiatric nurse in helping the victims and families of honour killing- a Palestinian family perspective

University of Manchester, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work

Interview questions

Section one: Demographic

Date: ____________________

File Number: ______________________

Will you please provide the following information:

1- Age in years: _____________

2- Gender: Female [ ] Male[ ]

3- Residency:

Camp [ ] Village [ ] City [ ]
Town [ ] Other (please specify) [ ]

4- Civil status: Single [ ] Married [ ] Divorced [ ]
Widowed [ ] Others (e.g. engaged…)

5- Religion:

Muslim [ ] Christian [ ]
Other (please specify) ______________________

6- Educational Level:

Illiterate [ ] Primary school [ ] High school [ ]
Diploma [  ]  Bachelor degree [  ]  Masters degree or higher [  ]

7- Occupation: ________

**Socio-demographic characteristics of the family member:**

8- Characteristics of the family:

   Nuclear [  ]  Extended [  ]

9- Number of rooms in the home:______________

10- Number of people living in the home: ______________

11- What is your family’s average monthly income? ________

<p>| | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age (years) (months if &lt; 1yr)</td>
<td>Sex (M/F)</td>
<td>occupation</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Current status</td>
<td>Cause of death</td>
<td>Health status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alive</td>
<td>Died</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for your time and effort
APPENDIX 9

A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on Victims’ family members- A Palestinian family perspective
University of Manchester· School of Nursing· Midwifery and Social Work

Section two: Individual Interview questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductory question</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you please tell me briefly about yourself and your family?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions related to the events</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prop</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you please describe the event</td>
<td>What happened, when, where, how, the causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you please talk about the person who performed the event</td>
<td>Who is he, age, education, beliefs, personality, behaviours The role and the position in the family, the relation with the victim, any medical or mental history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you please talk about the victim</td>
<td>Who is she, age, education, beliefs, personality, behaviours, previous history of mental or physical problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who reported the event to police?</td>
<td>Family members, relatives, neighbours How Why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened with the person who performed the event after it happened</td>
<td>Stay home, stay in prison or free, how long stay in prison, how is his life after the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions related to the family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question</strong></td>
<td><strong>Prop</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| How did your family react to the events | Reaction of father, mother, sisters, brothers  
Their children if married or husband  
Type of reaction: Sad, depressed, or happy, or angry or relax (Why) |
| What impact did this event have on your family? | Negative impact: e.g. sadness, isolated, low self esteem and respect (Why)  
Positive impact: e.g. happy, proud of themselves, more respect from other people around (Why) |
| Did this event affect the life of your family in comparison with its life before the event? | If yes: how  
If no: how |
| How did your family cope with the event?? | If still not coping: how and why  
If coping well: how and why  
What type of coping mechanism do they use |
<p>| Did your family seek any emotional and | If yes: how, where, when, what kind of |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>social support</strong> or medical treatment after the event?</th>
<th>services they receive, how long they receive it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If no: why</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did the people around you interact with the event and your family after this incident?</th>
<th>Negative reaction: e.g. Reject the family, decrease their social interaction, no respect, anger... (Why)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive reaction: e.g. happy, support the family, more respect ....(Why)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question related to the participant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Question</strong></th>
<th><strong>Prop</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Could you tell me how was your relationship with the victim and the person who performed the event before the incident?</td>
<td>Good relation: how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bad relation: why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you talk about your reaction and feeling when you heard or saw the event</td>
<td>No reaction or feeling: Why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reaction: angry, happy, relax, depressed: why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did this event have an impact on your life?</td>
<td>If yes: how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If no: why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you tell me how do you cope and</td>
<td>Did he/she seek any psychotherapy or medical treatment, how, where, when?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handle the situation?</td>
<td>length· results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                                                                        | Use self coping mechanism: what are they???
| From your point of view what are the factors that may contribute to the | Social factors, political factors, tradition and customs, religion, family factors, personal problems, financial factors .......... |
| occurrence of the incidence?                                            |                                                                          |
| From you experience what kind of measures can be taken by medical health |                                                                          |
| professionals and mental health professionals to deal with honour killing |                                                                          |
| What would you tell other families who may face the same experience?     |                                                                          |
| What are your recommendations to prevent the occurrence of these incidents in Palestine |                                                                          |

Thank you for your time and effort
APPENDIX 10
Modified interview guide

Can you please tell me briefly about yourself and your family?
‘tell me about your day?’
‘tell me about yourself?’
Do you like to speak about your experience after the murder?
How did the people around you interact with the event and your family after this incident?
Do you like to speak more how this event affected the life of your family in comparison with its life before the event?
From your point of view what are the factors that may contribute to the occurrence of the incidence?
What could you tell other families who may face the same experience?
From you experience what kind of measures can be taken by medical health professionals and mental health professionals to deal with honour killing

Later on more questions added such as:
could you please tell me more about the female relatives’ personality?‘how would you describe the deceased?’

Participants reported that their poverty played major role in motivating the crime, so I also asked interviewees’ opinions on this and how they explained the link between poverty and the murder.

I asked more question about their experience after the murder such as their immediate experience after the killing and how this affected them.

What happened with the person who performed the event after it happened?
How did his jail affected you?

Interviewed families talked that the perpetrators did not jail for long time. Do you like to talk about your opinion about this.
APPENDIX 11

A Grounded Theory Study of the emotional and social effects of honour killing on Victims’ family members - A Palestinian family perspective

University of Manchester - School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work

Section two: Interview questions

Health care professionals, mental health professionals and NGOs representatives (Who have dealt with honour killings cases)

Please answer the following open-ended questions in as much length and details as you wish:

Open-ended questions:

1- Can you please briefly tell me about yourself?

2- How do you perceive honour killings?
   - Do you think that honour killing is a violent practice?
   - Do you think that honour killing is a cultural or religious practice?

3- What experience have you had with working with honour killings?

4- From your experience or point of view:
   -- What are the main motivations or reasons of honour killings?
   -- Do external factors as gossip and rumours have impact of honour killing
   -- Do you think that external factors (i.e. community pressure, rumours have higher impact on honour killing than internal factors (i.e. family support of killing)?
   -- How many cases of honour killings have you dealt with or heard about it?
-- How do you and your organisation tackle honour killings or what kind of services does your organization provide to deal with honour killings?

5- Do you offer support to other family members as sisters or mothers?

6- Can you tell me about the main concerns of these families?

7- Do you think it’s helpful to work with these families?

8- What kind of measures can be taken by medical health professionals and mental health professionals to deal or to prevent honour killings?

9- What kind of measures can be taken to help people’s awareness to honour killings?

10- Do you think the police and authority figures are doing enough effort to deal with honour killings in Palestine?

11- Is there anything you want to add?

Thank you for your participation in the study
APPENDIX 12

Ethical approval
Our Ref: HS/MH

Mrs Salam I. A. Alkhatib
PhD Student
Jean McFarlane Building
School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work
University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

28 October 2009

By email and internal post.

Re: The role of psychiatric nurse in helping the victims and families of crimes of honour – a Palestinian family perspective.

Proposal Number: 09/1026/NMSW

Dear Mrs Alkhatib,

Thank you for the clarifications and amendments to the above study as requested by the Research Ethics Committee.

I am of the opinion that no major concerns or objections are evident of an ethical nature. Therefore on behalf of the Committee and taking Chair’s Action, I am happy to grant full ethical approval.

During the progress of the study please inform the Committee of any changes or amendments that may be necessary.

On completion of the study would you please provide the Committee with a “Completion of Study Report”.

Direct Contact: Jean McFarlane Building, University Place
In order to arrange University Insurance Cover please forward the completed Insurance Form (enclosed) along with your Research Proposal and a copy of this letter to the Purchasing Office at the address printed on the form.

Best wishes for your study.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Howard Shilton  
Chair: School Research Ethics Committee

cc. Shaun Speed

Enc.
### APPENDIX 13

**Demographic of Family Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Number of family members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FM1-F</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM2-F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM3-F</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM4-F</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM5-F</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Married – separated</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM6-F</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM7-F</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM8-M</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Daily paid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM9-F</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eldest sister F</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd sister</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd sister</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th sister</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM10-F</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>FM11-F</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Single</td>
<td>Daily paid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Member</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>Relationship Status</td>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Living Arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM12-M</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Married to another wife</td>
<td>Daily paid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM13-F</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>None</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>FM14-M</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>Basic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Daily paid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM15-F</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM16-M</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Daily paid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM17-M</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>Middle</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>FM18-F</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Voluntary work</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
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<td>FM19-F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FM: Family member, M: Male, F: female

Number of family small (1-5)/ medium (6-10)/ large ≥10
Income: low (earning less than 1.25$ per day (Oxford Poverty and Human development Initiative, 2010)
**APPENDIX 14**

**Example of a memo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memos interview 10</th>
<th>Initial code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causes of honour killing:</td>
<td>Feeling powerless because of poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families mentioned that they lost the support from others because they were perceived as powerless and perpetrators got the support because they were strong financially and politically... one of the most meanings I observed on those families which needs more analysis to understand the reason of such belief and if it is just a rationalization of killing??</td>
<td>Feeling powerless because of having no relation with authority figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So how poverty did affected poor people position inside the society?</td>
<td>People support powerful persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did people react to gossip against rich people?</td>
<td>After the murder:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any differences between community’s reaction to accusation of infidelity between poor and rich? What else could affect their reaction?</td>
<td>Lack of community support because of poverty and powerlessness of the families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memos about difficulties families faced after murder: Few families reported that close knit community did not support them after murder because they were poor, so to what extent this is accurate? What else could lead to community rejection? What about gossip and reputation. I have to consider these in the following interviews</td>
<td>Community rejection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 15

Effect of murder in *NVivo*
APPENDIX 16: Emotional effects of honour killing in *Nvivo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Created On</th>
<th>Created By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>destroyed psychologically</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/10/2010 20:2</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 24/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devalue people around them</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>18/10/2010 20:2</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 18/10.</td>
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<tr>
<td>did not know what to do</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18/10/2010 18:0</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 19/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did not want to visit victim’s grave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19/10/2010 23:5</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does not care about people perspective o</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14/09/2010 12:2</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 16/09.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excessive thinking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05/08/2010 21:1</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 19/10.</td>
</tr>
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<td>expecting the negative</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>07/08/2010 23:4</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 08/09.</td>
</tr>
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<td>extended family anger at family for killing v</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17/10/2010 21:5</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 17/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family admire and honoured by victim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16/09/2010 13:1</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 17/09.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family blamed each others for killing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21/09/2010 01:1</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 21/09.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family blamed grandfather for killing</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>21/09/2010 01:1</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 21/09.</td>
</tr>
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<td>family consider murder family matter</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>20/10/2010 19:0</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family did not interact to not be blamed</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>20/10/2010 19:0</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father keeps his relation with perpetrator</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>17/10/2010 18:3</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 17/10.</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21/09/2010 01:5</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 21/09.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fear</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27/08/2010 16:0</td>
<td>PC3 24/10.</td>
</tr>
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<td>fear at night</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>16/09/2010 22:1</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 17/09.</td>
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<td>fear of losing their mind</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>fear of perpetrator</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 18/10.</td>
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<td>feeling no one safe same experience as th</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 17/09.</td>
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<td>feeling of injustice</td>
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<td>PC3 20/10.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>19/10/2010 12:2</td>
<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
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<td>female family members could be at risk of</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 26/10.</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 24/10.</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 24/10.</td>
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<td>female sister suppress their anger at perp</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>frustrated</td>
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<td>going to grave to tell her mother about peo</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>ALKHATIB 20/10.</td>
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<td>PC3 24/10.</td>
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<td>insomnia, dreaming, night terrors</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>27/08/2010 16:0</td>
<td>PC3 24/10.</td>
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<td>keeping contact with deceased through vili</td>
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<td>27/08/2010 16:1</td>
<td>PC3 20/10.</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 17

Example of open coding

Interviewee: her father was one of my cousins... I am the closest one to the father in the terms of blood relationship... They considered me the head of the family...one day we surprised by information that said: one of our daughters (sense of ownership by extended family) was pregnant (reason of murder) and because I am the eldest male in the family I have to think carefully before making any decisions (family structure responsibilities and ties) I am the oldest one who should not act arbitrarily... It was difficult time. It just likes a strong slap

I: Can you explain how it was difficult to you?

Interviewee: I was informed about her pregnancy before her father... I was the second from the family members who knew about it (head of clan value in family/ has power more than fathers). At first, my nephew knew about her pregnancy from his youngest sister (rumours and gossip within extended family), he was young, reckless giddy boy so I asked him to relax until things unfold. Her brother was to be married and they had a party at their home. I wanted everything to go smooth till he got married (sense of responsibility by head of clan)... So I decided to go to the party to see on my eyes if she was pregnant or not (gathering evidence and searching for verification). You know how it’s difficult to a man in my position go to women’s party and to look at women. Everyone will talk about me (cultural segregation between women and men/thinking of people’s perspective on him) and despite all of this I went there and saw her... The problem that she was pregnant and wore a very tight dress and no one suspected or questioned that ... It’s weird to me (questioning if nuclear family truly knew about pregnancy or just denied it)

(Interview with extended family member)