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Iranian women's perception of intimate partner abuse in the UK

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield

February 2020

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude toward several individuals who provided me with continuous support to pursue my PhD. I would like to thank my supervisors Professor Nigel King and Dr Susie Kola-Palmer for their guidance and support with this thesis. I especially like to thank Nigel King for providing me with endless valuable feedback.

My sincerest gratitude is towards my husband who stayed beside me in every step of my journey. Arash, thank you for your infinite love and devotion as well as your endless support that gave me strength and confidence to fulfil my dream. You have stayed up with me day and night and made sure that my life was stress-free by making me the greatest coffees. Your encouragement remains irreplaceable, and I wish that one day, I will be able to do the same for you.

This thesis would not be complete without the special thanks to my family. I am very grateful to my mum Farah for her belief in me and for keeping me going when the task seemed overwhelming. She has inspired me in so many ways and my brother Navid for his enthusiasm and for keeping my spirits up throughout. And the loving support of my in-laws including grandma and Farzaneh. I would like to thank my mother and father in-law for their late-night barbeques that was always a booster! I am also thankful to my cousin Ashkan and his wife Elham for their active role in advertising my study in the Iranian communities in London.

Notes of gratitude are owed to Dash (Refugee centre in Huddersfield), Islamic Centre of England, Iranian Embassy, and North London Iranian church for giving me access for recruiting Iranian women. Finally, this study would not have been possible without the participation of Iranian and non-Iranian women who helped me with the development of this thesis.

Abstract

Though the understanding of the problem of intimate partner abuse (IPA) has grown over the years, limited focus has been given to the voices of minority women and their perception of IPA. The present research aim was to understand how Iranian women in the UK perceive IPA by men towards women, and what influences such perceptions. It was decided that a more comprehensive understanding of the construction of Iranian women's perception of IPA can be sought through mixed-methods research. Therefore, the present research took an explanatory mixed-method approach where the quantitative data helped to guide a purposeful sampling for the qualitative phase. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was taken in which the quantitative study (phase one) used questionnaires to identify the predicting socio-demographic variables that influenced women's perception of IPA before comparing the Iranian and non-Iranian sample together. Phase one was subsequently followed by the qualitative study (phase two) where 16 Iranian women were purposefully selected to be interviewed about a vignette using semi-structured interviews.

The regression analysis showed that the socio-demographic characteristics of marital status, education, religion, income, and ethnicity are able to predict the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. Furthermore, Iranian women have significantly better legal knowledge of IPA than non-Iranian women in the UK. However, Iranian women also have significantly more accepting attitudes towards male violence than non-Iranian women in the UK. Phase two of the research indicated that Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles minimised IPA and had victim blaming attitudes. The findings from phase one and phase two suggest that although certain socio-demographic variables are able to predict the perception of IPA, Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles have a fundamental role in shaping their understanding of IPA.

The mandate of this research is not to ostracize women of other cultures or to cast judgement for or against beliefs, but to better understand how culture and social interactions can influence the perception of IPA. This understanding is critical for identifying women who are at most risk of IPA in the UK. Future implications for practice and research are outlined in the present research.

Chapter 1: Introduction and literature review

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. In this chapter, areas where further research is required is highlighted by drawing on the existing body of literature about IPA against women. By doing so, the present research was able to track the development of the research question, aim, and objectives, most notably through a feminist perspective.

1.1. Introduction

Intimate partner abuse (IPA) is an international concern (Barnes, 2001; Jahanfar & Malekzadegan, 2007; Rogers, 2020) that takes place amongst all races (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995; Jonge, 2016) and cultures (Singh & Singh, 2008). It is a serious problem that could lead to adverse psychological consequences such as anxiety (Spencer et al., 2019), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Resnick, Kilpatrick, Dansky, Saunders, & Best, 1993, Pole, Gone, & Kulkarni, 2008), and depression (Bukowski, et al., 2019). As more research has been conducted and published in the area of IPA, more evidence has surfaced to suggest that the context and the severity of abuse by men against women make IPA not only a public health problem (World Health Organization, 1997), but also a gender problem (McHugh, 2005; White, Yuan, Cook, & Abbey, 2012; Smagur, Bogat, & Levendosky, 2017). To this date, The Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2016, 2017, 2019) continues to report higher female victimization of IPA than men in the UK. In the UK alone, it is estimated that one in four women become victim of IPA at some point in their lifetime (Women's Aid Federation, 2001; The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey [NISVS], 2010).

Comparison studies show that IPA takes a different form amongst ethnic minority women compared with women from the host country (Mechanic & Pole, 2013; Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). Ethnic minority groups are defined as groups of people who ethnically differ from the majority or the dominant group (Bhopal, 2015). At the end of World War 2, ethnic minority groups accounted for less than 0.1% of the population in England (Bhopal, 2015). However, the minority groups' population has since risen to 9.5% in England and Wales (Office for National Statistics, 2019a). Femi-Ajao (2018) used the term 'minority women' to refer to women who belong to non-English communities in the UK. For the present study, the

researcher opted for Femi-Ajao's (2018) definition of minority women to foster consistency of terminology throughout the research.

In a recent study, Gangoli, Bates, and Hester (2019) suggested that in common with white English women, ethnic minority women's experiences of IPA is complicated by their social status, patriarchal norms, and legal systems in the UK. However, minority women are more vulnerable to specific forms of abuse that are specific to that culture such as female genital mutilation and honour-based violence (Gangoli et al., 2019). There are other barriers for minority women that add to the complexity of IPA amongst them (Burman & Chantler, 2005). Cowburn, Gill and Harrison (2005) illustrated that leaving abusive relationships does not end abuse for minority women who may be wary of accessing mainstream services due to cultural barriers. For instance, Gangoli et al. (2019) also found that minority women report less incidents of sexual abuse compared to White British women. Gangoli et al. (2019) concluded that this is most likely due to the cultural taboos and the shame that comes with the disclosure of sexual abuse.

Cultural prohibitions can prevent women from reporting IPA (Mechanic & Pole, 2013). Jamshidimanesh, Soleymani, Ebrahimi, and Hosseini (2013) provide a good example of cultural prohibitions in their pilot study of IPA amongst Iranian women. Jamshidimanesh et al. (2013) found that Iranian women did not respond to the question about sexual abuse in their questionnaire. As a result, the question of sexual abuse was eliminated, and the questionnaire was modified in their study. Although Jamshidimanesh et al. (2013) were unable to gather data on sexual abuse against Iranian women, their study provided valuable insight into the complex nature of IPA in Iranian women. Jamshidimanesh et al.'s (2013) study was conducted by Iranian women *for* Iranian women, yet, it was faced with cultural barriers that prevented women from discussing certain aspects of IPA. Fontes (1993) encountered similar difficulties when she tried to interview Puerto Rican women who had been sexually abused. Fontes (1993) concluded that oppression creates many cultural barriers for women which prevents them from discussing their experience of abuse.

Darvishpour (1999) suggested that migration to the West can help minority women overcome the stigmas and cultural taboos that are attached to them. According to Darvishpour's (1999) findings, Iranian women who lived in Sweden were able to build new lives in their new

country of residence once they felt that they had become free of stigma and cultural taboos. However, in a more recent study of Iranian women in the UK, Aghtae (2016) found that the cultural expectations and gender roles follow Iranian women irrespective of their country of residency and continues to build barriers to leaving an abusive relationship. Such contradicting findings highlight the need for further research.

According to Mechanic and Pole (2013), researchers should try and conceptualize the experience of minority women through cultural, structural, and institutional inequalities in the form of oppression. One way to achieve this is by understanding women's perception of what constitutes IPA (Torres, 1991; Dhairyawan, Tariq, Scourse, & Coyne, 2013; Monterrosa, 2019). Peek-Asa, García, McArthur, and Castro (2002) argued that a comprehensive understanding of the perception of IPA can help in identifying women who are at most risk of IPA. Taherkhani, Negarandeh, Simbar and Ahmadi (2017) found that beliefs and attitudes of Iranian women directly or indirectly, through affecting individual's perception of IPA, played an important role in their help-seeking behaviour. Women's perception of IPA can be shaped by the acceptance of patriarchy (Valdovinos & Mechanic, 2017) and the endorsement of traditional gender roles (Harris, Firestone, & Vega, 2005; Umubyeyi et al., 2016). Traditional gender roles dictate how men and women are expected to behave as women are expected to be feminine and soft, whilst men are expected to be masculine and aggressive (Altenburger et al., 2017). Such expectations shape the perception of IPA against women by leading women to believe that they must be obedient when men show aggression towards them (Danesh et al., 2016). Kar (2000) emphasised that in countries like Iran, violence against women is embedded to such extent that women are led to believe that physical violence is the only act of IPA (Kar, 2000).

Cross-cultural research suggests that IPA is more common in societies with stronger adherence to patriarchy (Levinson, 1989) as it is deeply ingrained into cultural attitudes and practices (Robinson, 1995). Given the complexity of IPA, Reddy (2008) suggested that by categorising violence against women as primarily cultural, the position of IPA against women within the wider spectrum of gender violence may unintentionally be ignored and result in lesser protection of minority women. In fact, women's perception of IPA can also be influenced by various socio-demographic variables (see Bent-Goodley, 2005; Ricks, Cochran, Arah, Williams & Seeman, 2016) including age (Kingston et al., 2016), education

(Hamzeh, Farshi, & Laflamme, 2008), and income (Copp, Giordano, Longmore, & Manning, 2019).

There are many ways to address IPA amongst minority women and one way to do this is by conducting a group comparison study (Hong, Benet-Martinez, Chiu & Morris, 2003; Lacey, West, Matusko, & Jackson, 2016). It is suggested that studies of group comparison not only identify the influencing variables that can shape perceptions, but they can also help enrich knowledge on the similarities and the differences between the minority and majority groups (Hong et al., 2003; Mulawa, Yamanis, Balvanz, Kajula, & Maman, 2016). Additionally, comparing the perception of IPA can help the researchers establish how serious the studied groups view different types of IPA (Haynes, 2016). Previously, comparison studies of Iranians and non-Iranians have proven to be successful in capturing the similarities and differences between two ethnic groups in Sweden (see Daryani et al., 2005) and in the UK (Furnham, Shahidi, & Baluch, 2002).

1.2. Literature review

This section presents a detailed review of the English and Farsi literature in relation to IPA in Iranian and non-Iranian women. It was important that literature in both languages was studied to ensure that all valuable findings from previous studies were considered and any gaps were identified before conducting the present research. This section will endeavour to demonstrate how patriarchal systems promote violence against women by highlighting the social and cultural aspects of IPA.

1.2.1. What is already known and understood about IPA

Over the years, scholars have used different terms such as intimate partner abuse (Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2008; Mills, 2009), intimate partner violence (Stark, Buzawa, & Buzawa, 2012; Barrett, Fitzgerald, Stevenson, & Cheung, 2020), gender-based violence (Masanet & Dhaenens, 2019), domestic abuse (MacQueen, 2016), and domestic violence (Goodmark, 2013; Motz, 2014) to refer to co-occurring abuse in an intimate relationship. Considering that the terms domestic violence and domestic abuse can encompass family abuse such as child or elder abuse in addition to partners abuse (World Health Organization, 2012), the present research decided to adopt a more specific term to refer to abuse of one partner by another in an intimate relationship. Intimate partner violence denotes physical violence alone (Nouri et al., 2012), whereas intimate partner abuse (IPA) is inclusive of physical and non-physical forms of co-occurring abuse (Mechanic et al., 2008). IPA is generally a collective term used to describe a pattern of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse of the current or previous partner in an intimate relationship (World Health Organization 2012; Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Pun, Tjomsland, Infanti, & Darj, 2020). Therefore, the present research will use *IPA* to refer to co-occurring abuse between intimate partners, and *domestic violence* to refer to any abuse that includes IPA and family abuse.

Despite the considerable amount of research on the topic of IPA, it continues to be one of the most pressing public health problems facing women in the UK (McLaughlin, O'carroll, & O'connor, 2012; Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2020) and elsewhere in the world (Devries et al., 2010; Fotheringham, Wells, & Goulet, 2020). IPA is a global problem (Rogers, 2020) that is greatly influenced by the customs and cultures of each community (Robinson, 1995); therefore, no single strategy can be adopted to resolve issues of IPA universally (Golchin, Hamzehgardeshi, Hamzehgardeshi, & Ahoodashti, 2014). In the UK, one in four women

become a victim of IPA at some point in their life (Women's Aid Federation, 2001; NISVS, 2010). In addition, two women lose their lives to IPA each week by their current or former partner in the UK (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2018). It is understood that IPA is even more common in patriarchal societies (Levinson, 1989) and households (Golchin et al., 2014).

This makes IPA a global gendered problem that is shaped by social and cultural context of a woman's life (Dutton, 1993; Singh & Singh, 2008). As Robinson (1995) pointed out, IPA is a violation of women's rights. Shen (2011) stated that cultural beliefs and values rooted in patriarchy force women to tolerate IPA as they are told that IPA is a private family affair. Such patriarchal beliefs present barriers to help seeking in minority women who experience IPA (Shen, 2011). IPA emerges out of social injustice and the structured relations of gender inequality (Dobash & Dobash 1998; Varcoe, 2008; Davies et al., 2009) which creates barriers to social changes (Kaschak, 2012). Gender inequality in the form of cultural context highlights the poor social and institutional response to this issue (AIUK, 2018). Therefore, gender inequality must be recognised as a social problem to aid the institutionalised collaboration between different sectors in protecting women from IPA (Umubyeyi et al., 2016).

It is extremely difficult for women who then find themselves with an abusive partner to recognize and acknowledge the abuse (Mahoney, 1991). Therefore, it is vital to develop a good understanding of what women perceive as IPA to identify those who are more at risk of victimization (Torres, 1991; Dhairyawan et al., 2013; Mechanic & Pole, 2013; Monterrosa, 2019). As Gorey and Leslie (1997) put it, the wide discrepancies in the prevalence of IPA against women reflects how IPA is defined in different societies. Yet, limited knowledge exists about conceptual variations in defining IPA (Ahmad, Smylie, Omand, Cyriac, & O'Campo, 2017). Therefore, it is important to obtain a definition of what counts as IPA, and to whom it applies to before any research on IPA can be conducted (Tizro, 2013). On the other hand, the role of socio-demographic variables in shaping women's perception of IPA should not be ignored (see Bent-Goodley, 2005; Ricks, Cochran, Arah, Williams & Seeman, 2016).

1.2.1.1. UK's definition of IPA

In 2003, the Home Office (2003a, p.6) defined IPA as “any violence between current and former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse”. In line with this, the present research included both physical and non-physical forms of violence perpetrated by men towards women in an intimate relationship. However, further changes were made to the UK’s definition of IPA in 2012 when coercive and controlling behaviour was highlighted (Home Office, 2012). Since then, Home Office (2012) has changed the definition of IPA to “any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality”. Therefore, the present study broadly adopted the Home Office (2012) definition of IPA wherein five types of IPA including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse were considered.

Given common occurrence of stalking in abusive relationships (Walker & Meloy, 1998; Woodlock, 2017; Acquadro Maran, & Varetto, 2018), the present study also recognised stalking as a form of IPA. Home Office (2020b) defined stalking as a pattern of unwanted and obsessive behaviours that are intrusive. Stalking includes watching or following a person without the person’s knowledge (The Crown Prosecution Service [CPS], 2018). The most recent definition of physical abuse by Home Office (2020) includes any physical contact with the intention of harming the other person. Financial abuse is described as restricting the person’s access to any financial means including food and clothing, whilst, emotional abuse is defined as verbal assaults including humiliation and intimidation (Home Office, 2020a). Controlling or coercive behaviour refer to a pattern of repeated behaviours that are designed to intimidate and frightened a person (Home Office, 2012). Further detail on the statutory guidance for IPA will be explained in the next section.

1.2.1.2. UK's legal system and IPA

IPA (formally referred to as domestic violence) has evolved over decades to reach its current definition in the UK (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2019b). The beginning of the 21st Century saw a major overhaul of the sexual offence legislation in England and Wales when the Sexual Offence Act 2003 made new provisions to sexual offences. The Act which came into effect from May 2004, recognised marital rape as a crime under Section 1 of the Sexual

Offence Act 2003 (Home Office, 2003b). However, the amendments to the UK's legal system within the context of IPA was still in its infancy when the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Bill highlighted some of the gaps in the legal system (House of Lords, 2003). The Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Bill was concerned that the domestic violence was not a legally defined offence and was not separately recorded as a crime (Berman, Strickland, & Broadbridge, 2004). Although domestic violence could be recorded and prosecuted as threatening behaviour or assault, the police did not have to record the relationship between victim and offender which made it impossible to distinguishing between domestic crime statistics and other offences of violence (Berman et al., 2004). As a result, the Home Office published the *Safety and Justice* consultation paper which aimed to improve the legal protection available to the victims of IPA, and the response that they receive from the justice system (Musgrove & Groves, 2008).

The publication of the *Safety and Justice* consultation paper led to the introduction of the *Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004* by the Home Office in 2003. Instead of concentrating on domestic violence as whole, the government hoped that the act could set out plans to legally strengthen the rights of women, thus, assisting their access to legal support and protection against IPA (Musgrove & Groves, 2008). With the *Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004*, the government introduced new powers to enable both police and courts to deal more effectively with the perpetrators of IPA. This meant that under Section 10, the British police could arrest the perpetrators of IPA without an arrest warrant for assault or suspected assault (Musgrove & Groves, 2008). The act was welcomed by the general public; however, feminist groups argued that the act still had gaps when it came to protecting women. UK's law against marital rape was also under scrutiny for failing to enact appropriate rape legislation (see Munro & Kelly, 2009). One of the key arguments was that the act was still more focussed on domestic violence as a whole and failed to capture the full extent of IPA (see Ireland, 2005). Furthermore, the Act could only be of assistance to women seeking help via the criminal justice route and missed women who were failed by the police's response (Musgrove & Groves, 2008).

Nevertheless, the definition of IPA is ever-changing and evolving as time passed (ONS, 2019b). Following a campaign to amend the Harassment Act in 2012, the UK's parliament reformed the Act and created two new offences of stalking (Section 111) under the Protection

of Freedoms Act (2012). Under the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012), it was a criminal offence to a) pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment and stalking, and, b) to involve fear of violence, serious alarm, or distress (Strickland, 2017; CPS, 2018). Further changes took place in 2015 when the Serious Crime Act 2015 created a new offence of ‘Controlling or coercive behaviour’ to protect men and women in abusive relationships (CPS, 2017b). Although Home Office (2012) had previously recognised coercive behaviour as part of IPA, it was not legally acknowledged until 2015.

Under Section 76, any behaviour that stopped short of serious physical abuse in an intimate relationship but amounted to extreme psychological and emotional abuse could carry up to a maximum of 5 years’ imprisonment (Home Office, 2015a). In the same year, the Home Office (2015b) also recognised Revenge Pornography (disclosure of private sexual contents from an intimate relationship with the intent to cause distress) as an offence in England, Wales, and Scotland. Despite these changes, a recent study by Brady et al. (2020) demonstrated that there is still a gap in the system as the police tends to only relate stalking to IPA if the perpetrator has a history of prior police involvement. Brady et al. (2020) stressed that these assumptions by the police are examples of failures within our justice system that must be addressed to help victims of IPA.

Even with all the legal definitions of IPA, IPA’s features vary across cultures (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a; Etesamipour, 2012; Sikweyiya et al., 2020)(On that account, women’s response to IPA depends on their culture (Kasturirangan, Krishnan, & Riger, 2004) regardless of their country of residence (see Gill, 2004; Stockman et al., 2014). Therefore, an understanding of the context in which IPA occurs is an important element of any research (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a). Archer (2006) suggested that cultural variables have the most relevance when studying IPA. Thus, studies of group comparison not only tell us about how variables such as culture influence people’s choices and decisions (Hong, Benet-Martinez, Chiu, & Morris, 2003), these studies can also help enrich knowledge on the similarities and the differences between the two studied groups (Mulawa, Yamanis, Balvanz, Kajula, & Maman, 2016). It is therefore imperative to understand the cultural boundaries and the stigma that may emerge from the experience IPA when studying and comparing specific cultural groups (Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). Mechanic and Pole (2013) concluded that studies of IPA would benefit from conceptualizing the experiences of women of ethnic minority background

through the lenses of cultural inequalities expressed as oppression. However, cultural differences could be mistaken for deficits if the researchers are unaware and blind to these differences (Kalyanpur, 1998). This is called *cultural blindness*.

1.2.1.3. Cultural Blindness and IPA

Cultural blindness refers to the inability to comprehend how a concept can be viewed by a different culture because one's own culture is limiting his or her understanding to see the alternative interpretation (Schon, 1992). As Tizro (2013) stated, IPA manifests itself differently in different cultural settings. However, the majority of IPA research continue to ignore the importance of cultural contexts in women's experience of IPA (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a; White et al., 2012). Plaut, Thomas, and Goren (2009) referred to cultural blindness in research as an inadequate understanding of the differences between the minority and majority groups. For example, our Western values tell us that contacting the authorities and seeking formal support is the most appropriate form of help-seeking behaviour (Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). Yet, a study by Brabeck and Guzmán (2008) revealed that informal support system (i.e., family) can, in fact, be more effective for some women than seeking formal support (i.e., lawyer).

According to Mechanic and Ahrens (2019), cultural blindness in IPA research often fails to consider women's coping strategies and resilience as cultural strengths. Zakar, Zakar and Krämer (2012) noted that there are various coping strategies that women use to survive IPA. But these coping strategies are complex in cultures where violence against women is embedded in the social, political, and legal structures of society (Zakar et al., 2012). For instance, women from certain cultures may minimize IPA as a coping strategy to deal with the impact of abuse (Maschi, Viola, & Koskinen, 2015). The Minimization of IPA is not a weakness, rather, it is a cultural strength that helps women dissociate themselves from the trauma of IPA (Ting, 2010) and enhance their resilience (Himelein & McElrath, 1996).

Hooks (2014) would disagree with the focus on 'cultural strengths' and would argue that such string statement could lead to the exploitation of women by confusing endurance with transformation and resilience. In her book of *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*, Hooks (2014) highlighted that feminists acknowledge that Black women are victimized. Yet in the same breath, feminists praise Black women and label them as 'Strong Black Women'

for their strength to circumvent the damaging impacts of oppression by being strong. Hooks (2014) argued that this undermines the oppression of Black women by tying their strength to the way that they cope with oppression. Similar point was raised more recently by Davis and Jones (2020) who stated that the image of Strong Black Women in the United States has been perceived as a way to justify the oppression of Black women, thereby, denying them of their personhood. Therefore, scholars must be mindful when framing the strength of women. Stewart (2017, p.31) referred to the term of Strong Black Women as “superficial empowerment” which stops Black women from receiving any help because they are deemed to be strong and independent. It is worth noting that the notion of Strong Black Women is not limited to merely Black women in the United States. The contradicting literature highlights the need for all researchers to ensure that the image of Strong Black Women does not repeat in any other cultural studies.

Another major consequence of cultural blindness is that it can lead to under-developed measures of IPA (Campbell & Humphreys, 1993). According to White et al. (2012), under-developed measures of sexual abuse are failing to detect the nature and the scope of abuse against minority women as a result of cultural blindness. Under-developed measures have often been witnessed in Iranian studies where women have withdrawn from the study or have skipped questions about sexual abuse (see Ardabily et al., 2011; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). Schon (1992) suggested that there is a need for the professionals to recognise how their interactions and behaviour are influenced by their ethnicity, social class, and gender. In support of this, several scholars have found that self-awareness in researchers can be the first step to recognise cultural blindness when working with minority groups (Hanson, Lynch, & Wayman, 1990; Correa, 1992; Jacob, 1993; Chao, Wei, Good, & Flores, 2011). Hassouneh-Phillips (2001a) suggested that the only way to manage cultural blindness is by establishing the cultural basis of IPA in minority groups. For example, a group of Iranian researchers insisted that all IPA studies of Iranian women should develop their own questionnaire because modified questionnaires will not be able to capture all cultural aspects of IPA (see Nouri et al., 2012). In line with this, the current research will obtain a comprehensive account of IPA in the Iranian context to avoid the possibility of cultural blindness.

1.2.1.4. IPA in Iran

Women's rights activists have consistently raised concerns about violence against women in Iran (see Mir-Hosseini, 1999; Kar, 2000; Ebadi, 2019). IPA is conceptualized differently in Iran than other societies (Merghati-Khoei et al., 2015). As noted earlier, violence against Iranian women is rooted in patriarchy (Zand & Zand, 2008; Farhad, Naghibzadeh, Nouhi, & Rad, 2011; Maghsoudi Anaraki, & Boostani, 2018) and a male-dominated system (Kar, 2000; Tizro, 2013). Iranian women experience violence in their homes (Zand & Zand, 2008) and in their court system (Tizro, 2013). This suggests that the scope of violence against Iranian women is beyond this thesis. Therefore, it was decided to focus on the research question and include the relevant literature on IPA against Iranian women. Although IPA is a worldwide phenomenon, it consists of various definitions and rate of incidents in accordance with the culture of that society (Pournaghash-Tehrani, 2011).

For an Iranian woman, IPA is embedded in her culture (Pournaghash-Tehrani, 2011; Fasaie & Isari, 2012; Rahbari, Najmabadi, & Shariati, 2014; Zare et al., 2017), religious (Aghtaie, 2016), political views (Kar, 2000), and the patriarchal family structures (Lotf Abadi, Ghazinour, Nojomi, Richter, 2012b). Under Sharia Law, Iranian women are subjected to gender inequality by being classed as their father's, and later, their husband's property (Kar, 2000). This means that men in Iranian household can treat women as they please because men are perceived to be superior to women (Finnish Immigration Service, 2015; Motevaliyan et al., 2017). So, Moghissi (1999, 2016) called for more feminist research to help Iranian women's voice be heard. Feminist research is committed to producing knowledge and initiating social change (Ackerly & True, 2019) by considering how gender intersects with women's oppression (Letherby, 2003). Therefore, it is important that IPA in the context of Iran is well understood before any discussions about IPA against Iranian women can take place (Shams, Kianfard, Parhizkar & Mousavizadeh, 2020). The following sections will demonstrate how IPA is socially and legally defined under the patriarchal structure of Iran.

1.2.1.4.1. Definition of IPA in Iran

The definition of IPA can affect the conclusion that can be drawn about the prevalence, patterns, and the health consequences of IPA (Nicolaidis & Paranjape, 2009). Additionally, it can help identify what counts as IPA and to whom it might apply (Tizro, 2013). In Iran, there

are no laws to specifically addresses IPA (Moradian, 2009; Taherkhani, Negarandeh, & Farshadpour, 2020), hence, no comprehensive definition of IPA (Tizro, 2012).

In trying to understand IPA from women's own perspectives, Nicolaidis and Paranjape (2009) suggested that the definition of IPA is largely driven by one's background and experiences. Recent study by Shams et al. (2020) concluded that Iranian women are aware of the definition of IPA in Iran. However, a closer look at Shams et al.'s (2020) research paper reveals a few problems with their study. For example, Shams et al.'s (2020) study was unable capture the full definition of IPA amongst Iranian women. In their study, Shams et al. (2020) briefly discussed that Iranian women were aware that 'IPA is more than physical abuse'. However, Shams et al. (2020) failed to elaborate on their findings of what Iranian women defined as IPA. Another limitation with Shams et al.'s (2020) study is their data. According to Richards and Marcum (2014), an up-to-date research is important to ensure that the contemporary challenges that the researchers face in the society are highlighted. Even though Shams et al. (2020) published their study very recently, their data was obtained in 2014 and this brings more limitations. On the one hand, one could say that Shams et al.'s (2020) data cannot be labelled as out-dated since Iranian society continues to be as patriarchal in 2020 as it was in 2014. On the other hand, it could be argued that patriarchy is in transition in Iran (Moghadam, 2004) and Iranian women's definition of IPA could evolve and be different than it was several years ago. Either way, there is no way to be certain of this as Iranian study of IPA lack accurate and consistent data (Jahromi, Jamali, Koshkaki, & Javadpour, 2016).

Iran's failure to acknowledge IPA has resulted in scattered studies of IPA against Iranian women (Ghazizadeh, 2005; Faramarzi, Esmailzadeh, & Mosavi, 2005; Nojoumi, Aghaie, & Eslami, 2007). Another consequence of the lack of legal definition of IPA in Iran is that the researchers must rely on their own individual interpretation of IPA. As a matter of fact, Mousavi and Eshagian (2005) found themselves explaining their own definition of IPA to their Iranian participants before they could conduct their study about IPA. Mousavi and Eshagian (2005) stated that the meaning of IPA had not previously been explained to any of their Iranian participants. There is also a lack of Iranian definition for stalking (Kordvani, 2000). However, different elements of stalking such as threats and harassment are still punishable by law (Kordvani, 2000). Unable to focus on the full extent of IPA, the present review found that less attention has been paid to stalking as a form of IPA in Iranian studies

(see Tavoli et al., 2010; Asadi, Charandabi, Yavarikia, & Mirghafourvand, 2019). Iranian studies are more likely to focus on physical abuse (see Tavoli, Tavoli, Amirpour, Hosseini, & Montazeri, 2016), emotional abuse (see Vakili, Nadrian, Fathipoor, Boniadi, & Morowatisharifabad, 2010), and coercive behaviour (see Bahrami, 2014) as the main types of IPA. Financial abuse has also been placed as a subcategory of emotional abuse instead of having its own category of IPA (see Jahromi et al., 2016).

Considering that emotional abuse is the most common form of IPA in Iran (Nouri et al., 2012; Sheikhbardsiri et al., 2020), the current research felt that it was necessary to mention is that Iranian scholars use the term emotional abuse interchangeably with terms such as verbal abuse (see Lotf Abadi et al., 2012a; Ghahari et al., 2019), emotional-mental abuse (see Hajnasiri et al., 2016), and mental violence (see Hajian, Vakilian, Najm-abadi, Hajian, & Jalalian, 2014). Another inconsistency in the Iranian literature, is their definition of marital rape (Tizro, 2013). Marital rape constitutes a violation of a woman's human rights (Stafford, 2007) and is highly prevalent amongst victim of IPA (Bennice & Resick, 2003). However, very few words exist to describe different kinds of sexual harassments (Ghadimi, 2005) and there is a great deal of variability in how rape is defined in Farsi (Aghtaie, 2011). In the book of *International Approaches to Rape*, Aghtaie (2011) explains that terms such as *tajovoz jensi* (sexual attack) or *tarozi jensi* (sexual harassment) are used as synonyms for 'rape' in Iran. Other words such as *tarozi* and *azaari* which translate as 'bothering' and 'harassment' are also used with no reference to 'sexual' (Aghtaie, 2011). Such ambiguity can also be observed in Iranian scholars on rape. During this literature review, the researcher found that the Iranian scholars use the terms such as *azaari jensi*, *tajavoz jensi*, and *tarozi jensi* interchangeably to refer to rape.

Given the intensity of IPA amongst Iranian women (Hajnasiri, Gheshlagh, Sayehmiri, Moafi, & Farajzadeh, 2016), various Iranian websites have attempted to increase awareness by providing information about IPA and rape (see DW, 2020). As a concept, violence is easier to identify and to point to than it is to define (Potter, 1999). With no Farsi word for marital rape, these websites have turned their attention to what rape entails (see Mind, 2020). One website even encourages women to record the voice of the perpetrator as part of evidence to present in court (see Yasa, 2018). More recently, Tabesh (2020) from BBC Farsi attempted to bring clarity to the definition of 'rape' within the Iranian context in both Farsi and English.

Tabesh (2020) made a distinction between the three terminologies of *azaar jensi*, *tarozi jensi*, and *tajavoz*. According to Tabesh (2020), *azaar jensi* can be translated into sexual harassment, *tarozi jensi* as sexual assault, and *tajavoz* can be translated as rape.

The conflict in defining and translating rape in an Iranian context between an academic setting (e.g., Aghtaie, 2011) and one of the leading public services such as BBC (e.g., Tabesh, 2020) underlines the extent of this problem. As mentioned, Aghtaie (2011) refers to *tarozi jensi* as sexual harassment, whilst Tabesh (2020) interprets this term as sexual assault. It must be noted that the two terms of sexual harassment and sexual assault should be used with caution as there is a great difference between the two terms (Rainn, 2020). Rainn (2020) highlighted that sexual harassment generally violates civil laws (i.e., inappropriate sexual jokes), whilst, sexual assault refers to a sexual act that is legally classed as crime (i.e. unwanted sexual contact). According to Tizro (2013), such ambiguity in the definition of IPA has allowed Iranian men to use their own criteria to implement the law against women. Potter (1999) suggested that IPA's definition relies on the influence of culture. Therefore, a good understanding of IPA in the Iranian context is needed to be able to determine the cause of IPA and to develop ways that can help Iranian women (Hajnasiri et al., 2016). This leads the current literature review to the next section which discussed IPA in the Iranian context.

Despite the Iranian government's refusal to acknowledge the seriousness of IPA (Kar, 2000), the high rate of IPA against Iranian women cannot be hidden (Shams et al., 2020). With the cultural and religious boundaries creating obstacles for Iranian women (Haghi, 2018), IPA stands as a social issue that prevents women from having gender equality (Saberian, Atashnafas, & Behnam, 2004). Furthermore, IPA is treated as a 'silent topic' in Iran and women are expected to keep their marital affairs private (Amoakohene, 2004; Garrusi, Nakhaee, & Zangiabadi, 2008; Eftekhari et al., 2010). Therefore, as Tizro (2013) suggested, the patriarchal legal system and a long-established traditional culture means that IPA has its own variables in the Iranian society.

1.2.1.4.2.1. The experience of IPA

According to Ghazi Tabatabai et al. (2004), IPA is so common against Iranian women that 66% of them are subjected to at least one type of IPA during the first year of marriage. Yet,

the absence of official figures on IPA against Iranian women means that studies of IPA (including the present research) must rely on the findings from other scholars for figures of IPA. Bauru Census which is an official government agency has never conducted any studies on IPA and does not allow international organizations to have any involvement in studying IPA against Iranian women (Moradian, 2009). In 2001, the Iranian government conducted surveys on IPA against women in 28 provinces of Iran (Moradian, 2009). However, this data is not accessible on the internet and is only available for referencing (Minority Rights Group, 2019). A few studies have put the lack of access down to the government's intention to hide the extent of the problem (Tizro, 2012; Moradian, 2009; Hajnasiri et al., 2016). Nevertheless, the lack of official data is no reason for ignoring IPA. As Hajnasiri et al. (2016) put it, there is still enough evidence to suggest that IPA against Iranian women is prevalent.

IPA researchers continue to stress the importance of addressing the subtle, yet, difficult-to-measure dimensions of IPA such as emotional abuse (Arias, 1999; Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2008; Hegarty et al., 2013). Given that women who experience IPA often identify the pain of psychological abuse greater than the pain of physical abuse (Vitanza, Vogel, & Marshall, 1995), the gap in the literature about non-physical forms of IPA still exists (Brady, Reynolds, & Dreke, 2020; Towler, Eivers, & Frey, 2020). As mentioned earlier, there are no specific definitions of IPA (Aghtaie, 2011) and there is no law to define emotional abuse in Iran (Tizo, 2013). However, Iranian researchers tend to acknowledge emotional abuse when conducting studies of IPA (e.g., Bina, 2008; Khademloo, Moonesi, & Gholizade, 2013; Ghahari, 2019). In fact, Iranian studies tend to be more focussed on physical, verbal, and sexual abuse than any other form of IPA (e.g., Ghazi Tabatabai, Tabrizi, & Marjai, 2004; Vakili, et al., 2010; Nouri et al., 2012; Sheikhbardsiri, Raeisi, & Khademipour, 2020). For instance, Nouri et al. (2012) reported that the prevalence of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse is 60 %, 79.7%, and 32.9 %, respectively. Several other studies have also concluded that emotional abuse is the most common form of IPA in Iran (Narimani & Mohammadian, 2004; Bagherzadeh, Keshavarz, Sharif, Dehbashi, & Tabatabaei, 2008; Jamali & Javadpour, 2016; Jahromi et al., 2016). Jamali and Javadpour (2016) highlighted two reasons for the high prevalence of emotional abuse in Iran. Firstly, it would be difficult to provide hard evidence to prove emotional abuse in courts of law. Secondly, legal terms of assault are more explicit with respect to physical abuse towards women in Iran (Jamali & Javadpour, 2016).

Although it may seem that Iranian studies dismiss different aspects of IPA by focussing on a few types of IPA, it is important to note that they still provide valuable data regarding marital rape and sexual abuse amongst Iranian women. Iranian studies have consistently demonstrated that women tend to disengage with items regarding marital rape and sexual abuse in marriage (see Darvishpour, 1999; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). As mentioned earlier, Jamshidimanesh et (2013) found that Iranian women left the question about marital rape unanswered. Consequently, the questionnaire was modified, and the question was removed. However, in a different Iranian study by Ardabily et al. (2011) three questions from the Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (RTS2) questionnaire were removed. These questions were (1) he insisted that I engage in oral or anal sex (but did not use physical force); (2) he used force (such as hitting me, holding me down, or using a weapon) to make me engage in oral or anal sex; and (3) he used threats to make me engage in oral or anal sex. Although Ardabily et al. (2011) pointed to the cultural reasons for the removal of these three questions, they failed to explain the reason for keeping the remaining four questions of rape from RTS2 in their study. However, it is evident that out of seven questions of rape in RTS2, 3 were about oral/anal sex and 4 were about vaginal sex. This reveals that Ardabily et al. (2011) had only removed the questions about oral and anal sex. Such approach is not uncommon in Iranian studies as non-vaginal sexual practices are culturally identified as unacceptable sexual practices amongst Iranian women (Shirpak et al., 2008; Hashemi, Seddigh, Tehrani, Khansari, & Khodakarami, 2013). A key observation from these studies is that the researchers decide about how many items should be included about marital rape in each study.

Tizro (2013) noted that whilst financial abuse was reported by a considerable number of her Iranian participants, sexual abuse was reported by only a few Iranian women. Therefore, studies of marital rape in the Iranian context are rare (see Yari, Nouri, Rashidian, & Nadrian, 2013; Naghavi et al., 2019) and most studies of rape are part of a bigger study subject (see Hajiabdolbaghi et al., 2007; Tahmasebi-Birgani, 2010; Ansari, Noroozi, Yadegari, Javaheri, and Ansari, 2012). Furthermore, Pournaghash-Tehrani (2011) stressed that obtaining accurate data about IPA against women is a formidable challenge due to faulty dissemination of information in Iran. This means that any attempts to address IPA against Iranian women is of great merit. Viki and Abrams (2002) suggested that in cultures where women are expected to abide by the traditional gender norms, women may not report rape because they fear that

others may react negatively and blame them for inappropriate conduct. Furthermore, Taherkhani et al. (2019) suggested that the stigma attached to being divorced still builds a barrier for Iranian women who wish to leave their abusive relationship. So, even when Iranian women seek help and support to leave their marriage, they must face the taboos attached to divorced or widowed Iranian women that follows them after separation (Hosseini-Kaladjahi 1992; Dehghani-Firoozabadi et al., 2017; Zare, Aguilar-Vafaie, Ahmadi, & Mirzaei, 2019)).

Shame and stigma stem from the cultural expectations and play a large role in the victim's experience IPA (Shuman et al., 2016). Therefore, women need to be empowered to move beyond these cultural values by increasing awareness on gender inequality and the oppression of IPA (Van der Wath, Van Wyk, & Van Rensburg, 2016; First, First, & Houston, 2017; Yitbarek, Woldie, & Abraham, 2019). Socio-demographic variables are considered as crucial in shaping cultural values (Park, Joo, Quiroz, & Greenfield, 2015) and the experience of IPA (Ruiz-Pérez et al., 2006). Although IPA is most strongly tied to the status of women in the society as subordinates (Rasoulilian et al., 2014), further review of the literature demonstrates that their experience can be exacerbated by their socio-demographic variables (Ahmadi et al., 2017; Bazazbanisi, Amir Ali Akbari, Emamhadi, & Akbarzadeh Baghban, 2020).

1.2.1.4.2. Socio-demographic variables and IPA

The body of literature is fraught with inconsistencies about the role of socio-demographic variables on IPA against Iranian women. Considering the perpetrators' socio-demographic variables, Faramarzi et al. (2005) suggested that there is not a significant association between husband's socio-demographic variables and IPA against Iranian women. However, other Iranian studies have revealed that unemployment in husband is associated with a greater risk of IPA against women (Salari & Nakhaee, 2008; Mohamadian, Hashemian, Bagheri, & Direkvand-Moghadam, 2016; Bazazbanisi et al., 2020). Additionally, husband's higher education can be a protective variable against IPA towards women (Salari & Nakhaee, 2008; Farrokh-Eslamlou, Oshnouei, & Haghghi, 2014). According to Jamali et al. (2016), educational attainments in Iranian men teaches men to deal with conflicts and use problem solve methods instead of violence which reduces IPA against women. Other variables linked to an increase in the prevalence of IPA against Iranian women include older age in husband (Mousavi & Eshagian, 2005). However, no explanation has been offered to explain the

significance of husband's older age in predicting IPA against Iranian women (see Mousavi & Eshagian, 2005).

Studies in different countries indicate that the socio-demographic variables that are associated with IPA vary from one society to another (Abramsky et al., 2011; Golchin et al., 2014). While certain variables promote IPA in a community, they can protect women against IPA in another (Abramsky et al., 2011). Many feminist studies warn against the socio-demographic variables that can implicitly or explicitly add to the complexity of IPA against women (see Lenton, 1995; Kaukinen, 2004; Femi-Ajao, Kendal, & Lovell, 2020). This is not to say that IPA against women can be eliminated by identifying the associated socio-demographic variables. After all, it is the attitudes and the practices of men that need to be addressed to help mitigate the risk of IPA against women (McFarlane, 2007). Indeed, IPA is merely a gender problem (Anderson, 1997; Pallitto & O'Campo, 2005; Jansen, Nguyen, & Hoang, 2016). However, certain socio-demographic variables can increase the risk of victimization amongst women if men view them as threats to their domination (Counts, Brown, & Campbell, 1992; Sugarman & Frankel, 1996). It is suggested that by identifying these socio-demographic variables, services can identify those women who are at higher risk of victimization and help them continue their journey of becoming more independent (Esmailzadeh, Faramarzi, & Mosavi, 2005).

In the case of Iranian women, some of their socio-demographics have transitioned since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 to give them some level of independence (Sadeghi, 2008). Education is one example of this transition. Iranian scholars suggest that high educational attainment of Iranian women is a quest for empowerment in the patriarchal structure both within their own family and society (Shavarini, 2005; Rezai-Rashti et al., 2019). That being said, Iranian women's quest for empowerment has resulted in transition and change in the social structure of the society and family (Sheikhan, Ozgoli, Azar, & Alavimajid, 2014) and has led to 'patriarchal crisis' (Moaghadam, 2004). Moghaddam, Asadi, Akaberi and Hashemian (2013) stated that Iranian women's empowerment and independence can pose a threat to their domination by men. Therefore, lead to further problems of controlling women and increase their risk of victimization to IPA (Moghaddam et al., 2013).

It is important to note that IPA research often conceptualizes the effects of income, education, and employment as indicators of financial independence and security for women (Schoen, Astone, Rothert, Standish, & Kim, 2002). Low level of educational attainment has been linked with higher prevalence of IPA amongst Iranian (Nasrabadi, Abbasi, & Mehrdad, 2015; Ahmadi et al., 2017; Bazazbanisi et al. 2020) and non-Iranian women (Hindin, 2003; Trinh, Oh, Choi, To, & Do, 2016). Consequently, Hodson (1983) suggested that women with financial independence are more likely to have better social support contacts (e.g., co-workers) which makes it easier for them to leave abusive relationships. In terms of Iranian women, education can be translated into wealth by giving Iranian women job prospects and financial security (Faramarzi et al., 2005; Shavarini, 2005, 2006; Jahromi et al., 2016). It is believed that highly educated Iranian women are better acquainted with their rights and possess the skills to identify signs of IPA (Rasoulia et al., 2014; Jahromi et al., 2016). Faramarzi et al. (2005) stated that education confers empowerment via social networks, self-confidence, and the ability to use information and resources available in the society.

Although education empowers women enough to challenge traditional gender roles, such empowerment can carry an increased risk of IPA for women (Jewkes, 2002). In fact, there is evidence to indicate that Iranian women with higher education are more likely to be a victim of IPA (Garrusi et al., 2008; Nouri et al., 2012; Moghaddam et al., 2013). Iranian studies of IPA stress that men in patriarchal societies perceive women's empowerment and independence as a threat to their masculinity, therefore, try to improve their image and resolve their masculine crisis by inflicting harm on their wives (Darvishpour, 2002; Jewkes, 2002; Nayak, Byrne, Martin, & Abraham, 2003). It is believed that educated women hold more liberal ideas about their role and position in the society which could put them at a greater risk of IPA (Counts, Brown, & Campbell, 1992; Sugarman & Frankel, 1996). Regardless, Esmailzadeh et al. (2005) suggested that Iranian women should be supported and feel further empowered via education and work.

Like education, employment has been found to act as both protective and risk factor against IPA in Iran. Several Iranian studies found that unemployment in women makes them an easier target for the perpetrators of IPA (see Faramarzi et al., 2005; Mohammadhosseini, Sahraean, & Bahrami, 2010; Ahmadi et al., 2017). According to Mohammadhosseini et al. (2010), financial dependency makes Iranian women dependent on

their husbands as the breadwinner of the house which increases their chance of victimization. Consequently, Esmailzadeh et al. (2005) suggested that empowering Iranian women through employment could reduce the risk of IPA against them. But more recent studies of IPA have found that employment can lead to further victimization of IPA amongst Iranian women (Asadi et al., 2019; Bazazbanisi et al., 2020). Referring to the role of socio-demographic variables in patriarchal societies, Darvishpour (2002) explained that employment and independence in Iranian women once again undermines their husband's dominance and masculinity which, in turn, increases the risk of their victimization.

Associations between higher prevalence of IPA has also been noted in older non-Iranian women (Dhairyawan, Tariq, Scourse, & Coyne, 2013). To explain this link, Belknap, Melton, Denney, Fleury-Steiner and Sullivan (2009) suggested that older women are more likely to report IPA simply because their ability to hide IPA has been depleted by many years of constant abuse. However, the association between age and the experience of IPA is less consistent amongst Iranian studies. In contrast to the findings of non-Iranian studies, younger age in Iranian women has been associated with higher victimization (Hajian et al., 2014). Although it must be noted that the inconsistency could be due to the definition of 'younger age' in Iranian studies. For instance, link was found between IPA and Iranian women who are under 20 years old (Faramarzi et al., 2005), under 25 years old (Mousavi & Eshagian, 2005), and under 40 years old (Ahmadi et al., 2017). Such findings point out the inconsistency in the literature on IPA against women and demands further attention.

Dowlatabadi, Saadat and Jahangiri (2013) suggested that religion also helps Iranians stabilise their marriage and increase their marital satisfaction. Yet, the discrepancy in the literature of IPA shows that religion is another demographic variable that can act as both a risk (Kim, 2018) and protective factor against IPA (Lehrer, Lehrer, & Krauss, 2009). When it comes to religious affiliation, studies have concluded that Muslim women are more likely to become the victim of IPA than women from other religion (Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, & Mozumder, 2003; Moore, 2008). In the Iranian context, Dehghani-Firoozabadi et al. (2017) found that Iranian women who strictly practiced Islam and had fundamental values were more likely to indicate that they had experienced IPA than other Iranian Muslim women. Of socio-demographic variables, marital status has also shown that women are more likely to indicate the experience of IPA after they leave the relationship (Lacey, West, Matusko, & Jackson,

2016; Scott, 2018; CSEW, 2016). Rasoulilian et al. (2014) found that divorced Iranian women are more likely to indicate the experience of IPA compared with married women. Recently, Afroz (2019) added that divorce is a means of freedom for any woman in an unpleasant marriage, especially in societies with higher patriarchal adherences. Therefore, it could be said that women feel more able to talk about their abusive relationship after they leave their husbands.

Another point worth noting is that IPA occurs in both same-sex and heterosexual relationships (Carvalho, Lewis, Derlega, Winstead, & Viggiano, 2011). In fact, it is suggested that bisexual women are at a greater risk of victimization than heterosexual women (West, 2012) especially if they come from a Middle Eastern background (Ayhan Balik & Bilgin, 2019). However, same sex relationship is considered a crime by the Sharia law in Iran and is punishable by the death penalty (Iran: Islamic Penal Code 1991). The government's stance against homosexuality has kept homosexuality a hidden topic amongst Iranians (Terman, 2014; Yadegarfar, 2019) with no records of IPA amongst LGBT Iranian women (Human Rights Watch 2010). Taboos around homosexuality have also been witnessed in the Iranian communities outside of Iran (Miresghhi & Matsumoto, 2008). Homosexuality is not just a political matter as Iranian communities and scholars are also distance themselves from this subject. An example of this stigma can be found in Merghati-Khoei et al.'s (2015) study which excluded an Iranian woman who identified herself as homosexual from their study without an explanation. Consequently, Iranian women with homosexual identity in the West isolate themselves from Iranian communities to cope with the cultural stigmas attached to homosexuality (Abdi & Van Gilder, 2016). Therefore, conducting research on homosexual Iranian women would be a rather challenging task as many women will not come forward in fear of stigmatization.

Socio-demographic variables also play a vital role in women's attitudes towards IPA (Nabors, 2006; Nabors, Dietz, & Jasinski, 2006). Hamzeh et al. (2008) conducted a study on Iranian women's attitudes towards IPA found that Iranian women who classed themselves as housewives were more likely to agree with IPA against women. In addition, Iranian women who were married to low-educated husbands were more likely to agree with IPA against women. These attitudes are less accepted by older Iranian women (Taleb & Goodarzi, 2004). Religion appears to be one of the contributing variables to the perception of IPA amongst

Iranians (Aghtaie, 2016; Ghaleiha, 2018). Hassouneh-Phillips (2001b) stressed that that Islam ‘disables women’s defence’ to recognise signs of IPA. Aghtaie (2016) found that religious Iranian women generally held views about gender roles that were consistent with the Sharia law and Iranian state’s gender ideology.

1.2.1.4.2.3. Iran’s legal system and IPA

Taking a feminist perspective, this section will explore how Iranian state encourages violence and more importantly IPA against women. Kar (2000) debated that Iranian women’s experience of IPA can be better understood by building a cohesive picture of how Iranian system encourages violence against women. Following this, Rose (2015) suggested that IPA is a state crime against women where men are encouraged to use violence against women under the patriarchal state. Iran’s legal system provides a good example for the state crime (Kar, 2000). The legal system is expected to help provide the appropriate response to IPA (World Health Organization, 2003), and to determine if protection orders are granted by the courts (Durfee, 2009). However, Iran has a legal system that follows Sharia law and is run by men who promote traditional gender roles (Tizro, 2012) and the fundamentalist ideas of women as properties of men (Moradian, 2009). According to Aghtaie (2017), Iranian women have never been free of the patriarchal structures. But women had a few rights in the family protection law during Pahlavi’s era that were replaced by the Sharia law after the Islamic revolution in 1979 (Aghtaie, 2017). After the Islamic revolution, Iranian legal system saw many of its laws and policies abolished because they contradicted the Sharia law (Aghtaie, 2011). This means that IPA it is tied to the societal and governmental laws of inequality towards women. Therefore, one cannot discuss IPA in Iran without referring to the political issues in its patriarchal system (Moradian, 2009).

In 2017, the Home Office addressed IPA in the Country-of-Origin Information (COI) of Iran (Home Office, 2017). The COI’s purpose is to provide policy guidance to Home Office decision makers on handling asylum claims based on humanitarian protection under Section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. The COI’s report noted the lack of legal and social protection for Iran’s victims of IPA and placed blame on gender inequality and discrimination against Iranian women in Iran’s legal system (Home Office, 2017). Iran’s Penal Code on rape perceives rape outside of marriage which means that the concept of marital rape is alien to the system. Although rape is recognised, Aghtaie (2011) highlighted

that the punishment is not because the perpetrator has violated a woman's sexual rights, but because he has threatened another man's property. Considering that women are seeing as their husband's property in Iran, Iranian men have the legal right to rape their wives (Aghtaie, 2011).

Under Sharia law, husband and wife have certain duties towards each other (Mehran, 2003). In Iranian-Islamic culture, the wife's obedience to her husband is a woman's duty and considered virtuous (Garrusi et al., 2008). It is important to mention that under Sharia law, the wife is entitled to a one-off payment called *Mahrieh* which is a sum of money or something valuable that the husband must pay to the bride after marriage. Tizro (2012, p. 39) referred to *Mahrieh* as a payment in exchange for "exclusive access to the wife's sexual services". The wife also has the right to receive *Nafagheh* (*maintenance*) for household expenditures such as food or clothing. Unlike *Mahrieh* which is a one-off payment, *Nafagheh* will be paid in regular intervals. In return for his financial support, the wife is required to *Tamkin* (sexually submit) to her husband (Kar, 2000).

Tamkin which is translated as submission or obedience can be divided into *Tamkin e khas* or *Tamkin e aam* (Aghtaie, 2011). The former (*Tamkin e khas*) refers to the wife's sexual submission (Tizro, 2012). Article 1108 creates a duty for an Iranian woman to satisfy her husband's sexual needs at any time (Kar, 2000). The latter (*Tamkin e aam*) refers to the wife's submission to reside in the chosen place of husband (Kar, 2000). If a wife refuses to *Tamkin* or submit to her legal duties, she can be barred from receiving maintenance (*nafagheh*) from her husband (Kar, 2000; Tizro, 2013). As Aghtaie (2011) stated, the notion of *Tamkin* can lead to marital rape or financial abuse from the husband (Aghtaie, 2011). In addition, the belief that women are passive receivers of male sexual gratification can blur the line between force and personal choice (Aghtaie, 2016). More recently, Mirkamali (2017) compared Iran's law on *Tamkin* with the UK's law on marital rape and stressed that Iran's legal system is 'beneficial to men' by not acknowledging marital rape.

As Bennice et al. (2003) suggested, the widespread cultural belief that marital rape is not real rape invalidates women's traumatic experiences and limits identification of this crime. Aghtaie (2011) also emphasised that the cultural belief that there is no rape in marriage and the absence of legal definition for marital rape in Iran make it difficult for victims of rape to

report crime to the police. Aghtaie (2016) suggested that the concept of *Tamkin* can be best explained using Stark's (2009) concept of coercive control. According to Aghtaie (2016), the concept of coercive control can be applied to the Iranian state which uses religion to create 'a condition of unfreedom' for women. Stark (2009) argued that male domination presents itself in different guises as it depends on the context of a woman's life. Therefore, male domination consists of specific features that are in place to subjugate women. Maciel, Van Putten and Knudson-Martin (2009) referred to coercive control as 'the invisible male power' which denies women of their independence. In terms of the Iranian context, Sharia law and what women are expected to do becomes a feeding source for men's coercive control over women (Aghtaie, 2016).

To insert dominance over women, Iranian men have led Iranian women to believe that they must submit to their husband's uncontrollable sexual desires. By doing so, women are told that they would avoid committing a sin as well as preventing their husband from exercising his right to polygamy (Aghtaie, 2016). In cases where women have refused to *tamkin*, their disobedience has created legal grounds for husbands to engage in polygamy and/or inflict harm on women (Iran Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2013). This brings another layer of violence against Iranian women as they must take their case to court judges that are biased against them (Iranwire, 2014). In the case of inflicting physical injuries, an Iranian woman can take their husband to court for assault. Saying this, the rules of evidence make it extremely difficult for women to prove their case in court (Moradian, 2009). These legal challenges to Iranian women's lives highlight Iran's incompetent justice system (Tizro, 2013) which promotes 'silent' marital affairs (Shams et al., 2020).

Despite their limited rights, having knowledge of what is legally classed as IPA can help women recognise their rights (Antle, Karam, Christensen, Barbee, & Sar, 2011). In 2012, Lotf Abadi et al. (2012a) insisted that the Iranian law is changing to empower victims of IPA. Still, IPA is not recognised in Iran (Tizro, 2013; Aghtaie, 2016). In fact, there is still a general belief that there can be no rape within marriage or an intimate relationship (Aghtaie, 2017). Abeya, Afework and Yalew (2012) stated that a community's beliefs and perceptions can impel women to tolerate IPA and stay in abusive relationships. Considering that there is limited understanding of IPA amongst minority women in the UK (Gangoli et al., 2019), it

would be useful to understand how women perceive IPA to offer them the help that they need (Chang et al., 2010).

1.2.2. Perception of IPA

Perception is defined as a constructive process which relies on prior knowledge (Gregory, 1970; Rahman, & Sommer, 2008) or a set of information that are acquired before the individual learns new information (Hailikari, Nevgi, & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2007). The perception of IPA has been known to be influenced by the prior knowledge that it influenced by socio-demographic variables (Bent-Goodley 2004; Ahrens et al. 2011; Kingston et al., 2016). Some of these socio-demographic variables include religion (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a; Kpozehouen et al., 2018), education (Hamzeh et al., 2008), and income (Copp, Giordano, Longmore, & Manning, 2019). Forster, Grigsby, Soto, Sussman and Unger (2017) suggested that the perception of IPA can also be influenced by culture. Literature suggests that those who endorse the traditional gender roles and adhere to the patriarchal rules more likely to normalise IPA (Bhanot & Senn, 2007; Uthman, Lawoko, & Moradi, 2009; Sánchez-Prada, Delgado-Alvarez, Bosch-Fiol, Ferreiro-Basurto, & Ferrer-Perez, 2020) and have victim blaming attitudes (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008; Grubb & Turner, 2012).

Endorsement of traditional gender roles have been identified as the main influencers of women's attitudes towards IPA in Palestine (Haj-Yahia, 1998), South Asia (Ahmad, Riaz, Barata, & Stewart, 2004), Turkey (Sakall, 2001), and Iran (Lowe et al., 2018). However, as Lewis, West, Bautista, Greenberg and Done-Perez (2005) pointed out, cultural norms and community perceptions of IPA must be fully understood before the government attempts to address any issues in relation to IPA. Such a focus is imperative to the understanding of IPA because women are part of a larger social system that defines appropriate as well as inappropriate behaviour in an intimate relationship (Klein, Campbell, Soler, & Ghez, 1997).

As suggested by Mechanic and Pole (2013), research must be open to how women of other culture may perceive IPA. For instance, Western feminist research has dedicated much focus to the emotional attachment between the abused and the abuser (see Sandberg, Valdez, Engle, & Menghrajani, 2019; Bermea, Khaw, Hardesty, Rosenbloom, & Salerno, 2020). Yet, emotional attachment between the abused and the abuser has never been covered in studies of Iranian women. Rather, behaviours such as husband's infidelity has been studied as a form

of IPA amongst Iranian women. An Iranian study by Taherkhani et al. (2014) found that Iranian women considered a husband's betrayal as the most intolerable form of IPA as they interpreted this act as public humiliation. This is an important point to consider when conducting research with minority women. Shuman et al. (2016) reported that regardless of the form of abuse, public episodes of IPA are almost always seen as more detrimental than private episodes of IPA.

According to Crawford et al. (2009), sometimes women's identity and sense of self are so strongly influenced by the culture and society that they live in that being publicly humiliated by their husbands can be as damaging as IPA. The concept of husband's infidelity has been a hot topic in feminist scholars in the recent years (see Kwansah-Aidoo & Owusu, 2017; Hao, 2017; Jadhav, 2018). Utley (2017) even suggested that husband's infidelity should be categorised as a form of IPA. The community's perception of IPA and their acceptance of gender norms can also impel women to tolerate IPA and stay in abusive relationships (Abeya et al., 2012). As mentioned earlier, Iran is a male-dominated country which offers limited rights to women. Regardless of this, designing effective programs for preventing and controlling IPA necessitates a thorough understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA (Shams et al., 2020). Considering that a substantial number of 82,000 Iranian-born residents were recorded to be living in the UK by 2011 (ONS, 2013), it was important to understand how these women of ethnic minority background perceive IPA in the UK.

1.2.2.1. Iranian women's perception of IPA

Iranian women's perception of IPA must be taken into account when helping these women leave abusive relationships. Researchers suggest that an inadequate understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA diminishes the effectiveness and efficiency of any IPA program that is aimed at identifying and helping Iranian victims of IPA (Ali-Akbar, 1980; Shams et al., 2020). For example, Shams et al.'s (2020) study had a poorly structured question (What is your definition of domestic violence) that failed to capture Iranian women's perception of IPA. There are two studies of perception of IPA amongst Iranian women that are relevant to this thesis. The first study is by Tizro (2013) who looked at the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women. Tizro's (2013) study provided a comprehensive account of Iranian women's perception of IPA from a feminist perspective. Tizro (2013) used her knowledge of IPA in the Iranian context to shed light on women's difficulties in dealing with IPA in Iran. More

recently, Aghtaie (2016) took research on the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women a step further by comparing the perception of Iranian women in the UK and in Iran. Aghtaie (2016) found that the country of residence does not shape Iranian women's attitudes towards IPA, rather, it is Iranian women's religious beliefs and their degree of acceptance of the Iranian state's gender ideology that influence their perception IPA. A crucial observation that can be made from Tizro's (2013) and Aghtaie's (2016) studies is that they both stress the extent of which IPA is used to control and to subjugate women in Iran. Despite her valuable data, Aghtaie's (2016) aim to recruit Iranian women who were born after the 1979 revolution limited her sample to students of under the age of 30. Therefore, more studies on Iranian women's perception of IPA should help provide a fuller picture of IPA an Iranian context.

Iranian studies of IPA tend to be in twofold: a) women's general perception of IPA, and b) women's perception of the legal system in relation to IPA. Taherkhani et al. (2017) found that Iranian women's general perception of IPA and their attitudes towards gender binary (including the role of women in marriage) played an important role in their help-seeking behaviour. Expressing attitudes such as the need to protect marriage, considering divorce as a despicable act and considering IPA as a normal in married life prevented Iranian participants from seeking help (Taherkhani et al., 2017). As mentioned earlier, the perception of IPA can be shaped by socio-demographic variables (Bent-Goodley 2004; Ahrens et al. 2011; Kingston et al., 2016). However, the perception of legal system is also an important element of understanding IPA in an Iranian context (Maranlou, 2014). Iranian legal system plays a vital role in the lives of Iranian women (Shams et al., 2020). Maranlou (2014) found that Iranian women have a negative perception of their justice system because they feel let down by their justice system. Moreover, Iran's social stigma on marital problems and divorce prevents women from taking an IPA case to the court (Tizro, 2012; Maranlou, 2014). A sense of disempowerment occurs in Iranian women when they feel that there is nobody to help them and they have nowhere to go (Naghavi, Amani, Bagheri, & De Mol, 2019). Most importantly, disempowerment is not limited to Iranian women's own country.

Despite the efforts of various government agencies, the justice system is still not conducive to empowering minority women (Barringer, Hunter, Salina, & Jason 2017). Therefore, understanding the perception of what consists of IPA is necessary to advance the understanding of IPA (Chang et al., 2010). In cultures where the binary constructions of

femininity and masculinity are encouraged, IPA against women is frequently justified if women do not appear to have fulfilled their housekeeping or marital duties (Kim & Motsei, 2002). The society's accepting attitude towards IPA and the blame that is placed on women will prevent victims of IPA from seeking help (Kim & Motsei, 2002). In the Iranian context, a recent study revealed that men and women in patriarchal societies including Iran justify IPA against women (Lowe, Khan, Thanzami, Barzy, & Karmaliani 2018). Emphasising on Iranian women's perception of IPA, Garrusi et al. (2008) concluded that a considerable percentage of Iranian women (43%) believe that women are to blame for IPA against them. Such perceptions are rooted in the traditional belief that women's behaviours provoke IPA against them (Amoakohene, 2004).

1.2.2.3. Iranian women's legal knowledge of IPA

Davidov et al. (2012) encouraged IPA researchers to consider legal knowledge of women when studying perception of IPA. According to Davidov et al. (2012), legal knowledge of IPA provides another aspect of understanding to the perception of IPA. It is argued that there is a limited knowledge of legal rights amongst Middle Eastern women (Barkho, Fakhouri, & Arnetz, 2011), Iranian women (Kar, 2000), and women who migrate to the West (Reina, Lohman, & Maldonado, 2014; Silva-Martinez & Murty, 2011; Tam et al., 2015). The Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW, 2015) showed that 26% of women who are victims of IPA in England and Wales are aware that the act is wrong, yet do not see this act as a crime. According to Haj-Yahia (2002), women's legal knowledge of their rights in the UK is lowest amongst women who come from cultures that accept male dominance. Therefore, the role of culture in influencing Iranian women's perception of IPA should not be ignored (Kim and Motsei, 2002; Faramarzi et al., 2005).

Patriarchal societies place men as the priority and in control of women which limits women's basic human rights (Sultana, 2010). In such societies, women's rights are 'withered' under the patriarchal rules (Moghadam, 2007) and their knowledge of their legal rights is limited (Goodwin, 2006). Rasoulilian et al. (2014) stated that Iranian women who have limited knowledge about their rights are more likely to experience IPA. Furthermore, Eftekhari, Kakuiee, Foruzan, and Eftekhari (2010) stressed that even if Iranian women are aware of their rights, their shame in reporting IPA to the Iranian police present barriers to these women's lives. But, once they recognise their legal rights, Iranian women are unlikely to

tolerate abuse and will fight against IPA (Garrusi et al., 2008). Previous studies of family courts in Iran have demonstrated that Iranian women will fight for the limited rights that they have in courts (see Mir-Hoseini, 1993; Osanloo, 2006).

According to Tang and Wang (2011), women must use different strategies to empower themselves within the family structure of patriarchy that is constantly changing. An example of women's use of different strategies to empower themselves was recently observed in Iran. In a recent study, Sattari (2020) demonstrated the complexity of oppression and empowerment in Iran by highlighting how Iranian women transform their oppression into means of empowerment by negotiating better opportunities in the public realm. In 2006, new scheme on female-only taxis for women was introduced by the Iranian state to with the intention of keeping men and women segregated. According to Sattari (2020), Iranian women used this opportunity to be more independent and have their own financial support as well as commuting to and from the workplace.

One the one hand, Iranian system tries to keep women subordinated by keeping them at home by emphasising on traditional gender roles (Sattari, 2020). On the other hand, Iranian women' access to the internet has produced a generation of women who are aware of their rights, thus, more resistant to the gender discriminatory policies (Aghtaie, 2016). Nonetheless, this does not mean that all Iranian women will fight for their freedom and rights in the UK. Aghtaie's (2016) study on the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK and in Iran showed that the country of residence does not have a great impact on Iranian women's attitudes towards IPA.

The expectation that Iranian women in the UK are prepared to secure their rights in the UK and to challenge gender inequality, can represent obstacle to seeking support when IPA occurs. Cultural beliefs about the acceptability of IPA and the endorsement of traditional gender roles can affect women's response to IPA (Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). In addition, criminal justice responses to IPA could influence the occurrence of abuse against women (Websdale, 1997). The present research is mindful that by focussing on the legal system, it may unintentionally give the impression that IPA is a 'women's issue' and women will be able to prevent abuse if they have more rights and adequate legal knowledge of IPA. As McFarlane (2007) puts it, we must change the attitudes and practices of men to help reduce

IPA. As Chang et al. (2010) indicated, by understanding women's perception of IPA, we can provide better support for the victims of IPA. As Chang et al. (2010) indicated, by understanding women's perception of IPA, we can provide better support for the victims of IPA. Additionally, understanding women's perception of IPA can help identify women who may be at risk of experiencing IPA (Maquibar Landa, 2017; Burjalés-Martí et al., 2018; Steele, Everett, & Hughes, 2020) as well as finding ways that can be used to motivate women to move forward and change their situation regarding IPA (Chang et al., 2010).

1.2.3. Reporting IPA

According to Walby and Allen (2004), only around half of the victims of IPA seek help in the UK. Therefore, it would be fair to say that IPA remains under-reported crime (Davis et al., 2003). Ferber (2012) explained that the problem of under-reporting arises from the service's lack of understanding about IPA. Ferber (2012) added that most of the IPA help available does not take account of the various ways that women are positioned by race, class, and immigration which limits their usefulness for minority women. In a recent study, Chandan et al. (2020) concluded that ethnic minority women are at a greater risk of IPA than White English women. But there are many complexities in the interactions of minority women within and outside their cultures in their host societies that prevents women from reporting IPA (Yoshioka & Choi, 2005). One of these complexities is the fear of misrepresentation of their original country.

Minority women have a fear of mis-representing their culture to the host society, so they may struggle to ask for help (Styles, 2014). However, in cases where minority women report IPA, there is an inconsistent pattern of responding by the police (Hanmer, 1996). Recently, Gangoli et al. (2019) found that the police initially respond quickly to cultural cases (i.e., honour-based abuse), but often the police are less proactive in following up IPA with minority women. Robinson, Pinchevsky and Guthrie (2016) put the police's poor response to non-physical forms of IPA down to the police's lack of understanding about IPA. Such responses can exacerbate the negative impact of IPA against minority women, as well as their help-seeking practices (Anitha, 2010). The inability to speak the host country's language has been noted as an additional barrier to reporting IPA (see Gangoli et al., 2019). Gangoli et al. (2019) suggested that dealing with language barriers can be demanding especially if women are already dealing with the consequences of IPA. Gangoli et al. (2019) explained that some

minority women may be not fully understand the process of the UK's justice system and be forced to depend on interpreters for translation. Still, the interpreters' translations are not necessarily a true reflection of the statements that minority women give to the police (Gangoli et al., 2019).

Country of origin may also deter undocumented migrants from reporting IPA (Ingram, 2007, Nicolaidis et al., 2010) due to mistrust in the intentions of the authorities (Mechanic & Pole, 2013) or fear of court involvement (Rodriguez, Sheldon, Bauer, & Pérez-Stable, 2001). In the case of Iranian women, they have previously been difficult to recruit in studies of IPA due to their fear of jeopardising their migration status (Ansari & Abdolmabou, 1988; Darvishpour, 1999). Emery (2010) added that missing data and under-recording of IPA could also contribute to the misunderstanding of IPA. Chandan et al. (2020) also concluded that ethnic minority women are at a greater risk of experiencing IPA than White English women. However, there is an under-recording of IPA in the UK's care data base which fails to protect victims of IPA (Chandan et al., 2020). In 2005, CSEW (2005) positioned Iranian population in 'Asian- Other' category as Iranians accounted for less than 5% of the UK population. Even so, the knowledge about the *ethnicity* and *ethnic groups* of Iranians in the UK remains incomplete and demands clarification (Amanolahi, 2005). To this date, UK's largest social research surveys of victimization has failed to cover Iranian women under a specific category of ethnicity which indicates failure to protect victims of IPA (see Crime Survey for England and Wales [CSEW], 2020).

It is important to note that seeking help does not necessarily solve the problems of IPA for an Iranian woman. Divorce is still considered a shame for Iranian women (Sadeghifasai, 2010). As Naghavi, Amani, Bagheri and De Mol (2019) stated, cultural norms play an important role in how Iranian women deal with IPA. The main reason for Iranian women's underreporting of IPA has been put down to the patriarchy (Darvishpour, 1999) and gender role expectations (Akpinar, 2003). IPA remains a hidden matter (Aghtaie, 2014) with a belief that if something has not been spoken of publicly, it has not taken place (Shahidian, 2002). Kar (2000, p. 17) stated that "Iranian women will not talk about their experience of domestic violence until the pain reaches their bones". Therefore; despite the high rates of IPA amongst Iranian women (Straus, 2008), Iranian women's perception of IPA as a silent topic has resulted in the

underreporting of this issue (Garrusi et al., 2008; Eftekhar et al., 2010; Lotf Abadi et al., 2012a; Vosoogh & Forouzesh, 2013).

Choi and Harwood (2004) pointed out that keeping IPA private does not mean that women have a desire to stay in an abusive relationship. Reluctancy to disclose marital affairs in women has also been witnessed in other cultures where women believe that marriage is part of their private life (see Hawkey, Ussher, & Perz, 2019). In fact, Lynch, Jewell, Golding, & Kembel (2017) labelled women's beliefs to keep their marital intercourse a private matter as a "cultural myth" rooted in old beliefs that a wife is a husband's private property. Others strongly reject Lynch et al.'s (2017) labelling of cultural differences as "cultural myth" and propose that that cultural variations in women should be reframed as strengths rather than barriers (Bent-Goodley, 2005; Mechanic & Pole, 2013). For example; Mechanic and Pole (2013) stated that IPA research on women often reflects assumptions rooted in core Western values of individuality where only some strategic responses to IPA are deemed appropriate (e.g., contacting the police or leaving the male perpetrator), and others are judged inferior (e.g., seeking informal social support or seeking support from clergy).

1.2.4. Living in patriarchy

The topic of IPA and its patriarchal roots have been the subject of feminist studies for decades (Malik & Lindahl, 1998; McHugh, 2005; George & Stith, 2014). Feminist scholars highlight the gender inequalities throughout history by addressing the patriarchal relations that are formed through sexuality and constructed through gender (Mayer, 2012; Lieb, 2019). For feminists, the term gender draws attention to the culturally expected traditional gender roles that are considered as appropriate for men and women in that society. Although gender role expectations are said to vary from culture to culture (Malik & Lindahl, 1998), Iranian studies in the West imply that the patriarchal structure of Iranian families have never been completely free of a patriarchal structure even after migration to the West (Afshar, 1989; Aghtaie, 2016).

According to Lammers et al. (2005), the term 'patriarchy' was originally defined as the supremacy of the father over his family members but was later changed to the social system that allows men to dominate and rule different aspects of a women's life. Ezazi (2002) specifically focussed on the notion of patriarchy within the Iranian society by referring to

Iran's formal and informal social structures and suggested that patriarchy starts in households where certain extent of aggression by husbands against wives is acceptable and justifiable. Studies of feminism refer to language as one of the ignored, yet powerful sites in the exercise of patriarchal rules (Hassanpour, 2001; Lassen, 2011). As Cunningham and Baker (2007) suggested, meeting the expectations of being a 'good' mother can create many challenges for a woman especially if she is in abusive relationship. Additionally, Jalali (2005) found that Iranians are caught between the pull off traditional religion and culture and an acceptance of more Western family relationships.

Being a 'good woman'

Marriage exists in every society, but, its form varies according to the cultural mandates (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a). According to Kar (2000), the expectation of traditional gender roles prompted by the Islamic Revolution of Iran has created the fundamental structure for women's treatment in Iranian society. Therefore, there are socially determined restrictions that expect Iranian women to adhere to certain roles throughout different stages of their lives in order to qualify as 'good' women. Being a 'good woman' starts from a young age in an Iranian woman (Vakili et al., 2010). First, she needs to be a virgin as her chastity is the symbol of her family's honour and respect in the community (Aghtaie, 2011). The concept of honour is not specific to the Iranian culture, it can be traced to Asia and Middle East where young girls are expected to refrain from any sexual activities before marriage (Afshar, 1989; Akpinar, 2003; Menon, 2015). The emphasis on the Iranian woman's chastity remains with her until she gets married. Thereafter, the focus will shift to her devotion to her husband as a 'good wife'.

Iran's patriarchal system expects the wife to follow her husband's orders (Motevaliyan et al., 2017) and submit to her husband's unlimited claims on her sexuality (Shahidian, 2002). Ghvamshahidi (1995) stated that the emphasis on the role of being a 'good' wife or mother is so strong that young Iranian girls are taught to do the housework from a young age. Being a 'good mother' sits in the last of three stages in an Iranian woman's life where she is expected to sacrifice her life to ensure that their children have the best life possible (Ghvamshahidi, 1995). Lammers, Ritchie and Robertson (2005) stated that women who internalised gendered role ideologies are more likely to feel guilty when criticised for not measuring up to the ideal of a 'good' woman and may experience a diminished self-esteem as a result. Studies on the

gender expectations of Iranian women also show that the strict moral and the rigid social conduct amongst Iranian women give them high values for restraining their sexuality, yet, the same sinful behaviour is later encouraged and women are expected to fulfil their husband's sexual needs in marital life (Abraham, 1999; Okazaki, 2010).

According to Merghati, Whelan, and Cohen (2008), the sexual pressure on Iranian women can later result in marital dissatisfaction and unease for women. Therefore, marriage brings many challenges to the lives of Iranian women (Taghizadeh et al., 2015). And those who do not comply with the expected traditional gender roles, are those who are most at risk of becoming victim to IPA as they become the target of their husband's impatience (Motevaliyan et al., 2017). Ogu (2018) highly discouraged the traditional gender role expectations stating that women feel more empowered when they make their own decisions in life as women should have independence in their lives to be free from male domination and IPA.

Independence and freedom

Studies of Iranian women argue that Iranian women do not enter higher education for the sole purpose of enhancing their chances of employment, rather, their high educational attainment is a quest for empowerment in the patriarchal structure both within their own family and society (Shavarini, 2005; Rezai-Rashti et al., 2019). Contrary to the feminist concerns about the low representation of women in the field of education (see Chanana, 2012; Zhao & Wry, 2016; Bhopal, 2019), Iranian women have, over the past 40 years, out-numbered Iranian men in higher education (Shavarini, 2005; Sadeghi, 2008; Rezai-Rashti, Mehran & Abdmolaei, 2019). In addition, higher education has been witnessed in Iranian women who live outside of Iran. Guruge, Roche and Catallo (2012) found that two third of Iranian women who lived in Canada had higher education. This suggests that education is a big part of Iranian women's lives despite their limited job options (Rezai-Rashti & Moghadam, 2011). Sadeghi (2008) added that Iranian women's interest in higher education lays within their lived experiences, beliefs, and values, and is influenced by unequal power relations in Iran. More recently, Rezai-Rashti, Mehran and Abdmolaei (2019) highlighted the complexities in Iranian women's education in relation to the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian Revolution stating that there is a paradox of growing educational opportunities whilst discriminatory laws and restrictions that have been implemented on Iranian women's lives. Therefore, many of these

women are well educated even before migration (Darvishpour, 1999; Wiking, Johansson, & Sundquist, 2004).

Even though higher level of education enhances Iranian women's chances of a good career in addition to giving them higher status in the society (Shavarini, 2005, 2006), many remain unemployed due to the restrictions posed on women and must agree to marriage for economic protection (Hadianrasnani, 2008; Tizro, 2012). Despite Research Group for Muslim Women's Studies' (1990) attempts to impose that low female employment in Iran is due to Iranian women's choice, Motevaliyan et al. (2017) stated that Iranian women's unemployment was mostly due to the patriarchal structure of their family and society. As mentioned earlier, financial dependency in women can predict their experience of IPA (see Schuler, Hashemi, Riley, & Akhter, 1996; Cunradi, Caetano, & Shafer, 2002; Kingston et al., 2016). Lotf Abadi et al. (2012b) suggested that by being financially independent, Iranian women do not have to depend on their husbands to financially provide for them in an abusive marriage. Additionally, financial independence in women has been linked with less conservative gender ideologies and a reduced risk of IPA (Gonsoulin & LeBoeuf, 2010).

Studies of IPA put an emphasis on the education as an additional source of empowerment for women (Esia-Donkoh, 2014) by offering a better quality of life (Schutte, Malouff, & Doyle, 1988) and promoting financial independence (Hutchinson & Hirschel, 1998; Brabeck & Guzmán, 2009). Shavarini (2005) also stressed that apart from having the ability to provide one of the prominent routes to independence, higher education is a necessary asset in maintaining and gaining social prestige amongst Iranian women. Jalali (2005) drew attention to the cultural expectations and the expected gender norms that can result in an inner conflict for Iranian women. According to Jalali (2005), Iranian women can be labelled as inadequate and incompetent wives if they pursue their dream of becoming independent over their expected gender roles. In support of this claim, studies of Iranian mothers in higher education have found that when the role of being a mother and being a university student overlapped, Iranian mothers always prioritized their children over their education both in Iran (Behboodi, Ordibeheshti, Esmaeili, & Salsali, 2017) and in the US (Jalali, 2005). Prioritization of family values is not specific to Iranian women. Burman (1993) referred to the social construction of traditional gender roles that forces women in UK and elsewhere in the world to fulfil their expected mother duties. Such expectations can be observed in every culture where ideologies

of mothering functions are used to keep women economically subordinated (Herman & Lewis, 2012). It is important to note that IPA must be understood in the context of gender inequality and the binary construction femininity and masculinity as part of the larger patriarchal system.

1.2.4.1. Social constructions of gender roles and its influence on IPA against women

As mentioned earlier, IPA is connected to the oppression of women which makes IPA a problem of gender inequality (McHugh, 2005; Smagur et al., 2017). Gender is socially constructed and holds an array of behaviours that are expected by men and women (Tizro, 2013). The definition of gender roles refers to the societal and cultural beliefs about personal qualities that are masculine and feminine (Gilbert, 1998; Kite, 2001). The social dichotomizing of men as masculine and women as feminine will ensure that women are placed a subordinate position (Hartmann, 1981; Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002). Although specific features of masculinity and femininity will vary depending on culture and the social groups (Wood, 2000; Dellinger, 2004), the traditional feminine gender roles have variables such as being weak, fragile, unassertive, peaceful, irrational, and driven by emotions (Woodhill & Samuels, 2004). The traditional masculine gender roles are perceived to have attributes that are concerned with being strong, in control, masterful, and aggressive (Altenburger et al., 2017).

Traditional gender roles rest on the assumption that sex and gender are perfectly aligned (Mikkola, 2008). The traditional gender roles are more prominent in patriarchal societies where women are expected to be soft and accept aggression from their husbands (Hartmann, 1981; Calvo-Salguero, García-Martínez, & Monteoliva, 2008; Sultana, 2010). In countries like Iran, girls are prepared to practice traditional gender roles from an early age (Ghazizadeh, Zaharakar, Kiamanesh, & Mohsenzadeh, 2018) and are taught to be obedient when their husbands show aggression towards them (Danesh et al., 2016). In a society where a woman's role is primarily that of a wife and a mother, the expectation to obey the husband can become problematic and result in IPA if women resist the traditional gender roles (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a).

For decades, feminists and women's rights activists have endeavoured to shed light on the issues surrounding gender inequality in patriarchal societies (Millet, 1972; Chodorow, 1978).

However, their efforts are hindered by the concept of masculinity and femininity (Donaldson, 1993). Feminism established that extreme adherence to the rigid binary division of genders implicated in the perpetuation of sexual violence against women in that it encourages men to be dominant and aggressive, whilst teaching women that they are inferior to men (Murnen et al., 2002). One of the key debates in feminism is that pornography is merely a representation of violence against women. The contents of pornography promote the culture of male violence against women and contribute to the epidemic of rape (Nead, 1990).

It is argued that pornography glorifies male sexual violence which sees women as sex objects to be used and abused, excusing violence as normal aspects of male sex drive (Bronstein, 2011). It is argued that pornography promotes the 'rape culture' (Strain, Martens, & Saucier, 2016) which is a culture wherein rape is tolerated and normalised in women's everyday lives (Buchwald, Fletcher, & Roth, 1993; Keller, Mendes, & Ringrose, 2018). In addition, legalisation of marital rape as mentioned earlier in the name of *Tamkin* can add to the acceptance of marital rape. As highlighted by Aghtaie (2016) the belief that women are passive receivers of male sexual gratification can blur the line between force and personal choice.

When it comes to the perception of masculinity and femininity, Mohammadi and Mirzaei (2011) found that 67% of Iranian men and 70% of Iranian women agree with traditional gender roles. The concept of masculinity encourages men to assert their authority and power over women by using varying forms of violence against women (Sikweyiya et al., 2020). In a patriarchal society such as Iran, men are the sole breadwinner which gives men the freedom and rights within the family, including the freedom to commit crimes such as verbal, physical or sexual abuse (Lotf Abadi et al., 2012a). Men's coercive behaviour and violence are central to masculinity that it is internalized, and its instrumental success enhances the men's life satisfaction (Yount, Miedema, Martin, Crandall, & Naved, 2016). Since masculinity and male power are shaped by the culture, IPA is more likely to be intentional rather than impulsive and unplanned (Tizro, 2012).

Lawoko (2008) concluded that patriarchal norms influence the extent of IPA by encouraging men to use force and coercion as a way of maintaining dominant position in the household. However, the concept of binary gender roles is not limited to Iran. Lloyd (1984) suggested that even in the Western cultures, the mind and reason are coded masculine. To identify self

with the rational mind is, then, to masculinise self with the expectations of binary gender roles (Seidler, 2013). Women's sense of self is ultimately affected by IPA (Lynch & Graham-Bermann, 2004) as men make women doubt their ability which, in effect, increases women's dependence on the perpetrators of IPA (Crawford et al., 2009). This draws attention to the concept of personhood. Personhood is constructed by culture (Butler, 2011) and forms the basis for norms of acceptable behaviour in various settings including in an intimate relationship (Abeyasekera & Marecek, 2020). Therefore, one's status as a woman or man can shape the way that person is recognised (Matambanadzo, 2012). According to Alcoff and Kittay (2007), rape is a profound violation of the victim's personhood.

Reflecting on the inability to achieve equal personhood, feminists argue that patriarchal rules violate the right to personhood for women (Campbell, 1983; Graham, 2016; Moder, 2019). In the context of IPA, the complex and coextensive 'elements' of personhood play a role in understanding IPA (Hoeft, 2009). Stark (2009) argued that the strategic dimensions of coercive control deter women from freely developing their own personhood. According to Stark (2009) coercive control stands out as a liberty crime by stripping the victim away from her sense of self and dominating various aspects of her life. Drawing on Iranian women's lives, Aghtaie (2016) suggested that Iranian women perceive IPA as an act that denies women of the opportunity for equal personhood by taking away their sense of self. To help women increase their self-worth, feminism draws attention to the emancipatory approaches that feminist scholars promote in the hope freeing women from male domination.

1.2.4.2. Emancipatory approaches to dealing with social problems

All countries and societies have norms embedded in their culture that use power as a tool to exacerbate IPA against women (Afifi, Al-Muhaideb, Hadish, Ismail, & Al-Qeamy, 2011). Feminist scholars contend that men use power to dominate women (Adams, Towns, & Gavey, 1995; Mikorski & Szymanski, 2017; Bareket & Shnabel, 2020), whilst feminists use power to emancipate women (Sewpaul, Ntini, Mkhize, & Zandamela, 2015). Thus, power can be used to emancipate, to enable, as well to oppress and to dominate (Albrechts, 2003). Given that feminism developed as a movement to liberate women from gender-based oppressions (Gupta, 2002; Burman, 2008), emancipation of women in the sense of freedom from male domination became one of the main driving forces of feminist research (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). Emancipatory approach is highly recommended by feminist researchers to

increase women's self-esteem and to encourage women to confront structural sources of marginalisation, oppression, and exclusion (Dominelli & Campling, 2002; Sewpaul et al., 2015). According to Welzel (2014), emancipation starts with empowerment. Empowerment is defined as a process whereby an individual gains control over his/her life and acquires the resources needed to achieve his/her goals (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). It is not uncommon for feminist researchers to focus on the personal experience of women and view their work in terms of broad emancipatory goals (see Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994). But, as both emancipatory and participatory research maintain empowerment as their base, this can cause confusion in feminist studies (French & Swain, 1997).

Pertinent to empowerment and emancipatory research is the way in which feminist studies involve their female participants (French & Swain, 1997). According to French and Swain (1997), participatory research empowers women by giving them a voice to tell their story. In participatory research women are likely to be conscious of the oppressions that they face and become assertive about their rights. This can gradually lead to emancipation which refers to the liberation from restrictions brought about by social change (Barnes, 1992). Emancipatory research goes further than participatory research. According to Barnes (1992), emancipatory research changes the social relations of research production by having the research formulated and directed by the female participants as co-researchers, in collaboration with researchers, at every stage (Barnes, 1992). However, there are risks to conducting emancipatory research with minority women that must be addressed.

Risks to conducting emancipatory research on minority women

As Kar (2000) emphasised, the voice of Iranian women is absent when it comes to IPA. Therefore, the goal of emancipation may be crucial to the production of feminist knowledge about Iranian women. But conducting emancipatory research on minority women comes with several challenges. Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) called out on what they described as 'a critical point of fracture within feminism'. According to Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002), the problem with emancipation is that it focusses on the Western women who are subject to patriarchal oppression. Furthermore, Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002, p.39) asserted that "assumption of universal humanity and universal rights transcends actual inequalities and differences and so overlooks power relations between women." Another point to remember is that research strategies for emancipation can be clouded by cultural differences on what is the

right of women. Furthermore, the feminist notion of justice is complicated by political, religious and cultural, differences between women on what may be considered unjust (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002).

As French and Swain (1997) stated, it is not easy for researchers to adopt a participatory or an emancipatory paradigm in their research. In their study, French and Swain (1997) found that emancipation was difficult amongst women with physical disability because each governmental agency has its own individualistic definition of disability. Having individualistic definition of disability can be problematic on its own as it could mean that people with certain disabilities are excluded from research on disability (French & Swain, 1997). Similar rules could be applied to Iranian women. Having individualistic definition of IPA has also been observed in Iranian scholars. As mentioned earlier, there is no specific definition of IPA in Iran (Kar, 2000; Tizro, 2013; Aghtaie, 2014), and Iranian scholars are forced to use their own individualistic definition of IPA (e.g., Vakili et al., 2010; Bahrami, 2014; Tavoli et al., 2016). This means that many Iranian women could unintentionally be excluded from studies of IPA because their victimization is unintentionally ignored.

Another major difficulty with emancipatory research on IPA against Iranian women could be the cultural taboos that prevent Iranian women from disclosing personal information. As noted earlier, homosexuality is a hidden topic amongst Iranians (Terman, 2014; Yadegarfar, 2019) and studies of IPA in Iran purposefully exclude women who disclose their sexuality as homosexual (see Merghati-Khoei et al., 2015). One major problem that arises from excluding certain groups is that the research could be 'oppressive in itself' (Oliver, 1996). Therefore, focus should be diverted to a participatory research before an emancipatory research can be undertaken (French & Swain, 1997). In cases where an emancipatory approach is not possible, French and Swain (1997) argue that participatory research with emphasis on feminism can be considered as the first step toward empowerment.

1.2.5. Difficulties of separation

Research often focuses on leaving abusive relationships as the key to empowering women (Choice & Lemke, 1997, Werner-Wilson, Zimmerman & Whalen, 2000). However, feminist scholars argue that oppression and the structural inequalities often limit community resources that can aid women develop and achieve their goals (Kabeer, 1999). There are many

difficulties that may follow Iranian women after separation from their husbands that need to be addressed before the correct help and support can be offered to them (Hosseini-Kaladjahi 1992; Dehghani-Firoozabadi et al., 2017; Zare et al., 2019). Studies of Iranian women often reflect on the taboos surrounding the divorce amongst Iranian women (Zare, Aguilar-Vafaie, Zare et al., 2019). Although studies propose that more and more Iranian women are moving towards becoming independent by ignoring the cultural stigma and divorced (Aghajanian & Thompson, 2013), a recent study by Taherkhani et al. (2019) suggested that the stigma attached to being divorced in Iranian women still builds a barrier which stops them from leaving an abusive relationship. The absence of social support is strongly related to the increased prevalence of IPA in Iranian women (Kabiri, Saadati & Norouzi, 2018; Haydari & Navah, 2019). In addition, Sadeghifasai (2010) referred to the hostile comments that Iranian women must endure from Iranian communities after separation.

Ghvamshahidi (1995) stated that Iranian women are at their most vulnerable to these hurtful comments when they do not have any male relatives to look out for them. As Crawford et al. (2009) stated, women's identity and sense of self are strongly influenced by the culture and society that they live in. These influences affect women's decision to leave an abusive relationship, and this poses a challenge for Iranian women who feel that their identity and their moral values are questioned when they seek divorce in marriage. The collision of tradition and modernity, particularly in the acceptance of gender roles, can result in cultural crisis in Iranian women (Moghadam, 1992; Rostami-Povey, 2007). Therefore, divorce reflects so badly on Iranian women that most of them feel that they have no choice but to cope with the husband's abusive behaviour (Ezazi, 2002). Saying this, studies of Iranian women in the West have found that many women seek divorce when they develop new family values that are against gender roles (Darvishpour, 1999; Hojrat et al., 2000).

Voicing dissatisfaction in the marriage and discussing marital issues outside the home might cast a negative light on the family (Perilla, 1999), therefore, impede women from seeking help (Raj & Silverman, 2002). Lee, Thompson, Vetta and Mechanic (2002) suggested that ethnic minorities have different cultural norms regarding the appropriateness of seeking help from outside the family. For instance, Janghorban, Latifnejad Roudsari, Taghipour, Abbasi and Lottes (2015) found that the expected gender roles and the fear of being labelled as an incompetent wife sometimes led Iranian women to seek help from their mothers. Iranian women have also been known to use counselling (see Safarinejad, 2006; Dashtestannejad,

Eshghi, & Afkhami, 2014; Tehrani, Farahmand, Simbar, & Afzali, 2014; Mohammadzadeh et al., 2019) which has successfully reduced IPA against women (Atashrouz et al., 2008; Motevaliyan et al., 2017; Poornowrooz et al., 2019).

However, for those who sought professional help, the counsellor's knowledge and understanding about Iranian women's marital problems played a critical role in women's treatment. According to Janghorban et al. (2015), the counsellor's limited understanding impedes Iranian women's access to information and help. However, it is important to mention that while support from the family may provide protection against IPA, the expectations of a 'good wife' may also present barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (Bauer et al., 2000; Crawford et al., 2009). Therefore, specific interventions need to be adapted by the policy makers to support victims of IPA (Nwabunike & Tenkorang, 2017). It is important to empower women by recognising various help seeking methods such as family as a cultural strength and empowerment rather than barrier (West, 2004). Clements and Ogle (2009) also emphasised on the importance of self-acknowledgment of victim as their findings showed that women who do not recognise their victimization are more likely to suffer from impaired coping ability and more psychological distress than those who recognised their victimization. Littleton, Axsom and Grills-Taquechel (2009) also found that unacknowledged victims of rape are twice as likely to experience rape than acknowledged victims of rape. These findings highlight the importance recognising IPA in the Iranian context to be able to help Iranian women identify signs of abuse in their relationship (Shams et al., 2020).

1.3. Recognising the gap in research

There is substantial amount of literature on IPA which indicates that IPA is not a new phenomenon in research (Barnes, 2001; Jahanfar & Malekzadegan, 2007; Rogers, 2020). IPA is a gender issue that uses violence to control and to subjugate women (McHugh, 2005; White et al., 2012; Smagur et al., 2017). In common with White English women, minority women's experiences of IPA are complicated by their social status, patriarchal norms, and legal systems in the UK (Gangoli et al., 2019). However, minority women can also be more vulnerable to specific forms of abuse that are specific to their culture (Gangoli et al., 2019). Therefore, it is imperative to identify minority women who are at higher risk of victimization to IPA. To do this, a comprehensive understanding of the perception of IPA is needed (Peek-Asa et al., 2002). Iranian women are classed as one of the minority groups in the UK (Farsight, 2016) and there is ample evidence to suggest that IPA against Iranian women is

prevalent (e.g., Saberian et al., 2004; Haghi, 2018; Sattari, 2020). That being said, the majority of scholars that aim to address IPA amongst Iranian women obtain their sample from Iran. Thus, less attention has been paid to Iranian women in the UK as they have been largely omitted from the research focus in the UK.

The observations of the existing literature led to the identification of several gaps in the field of IPA that need to receive immediate attention. First, Iran's lack recognition and official data on IPA against women has forced the Iranian researchers to rely on their own definition of what should be classed as IPA (e.g., Mousavi & Eshagian, 2005). This means that various types of IPA have gone unnoticed resulting in lack of accurate and consistent data in Iranian studies (Jahromi et al., 2016). Therefore, Iranian studies are limited by what they can achieve due to lack of direction and clarity for research. Given the grave statistics of IPA against Iranian women, Iranian women's accounts of IPA are rarely researched. Relatively scant attention has been devoted to the role of non-physical forms of IPA amongst Iranian women, and this calls for further research. The present review found that less attention has been paid to stalking (e.g., Tavoli et al., 2010; Asadi et al., 2019) and marital rape (e.g., Abdollahi, Abhari, Delavar, & Charati, 2015) in Iranian studies. Furthermore, financial abuse is viewed as a subcategory of emotional abuse instead of a separate category of IPA (e.g., Jahromi et al., 2016). The literature shows that Iranian studies are more likely to focus on physical abuse (e.g., Tavoli et al., 2016), emotional abuse (e.g., Vakili et al., 2010), and coercive behaviour (e.g., Bahrami, 2014) as the main types of IPA.

Socond, much of the existing research still focuses on IPA against women who live in Iran. The evidence is therefore unable to provide an insight into Iranian women's lives outside of Iran. Moreover, Iranian studies to date have varied level of rigour in methodology and the findings tend to be clouded by using under-developed measures of IPA (e.g., Ardabily et al., 2011; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013) and drawing on assumptions (e.g., Shams et al., 2020). This necessitates further research on Iranian women's perception of IPA to help provide a better understanding of what Iranian women view as IPA against women in the UK.

Third, the use of mainstream measures of IPA in research is likely to miss the cultural differences as the result of cultural blindness. Ethnic minority women's perception of IPA is usually labelled as inferior which can be disempowering to women and can prevent them

from reporting IPA. Given that Iranian women come from a strong patriarchal country, acknowledgement of the cultural and social challenges for Iranian minority women in abusive relationship is much needed in order to identify Iranian women at higher risk of victimization in UK. The current review of the literature not only marks the gap in research, but also highlights the need for research to be conducted on Iranian women within a feminist framework. The gap in the literature calls for research that does not explain what IPA should be, rather, gives women a voice to tell, in their own words, what they view as IPA.

1.4. Rationale for the present research

Although gender inequality exists in different forms and takes place in every culture, Iranian culture is a prime example of cultural and social inequalities against women. Therefore, it was important to understand IPA amongst Iranian women in the context of gender inequality. As Anderson (2005) stated, feminist researchers are required to consider how the context of gender inequality influences IPA against women. Inspired by the book of Kar (2000), the present research explored the literature written in both Farsi and English to gain a better understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA.

The present research was mindful that by focussing on the services for women as the victims of IPA, it could have unintentionally given the impression that IPA is a 'women's issue' and women will be able to prevent abuse if they have more rights and adequate legal knowledge of IPA. As McFarlane (2007) puts it, we must change the attitudes and practices of men. Following this, the present research will adopt a feminist stance by giving Iranian women a voice to delineate what IPA means for them and how they perceive this problem. It is hoped that by doing this, the present research will be able to provide ground for future emancipatory approaches to IPA against Iranian women in UK. Furthermore, the current research intends to alter the perception of cultural stereotypes against Iranian victims of IPA and contribute to the development of culturally appropriate measures.

Previous studies of IPA against minority women in the UK have successfully compared the perception of minority and majority groups to better understand the similarities and the difference between the two groups. The evidence shows that socio-demographic variables can also play a role in shaping perception and attitudes towards of IPA. Therefore, this study attempted to conduct a comparison study between Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK

understand how cultural, social, and socio-demographic variables can shape Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. In addition, the present study intended to comprehend the three main aspects of Iranian women's perception of IPA. These aspects included 1) how women define IPA, 2) what they know and perceive as their legal rights in the UK, and 3) their attitude towards male dominance.

Feminist scholars insist that one of the fundamental ways to successfully capture oppression and gender inequality is to have a female researcher (Walby & Myhill, 2001). Sharing a similar background with the participants is therefore encouraged to provide the researcher with valuable context and clarity that may not be identifiable by other researchers (see Hey, 1997; Letherby, 2000; Wesley, 2006). This stance stands in contrast to the previous studies where the researchers were encouraged to remain objective by concealing their background and values (see Oakley, 1981). Yet, it gives more reasons to conduct the present study on Iranian women and to develop the following research aim and objectives.

1.4.1. Aim and Objectives

As Mechanic and Pole (2013) suggested, the formation of the research question is one of the most fundamental stages of the research process. The formation of the research question requires cultural sensitivity as how one frames the research question can influence all remaining steps in the research process (Mechanic & Pole, 2013). In view of the literature, the present research suggests that Iranian women who are at higher risk of victimization are more likely to be identified once a good understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA is developed. However, a lingering question remains on how various socio-demographic variables alongside cultural and social implications can influence Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK.

Research Aim

The present research intends to empower Iranian women by giving them a voice to elaborate on their perception of IPA and provide a sketch of the problems that many Iranian women face whilst being tied to cultural and social challenges. Therefore, this study seeks to understand how Iranian women in the UK perceive IPA by men towards women, and what influences such perceptions.

From this, the following objective will arise:

- I. To obtain a general understanding about how different socio-demographic variables of Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK may be associated with similarities and differences in their perception of IPA against women.
- II. To establish Iranian and non-Iranian women's definition of IPA, their legal knowledge of IPA in the UK, their experience of IPA, and their attitudes towards male violence against wives.
- III. To explore in depth how individual Iranian women in the UK view IPA by men against women.

1.5. Chapter Summary

As mentioned throughout this chapter, the existing gap in the literature means that the UK's intervention methods in helping victims of IPA may not be applicable to all women from different minority backgrounds in the UK. Over the recent years, feminist research has been rather influential in transforming women's position in social, legal, and personal spheres, which has secured full participation rights for women in education and employment. Iranian women are an ethnic minority population in the UK who come from patriarchal family homes and society where they are legally classed as their fathers and later, their husband's possession. Yet, not much is known about this minority group and their perception of IPA in the UK. What is known is that Iranian women are taught from a young age to keep their family's honour by refraining from any sexual activities. Iranian women are later told to be 'good wives' and satisfy their husband's sexual needs before they become mothers who are expected to sacrifice their lives for their family. Iranian women like many other ethnic minorities in the UK have developed their own unique coping strategies in relation to IPA.

One of the very few studies on the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK found that Iranian women support gender roles irrespective of their country of residence (Aghtaie, 2016). However, other studies of Iranian women suggest that sometimes Iranian women will try to make light of an IPA incident to cope with the painful event. Therefore, Iranian women's coping strategies should not be mistaken with their perception of IPA. Feminist research has successfully developed public awareness and intolerance of IPA against women, reflected in law and policy, by demonstrating the link between women's subordinate position in patriarchal social systems, and their experiences of IPA in the personal sphere of intimate relationships. On that note, it is suggested that more studies are required where culturally appropriate measures are applied to comprehend what influences Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. It is therefore important to add that the roots of the present research lie within the feminist theoretical perspective which underpins the philosophical position and methodology, discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and philosophical position

Introduction

This chapter will track the development of a feminist research from how the core belief of feminism influenced the philosophical position of the present research. Whilst feminist scholars focus on the subjective experiences of women when investigating IPA, the present research highlights there is a real world regardless of Iranian women's unique experiences and the researcher's subjectivity. On that note, limited realist philosophical position will be taken which embraces epistemological relativism alongside ontological realism to build on a more comprehensive research about the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK.

2.1. Theoretical framework

There has been a considerable amount of research on IPA, so, there is no shortage of theoretical accounts that endeavour to explain this issue. Schechter (1982, p. 209 as cited in Pope & Ferraro, 2006) stated, "theoretical explanations for battering are not mere exercises; by pinpointing the conditions that create violence against women, they suggest the directions in which a movement should proceed to stop it". Yet, it must be noted that there still remains a paucity of research developing and testing theories of IPA amongst Iranian women. On that note, the selection of the theoretical framework for the present research was guided by the available literature (in English and in Farsi) on the perception of Iranian women. Theory of conformity by Asch (1951) suggested that people can change their belief or perception to fit in with a group. In support of Asch (1952), Smartt (2006) stated that women in patriarchal societies may change their views on IPA in order to conform to the societal norms of being a 'good' woman. However, learning theories have also tried to explain the perception of IPA by putting emphasis on the social interaction between members of a society.

2.1.1. Learning theory approaches

One of the early behavioural approaches to IPA is Skinner's (1953) operant conditioning in which he proposed that people's behaviour is modified using positive or negative reinforcement. Long and McNamara (1989) applied operant conditioning to abusive relationships where they posited that women remain in abusive relationship because the abuse can produce an augment responsiveness by increasing the motivation to obtain positive

reinforcement from the abuser. Grossman (2018) added that the perception of IPA can also be clouded when the perpetrator manipulates the other partner by positively or negatively reinforcing them to believe what is right or wrong in a relationship. The theory of role modelling highlights how role models can influence perception of IPA (Wagner, Jones, Tsaroucha, & Cumbers, 2019). For instance; a study based in the UK found that peer groups can influence the perception of IPA (Fox, Hale, & Gadd, 2014). However, Ahmed (1992) concluded that in the Middle Eastern cultures, parents play a vital role in shaping children's social behaviour.

Social learning theory rests on the basic tenet that "human behavior is learned . . . it is acquired rather than innate" (Miller & Doddard, 1941, p. 1). According to the social learning theory, perception and behaviours are learnt primarily through social interaction (Akers, 1977; Eckstein, 2011; Powers, Cochran, Maskaly, Sellers, 2017). Therefore, perception of IPA is formed through children's modelling of the behaviour and response patterns of IPA from their parents and close family members (Anderson, & Kras, 2007). Social learning theory would highlight that girls learn the expectations related to their role as a woman, whilst men socialise to acquire abusive and controlling behaviour towards women (Walker and Browne, 1985; Manuel and Lana, 2013). Such expectations are thought to shape the perception of IPA in women. Saying this, the social expectations of women would once again emphasise the need for understanding how the binary construction of femininity and masculinity can shape the perception of IPA in Iranian women. Such understanding requires the evaluation of gender roles which can only be achieved via a feminist approach.

Considering the literature in the previous chapter about the patriarchal structures of Iranian women's lives, feminism is the most relevant approach to this research. Feminism is the only approach that sees IPA as a product of a patriarchal society in which men use violence to control women. Feminist studies would argue that IPA by a man against women is not an indication of loss of control, but rather, an establishment of control over women (Shackelford & Goetz, 2004; Hayes & Franklin, 2017; Chamsanit, Khuankaew, Rungreangkulkij, Norsworthy, & Abrams, 2020). From a feminist perspective, the traditional theories have been applied in ways which make it difficult to comprehend women's perception and experience of IPA (Walby, 2016; Woodiwiss, Smith & Lockwood, 2017). According to Walby (2004) feminism works on two main assumptions. First, feminism empowers women

by giving them a voice to understand women's experience from their own personal views. Second, feminism highlights various issues around patriarchy in which women must comply with the binary gender system.

2.1.2. Feminism

Even though there is not a single feminist position or standpoint (Cott, 1986), the concepts of patriarchy and social change are the core beliefs of feminism (Walby, 1990). Motivated by the commitment to improve the quality of women's lives; feminist researchers have endeavoured to enact social change (Afshar & Maynard, 1994; Benschop & Doorewaard, 2012) by challenging women's oppression in patriarchal systems and structures (Selokela, 2005; Rose, 2015). Focussing on the power imbalances between men and women within the family and society (Bem, 1981; Choi & Ting, 2008; Jewkes, Flood & Lang, 2014), feminism desires to reshape the society (Lombard & Whiting, 2018) and the social structures that underpin the occurrence and perception of IPA (Irwin & Thorpe, 1996; Mays, 2006; Grose & Grabe, 2014; Jonge, 2016). Feminists stress that IPA against women is an extension of an oppressive patriarchal system where men can display different forms of aggression towards women, and by doing so, deny women access to political, economic, legal, and educational resources (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). So, different strands of feminism are united by challenging women's oppression in patriarchal systems and structures (Rose, 2015; Jonge, 2016).

Another focus of feminism that unites all feminists' works together is that they all share the underlying concerns on the ways that patriarchy strips women of their personhood (Sanchez-Eppler & Sanchez-Eppler, 1993; Stark, 2009). For example, *Political feminism* draws attention to the oppression of women and their loss of personhood by political settings (Sanchez & Martin-Sevillano, 2006) and challenges women's political influence (Lovenduski, Baudino, Sainsbury, Guadagnini, & Meier, 2005). The focus of Political feminism is on female political representation and on the legal aspects of human rights for women in the patriarchal societies (Kauppert & Kerner, 2016). *Liberal feminism* emphasises on the gender inequality in all institutions of society as it proposes new legislations, laws, and policies (Olson, Horn-Schott, Hartley, & Schmidt, 2018). With its focus on education and voting rights, liberal feminism has been challenged over addressing the situation of women of the upper and middle classes mainly (Buist & Sutherland, 2015).

Black feminism states that consciousness arises from the understanding of intersecting patterns of discrimination against women. Black feminism holds the position that discrimination is based on women's ethnicity as well as gender (Simien, 2004). The lives of African American women are highlighted in this strand of feminism as it is suggested that African American women are disadvantaged doubly in the social, economic, and political structure of the United States (Simien, 2004). *Ecofeminism* proposes that there is a connection between the degradation of the natural world and the oppression of women (Vakoch & Mickey, 2018). According to *Ecofeminism*, women and the natural world are dominated by men (Mellor, 1997). This branch of feminism draws elements of the feminist and green movements together. It takes the concern about the impact of human activities on the non-human world from the green movement, and the view of humanity as gendered in ways that subordinate, exploit, and oppress women (Shiva & Mies, 2014).

Lesbian feminism encourages homosexuality in women (Enszer, 2016). According to this strand of feminism, sexuality in heterosexual relationships equals male dominance and female submission (MacKinnon, 1987; Farrell, 1988). Most importantly, Lesbian feminism attempts to broaden the definition of lesbianism from sexual preference to a collective identity which rises above gender binary (Stein, 1992). Thompson (1992) puts forward that setting up an oppositional dichotomy between 'lesbian' and 'heterosexual' divides women from each other and promotes male domination. While emancipatory in its own way, *Socialist feminism* is grounded within radical feminism but it does not rest on the idea that gender is the only cause of oppression in women. Social feminism recognises the physical and biological differences in men and women (Caldwell, Swan & Woodbrown, 2012) and asserts that oppression of women is the result of their financial dependence on men (Calasanti & Bailey, 1991). Socialist feminism takes the view that the perception of inequality between men and women can shift even if the society is built on patriarchy and capitalism (Smith, 1990; Gordon, 2016; Roelofs, 2018).

Radical feminism sees the society as a patriarchy in which men oppress women solely based on sex differences (Mackay, 2015). Therefore, a key distinguishing feature of radical feminism is its refusal to accept the binary construction of femininity and masculinity (Crow, 2000). Patriarchy is seen as the primary social division which can be categorised into the two

distinct categories of men as the group in power and women as the oppressed group (Millett, 2016). Another important aspect of radical feminism is its focus on the rape culture. Rape culture encourages sexual aggression and violence against women by identifying men's sexual aggression as natural (Radford & Stanko, 1991; Buchwald, et al., 2005). Hence, rape is tolerated and normalised in women's everyday lives (Buchwald et al., 1993; Keller et al., 2018). Fuelled by the concept of rape culture in the 1970s, radical feminists led the way in identifying and analysing pornography as a feminist issue in the UK (Long, 2012).

Connecting pornography with rape and IPA enabled the British feminists to lay ground for the rise of anti-pornography movement in the UK (Long, 2012). British feminists fought hard to draw attention to the objectification of women's body for the purposes of male sexual arousal. It was suggested that objectification of women's body in pornographic content reinforces the acceptance of men's sexual desires as out of their control and promotes rape culture (Strain et al., 2016).

The danger of promotion of rape culture can be even more problematic in cultures that justify rape. Aghtaie (2011) highlighted that male sexuality and their desire to have unlimited sex are treated as natural and beyond their control in patriarchal societies such as Iran. But more importantly, victims of rape are often blamed for provoking rape incidents in Iran as the state fails to recognise rape as violence against women (Aghtaie, 2011). In a recent study, Naghavi et al. (2019) found that many Iranian women were exposed to marital rape after their husbands had watched pornographic material. In some cases, husbands forced their wives to perform sexual acts from pornographic contents which left the participants feel helpless. As mentioned, marital rape is not recognised in Iran (Tizro, 2013). Therefore, rape can only be understood by addressing how unequal gender relations and male domination control women's sexuality (Hester, 2003).

In the model of 'Power and Control wheel' by Pence and Paymar (1993), men's violence against women is seen as embedded in a culture that supports relationships of male dominance. Physical violence is thus seen as part of a continuum of tactics which includes coercion, intimidation, emotional abuse, financial abuse, and using male privileges.

Furthermore, Stark (2009) draws on the notion of 'liberty crime' in which men deploy tactics of coercive control to dominate women and to strip women away from their sense of self.

Broadening the understanding of IPA under feminist framework, Stark (2009) argued that

male domination presents itself in different guises as it depends on the context of a woman's life. Therefore, male domination consists of specific features that are in place to subjugate women. Supporting Stark's concept of coercive control, Aghtaie (2016) highlighted that the Iranian state which uses religion to create 'a condition of unfreedom' for women can be understood using the coercive model. According to Aghtaie (2016), Sharia law and what women are expected to do becomes a feeding source for men's coercive control over women (Aghtaie, 2016).

Stark's (2009) concept of coercive control add a new layer to the feminist studies as it suggests that the state of subordination produced by coercive control could resemble the subjugation experienced by women in the traditional societies. Yet, subordination feels different when enforced on a personal level in a society that promotes gender equality compared to a society where the oppression of women is actively encouraged. Victims of coercive control feel greater shame and a more intense sense of failure, so, their feelings often seem disproportionate to the abuse that they have suffered (Stark, 2009).

It is beyond the scope of this research to explain all the variants of feminist thoughts. The line that differentiates between different branches of feminism may be blurred (McQuire, 2015), but every feminist approach shares similar ethical criterion around gender (Jonge, 2016). Although used interchangeably, the two concepts of *gender* and *sex* are not the same (DeKeseredy, 2016). Gender refers to the socially defined expected roles and attributes that constitute masculinity, femininity, or gender identity (Flavin & Artz, 2013). Sex refers to the biologically based categories of male and female that are stable across history and cultures (Dragiewicz, 2009). Even though the feminist perspective of IPA does not explain the variation in the behaviour of men and women across different cultures, it argues that the perception of IPA reflects on a pattern of behaviours which is directly connected to the patriarchal societies (Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1998). Unlike other theories of IPA (i.e., social learning theory) that explain family interaction patterns (Rakovec-Felser, 2014), a feminist stance addresses the social structures and the family issues around male domination over women (Knoppers & McLachlan, 2018).

Commenting on feminist studies, Rajan (2018) stated that the data and theories of IPA have largely emerged from research conducted in Western countries. Therefore, in order to

understand the profound effect that it has on the lives of women from different cultures and backgrounds, feminists need to shift their views away from the northern settings and focus on the issues that women from other cultures find problematic (Rajan, 2018). Having established the situation of Iranian women within the structure of patriarchy and gender inequality, the present research will add another dimension to the existing theoretical explanations of the perception of IPA by taking a feminist approach in understanding Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK.

All strands of feminism endorse the view that IPA is a gendered issue fuelled by gender inequality and binary constructions of femininity and masculinity. However, radical feminist perspective remains very influential to current theoretical perspectives on IPA against women with roots in wider structures of gender inequality (Walby, 1990) and male domination (Crow, 2000). Radical feminists claim to go to the roots of women's oppression, proclaiming themselves as a theory of gender equalities, by and for women; as such, it is based firmly on women's experiences and perceptions (Thompson, 2001). As mentioned, radical feminism sheds light on the issues around rape culture, which is relevant to every culture, especially in the Iranian culture where marital rape is legalised and accepted. By locating IPA as a gendered issue perpetuated by patriarchy the present research is guided by feminism. But, by placing IPA as a product rape and violence that allows men to maintain power over women, the present research aligns with radical feminist values. But first, understanding of radical feminism requires some analysis of the historical context which is explored in the following section.

History of radical feminism

The first wave feminist movement in the UK occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was mostly concerned with women's civil rights (Banks, 1986). This was a time when women's inferiority was deemed to be natural (Firestone, 1972). Raising awareness on patriarchal structures that surrounded women's subordination within the private spheres of their family and their marriage were out-with the scope of the first wave of feminist movement. The outcome of this state of thinking was that all knowledge was produced from the male perspective by disregarding women's knowledge and experiences. Subverting this situation was a key rationale of the second wave feminist movement (Walby, 1990).

Although more distinctive branches of feminism later developed in the second wave of

feminism, wherein women stressed their entitlements to gender equality with men in different aspects of social, legal, and civil life (Mackay, 2015).

Second wave feminist researchers during the 1960s and 1970s underscored the connections between women's experience and larger social and political structures which later developed the name of *Personal is political* (Lin, 2019). *Personal is political* drew on the personal experiences of women rooted in their political situation and gender inequality (Morris, 1992). For feminist activists, enacting a social change to challenge the structure patriarchy and male dominance during a time when women's voices were disregarded and de-valued, was a challenging agenda (Banks, 1986). By the early 1980s, the British feminist scholars saw a shift from mainly studying white, middle class women (Letherby, 2003) to investigating the influence of factors such as age, race, sexual orientation and social class on oppression (Hester & Donovan, 2009; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013) amongst ethnic minority women (see hooks, 1982). In the wake of these historical activities an extensive literature and research on IPA now exists in both the United Kingdom and internationally (Hester, Pearson, Harwin, & Abrahams, 2007).

Theorising Patriarchy

Patriarchy is the “system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (Walby, 1990, p. 20). Patriarchy emerged from the second wave feminist movement and was particularly central to the radical feminist perspectives (Lin, 2019). Radical feminism established IPA against women as a tenet of patriarchal structure and male dominance where women's oppression by wider patriarchal societal structures was replicated in the privacy of their heterosexual relationships (Banks, 1986; Walby, 1990). Whilst feminism has empowered women for the past few decades by advocating for gender equality in societal (Tsuria, 2019) and familial structures globally (Davis & Gao, 2020), some of the scholars argue that feminist perspectives have been positioned as unnecessary in the light of strong and overstated perceptions of women's liberation from patriarchy (McRobbie, 2009). As a result, many women have turned against feminist values, considering them out of date, and anti-male (Hooks, 2000).

The conflict between scholars about the influence of feminism and women's rights in the society has resulted in diverse findings. Some believe that women share equal opportunities

with men and hold women accountable for maintaining their own freedom and success (Djupe, McClurg, & Sokhey, 2017). For instance, wage gap is said to exist not because of gender discrimination, but, because men take credit for their accomplishments at work (Guillén, Mayo, & Karelaia, 2018) and ask for pay rise (Babcock, 2003). Others insist that gender ideologies still exist (e.g., Sommerlad & Sanderson, 2019). Furthermore, Jamieson (2002) stressed that the overstated perception of gender equality and liberation can result in harmful consequences for women as it may force them to keep their experience of IPA hidden in fear of stigmatization. In addition, Ismail, Berman and Ward-Griffin (2007) found that women's self-blame on their victimization to IPA left them isolated from support and intervention. This may particularly be the case in the private realm of intimate relationship between a man and a woman where a woman's success in life is measured through maintaining her marriage (Tolman, Spence, Rosen-Reynoso, & Porche, 2003).

Feminist researcher Butler (1990) suggested that women from diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds are united by intense pressure to adhere to traditional gender ideologies. Consequently, each culture and community are partially responsible for the perception of IPA and the identities framed around the notion of gender roles (Lyons, 2009; Lutz, 1988). These gender ideologies still exist in the UK amongst Muslim women (Morey & Yaqin, 2011), and Iranian women (Aghtaie, 2016). Most feminist scholars, regardless of their field of inquiry, devote considerable attention to the concept of patriarchy (DeKeseredy, 2016). Therefore, as Afshar and Maynard (1994) highlighted, research into IPA requires the study of patriarchy on culture and ethnicity before any support can be offered to the victims of IPA.

Patriarchy in Iran

As McHugh (2005) stated, the silence that is attached to women's knowledge and perception of IPA under the patriarchal structures must be broken to be able to help the victims of IPA. Patriarchal societies such as Iran continue to support the notion of patriarchy to put woman in a submissive position to accept IPA (Ghvamshahidi, 1995; Kar, 2000; Moallem, 2005; Sattari, 2020). Ghvamshahidi (1995) stressed that the patriarchal structures of Iranian women's lives have roots in more than one source. According to Ghvamshahidi (1995), patriarchal structures of Iranian women's lives have roots in the complex historical process of the rise and fall of the Persian Empire and the impact of Islam on their culture through custom and formal laws reinforced by the state. As Aghtaie (2017) explained, Iranian women

have never been completely free of patriarchal structures. However, they had gained a few rights in the family protection law during Pahlavi's era (before Islamic revolution) which was soon annulled and replaced by the Sharia law.

Iran's shift from a secular to an Islamic state in 1979 reinforced the re-constructions of gendered ideologies in the public sphere through policies and practices which impacted on Iranian women's position in the society (Sattari, 2020). Islamic feminists have endeavoured to introduce a new perspective on Islam as a religion that is conducive to equality and social (see Sadiqi, 2020). But as Tizro (2012) stated, one cannot ignore the fact that Iranian women's role were dramatically changed with the introduction of Sharia Law after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. After the Islamic revolution in 1979, the state began to enforce the religious mandates and promote gender roles. This meant that due to physiological and biological differences, husbands and wives or women and men in society had to comply by the gender roles and expectations (Moghadam, 2003). Nonetheless, Iranian women have continued to challenge patriarchal structures from the first feminist movement was in 1910 to campaigning against compulsory hijab (Siamdoust, 2018). Rezai-Rashti et al. (2019) drew on Iranian women's empowerment through education stating that there is a paradox of increasing educational attainments despite discriminatory laws and restrictions that have been imposed on Iranian women for the past four decades.

Despite Iranian women's attempts to challenge the traditional gender roles that are imposed on them, women are still expected to be in carer roles and to adapt to their societies' expectations reflected in their husbands' demands (Rahbari & Mahmudabadi, 2017). To insert dominance over women, Iranian men have led Iranian women to believe that they must submit to their husband's uncontrollable sexual desires. Studies of IPA amongst Iranian women stress that marriage brings many challenges to the lives of Iranian women (Taghizadeh et al., 2015). Motevaliyani et al. (2017) found that those Iranian women who do not comply with the expected gender roles are those who are most at risk of experiencing IPA as they become the target of their husband's impatience. Jalali (2005) drew attention to the cultural expectations and the gender norms that can result in an inner conflict for Iranian women. According to Jalali (2005), Iranian women can be labelled as inadequate and incompetent wives if they pursue their dream of becoming independent over their expected gender roles. Therefore, Iranian mothers always prioritized their children over their education

(Behboodi et al., , 2017) because they do not want to be labelled as bad mothers (Rastegarkhaled, 2006; Rahbari & Mahmudabadi, 2017).

Lotf Abadi et al. (2012b) added that Iranian mothers who are victims of IPA report lower self-esteem because they need to fulfil their expected role of a mother as well as tolerating IPA. Aghtaei (2016) also highlighted the extent to which different forms of IPA are interlinked and combined in order to control and overpower Iranian women irrespective of their country of residence. Even though religion been blamed for creating gender norm expectations for Muslim women (Hermansen, 1983; Tizro, 2013), Aghtaei (2016) stressed that patriarchy in Iran cannot be reduced to religion, misinterpretation of religion, or the patriarchal culture in the garb of religion. Rather, Aghtaei (2016) suggested that it is the context in which each woman's life that impacts the level of violence that she encounters.

Ezazi (2002) focussed on the notion of patriarchy within the Iranian society by referring to Iran's formal and informal social structures. According to Ezazi (2002), patriarchy starts in households where certain extent of aggression by husbands against wives is acceptable and justifiable. In agreement with Ezazi (2002), the newer studies of IPA in Iranian women also blame gender roles for the underreporting of IPA (e.g., Akpınar, 2003). Similarly, cultural and religious boundaries have been found to prevent Iranian women from reporting IPA (Darvishpour, 1999; Haghi, 2018). Taherkhani et al. (2014) highlighted that at times, reporting IPA can go against an Iranian woman by putting the blame on her for being an inadequate wife to her husband. However, despite fathers' and later husbands' subordination of women at household level in the traditional Iranian family units (Jalali, 2005), the control over wives and daughter tends to weaken after migration to the West (Darvishpour, 2002).

2.2. A Feminist philosophical approach

Taking a feminist approach to conducting the present research was about more than just the influence of gender roles and patriarchy on the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women. The role of feminism in the choice of philosophical positions in the present research must be acknowledged as this led onto the choice of methodology later in the process. Scholars suggest that the philosophical position about the nature of reality (ontology) and views about how one may come to know this reality (epistemology) must be clarified before the directions of research can be determined (Carter & Little, 2007; King, Horrocks, & Brooks, 2019). For

the present research, the importance of adopting a feminist epistemological approach was that such approach has questions what is known about power and gender in relation to IPA. The present approach therefore draws from Iranian traditions with an emphasis on the constructions and perception related to structural oppressions.

As mentioned earlier, the history of feminism and its progressive development comes from allowing women to share their knowledge and experiences by giving them a voice (Walby, 2017). Feminist approaches to research methods grew initially out of challenges to male-dominated knowledge within patriarchy (Gottzén, Bjørnholt, & Boonzaier, 2020), and from varying struggles that sought to reflect ways in which gender does and ought to influence the conception of knowledge of the social world (Anderson, 2000; Pinnick, Koertge, & Almeder, 2003). And since women's knowledge and understanding of gender inequality differ from one another (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Gilbert & Masucci, 2006), qualitative studies were suggested to seize women's perception and experience of IPA on an individual basis (Woodward & Duncanson, 2017). Feminist scholars focus on the epistemological framework by focussing on women's concept of knowledge being generated by their subjective realities modified through their social interactions and experiences with the social world (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Maynard, 1994). Therefore, the positivist stance on a single truth or reality is usually rejected when it comes to studying women's experiences (Clarke, 2001). Based on this view, Oakley (1998) went as far as gendering the methods by labelling quantitative methods as positivist and masculine and qualitative methods as feminine.

Maynard (1994) warned against absolute rejection of quantitative feminist research. According to Maynard (1994), quantitative methods have provided insight into women's subjective perception of IPA by enabling the researchers to unearth the nature and the extent of IPA against women. That being said, the contribution of quantitative studies in identifying predicting variables and mechanisms that underlie the perception of IPA should not be ignored (e.g., Lynch et al., 2017; Burjalés-Martí et al., 2018). It is worth mentioning that feminist researchers have previously been successful in combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies (mixed method approach) to understand women's complex experiences (Hesse-Biber & Flowers, 2019). As Woodward and Duncanson (2017) noted, feminist methodology has developed a broader vision of research practice to studying women's lives. This suggests that regardless of the choice of methods, it is the commitment of

feminist scholars to improve women's lives by breaking the silence that is attached to women's knowledge and unite all feminist research with one another (McHugh, 2005).

2.3. Philosophical Underpinnings of the Research

A philosophical position is, broadly speaking, about what we know and what exists (Hautamäki, 2020). Hofer and Pintrich (2012, p. 4) proposed that “epistemology is concerned with the origin, nature, limits, methods, and justification of human knowledge... This includes beliefs about the definition of knowledge, how knowledge is constructed, how knowledge is evaluated, where knowledge resides, and how knowing occurs.” In contrast, Jacquette (2002, p. 3) described ontology as “a method or activity of enquiry into philosophical problems about the concept or facts of existence.” According to Bean (1981), a lack of explicit specification of the philosophical positions will lead research to employ inadequate instruments. The traditional approaches in psychological research with a strict focus on human behaviour as the object of study and with the acceptance of rigorous empirical research as the cornerstone of the scientific method has often embraced a relativist approach. Therefore, the modern philosophical approaches that have taken an epistemological position and have largely focussed on the reality that is created by the human mind have resulted in a clash between relativist and realist conceptions (Fletcher, 1996).

The current research works within an epistemological framework which highlights the theory of knowledge in order to understand Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. Hester & Donovan (2009) stated that one of the most difficult aspects of any research is understanding how epistemology can capture something as elusive as individual conceptions of knowledge and knowing as the impact of IPA varies between women due to their location in particular sets of social relations and different contexts. The suitability of transferring the notions of objectivity and reliability to the evaluation of qualitative study needs to be explored whilst keeping epistemological position at the foreground of discussion. A major source of misunderstanding in research arises in philosophical debates as quantitative and qualitative studies often refuse to share fundamental assumptions (see Rennie & Toukmanian, 1992).

Considering feminist stance on the importance of an epistemological framework, the present research is positioned within a relativist-constructivist paradigm. However, the use quantitative methods as part of the mixed methods research can cause confusion for an

epistemological research framework. By bringing together these two strands of epistemology, this chapter offers a unique perspective on understanding the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. Therefore, different epistemological positions both within and outside of the epistemological framework will be discussed in the following sections to understand how knowledge of the social world of an Iranian woman can provide a solid foundation for epistemological framework.

2.3.1. Positivism

Considering that the present research is concerned with Iranian women's accounts of IPA, it can be said that a positivism's focus on reality contradicts the purpose of this research by rejecting the epistemological position and assuming that the reality derives from the science (Pope & Mays, 2020). The positivist paradigm is believed to limit the understanding concerning the experiences (Smith, 1987) especially in relation to IPA (Allen, 2011) because it does not take subjective experience of the individuals into account (Boudon, 1998). As mentioned earlier, feminist scholars are highly sensitive about hearing women's accounts of IPA on an individual basis (see Smith, 1987; Walby, 1990; Kimmons & Johnstun, 2019). Therefore, quantitative methods are believed to be inadequate on epistemological grounds for studying women collectively (Smith, 1987) and for missing the reality of women's experience of oppression and patriarchy (Kimmons & Johnstun, 2019).

It is true that the traditional forms of questionnaires adhere to the positivist paradigm by relying on the researcher's knowledge and objective knowledge taking a neutral stance (Burvill, 2019; Kondori, 2019). The reality is believed to articulate through positivism. However, Risman (1993) proposed that feminist scholars are likely to miss out on important data and results if they continue to deny quantitative methodology based on the presumption that the approach is positivist and lacks depth and knowledge. Chamberlain (2015) also stressed that it is better to understand the phenomenology as a set of theoretical framings and methodological approaches for conducting research than to choose a firm and close philosophical stance. The role of socio-demographic variables in women's perception of IPA cannot be overlooked (see Carlson & Worden, 2005; Pole et al., 2008; Kingston et al., 2016). As Madill, Jordan and Shirley (2000) asserted, it is thanks to the positivist epistemology that the researchers were able to generate reliable quantitative data to explain IPA in women. Therefore, Murphy and O' Leary (1994) advocated for methodological diversity and rigor in

the effort to understand IPA stating that questions of values and politics in research on IPA cannot be reduced to questions of methodology.

Smart (2009) posited that feminism is based on the conviction that research should be a better representative of the lives of ordinary women in the society, lives which were either ignored or presented in one-dimensional terms. Furthermore, Maynard (1994, p. 14) stated that “feminism must begin with experience, it has been argued, since it is only from such a vantage point that it is possible to see the extent to which women’s worlds are organized in ways which differ from those of men.” In response to this, the present research asserts that to understand the full concept of IPA, Iranian women’s perception of IPA should be examined using quantitative methods (positivist) to investigate the role of socio-demographic variables and qualitative methods (relativist/constructivist) to listen and understand women’s individual accounts of IPA. Allen (2011) emphasised that feminist researchers should be prepared to take risks and to connect with the women who contribute to the research process by finding ways to identify complex and different layers of cultural and social life of women.

2.3.2. Relativism

Relativism has emerged most strongly in the development of psychological research (Feyerabend, 1975). Relativism derived from challenging the validity of the standard positivist approach before suggesting a more subjective alternative approach via epistemology. Feminist scholars soon became fond of relativist approach as Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988, p. 458) maintained that because "the real nature of male and female cannot be determined" we should "focus our attention on representations of gender, rather than on gender itself". Feminists argued that studies of women ignored women’s experiences by paying too much focus on the values of objectivity, making science a distinctly male institution (see Riger, 1992).

Relativism insists that epistemic judgements or beliefs are justified or unjustified only relative to systems of standards as there is not neutral way of adjudicating between them (Ashton, Kusch, McKenna, & Sodoma, 2020). In addition, relativism creates a new possibility to study a problem of true and connected with its epistemological procedures of understanding, an explanation, interpretation which allows to look at the nature of human knowledge differently (Molokova, 2014). Therefore, the assumptions that the perception of

IPA in Iranian women is relative to systems of standards can contribute towards an understanding of the perception of IPA as dynamic in nature as relativism accommodates constructionist approach which suggests that reality is shared between a person and society (Derksen, 2010).

2.3.3. Constructivism and contextualism

As highlighted by Smart (2009), research on IPA must find ways to present the complex layers of social and cultural lives of women in responsive and sensitive ways. To do this, the present research employed qualitative research methods to gain an in-depth understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. Mason (1997) noted that qualitative methodologies have become almost obligatory for feminist research. However, the employment of qualitative methods in the current research was not because it has become fashionable to do so, but because it can help answer the present research question on the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. The present research investigates the perception of IPA amongst women and a constructivist approach will aid bring together Iranian women's construction of identity, their construction of the meaning of their relationships and the IPA that may emerged within them. By taking a constructivist stance the present research assumes that there are always multiple interpretations of the perception of IPA in Iranian women as their knowledge of what constitutes IPA is a construction of their reality that is shaped by their social and cultural background.

According to Brooks, McCluskey, Turley and King (2015), in researches where multiple interpretations can be made of a phenomenon, focus is likely to be on the researcher's reflexivity, acknowledgement of multiple potential perspectives, and concern with the generation of rich description. By doing so, the researcher is expected to challenge the social order or enrich and empower people's lives (Gergen's, 1985). Having outlined these epistemological assumptions criteria and research goals, it can be said that all constructivist studies share the belief that none of the many ways of understanding that people have developed provide a purely objective view and perception of the world around them. However, constructivism often disagrees about the implications of such positions, mostly regarding the nature of reality, the origin of the constructed meaning, and the most efficient way to conduct research (Raskin, 2002).

2.3.4 Limited Realism

Limited realism embraces epistemological relativism (i.e., we can't entirely escape our position as researchers) alongside ontological realism (there's a real world out there which we can discover things about). Stevens (1998) therefore considered the use of constructivism within psychological research, a form of limited realism. In this section, the use of limited realism considers a range of philosophical positions such as critical realism (Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson, & Norrie, 1998), subtle realism (Duncan & Nicol, 2004), minimum realist (Stevens, 1998), and natural realism (Boyd, 1999). The common ground amongst all these positions is their commitment to a realist ontology combined with a constructionist epistemology (King & Brooks, 2017). Limited realism suggests that the world has a reality outside of individual construction, however, our understanding of the world around us is limited by our position within it.

According to limited realism, culture and social structures are real and can influence human behaviour, however, one cannot remove his or her subjectivity from the analytical process (Lebow, 2004). Mixed method research using a limited realist position have recently been applied to understand IPA amongst ethnic minority women (Mechanic & Pole, 2013). Whilst a limited realist qualitative research does not claim objectivity, it rejects the assumption of a relativist or constructivist position that no interpretation of data is better than the other (King & Brooks, 2017). Since limited realist studies recognise the subjectivity of the researcher and at the same time seek to develop an understanding of the world that is not a product of that subjectivity, researcher's reflexivity is crucial in this philosophical position (King & Brooks, 2017). The present research takes the assumption that there are many influences that are real and are objective to Iranian women's construction of IPA, however, Iranian women's subjective view of their world and the researcher's reflexivity is also an important part of Iranian women's perception of IPA.

2.4. Chapter summary

This chapter has drawn on an extensive amount of literature to determine the theoretical basis for the present research, with the primary emphasis on theorising the patriarchal structures and male dominance Iranian women's families and society. More recently, women find themselves located where independence and liberation are expected, while also experiencing pressure to adhere to traditional roles of daughters and wives. Based on such findings, a theoretical approach to understanding Iranian women's perception of IPA was developed, an approach which moves from data and method through Iranian women's accounts of IPA to develop empowering strategies to support Iranian women who experience IPA in the UK.

The emphasis on the patriarchal structures of Iranian women's lives, the present research used a feminist epistemological approach, rooted in understandings Iranian women's perception of IPA, including experiences and intersections related to gender and sexuality. Such feminist epistemological approach would be valuable by allowing the development of a rigorous approach that considers what and how Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK

in influenced. This chapter argues that an understanding of the Iranian women's perspectives on the nature of the social world, and of the sort of knowledge that can be obtained through research about their social world, provides a solid foundation for a comprehensive research. Having considered the broad philosophical foundations of research, encompassing how Iranian women understand the social world and how they can know about that world, the chapter discusses the role of theory in the present research. By locating IPA as a gendered issue perpetuated by patriarchy the present research is guided by feminism. But, by placing IPA as a product rape, violence, and pornography that allows men to maintain power over women, the present research aligns with feminist values.

Examining how different philosophical positions are suited to feminist epistemic approach was critical to the present research. Feminist epistemology which is concerned with how categories of social identity affect knowledge production has a distinctive contribution to make in evaluating motives to adopt a constructivist/contextualist epistemology. However, the present research did not intend on seeing IPA as a constructed world by Iranian women that is open to multiple interpretations. Rather, it aimed to embrace the epistemological relativism stating that the subjective position of the researcher cannot be ignored when conducting such research. In addition, the philosophical assumption of ontological realism could not be overlooked in this research suggesting that there's a real world out there which we can discover things about. Therefore, led by the feminist theoretical literature which has been central to developing the current research's rationale and theoretical approach, limited realism became the leading philosophical position of the present. Having established the research's grounding within the feminist theoretical literature, the following chapter will offer a detailed overview of the current methodological approaches, with reference to feminist methodological writings within a limited realist framework.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

This chapter presents a detailed and reflective account of the choice of mixed method research to produce a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. A wide range of theoretical and methodological literature guided the choice of methods, and feminist scholarships were of importance in formulating the choice of research methods. In view of the sensitive subject matter of the present research, and the long standing and predominant influence of feminism in the understanding IPA against women, a methodology was sought which reflected feminist approaches to research. First, the chapter will begin by explaining the rationale behind using mixed method research. This will then be followed by detailed explanations of how quantitative methods and qualitative methods aided in answering the research question, respectively.

A detailed account of how the participants were accessed, recruited, piloted, and the steps taken to analyse the data both quantitatively and qualitatively will be provided. Quantitative methods will address the first two objectives of the research by assessing the ability of the socio-demographic variables in predicting the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK in addition to highlighting the differences and the similarities between the two groups. For phase two, the qualitative methods will address the last objective by providing a detailed account of how individual Iranian women in the UK view IPA by men against women. The qualitative section will also outline the basic principles of the current research method by describing the main procedural steps involved in undertaking Template Analysis. This chapter will conclude a detailed exposition of the data analysis process.

3.1. Mixed method approach

The first section on feminist standpoint will explain the influence of feminist scholars in choosing the current methods. This leads on to the second section of this chapter which focusses on the rationale behind the choice of mixed method approach. Additionally, this section will include a subsection on the design of the research by illustrating how an explanatory sequential mixed methods design can be used to address the objectives of the research.

3.1.1. Feminist standpoint

As DeKeseredy (2016) noted, no review of feminist inquiry is complete without addressing feminist methodological contributions. The wealth of feminist scholars and literature has had a crucial role in guiding the choice of methods in this research. Feminist theory endeavours to enact social change (Afshar & Maynard, 1994; Benschop & Doorewaard, 2012) and promote gender equality (Selokela, 2005) by challenging women's oppression in patriarchal systems and structures (Gorelick, 1991). As mentioned earlier, the history of feminism and its progressive development comes from allowing women to share their knowledge and experiences by giving them a voice. And social science has been praised for allowing this by studying women and shedding light on gender inequality (Kasper, 1986; Gorelick, 1991). Feminist scholars insist that one of the fundamental ways to successfully capture oppression and gender inequality is to have a female researcher (Walby & Myhill, 2001). Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that the feminist studies are produced by women of various

social conditions such as race, class, sexual preference, nationality, and ethnicity for more robust findings and to better understand the experiences of women from different backgrounds (Gorelick, 1991; Naples, 2003).

Despite the role of the social science in giving women a voice, there has been a long-standing debate about the best methodology to capture women's knowledge and personal experiences (Kelly, 1978; Harding & Norberg, 2005). However, McMahon, Miles, Scerih, and Townson (1996, p. 36) posited that "the women's movement has long relied on the collectivisation of women's ideas and personal situations". In support of McMahon et al. (1996) statement, other feminist researchers stressed that women's experiences and views should be studied on an individual basis because their knowledge and understanding differ from one another and are subjective to gender inequality (Gilbert and Masucci, 2006) and culture (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002).

As a result, feminist researchers recommend feminist methodology as an approach that has been developed with the aid of different methods and research strategies in response to concerns by feminist scholars about the limits of traditional methodology in capturing women's experience (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Woodward & Duncanson, 2017). Feminist methods are sensitive to the significance of gender within society and the way they collect data (Hughes & Cohen, 2013). Saying this, there is no specific feminist approach to social research (Reinharz & Davidman, 1992; Stanko, 1994). In the 1970s, feminist scholars critiqued quantitative methods for minimising the extent of issues that women must face (see Levine, Kamin, & Levine, 1974; Hochschild, 1975), especially the extent of IPA against women (Dobash and Dobash, 2004), suggesting that feminist researchers are most certainly able to attain a more representative data by using a qualitative approach (see Oakley, 1998).

Such strong methodological suggestions have led to an extensive use of qualitative methods in feminist studies including those that study abuse against women (see Cavanagh 2003; Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Ahmed, Shabu, & Shabila, 2019). Maynard (1994) warns against absolute rejection of quantitative feminist research explaining that quantitative methods have enables the researchers to unearth the nature and the extent of IPA against women which has undeniably resulted in effective interventions. Gorelick, (1991) also argued that although the use of qualitative techniques such as interviews help to describe the world as perceived by

women who are being studied, the results remain confined within women's perceptions and thus not able to provide generalised findings. More recently, feminist researchers have effectively combined quantitative and qualitative methods in mixed method research to understand women's complex experiences (Hesse-Biber & Flowers, 2019). As Woodward and Duncanson (2017) noted, feminist methodology has developed a broader vision of research practice to studying women's lives. This shows that regardless of the choice of methods, it is the commitment of feminist scholars to improve women's lives by breaking the silence that is attached to women's knowledge and views under the patriarchal structures which unites all feminist research with one another (McHugh, 2005).

3.1.2. Mixed method rationale

Although there is no specific methodological approach to study IPA against women, the diverse use of methods and approaches have contributed to the development of this complex issue by unravelling the gender inequality that underlies IPA (Johnson, 2005; McHugh, 2005). Studies of IPA have used quantitative and qualitative methods to address the perception of IPA amongst women. As Patton (2012) suggested, quantitative methods are intended to achieve breadth of understanding whilst qualitative methods are for the most part, intended to achieve depth of understanding. On the one hand, the increasingly sophisticated quantitative studies have identified predicting variables and mechanisms that underlie the perception of IPA (see Lewis, West, Bautista, Greenberg, & Done-Perez, 2005; Connor-Smith, Henning, Moore, & Holdford, 2011; Lynch et al., 2017; Burjalés-Martí et al., 2018). On the other hand, qualitative methods have provided insight into women's subjective perception of IPA with greater understanding of the context and meanings behind their knowledge (Po-Yan Leung, Phillips, Bryant & Hegarty, 2017; Spangaro, Herring, Koziol-McLain, Rutherford & Zwi, 2019).

Despite their limitations, both quantitative and qualitative approaches can independently contribute to the understanding of IPA against women (Testa, Livingston, & VanZile-Tamsen, 2011). As Bryman (2016) puts it, the most important difference between quantitative and qualitative studies is that whilst qualitative research uses rich data to see the social world as being constructed by the participant, the quantitative research has a view of the social world as external to the participant. The choice of quantitative or qualitative

approach therefore relies on the framework of “acquisition of knowledge” and is determined by the epistemology of the research (Todd, Nerlich, Clarke, & McKeown, 2004, p. 5).

It is still crucial that the correct approach is taken as the research is likely to encounter dilemmas and uncertainties if attention is not paid to the decision-making processes that leads to the chosen approach (Lauckner, Paterson, & Krupa, 2012; Borich, 2019). To ensure that the correct methods and procedures were selected for this research, it was important that the literature on both quantitative and qualitative research and their contribution to the understanding of IPA was carefully reviewed before any decision was made about the methods. Careful consideration of the literature review showed that whilst quantitative methods are time efficient, using wrong quantitative measures can cloud the researcher’s interpretation of IPA (Yoshihama, 2000; Hamby, 2005). On the other hand, the use of interviews in qualitative methods helps “bring rich insights into people’s experiences, opinions, values, attitudes and feelings” (May, 2001, p. 121) by offering detailed data (Majid et al., 2017). However, interviews can also be can be intrusive especially when studying a sensitive topic (Patton, 2002).

Referring to the methodological considerations and the sensitivity of IPA, Mechanic and Pole (2013) stated that there are a few shortcomings when it comes to questionnaires, some of which may interact with culture. One of the most common errors that can weaken the validity of research findings is cultural confusion or misinterpreting the meaning of self-report questions. Because self-report questionnaires are generally completed anonymously and away from the researcher, it would be easier to leave the items blank than would be possible in a face-to face situation. Iranian women have been known to skip questions about sexual abuse and marital rape due to the cultural prohibitions and the stigma attached to the victims of abuse (Darvishpour, 1999; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). Bearing this in mind, Iranian scholars frequently modify the IPA questionnaires before administration (see Ardabily et al., 2011; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). Although extreme, the decision to deduct questions about IPA for a more culturally appropriate content has allowed Iranian scholars to obtain valuable data on IPA against Iranian women (see Ardabily et al., 2011; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). In fact, developing culturally sensitive instruments is highly recommended in Iranian studies of IPA (see Jahromi et al., 2016). Alhabib, Nur and Jones’s (2010) systematic review of IPA against women revealed that 41% of IPA studies develop their own

instruments to understand IPA because of women's considerable difference in their perceptions and experiences of IPA. Therefore, there is an emphasis on the need for developing culture specific measures to deter standard measures from erasing or obscuring cultural differences in how IPA is constructed in that culture (McHugh, 2005).

Two main features of studying IPA amongst minority women are highlighted as researchers' cultural competence and methodological approaches pertinent to conducting culturally sensitive IPA research (Bent-Goodley, 2005; Mechanic & Pole, 2013). According to Ulrich et al. (2006), the participants' views and perception of IPA can and should shape the research methods when studying women from different cultures because IPA research needs to incorporate designs that are tailored to ethnic minority women. In the recent years, the studies of IPA have broadened their approach and have used a combination or the integration of the quantitative and qualitative approaches, known as mixed methods research (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddie, 2010). Mixed method designs are known to enhance validity of findings and conclusions drawn from a study (Hughes & Cohen, 2013) especially when studying a multi-faceted phenomenon such as IPA (Testa et al., 2011).

Considering that IPA is a complex issue that is influenced by gender norms and interpersonal relationships within a social context (Hosseini-Sedehe, 2016), research suggests that women's understanding, and knowledge of IPA cannot be understood from a purely quantitative perspective (see Gavey, 2005; White, Smith, Koss, & Figueredo, 2000; Percy, Kostere & Kostere, 2015) and should not be reduced to a checklist (Testa et al., 2011). In these circumstances, qualitative designs can be particularly suitable to elaborating the meanings behind quantitative data when both methods are used (Merriam, 2016). Mixed method has been known for successfully examining the concept of IPA amongst ethnic minority women (Ponterotto & Casas, 1991; Yick & Berthold, 2005) which further reinforces the need for mixed methodologies. One of the positive aspects of conducting mixed method research is that both qualitative and quantitative data can be integrated in various ways and at different points in the research process (Creswell, 2009).

In a study by Testa et al. (2011), they found that qualitative data was most valuable when embedded within a larger quantitative program of their research. Peterson & Muehlenhard

(2007) also suggested that interviews can be conducted to follow up on quantitative findings as an additional tool to complement and enrich the initial findings from the quantitative study. Although the concept of mixed method research is still new to the field of IPA, Testa et al. (2011) insisted that mixed-methods approach is stronger than either method on its own and can greatly enhance our understanding of IPA against women.

3.1.2.1. Designing an explanatory sequential mixed method

Mixed method approach in research can lead to a greater understanding of the research topic (Ivankova, 2014; Creamer, 2018). However, an appropriate research design cannot be achieved unless the researcher explicitly explains what steps have been taken to integrate the quantitative and qualitative approaches (McCrudden & McTigue, 2019). Explanatory sequential mixed method design is typically favoured in social science (Shannon-Baker, 2016), especially when investigating women's attitudes (see Buck, Cook, Quigley, Eastwood, & Lucas, 2009) and their experiences (see McGraw, Zvonkovic, & Walker, 2000). In fact, in a study on Iranian women's marital status and their reproductive practices, Taghizadeh et al. (2015) suggested that more explanatory sequential mixed method designs are essential when studying Iranian women to better understand the critical role of marriage in in different aspects of Iranian women.

In an explanatory sequential mixed method design, the quantitative design is used to display the objective statistical findings from the studied groups (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick 2006), before the qualitative design takes over to discover the subjective experience of the participants on an individual basis to explain the phenomenon behind the numbers that cannot be described by the quantitative data (Baheiraei, Bakouei, Mohammadi, & Hosseini, 2014). One of the main purposes of using an explanatory design is that qualitative phase of the study builds on the quantitative phase by using quantitative participant sociodemographic variables to guide a purposeful sampling for the qualitative phase (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003; McCrudden, & McTigue, 2018). Consequently, this study used an explanatory sequential design where the qualitative data helped to explain women's perception of IPA by building on the initial quantitative results obtained in the phase one of the research. Each study takes a different stance on achieving integration with some focussing on specific procedures (see O'Cathain et al., 2010), and other focussing on the more general stages (see O'Cathain et al., 2007). Regardless of their stance, McCrudden, Marchand, and Schutz

(2019) stated that it is crucial that the researchers articulate how and to what extent they integrate the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.1.2.2. *Integration principles in mixed methods design*

Fetters, Curry & Creswell (2013) described the integration principles at **three levels** in mixed methods designs. **Level one** is integration at the *study design level* which refers to the conceptualization of the study and the type of design implemented to investigate the research topic. The *study design level* has three basic designs of *explanatory sequential* (e.g., quantitative then qualitative), *exploratory sequential* (e.g., qualitative to quantitative), and *convergent* (e.g., quantitative and qualitative in the same timeframe). **Level two** is the integration at the *methods level* which involves linking the methods of data collection and analysis through four approaches of 1) *connecting*, 2) *building*, 3) *merging*, and 4) *embedding*. Integration through *connecting* occurs when one type of data links with the other through the sampling, *Building* occurs when the results from one data collection procedure informs the second data collection, *merging* when the two databases are merged together for comparison, and *embedding* occurs when the data collection and the analysis are being linked at multiple points so that the data can be used in various ways to clarify the outcome (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark, and Smith, 2011).

Level three is the integration at the *interpretation and reporting level* which refers to when the researcher combines the two sets of data to demonstrate how they are more informative than either data set alone. The *interpretation and reporting level* can occur through three stages of 1) *narrative*, 2) *data transformation*, or 3) *joint displays*. In *narrative*, the researchers describe the mixed methods findings in a single or series of reports consisting of one of the three approaches of a) *weaving* which is writing qualitative and quantitative findings together on a theme-by-theme basis, b) *contiguous* which is presenting of findings within a single report, but the qualitative and quantitative findings are reported in different sections, and c) *staged* in which the results of each step are reported in stages as the data are analyzed separately. *Data transformation* takes place when one type of data is converted into the other type of data. Finally, when integrating is through *joint displays*, the research integrates the data by bringing the data together through a visual means to draw out the information gained from the separate quantitative and qualitative findings. Table 1 provides a visual display of Fetters et al.'s (2013) integration principles in mixed methods.

Table 1. Levels of Integration in Mixed Methods Research (Fetters et al., 2013)

Integration		
level	Approaches	Description
<i>Design</i>	Exploratory design	Qualitative to quantitative
	Explanatory design	Quantitative then qualitative
	Convergent design	Quantitative and qualitative in the same timeframe
<i>Methods</i>	Connecting	One database links to the other through sampling One database informs the data collection approach of the other
	Building	
	Merging	The two databases are brought together for analysis
	Embedding	Data collection and analysis link at multiple points
<i>Interpretation and reporting</i>	Narrative (Weaving, contiguous and staged)	Mixed methods findings in a single or series of reports consisting of one of the three approaches One type of data is converted into the other type of data.
	Data transformation	Integrates the data by bringing the data together through a visual means to draw out the findings from both studies
	Joint display	

3.1.2.3. Explanatory sequential design and its integration principles in the current research

This study chose to follow Fetters et al.'s (2013) framework by implementing the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods at the *design level* using an explanatory sequential design. The purpose of using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design was to investigate Iranian and non-Iranian women's perception of IPA against women in the UK by building qualitative study based on the findings of the quantitative study. This two-phase design research began by the collection and analysis of the questionnaires about the participants' socio-demographic variables and their perception of IPA in the UK (quantitative

data), followed by the subsequent collection and analysis of semi-structured interviews from Iranian participants (qualitative data). The integration at the *methods level* occurred in two ways: *connecting* and *building*. *Connecting* was applied when a purposefully sampled subset of the participants from the quantitative phase (phase one) were interviewed to gain insights into the reasoning behind their perception of IPA.

The quantitative findings at the level of the individual differed from the quantitative findings at the group level. Recently, in a study by Johnson and Schoonenboom (2016), it was suggested that qualitative method can better understand the differences at the individual level as the data could differ from the group results. This resulted in *Building* taking place when integrating designs at the methods level for this research. Here, the quantitative findings were used to develop the interview guide for investigating these differences at the qualitative phase. Integration at the *interpretation and reporting level* took place using *narrative* whereby the findings were reported in a single report using *contiguous* approach, where the research initially reported the quantitative then qualitative findings in different sections. Following McCrudden & McTigue's (2018) visual display of explanatory mixed methods design, table 2 illustrates the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods in this research's explanatory sequential mixed methods design.

Table 2. A visual display of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design procedure.

Phase	Procedure	Outcome
Quantitative Data Collection	Questionnaire consisting of 3 parts of 1) socio-demographic variables, 2) perception, and 3) attitudes towards male violence.	Data collection from two separate samples of Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK.
Quantitative Data Analysis	ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and <i>t</i> -test.	Descriptive and regression analysis to compare the two samples
Purposeful Sampling	Purposefully sample of 16 participants from Iranian group, develop interview questions	Individuals were selected based on their sociodemographic information and their perception of IPA
Qualitative Data Collection	Development of interview guide and the vignette based on the quantitative findings, literature review, and informal discussions with Iranian women.	Interview transcripts and backtranslation
Qualitative Data Analysis	Coding and theme development, including the <i>a priori</i> themes before producing the initial template.	Template analysis

Integration of the
Quantitative and
Quantitative analysis

Interpretation and explanation of the mixed method study.

Integrated findings and discussion

3.2. Quantitative Method (phase one)

Taking a quantitative stance, this study aimed to obtain a general understanding about how different socio-demographic variables of Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK may be associated with their perception of IPA against women. Understanding how women perceive IPA are crucial to this research and this can be achieved by comparing the similarities and differences across Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. Though quantitative methods have been commonly used to study IPA amongst women (see Lewis, West, Bautista, Greenberg, & Done-Perez, 2005; Connor-Smith, Henning, Moore, & Holdford, 2011; Kingston et al., 2016; Burjalés-Martí et al., 2018), the concept of IPA is not limited to a specific method (Mechanic, 2011). Therefore, it is important that the best possible data collection strategy is employed to suit the requirements of the research question (De Leeuw, 2005). Since quantitative studies can aid the understanding of the variation in women who experience IPA within communities (Bent-Goodley, 2005), and the factors that put these women, especially minority women, at the risk of IPA (Ricks et al., 2016). Mechanic and Pole (2013) recommended that contributing variables of IPA amongst ethnic minorities should be considered and incorporated into the quantitative research design at every step; ranging from the selection of the research question, to the method of analysis.

3.2.1. Design

This study used a between-groups design to conduct a standard multiple linear regression where the independent variables (IVs) consisted of the socio-demographic variables and the dependent variable (DV) was women's perception of IPA. A questionnaire was developed to examine the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women guided by the book of Kar (2000), literature review, and Iranian women's disclosure to the researcher in the beginning stages of the study. The perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women consisted of how they defined IPA in their own views, what they believed to be legally classed as IPA in the UK, women's own experience of IPA, and their attitudes towards a man hitting his wife under different circumstances. Whatever its form, IPA constitutes a means of social control in which the position of women is highlighted, and their vulnerability accentuated (Carter & Weaver, 2003). However, the decision to explore women's attitudes towards physical abuse was made because physical abuse is the most recognised type of IPA amongst minority women (Bent-Goodley, 2004) and in patriarchal cultures (Shah et al., 2012; Madhani et al., 2017). So, the present research was interested to

see how accepting women were towards the most obvious form of IPA. The items that belonged to the legal knowledge of IPA were constructed from the literature review and what would have been likely to end in conviction in the UK.

As women's perception of IPA had many different aspects, it was decided that the questionnaire would benefit from four separate sections of women's perception of IPA. Therefore, the perception of IPA was divided into four DVs of 1) definition of IPA, 2) legal knowledge of IPA, 3) experience of IPA, and justification of male violence. This study recognised five different forms of IPA of physical abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse, and stalking. Each form of IPA had at least one item in the questionnaire. Physical abuse had 11 items, emotional abuse consisted of 14 items, whilst stalking, sexual, and financial abuse each contained one item (see Appendix 1). This questionnaire was exploratory and was conducted to provide basis for the qualitative phase. As mentioned earlier, women's perceptions of IPA vary amongst them (Alhabib et al., 2010). So, Jahromi et al. (2016) recommended that studies of Iranian women develop their own individual questionnaires to ensure that their study is culturally sensitive. The items of this questionnaire were built on the literature review and informal chats between the researcher and Iranian women. During these informal chats, the researcher learnt that financial abuse and stalking were hardly recognised in Iranian communities. So, the present study used one obvious item for stalking and one obvious case of financial abuse to see if women recognised the most common form of IPA within these two categories. Sexual abuse also contained of one item due to the cultural taboos around sexual abuse and marital rape in Iran (see Darvishpour, 1999; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013).

The method of back translation was used for the Iranian sample by employing two bilingual academics to ensure that the meaning of the information sheet (see Appendix 2, A for English and B for Farsi), consent form (see Appendix 3, A for English and B for Farsi), questionnaire (see Appendix 4, A for English and B for Farsi), and the debrief (see Appendix 5, A for English and B for Farsi) were not lost in the translation. A list of resources and support services was provided to all the participation at the end of the questionnaire with the debrief in case their elicited feelings caused them any emotional discomfort.

3.2.2. Sampling and recruitment

Whilst Mechanic and Pole (2013) emphasised on an important point about the design of the IPA studies amongst ethnic minorities, Rosenbaum and Langhinrichsen-Rohling (2006) argued that the sensitive nature of the IPA would make women's willingness to take part as one of the most fundamental challenges of the study. For that reason, many use non-probability sampling methods such as snowball and convenience sampling to recruit participants of ethnic minority groups (Yick & Berthold, 2005; Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). According to Okazaki and Sue (1995), snowball sampling is an efficient technique that can enhance the study's recruitment procedures by asking the current participants to advertise the study to their acquaintances. Convenience sampling, however, refers to the technique of data collection from a population that is conveniently available and willing to participate in the study (Dörnyei, 2007).

Although applicable to both qualitative and quantitative studies, convenience sampling is most frequently used in quantitative studies (Farrokhi, & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012), particularly when comparing the perception of IPA between ethnic minority and majority groups (see Tam & Tang, 2005; Burke, Jordan & Owen, 2002). This study used a combination of convenience and snowball sampling. The convenience sampling was selected as it was anticipated that cultural boundaries especially with Iranian women may deter women from taking part in the study. Since the data collection process proved to be challenging due to the sensitivity of the data and cultural boundaries, it was decided that in order to include a fairly large number of Iranian women in UK, the use of snowball sampling would be a feasible approach in this research where the researcher would ask the participants to recommend friends and family to take part in the study. The same method of sampling was used for non-Iranian women as the researcher approached friends, neighbours, and other non-Iranian women who studied at the University of Huddersfield as part of the convenience sampling. Snowballing was then used as an additional recruitment strategy since it had proven to be a successful strategy with the Iranian sample.

One of the challenges to this study was deciding on the sample of non-Iranian women in the UK. The initial decision was to recruit English women for the comparison sample. But this meant that women of second and third born generations in the UK were going to be excluded from taking part in this study. As Alba and Nee (2003) stated, cultural and social lines

become less relevant over time as migrants begin to adopt the social and cultural practices of the host country. Wallach, Weingram and Avitan (2010) also found that second generation migrants' attitudes towards IPA were close to the host country's attitudes. Wallach et al. (2010) concluded that integration into the host country can result in changes to attitudes towards IPA. For this study, the decision to recruit ethnically non-homogenous sample for the comparison study came after it was felt that the study could lose valuable data by ignoring those who had integrated into the English culture and had developed similar values and attitudes towards IPA. As the result, the sample of non-Iranian women in this study consisted of any woman who was not of Iranian ethnicity in the UK. The inclusions criteria included: being female, over 18 years of age, and to be living in the UK. There were no restrictions to which part of UK the participants came from, where they lived in the UK, or their length of stay in the UK.

The recruitment of women who want to talk about IPA in studies can be challenging due to their emotional difficulties (Abrahams, 2007; Hill, 2010), financial dependency (Tam, Tutty, Zhuang, & Paz, 2016), fear of law enforcement (Reina, Lohman & Maldonado, 2014), and language or cultural barriers (Lee, 1997). Living in isolation from the majority groups can also makes minority women exceedingly hard to research (Hightower & Gorton, 1998). Even when minority groups are successfully recruited into IPA studies, it can be more challenging to retain their participation in studies that require multiple assessments over a time period (Clough et al., 2010). Consequently, forming alliances with respected community leaders is a creative way to recruit minority participants (Mechanic & Pole, 2013). Ahrens et al. (2011) suggested that the process of approaching and contacting community leaders can be rather time consuming, but it is invaluable when conducting research with minority groups.

The recruitment for this study began with the researcher's attendance in various places of Iranian gatherings such as religious, political, and community settings. An additional recruitment strategy was employed where the researcher would ask the participants to recommend friends and family to take part in the study. The same method of recruitment was used for non-Iranian women as the researcher approached friends, neighbours, and other non-Iranian women who studied at the University of Huddersfield. To recruit Iranian women, the advertisement flyers about the study were posted on Facebook pages of Iranian societies (See

Appendix 6, A for English and B for Farsi) across various universities in the UK. Posters were also displayed in refugee centres, Iranian shops/restaurants, and hairdressing salons.

Recruitment began with collection of the data from a refugee centre (Dash- Huddersfield, West Yorkshire) where the researcher was already working as a volunteer interpreter. The researcher also attended the Baptist Church in Huddersfield and Iranian Christian Fellowship Church (biggest Iranian church) in London. As most Iranians are Shia Muslims, the biggest Shia mosque in London (Islamic Centre) was also contacted where the researcher was able to speak to the Imam and gain authorisation to recruit Iranian participants. The Imam advised the researcher to attend the mosque on Friday 12th of May 2017 as there was an Islamic event (Mid- Shaban, a special worship day during Ramadan) where the researcher was able to approach Iranian women on the mosque grounds between 6pm-10pm. Access to the Iranian mosque in Leeds was declined, however, further data were obtained from teachers and mothers of children who attended an Iranian school in Leeds, West Yorkshire.

One of the biggest recruitments of Iranian women took place on the day of Iranian presidential election (19th of May 2017 between 9am and 7pm in Manchester). On the 19th of May 2017, the researcher was given authorization by the Iranian embassy to stand outside of the embassy grounds and approach Iranian women for participation in the current study. It could be said that this study was biased because most women were recruited from the Iranian embassy on the day of presidential election from Manchester. However, participants were also recruited from mosques, churches, and various academic settings in the UK which demonstrates that all avenues were exhausted. Whilst this study acknowledges that sampling issues can impede the researcher's ability to make generalizations about the findings (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016), it asserts that the use of non-probability sampling technique was conducive and practical for this study.

Given that women's willingness to participate is one of the most fundamental challenges of any IPA studies (Rosenbaum & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2006), the use of non-probability sampling has often been witnessed in studies of ethnic minority groups (Yick & Berthold, 2005; Mechanic & Ahrens, 2019). This study's priority was to recruit as many Iranian women as possible due to the hidden nature of IPA amongst Iranian women. Afterall, certain groups are difficult for researchers to access due to social situations, vulnerability, or

otherwise hidden nature of that group (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, & Crann, 2015). Therefore, recruitment and sampling should not be viewed as a means to an end but as a process of engagement with an often-silenced groups (Ellard-Gray et al., 2015). As Wright (2005) stated, researchers use non-probability sampling when there are barriers to recruiting a specific sample. On that basis, the current study is confident that a different recruitment strategy could not have changed the outcome of the study. In fact, the current sampling method was able to obtain useful information that was used for the latter stage of the research (phase two).

Furthermore, Iranian communities in Huddersfield, Leeds, Manchester, Brighton, and London were approached via phone or social media (e.g., Facebook) and asked to advertise the study. Similar method of recruitment was applied for non-Iranian women as the researcher contacted and attended places of social gatherings such as churches and the University of Huddersfield to recruit non-Iranian participants. In addition, the researcher made a short one-minute video footage of herself explaining the aim of the study and asking non-Iranian women in the UK to take part in the study. This was advertised via online platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram by the supervisors, researcher and friends and family.

On recruitment, the Iranian and non-Iranian participants were given the option of completing the questionnaire online in which case they were asked to write down their email address where a link to Qualtrics (the online software) would be sent to them or receive a copy of the questionnaire with a stamped returned envelope. The choice of completing the questionnaire with the researcher was also available. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, written consent was obtained via a separate envelop that was provided with the questionnaire to the participants. Suresh and Chandrashekara (2012) stated that a big sample size can use more resources than necessary, and a small sample size can be a waste of resources for not producing statistically reliable results. The rule of thumb for multiple regression is $N > 50 + 8p$ where p is the number of predictors (Green, 1991). However, the present study was unable to calculate the sample size based on Green's (1991) suggestion because the predictors for regression analysis were determined by the preliminary analysis.

The study began by distributing 600 surveys to Iranian women between February and April 2017. Once the independent variables (IVs) for regression analysis of Iranian sample were identified, it was clear that the Iranian women's sample size was 'adequate' and in line with Green's (1991) rule of thumb formula. Following this, the distribution of the surveys to non-Iranian women continued until the sample size reached close to the number of Iranian respondents and the researcher was confident that she had an adequate sample size. Consequently, 300 surveys were distributed to non-Iranian women between October and December 2018. Although the current research attempted to recruit a diverse sample of Iranian and non-Iranian women, comparing their perception of IPA based on the sites from which the participants were recruited from was not a central rationale. For this reason, it was not necessary to ensure the recruitment of two equal sized research samples. Each envelope came with a slip for the Iranian participant to put their phone number and/or email address if they wished to take part in the follow up of the study.

3.2.3. Questionnaire design

Referring to the studies of the perception of IPA, the method of using questionnaires has received a great deal of support from scholars over the recent years, (see Tsai, 2010; Shuman et al., 2016; Doran & Hutchinson, 2017). Walby (2016) insisted that questionnaires are the only way of obtaining representative information about women who experience IPA because most women do not seek help from agencies, therefore, are not included in administrative statistics. So, it is suggested that the descriptive statistics on ethnic minorities' socio-demographic variables should be reported when using questionnaires because the background of the participants plays a vital role in how the individual's perception of IPA is shaped (Carlson & Worden, 2005; Pole et al., 2008; Kingston et al., 2016). However, the study of the perception of IPA is not limited to the socio-demographic variables of the participants. Others have also used quantitative approach to draw attention to the attitudes towards IPA (see Hindin, 2003; Trinh, Oh, Choi, To, & Do, 2016; Doran & Hutchinson, 2017; Lynch et al., 2017).

This study developed a questionnaire that could be administered to both Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. Following the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW 2016,2018) and Scottish Social Attitude Survey (SSA, 2015) and echoing Kar's (2000) work on IPA against women, the questionnaire included sections on emotional abuse, physical

abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, and stalking. Furthermore, the development of the current questionnaire as both surveys were concerned with the sociodemographic variables, disclosure of IPA, and justification of male violence in the UK. But it was important that the questionnaire was also culturally sensitive and specific to Iranian women's perception of IPA. This proved to be a difficult task, partly because there is a dearth of research on Iranian women's perception of IPA.

Charman (2019) stressed that the official criminal statistics in UK provide an inadequate measure of IPA because much of this crime is unreported or unrecorded. Therefore, the findings of Kar (2000) on Iranian women's experience of IPA, and the informal discussions shared between the researcher and Iranian women at an earlier stage of the research aided in further formation of the questionnaire (see Appendix 4A for English, Appendix 4B for Farsi questionnaire). The developed questionnaire consisted of three parts of 1) socio-demographic variables of the participant, 2) perception, legal knowledge, and experience of IPA, and 3) justification of male violence. A pilot study was not required as the questionnaire was not seeking to develop a measure for more general use, instead, it intended to gain a general understanding of perception of IPA and to help identify semi-structured questions for the interviews for the follow-up of the study.

Part 1) Socio-demographic variables

This study condensed the demographic variables of Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2019a) and Scottish Social Attitudes survey (SSA, 2015) surveys into a small section of demographics for the current questionnaire. Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW, 2001) had found that Iranian-British men and women were unsure of where they belonged on the 'ethnicity' category on the surveys with 7% placing themselves in 'Asian' and 3% on 'Other' category. As a result, Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW, 2005) officially positioned Iranian population in 'Asian- Other' category as Iranians accounted for less than 5% of the UK population. As Nwabunike and Tenkorang (2017) stated, specific interventions need to be adapted by the policy makers for women in different ethnic groups to receive the right treatment. This means that Iranian women need to know which category of ethnicity they belong to in order to receive the right treatment and intervention specific to their needs. Considering that the UK census in 2011 reported that there were 85000 Iranians living in the UK (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011), the variable of 'ethnicity' was added to this

section to see whether there was a consistency in Iranian women's answers. After removing the items of 'Partner's length of stay in the UK' and 'Partner's age of arrival to the UK', the item of sexual orientation was added to non-Iranian women's questionnaire. The item of sexual orientation was excluded from the Iranian sample due to the stigmas attached to this issue (see Yadegarfar, 2019). The demographic variable included: the participant's nationality, ethnicity, migration status, age upon arrival in the UK (if applicable), years of being in the UK (if applicable), date of birth, religion, marital status, highest level of education, occupation, income. The same questions were asked of the participant's partner except for his nationality, ethnicity, and marital status. The partner's demographic variables were also included in this section.

Part 2) Perception, legal Knowledge, and experience of IPA

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of three columns of a) perception, b) legal knowledge, and c) experience of IPA. Each column consisted of 31 items which focussed on the five main subcategories of IPA described as physical, verbal, stalking, sexual, and financial abuse (ONS, 2019a). This section contained 3 additional items that are not legally classed as IPA in the UK such as arguing, sexting (sending explicit messages to another woman), and cheating. These items were inserted as a result of Iranian women's informal chats with the researcher about what they would define as IPA. Many Iranian women would focus on their husband's unfaithfulness during their informal chats rather than what they described as their husband's controlling behaviour. It is reported that 26% of women who experience IPA are aware that it is wrong, yet, do not see this act as a crime (CSEW, 2015). So, the participants were asked to state whether they defined each item as IPA and whether they believed that items were legally classed as IPA in the UK. The participants were asked to select 'Yes', 'No', or 'I don't know' for each item. The last section was about the disclosure of the participant's experience of IPA. An additional option of 'I do not wish to disclose' was added to the experience column besides 'Yes', 'No', and 'I don't know' due to the sensitivity of the questions. This was to ensure that the participants did not feel uneasy in disclosing certain aspects of their intimate life. The selection of legal items relied on the official guidelines of on what legally constitutes IPA.

Part 3) Justification of male violence

The third part of the questionnaire was inspired by Kar's (2000) and SSA (2015) findings on justification of male dominance. This section consisted of 15 items each describing a different scenario of a husband hitting his wife. Women's justification of male violence was assessed using a five-point scale where 1 showed higher justification of male violence and 5 indicated lower acceptance of male violence. Here, women were given a small open space to elaborate on their answer to this section of the questionnaire. See Appendix 4 (A for English and B for Farsi version) for the questionnaires.

3.2.4. Analysis

A key point to remember when comparing the socio-demographic variables or attitudes towards IPA is that the samples of the two groups will inevitably stray from some of the measured variables. But as Pole, Gone and Kulkarni (2008) argued, researchers should aim to match their minority and majority groups on as many variables as possible prior to conducting a comparison study regardless of the difficulties and the challenges that they may encounter. Many of these challenges can be overcome by using the correct way of analysis (Mechanic & Pole, 2013). As Rosenbaum and Langhinrichsen-Rohling (2006) pointed out, with a complex topic such as IPA, it is important that the right method of analysis is selected to enable the researcher to address the research question in the most effective way. In addition to examining the predicting socio-demographic variables of the participants in their perception of IPA (see Mechanic and Pole, 2013), regression analysis has been used to predict attitudes towards IPA (Tam & Tang, 2005; Clark et al., 2016). Regression is amongst the most frequently used statistical tools estimating the probability of occurrence based on the demographic variables (Hosmer, Lemeshow, & Sturdivant, 2013). When used appropriately, regressions can provide robust and reliable results that can predict the contributing variables to the topic of study (Nad'o & Kañuch, 2018). This implies that regression analysis is a suitable method of analysis for this study by identifying the predicting socio-demographic variables that contribute to perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK.

The data were analysed through different stages. First, descriptive analysis was conducted on the socio-demographic variables and the IPA items on the questionnaire. Secondly, ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, and *t*-test were conducted on the four DVs to identify the significant IVs for the regressions. The three items of 'Sexting', 'Arguing', and 'Cheating' were reverse

coded in both samples as they are not legally recognised as IPA in the UK. To conduct the regressions, the significant categorical IVs were later transformed into dichotomous variables (value of 0 to 1) for each level using dummy coding (see Field, 2017). There is redundancy in dummy coding which means that a reference category was selected to for each categorical IV to allow for the comparison with the other categories. The most affluent value was taken as the reference variable and highlighted in bold in the regression tables for each variable. It should be noted that the reference category for the same variable in Iranian and non-Iranian groups could have been different depending on the value of the variables in each group.

The purposeful selection approach by Hosmer and Lemeshow (2000) suggests that the significance for the values should be evaluated at the 0.1 alpha level as they could still contribute to the regression. Therefore, purposeful selection was selected as a sampling method to enable this study to choose from a large set of IVs and construct regressions that best fitted the perception of IPA amongst women in the UK. Based on the theoretical background and considering evidence in the literature, the three IVs of 'Education', 'Income', and 'Marital status' were included in both Iranian and non-Iranian women's analysis. Keeping the three IVs of 'Education', 'Income', and 'Marital status' for their theoretical support on the perception of IPA, all the variables with a significance level of $p < 0.1$ under the definition of IPA were inserted into a regression simultaneously. Variables that had a greater P value than the traditional significance level ($p < .05$) were eliminated indicating that they may not contribute to the regression. The new regression with the eliminated variables was then compared with the original regression. If the change in each variable's coefficients ($\Delta\beta$) was more than 15%, it indicated that the deleted variables provided important adjustment of the effect of remaining variables and had to be added back to the regression.

This process of deleting, adding variables and model fitting and refitting continued until all variables excluded were statistically unimportant for the regressions. This process continued for legal knowledge, experience, and justification of male violence on individual basis until four separate regressions were conducted for each DV for each group resulting in a total of eight regressions. T -tests were carried out to finally compare the perception of Iranian and non-Iranian women together. The effect size is an important concept in quantitative analysis which is used to increase validity (Coolican, 2014), therefore, this study measured the effect

size to express the amount of variance accounted for by the IVs. A large effect size was anticipated from the results due to the large sample size.

3.2.5. Ethical considerations

Although activists have fought for Iranian women's rights for decades, the topic of women's rights remains a political and a sensitive matter amongst the government's officials. This complicated the data collection of Iranian women as the safety of the participants became a priority. Consequently, the researcher took any potential political references away from the questionnaire and solely focussed on the perception of IPA. Once the researcher was satisfied that participation in this study posed no political risks to the participants, a project proposal was sent to the School of Research Ethics Panel (SREP) at the University of Huddersfield. The application was approved for Iranian women (SREP/2017/012) and later for non-Iranian women (SREP/2017/012_rev1_250818) as further amendments were made to suit non-Iranian sample (see appendix 7).

Anonymity was maintained by allocating a number to each participant on their questionnaire. As the study focused on a sensitive topic, the participants were informed about their right to retrospectively withdraw their data until June 2017 for Iranian women and December 2018 for non-Iranian women. This study adhered to the British Psychological Society (BPS) and American Psychological Association (APA) codes of ethical conducts regarding data and the participant's confidentiality. The obtained data were not accessible to anyone, but the researcher and her supervisors. The retrieved information will be stored in a locked drawer for up to 10 years in order to assist with future transparency and integrity of research.

3.3. Qualitative Method (phase two)

This section presents the qualitative method from phase two of the mixed method research about the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. A detailed account of how the participants were accessed, recruited, piloted, and the steps taken to qualitatively analyse the data will be provided. In addition, an outline of the basic principles on Template Analysis will be highlighted before illustrating the main procedural steps involved in undertaking Template Analysis for this study. Reflexivity is the degree and the influence that the researcher exerts either intentionally or unintentionally on the research findings (Jootun, McGhee & Marland, 2009). As mentioned earlier, the present study acknowledges that the

researcher's subjectivity can influence the interpretation of the data. Therefore, in undertaking this research, it was important to consider the different identities that the researcher held as a woman of Iranian heritage who lives in the UK and who can relate to the experiences of Iranian women. The present research acknowledged that the points mentioned could have influenced the process of interpretation despite attempts to prevent biases. This issue will be further explored in the Discussion section.

3.3.1. Design

Taking a qualitative stance, Iranian women's perception of IPA was examined using semi-structured interviews based on a vignette about an Iranian couple living in the UK. since vignettes are capable of overstepping cultural boundaries (Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, & Herber, 2014), Torres (2009) insisted that the unintentional imposition of the Western template should be considered when designing a research that is culturally sensitive. Additionally, Vosoogh and Forouzesh (2013) had found that around one third of Iranian women who experience IPA would rather not be questioned about IPA. This study therefore constructed a vignette based on the results from phase one of the research in addition to the findings from the literature review, and informal chats with Iranian women in the UK. Ulrich and Ratcliffe (2008) supported this method of constructing the vignette stating that real life experiences, previous research findings, and literature reviews provide solid basis for the construction of a vignette. Consequently, this study used semi-structured interviews to ask the participants about their views and perception on the characters in the vignette. The participants were also allowed to draw on their own experiences of IPA.

The semi-interviews were follow-up from the phase one of the research as 16 participants who had completed the questionnaire were selected to be interviewed as part of a purposeful sampling. See the next section for more details on purposeful sampling and the sifting process This study decided to use a vignette about an Iranian couple to understand what Iranian women thought about IPA against women (see Appendix 8, A for English and B for Farsi). The vignette largely focused on women's perception of IPA in different scenarios. Therefore, a hypothetical vignette in which the nature of the relationship of an Iranian heterosexual couple in the UK was provided to the participants.

The interviews were scheduled between 60-90 minutes and were conducted on one to one basis. This was due to the participants' initial request during phase one. Many of the participants had approached the researcher and had asked for the interviews to take place on one-to-one level after completing the questionnaire. All interviews were audio recorded and password protected using the University of Huddersfield's voice recorder. Each participant was given an information sheet (see Appendix 10, A for English and B for Farsi), consent form (see Appendix 11, A for English and B for Farsi), and debrief (see Appendix 5, A for English and B for Farsi).

Whether qualitative or quantitative research, all studies will require a test of validity regardless of their paradigm (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) and one way to strengthen the interviews in a qualitative study is the use of pilot study (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Even though the need for a pilot study in a qualitative study is not obvious because the quality of the interview guide improves as the interviews progress (Harding, 2013), still, piloting is crucial to test the questions and to gain some practice in the interviewing techniques before embarking into the main study (Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim, and Yusof, 2017). It was therefore important that this study used a pilot study to aid the design of the interview guide and to provide valuable feedback for the researcher. For the current study, one pilot study was conducted on the first participant who had an academic background and a good knowledge of interviewing methods. One of main improvements as the result of piloting was to include a brief verbal introduction about the researcher's background and the aim of the study at the start of the interviews. Another point that was highlighted was to ensure that the researcher did not ask two questions simultaneously. The pilot interview was later added to the analysis due to its richness in data and information on cultural issues experienced by Iranian women in the UK.

Following the feedback from the pilot study, the researcher used probing questions to explore the participants' perception of IPA that required further clarification. To ensure that the participants were able to fully express themselves and share their views on IPA, any potential language barrier was removed by allowing the participants to choose their preferred language of English or Farsi to be interviewed in. Schensul and Lecompte (2013) stressed that the interviewer must know about the culture of the participants ensure that the participants do not feel disrespected. And for this study, the researcher's ability to fluently speak in Farsi with

the participants meant that Farsi interpreters were not required during the interviews. However, the transcripts needed to be forward and back translated by two bilingual academic researchers to attain accurate translations for the analysis to be conducted in English. Template analysis was used to analyse the interviews. Working on hierarchical levels, the Template Analysis enables the study to take a tailored qualitative approach and pre-selected themes (*a priori* themes) to identify themes that are likely to be relevant to the research question (King, 2012).

3.3.1.1. Developing the vignette

Investigating certain topics such as IPA can be sensitive and upsetting for the participants exposing them to potential emotional harm caused by revisiting the original trauma (Escribà-Agüir et al., 2016), so, vignettes are often selected to provide a protection for the participants by placing a distance between their experience and that of the vignette characters (Neale, 1999; Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, & Herber, 2014). A vignette is a short, descriptive scenario (Renold, 2002) in which the participants are asked to respond to a hypothetical or real situation and address the research topic (Paddam, Barnes, & Langdon, 2010; Rashid, 2013). The use of vignette can be combined with other methods (Richman & Mercer, 2002) to identifying the participant's knowledge, attitudes (Paddam et al., 2010), moral codes (Barter & Renold, 2000), and beliefs and perceptions (Barnatt et al., 2007). In fact, in a study by Torres (2009) on a sample of Iranian migrants in Sweden, vignettes were found to be particularly useful when studying values of Iranians in successful aging. As Hughes (1998: 384) noted, "*vignettes* highlight selected parts of the real world that *can* help unpack individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes to a wide range of social issues".

Furthermore, Neale (1999) stated that commenting on a story is less personal than talking about direct experiences which enables the participants to determine at what stage, if at all, they introduce their own views and experiences to the interviewer. On that note, the intention with this study's vignette was to qualitatively unpack the complex topic of IPA using semi-structured interviews and shed light on the complexity of cultural and social issues that Iranian women may have to face surrounding IPA. Following Barter and Renold's (2000) advice that a practical vignette should not have more than 300 words, five broad themes of 1) views on traditional gender roles, 2) perception of IPA, 3) the role of family and friends, 4) knowledge of help and support available in the UK, and 5) comparison between the lives of

Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK were identified from phase one of the research and covered in the vignette. Consequently, a hypothetical vignette about an Iranian couple in a heterosexual relationship in the UK was constructed (appendix 8 A for English and B for Farsi). The vignette was largely based on the results from phase one of the research in addition to the findings from the literature review, and informal chats with Iranian women in the UK. The development of the interview guide is explained below.

3.3.1.2. Developing the interview guide

Semi-structured interviews are a popular method of data collection amongst researchers of IPA (see Sullivan, Khondkaryan, Dos Santos & Peters, 2011; Bhattacharyya, Das, Alam, & Pervin, 2018). And a key element of semi-structured interviews is that they offer a guideline for questions prior to the interview, yet, give the interviewer flexibility for additional probing questions (Horton, Macve, & Struyven, 2004) and for exploration of new topics that emerge during the interview (Wilson, 2013). Interviews are especially useful when the interviewer is trying to focus on specific elements of a difficult situation (Kvale, 1996; Mechanic & Pole, 2013). However, Walby and Myhill (2001) stressed that the disclosure of sensitive topics amongst women such as abuse requires more than probing questions and skilful interviewing but is also dependent on the gender of interviewer. Walby and Myhill (2001) implied that the use of female interviewer can facilitate the building of rapport between the female interviewer and interviewee resulting in a more robust outcome.

As stated earlier, the development of both vignette and the interview guide predominantly relied on the results of the research from phase one which quantitatively examined the perception of Iranian women's IPA in the UK. At first an extensive list of interview questions about women's perception of IPA was covered. However, it was necessary to ensure that the interview guide comprehensively enclosed the relevant questions. The result of phase one of the research indicated that many Iranian women were still in relationships that they described as being abusive. These women were usually younger than their husbands and most highly educated, yet, a third of them were a housewife/unemployed with a low income. Furthermore, Iranian women believed that flirting or cheating on husband would be the most justifiable situations to hit a woman. Despite the Research Group for Muslim Women's Studies (1990) trying to imply that low female employment in Iran was due to Iranian women's choice, this study intended to hear this from Iranian women themselves by asking about their perception

of education. Therefore, questions about education, marital status, employment status, and justification of men hitting women were added to the guide. In addition to exploring different aspects of IPA such as financial abuse, a small section of the vignette and the questions were dedicated to issues surrounding the disclosure of intercourse in marriage. This was as a result of the earlier findings where the item of sexual abuse in marriage was the least disclosed item in the questionnaire compared with the items.

Additionally, other interview questions such as what a woman should be allowed to wear and who she could be friends with were also derived from phase one of the research as many women were unsure of whether they were legally classed as IPA, yet, over half of them defined both acts as IPA. This study also intended to give Iranian women an opportunity to talk about the aspects of their lives that they believed to differ from English women in the UK. Given that the interview guides are encouraged to include questions necessary to measure the concept of the research (Dikko, 2016), the questions in this study were designed to direct the participants to elicit relevant information about their perception of IPA against women. However, the questions were adapted to the context of each specific interview to encourage the participants to elaborate based on their own unique experiences and personal accounts when exploring the vignette.

3.3.2. Sampling and recruitment

The present research followed purposeful sampling in which Iranian women who had participated in phase one (questionnaire) were contacted based on their demographic information or their perception of IPA. The rationale for using purposive sampling was to capture the variation in Iranian women's perception of IPA by choosing participants from phase one of the study that offered insight into the aim of the research. According to Patton (2015, p.276), purposive sampling strategies "yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge". Therefore, Iranian women with specific knowledge, experiences, or demographic information were selected to be contacted for interviews. Following up from their responses to the questionnaires, Iranian women were considered based on their age, income, education, migration status, marital status, and employment status. To ensure that the participants were selected from a wide range of backgrounds, those women who were on the opposite sides of either the highest or lowest scores on definition, legal knowledge, and experience of IPA were taken into consideration.

3.3.2.1. Participants

Demographic information of Iranian women who had left their details for the follow up of the research played an important role in determining their selection to take part in the interviews. The table below (Table 3) provides an overview of the selected participants' demographic information, their perception of IPA (including their definition, legal knowledge, and their perception of IPA), and any other relevant information that Iranian women had shared on the back of the questionnaire. 50 participants had agreed to be contacted for phase two of the study. However, it was important that each participant was purposefully selected for phase two of the research. After consideration, it was decided that 20 of the participants would be able to offer valuable insight into Iranian women's perception of IPA. As mentioned above, the selected participants' perception of IPA tended to be on the opposite sides of the highest or the lowest scores. Additionally, the participants from a range of demographic backgrounds were included. For example, over two third of Iranian women had higher education in this sample. Using purposive sampling, the present study was able to select Iranian women with various educational attainments to optimise the variety in the qualitative sample (see table 3 for more information). The researcher contacted those who had indicated that they would like to be interviewed for phase two but had not been selected to thank them for their help.

A feminist-informed strategy for conducting interviews with women is to ask the participants to their own pseudonyms (Burgess-Proctor, 2015). It was noticed that the participants' choices of pseudonyms varied according to their religion, personal, and political views. For example, one bisexual participant insisted on having a "religious" pseudonym and chose the name of 'Fatemeh'. Another participant who was a supporter of the previous regime (Shah's Kingdom) chose 'Farah' as her pseudonym. Farah was the queen of Iran prior to the Islamic revolution and was known for her charitable work.

Table 3. Participants' demographic and other relevant information for their selection in phase two

Demographics	Age	Job	Education	Marital status	Perception	Other relevant information
1. Sara	23	Teacher training	Degree	Single	Little knowledge of law. Negative attitude on male violence	Came to UK when 5 years old
2. Atoosa	18	Student	College	Single	Little knowledge of law. Negative attitude on male violence	Born in UK
3. Sheila	34	Part-time baker	High School	Married	Acceptance of male violence and little knowledge of law	Been in the UK for 5-6 years
4. Homa	53	Homeless	High School	Single	Believed that women are superior to men	None
5. Maryam	36	Housewife	Degree	Married		None

					Little knowledge of law	
6. Mehri	55	Research fellow	PhD	Married	Didn't class many IPA items as IPA in the questionnaire	Both participant and her husband earned a good income
7. Farah	60	Hairdresser	College	Divorced	Good knowledge of law	Left Iran to be away from husband
8. Mina	37	Accountant	Degree	Married	No knowledge of law	Religion was Christian
9. Vida	44	Housewife	Degree	Married	Acceptance of male violence and little knowledge of law	None
10. Yasamin	30	Lecturer	PhD	Relationship	Classed all items of questionnaire as IPA	None

11. Leila	42	Housewife	Degree	Married	Experience of IPA	Child bride at 15. Went through legal system for divorce in Iran
12. Anahita	52	Housewife	Primary school	Married	Little knowledge of law, but classed most items as IPA	Child bride at 15. Arranged marriage.
13. Fatemeh	27	Researcher	PhD	In relationship	Described cheating as IPA	Bisexual, on student visa and has been in the UK for over a year
14. Azita	52		Degree	Married	Little knowledge of law and accepting of male violence	Did not want to be classed as housewife saying that she is "more than a housewife"
15. Hengameh	34	Driving instructor	High school	Separated	Selected option of 'I don't know' for most items of definition	Had experienced IPA, single mother. Divorced in Iran

16. Azam	75	Property developer	Primary school	Widowed	Good knowledge of law, accepting of male violence	compared Iranian women's lives before and after revolution
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It was important to carefully consider how the participants were going to be selected for the interviews prior to commencing phase two of the research. The decision was made to contact 20 participants out of 50 who had left their contact details. 15 of those participants responded to the researcher's email about the follow up study. Towards the end of interview stage, an older participant responded to the researcher's invite and requested to be added to the data. It was decided that the last participant should be added to the recruitment due certain unique variables such as her age and her perception of IPA.. The protocol for the recruitment was that the researcher would contact the participants with a brief reminder about the aim of the research and ask if they would like to take part in the interview. Once the participant showed interest in taking part, they would be given the choice of being interviewed in their own home or at the University of Huddersfield. An option for a neutral location to either party (such as a café) was additionally offered to Iranian women to ensure that the participant's safety and to ensure that there was no intimidation or coercion. Funding was granted by the University of Huddersfield for the researcher to travel and conduct face to face interviews with some of the participants who lived in London.

3.3.4. Analysis

When it comes to analysis of qualitative research, thematic analysis is a method that is widely used to analyse and to report themes within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Spiers & Riley, 2019). Whilst some researchers advocate for a specific style of thematic analysis such as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Chapman & Smith, 2002; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012), others argue that there are multiple ways of conducting thematic analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010). For instance, Brooks, McCluskey, Turley & King (2015) highlight the use of Template Analysis in qualitative studies by putting emphasis on its flexible approach to the style and the format of the template that is produced. Template analysis works on hierarchical levels enabling a tailored qualitative approach (King, 2012; King & Brooks, 2017) whilst allowing the researcher to pre-selected themes, known as *a priori* themes, and to identify themes that are likely to be relevant to the research question (King, 2012). Such analysis is undoubtedly an appropriate fit to explore the perception of Iranian women in the UK with the *a priori* themes building on the structure of results from phase one of the research before identifying the important themes and categorising them into a hierarchical order.

The starting point of the current analysis was the selection of *a priori* themes that had been identified from findings in phase one before it could construct the vignette and the interview guide. As Brooks & King (2014) noted, *a priori* themes can be very useful in accelerating the initial coding phase of analysis and can be re-defined or removed at a later stage if they are found to be irrelevant. Once the *a priori* themes had been identified in advance of coding, the next stage was to carry out the preliminary coding of the data by highlighting anything in the textual data that appeared relevant to understanding the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. Transcripts were coded by hand then re-read for methodological reflection. Although it is possible to formulate the initial template earlier in the process of data analysis, there is a potential risk of becoming over sensitive to the material that fits the existing template (King & Brooks, 2017). Consequently, this study decided to analyse three interviews before the initial coding template could be defined. Emerging themes were carefully clustered from the three interviews into meaningful groups and ordered hierarchically with focused themes narrowing down from broader themes. These clusters of themes produced the initial coding template which was amended as more transcripts were analysed by inserting, redefining, or deleting redundant themes that were irrelevant to the research question.

The final template was produced once the researcher was satisfied that it included varied accounts of Iranian women and it captured a good cross section of their perception of IPA against women. Back-translation was used on all 16 interviews to translate them into English. The initial codes were in English and the analysis was also in English. Reliability and validity remain appropriate concepts for attaining rigor in qualitative research and it is important to identify the criteria that are relevant to the qualitative approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002; Symon & Cassell, 2012). Hence, the following quality checks were enacted based on King and Brooks (2017) and were performed to assess quality of template analysis in the current study. First, the main supervisor was asked to critically review the initial template in relation to the early transcripts and through discussion of this, modifications were made. Second, an audit trail of the analysis process was retained about the modifications made. Lastly, to ensure that the study described the themes clearly throughout the analysis, the supervisor was given a draft of the final template for critical comment.

3.3.5. Ethical considerations

The primary ethical consideration of this study was the way in which the participants were informed and supported with their rights at all stages throughout the research process.

Elaborating on the research ethics, Fontes (2004) argued that the standard ethical guidelines are somewhat 'inadequate' for researching IPA against women. Adding to this, Downes et al. (2014) highlighted that complicated ethical dilemmas such as the participant's safety in IPA research is often ignored in the standard ethical guidelines. Feminist researchers emphasise on women's vulnerability as an important aspect of any research (Noaks & Wincup, 2004; Rogers & Lange, 2013). As mentioned in the previous chapter, feminist epistemologies question the way in which knowledge is constructed (Alcoff & Potter, 1993; Oakley, 1998; Clarke, 2001). Drawing on the male centred research that misrepresents women's realities, feminist researchers are often concerned about the ethical standards of their research as they recognise that women's realities can be distorted by patriarchal ideologies (Hunnicut, 2009; Burgess-Proctor, 2015).

As Paradis (2000) asserted, extra care must be taken during the research process to ensure women's safety throughout the process. Bearing this in mind, feminism has shifted the ethical standards of research by introducing feminist ethics of care (Burgess-Proctor, 2015).

Echoing empowerment through research, ethics of care is enriched by the notion of social justice that can be achieved through awareness of social practices and the ways in which these are influenced by power (Lloyd, 2006). In terms of researching the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women, it is important to remember that these women have never been free of patriarchal structures. In addition, Iranian women are a minority group in the UK and as Berdahl and Moore (2006) stated, minority women are more vulnerable than the majority groups in research. Since oppression often involves ignoring the perspective of the minority women, different approaches to feminist ethics aim to better understand the experiences of minority women as the oppressed gender (Held, 2006). Therefore, the ethical considerations are of paramount importance within this study due to the implicit sensitivity of researching the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. The present research will therefore embrace feminist ethics of care as the guiding principle for the present research.

3.3.5.1. Ethics of care within a feminist concept

The feminist ethics of care encourages the researchers to reflect on caring from an ethical perspective (Green, 2012) and to treat the experiences of women respectfully and critically (Gatens, 1998). Furthermore, ethics of care prompt researchers to re-evaluate how they conceptualize care and social justice for women (Lloyd, 2006). Several researchers have outlined Carol Gilligan's (1982) model of moral reasoning for having the widest impact on feminist ethics (e.g., Bender, 1990; Alcoff & Kittay, 2007; Machold, Ahmed, & Farquhar, 2008; Green, 2012). According to Gilligan (1982), women are more likely than men to avoid deriving conclusions from abstract principles. Instead, women consider a person in her own situational context. Gilligan (1982) further suggested that men emphasise on independence (separation), whilst women focus on interdependence (connection) and responsibility to others. Similar ideas about men and women's moral reasoning were presented about the same time by Nel Noddings (1984). However, it was Gilligan's (1982) work that set the stage for major advances in feminist ethical theorizing (Machold et al., 2008).

Although Gilligan's (1982) work emphasised on being 'heard' and 'respected' offered an interdisciplinary perspective to 'care' in line with the feminist standpoint (Jaggar & Held, 1995), its emphasis on womanly traits has been subjected to criticism by feminist researchers (Green, 2012). Feminist studies have pointed out that being caring is a characteristic that is defined by the patriarchal order and forced on women because women are subordinate (Gould, 1973). Feminists criticise gender binary itself, arguing that upholding a fixed conception of femininity and masculinity contributes to the maintenance of oppression (Dea 2016). The view of women as caring and emotional individuals has traditionally been used to keep women in private sphere and is a source to women's exploitation (Larrabee, 2016).

The ethical base of feminist perspective was developed as a strategy to reduce power tension between the researcher and the participant (Friedman & Bolte, 2007; Van Bogaert & Ogunbanjo, 2009; Larrabee, 2016; Branicki, 2020). As mentioned earlier, feminist researchers insist on the notions of connectedness and caring that is often ignored in the standard ethical guidelines (see Machold, Ahmed, & Farquhar, 2008). Echoing ethics of care, Watson, McKie, Hughes, Hopkins and Gregory (2004) proposed that the emancipatory research can help address the power tension between the researcher and the participant. Emancipatory research has a commitment to changing the social relations by having the

research formulated and directed by treating the female participants as co-researchers at every stage of research (Barnes, 1992). Walby and Myhill (2001) suggested that one of the fundamental ways to successfully capture oppression and gender inequality is to have a female researcher. Sharing a similar background with the participants is also encouraged to provide the researcher with valuable context and clarity that may not be identifiable by researchers of a different background (see Hey, 1997; Letherby, 2000; Wesley, 2006).

The ethics of care are important aspects of feminist studies in two ways. First; by focusing on caring attitudes and relationships, care ethics direct the researcher's moral attention to various aspects of human life that have been neglected by centuries of moral thoughts written by men (Alcoff & Kittay, 2007). Feminist ethics of care are focussed on supporting and respecting women who agree to share their experiences with the researcher by empowering them and giving them a voice (Burgess-Proctor, 2015). For example, an Iranian woman who had participated in this study had asked explicitly not to be referred to as a housewife. When asked what she would like to be referred to in the table of participants, she asked for the category to be left blank because she insisted that she was "more than just a housewife". In line with the feminist ethics of care, the participant was empowered and given a voice by leaving this category blank and allowing her to express her views on IPA against women. Second, as Campbell et al. (2010) highlighted, ethics of care reduce the likelihood of participant exploitation by creating a collaborative and egalitarian relationship between the researcher and the participant.

What gives ethics of care a distinctively feminist cast is its consideration of moral situations as a concern for female images and the expectations that are involved (Alcoff & Kittay, 2007). As mentioned earlier, societal and cultural expectations follow women from a young age. In an Iranian context, there are expectations of chastity before marriage, sexual submission to husband after marriage, and devotion to children as a mother. Iranian women are victims of traditional gender roles and the expectation that are imposed on them. Therefore, this study does not accept the notion of 'women's moral reasoning' but will adhere to the feminist ethics of care to empower Iranian women throughout the research process.

3.3.5.2. Ethical consideration in line with feminist research

Adopting feminist ethics of care does not eliminate all ethical considerations in research (Preissle, 2007; Gillies & Alldred, 2012). So, in line with feminist ethics of care, some of the key elements of ethical considerations such as informed consent, right to withdraw, safety and protection, and anonymity and confidentiality of research findings are addressed below.

Informed consent

Protection of the rights of each participant should be central to any research process (Flewitt, 2005). As some of the research participants had experienced IPA, it was of distinct importance that none of the Iranian women felt pressurised or coerced into taking part in this study. To account for this, several steps were taken to ensure that consent was freely given. Ryen (2004) stressed the importance of reminding the participants of their right to withdraw from the research at any time during research process. In line with the ethics of care, this was a crucial part to this study to ensure that the research maximised Iranian women's involvement and gave them control over the study. Furthermore, it was important that the participants fully understood what the present research entailed.

The participants were first informed about the aim of study during the initial contact made to invite them to participate in the phase two of the study (interviews). Those who stated their willingness to participate in the interviews were given a choice of having the information sheet (see Appendix 10A and 10B) and the consent form (See Appendix 11A and 11B) in English or in Farsi. In addition, the researcher would verbally explain purpose of the research and ask if the participants had any questions or concerns before conducting the interviews. To verify that informed consent had been achieved, voluntary participation in this study was asserted all stages throughout the research process including during the interview process. The participants were given the choice of having their interview conducted in Farsi or in English. This ensured that the participants had a say in how they wanted the interviews to be conducted.

It can be said that the participants in this study were able to give informed consent as they were all adults (aged 18 and above), had received all necessary information about this study and their agreement to participate was validated at three different stages of research (initial contact as follow up, via the consent form, and before the interview). Efforts were made to

ensure that all information provided to the research participants was accessible and at a level which was appropriate for them in the language that they felt most comfortable in. An email was sent out to the rest of the participants who had indicated willingness to take part in phase two of the research. Within the email, their participants were informed that their participation was not required and were prompted to contact the researcher for any questions.

Safety and protection from harm

A consequence of the implicit sensitivities about researching Iranian women's perception of IPA was that it could put the participants at the risk of physical and/or psychological harm. Considering that Iranian women come from a patriarchal society where male domination and violence against women can be observed at legal, societal, and cultural level, it was the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the participants were safe before, during, and after the research. IPA can evoke strong emotional responses, particularly in reference to the interviewing process which can cause emotional trauma to re-live the painful experience of IPA (World Health Organization [WHO], 2005). It was important that the participants felt free to reschedule (or relocate) the interview to a time (or place) that was convenient for them. As mentioned earlier, the participants were given the choice of being interviewed in their own home or at the University of Huddersfield. An option for a neutral location to either party (such as a café) was additionally offered to Iranian women to ensure that there was no intimidation or coercion. For the duration of the interview, a safe word was identified with each of the participants to use in case they felt unsafe. The participants were informed that by verbalising the safe word, they would direct the researcher to divert attention away from the topic from IPA and to discuss a different topic (i.e. family health).

Except for providing a debrief with a list of helplines in Farsi and in English, the researcher encouraged the participants to contact her via phone or email if they had any concerns after the research. The researcher had arranged to contact each participant separately after a few weeks to thank them for their participation in the study and to share with them the results of the interviews. Another purpose of this follow up was to allow the participants to provide feedback and to ask questions. This follow up contact was arranged with each participant at the end of their interview to ensure that the participants were in a safe environment for the follow up contact. The participants were reassured that they could contact the researcher to change the date/time of the follow up contact.

Ellsberg, Heise, Pena, Agurto and Winkvist (2001) emphasised on the need to take ‘special care’ when researching different aspect of violence against women. Ellsberg et al. (2001) referred to the safety measure for both the interviewer and the participants of IPA research and stated that IPA research has a duty to protect both participant and researcher. The present research took specific measures that were implemented at different stages to protect the researcher. To ensure the researcher’s safety, both supervisors were contacted before and after each interview to inform them about the process of the research. The supervisors were also aware of the researcher’s whereabouts throughout the interview process. The materials provided to the participants during the debrief were also useful to the researcher in case she suffered any distress. The debrief consisted of a list of resources available to help women regarding IPA. There was also a possibility of burnout with the researcher if she was overwhelmed by the information regarding women’s perception of IPA. In anticipation of this difficulty, weekly meetings were held between the researcher and her supervisors to reflect on the interview process and to discuss the researcher’s personal experience. Although the interviews brought up a range of emotions for the researcher (e.g. feeling upset by hearing women’s experiences), the researcher recognised that this study was a great experience in her own life. None of the support lines were contacted as the researcher felt supported by her supervisors.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality are two fundamental ethical concerns that apply to all research but have greater significance within IPA research, where much of the information shared is highly personal (WHO, 2005). Therefore, these ethical concerns can have implications for the participants’ current and future safety (WHO, 2005). For example, the participant could be at risk of physical and/or psychological harm if her husband finds that she had participated in this study. Fontes (2004) suggested that the researcher has a legal duty to protect the women involved in any IPA research. For this reason, all the participants were informed that confidentiality may be broken, and the relevant authorities informed if the participant was at risk of immediate harm. Nonetheless, the participants were reassured that the researcher would not inform the authorities without consulting the participants first. To protect the research participants from being identified, all interview transcripts were anonymised. Feminist scholars aim to empower women through emancipatory research and researcher-

participant relationship (DeVault & Gross, 2007). In line with this view, it was important that the participants felt involved in the present research.

Consistent with the feminist approach and for the purpose of empowerment, the present study encouraged Iranian women who had taken part in the interviews to choose their own pseudonym. Anonymity was maintained by using pseudonym for each participant. As mentioned earlier, it was noticed that the participants' choices of pseudonyms varied according to their religion, personal and political views. For example, one participant who had political views about violence against Iranian women and was a supporter of the previous regime (Shah's era) chose 'Farah' as her pseudonym. Farah was the queen of Iran prior to the Islamic revolution and was known for her charitable work. The participants were also informed that their interview recordings were only accessible to the researcher and her supervisors. All the retrieved information was stored in a locked drawer for up to 10 years in order to assist with future transparency and integrity of research

Ethical approval

This study adhered to the British Psychological Society (BPS) and American Psychological Association (APA) codes of ethical conducts. The ethical approval was sought and obtained from the University of Huddersfield (SREP/2019/011) and can be found in Appendix 12.

3.4. Chapter summary

The feminist nature of the current research is embodied in the topic, perspective, and the research question which has subsequently linked to the structure of this research design. As Sin (2010) suggested, the selection of theoretical grounds and the methods' relevance to the research questions are of prime concern of any research. And since the feminist theories are primarily based on the idea that reality is socially constructed, a feminist standpoint was taken to maintain a congruent theoretical framework by relying on quantitative methods to identify the predictive variables that contribute to women's perception of IPA, and later, the qualitative methods to provide a platform for Iranian women to share their knowledge of IPA as well as elaborating on role of cultural influences on their perception of IPA. For this reason, a mixed method approach was deemed to be appropriate in this two-phased quantitative and qualitative studies.

However, the mixed method approach required a framework that adequately guided the integration of the quantitative and qualitative designs. Thus, an explanatory sequential mixed methods design was taken in which the quantitative study (phase one) was used to identify the predicting variables in women's perception of IPA. Phase one was subsequently followed by the qualitative study (phase two) to understand how Iranian women constructed their knowledge of their social world by giving them a voice and allowing them to elaborate on their perception of IPA. The use of an explanatory sequential mixed methods design was essential to collate women's perception of IPA on a collective level by first comparing the Iranian and non-Iranian sample quantitatively and then using the qualitative findings to elicit Iranian women's personal accounts of IPA.

Chapter 4: Findings from the survey (phase one)

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from of the descriptive socio-demographic variables and the analysis of the data regarding the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. The chapter will be divided into four sections of 1) Iranian women, 2) non-Iranian women, 3) comparison and 4) chapter summary. Both sections of Iranian and non-Iranian women will mirror each other in terms of reporting the results. Each section will contain 1) response rate, 2) descriptive analysis, 3) identifying variables for regression, and 4) regression analysis. Whilst the 1) response rate will include an outline of the data that was obtained online and on paper, the 2) descriptive analysis will consist of summary statistics that quantitatively describe features of the collected data from Iranian and non-Iranian women. This includes their socio-demographic variables, their definition of IPA, their legal knowledge of IPA, their experience of IPA, and their justification of male violence. This will give the basis to conducting Pearson's correlation and inferential statistics such as one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) and *t*-test where the 3) identifying variables for regressions are prepared to conduct the 4) regression analysis. The identified IVs were incorporated into regressions of Iranian and non-Iranian women in order to determine which IVs are significant predictors of the perception of IPA amongst each group of women. To finalise the results, *t*-tests were carried out to compare the perception of Iranian and non-Iranian women.

4.1. Iranian women

This section will address the results Iranian women's 1) response rate, 2) descriptive analysis, 3) identifying variables for regressions, and 4) Regression analysis.

4.1.1. Response rate

The study of Iranian women in the UK had a response rate of 247 (41.17%) out of 600 distributed questionnaires. A total of 150 (25.00%) papered questionnaires and 450 (75.00%) online questionnaires were distributed to Iranian women across UK. Iranian women completed the questionnaire either online (N= 126, 52.70%) or on paper (N= 113, 47.30%) with many of them choosing Farsi (N= 87, 36.40%) as the preferred language rather than English (N= 152, 63.60%). Around a quarter of women (N= 53, 22.20%) left their contact

details to be used as the follow-up for the interviews. Eight cases were later removed due to incomplete data making leaving 239 valid cases (39.80%).

4.1.2. Descriptive analysis

This section presents the descriptive data on Iranian women and their perception of IPA which will include their definition of IPA, legal knowledge of IPA, experience of IPA, and justification of male violence.

Socio-demographics variables of Iranian women

The socio-demographic variables of Iranian women included their 'Age' ($M= 38.49$, $SD= 11.99$, range: 18-70), 'Age of arrival in the UK' ($M= 26.29$, $SD= 12.13$, range: 0-70), and 'Length of stay in the UK' ($M= 11.80$, $SD= 8.85$, range: 1-40). The variables of 'Age', 'Age of arrival in the UK', and 'Length of stay in the UK' for the participant and the participant's partner were changed from continuous to categorical variables to breakdown the demographic variables of the participants. The breakdown of the variables did not follow any order. Table 4 shows that most of Iranian women were 'Born in Iran' ($N=207$, 86.60%), declared their religion as 'Muslim' ($N= 94$, 39.30%), had 'Settled status' ($N= 135$, 56.50%), and were 'Married' ($N= 129$, 54%). Whilst most women had a 'Degree' or above ($N= 158$, 66.10%), around third were 'Housewives/unemployed' ($N= 66$, 27.60%), and just under half of them had an annual income of 'Under £10000' a year ($N= 101$, 41.10%). Most Iranian women believed that their ethnicity fell under 'Asian' ($N= 161$, 67.40%). Partners were in general older than the participants ($M= 43.80$, $SD= 11.74$, range: 19-70), with older age of arrival, ($M= 31.39$, $SD= 9.62$, range: 51-70), and longer length of stay in the UK ($M= 14.11$, $SD= 11.45$, range: 1-48). For their partners, being 'Muslim' was also the dominant religion category ($N= 94$, 39.30%). A smaller number of partners had obtained a 'Degree' or above ($N= 83$, 34.70%) compared with the participants. Most partners were also on an annual income of 'Under £10000' ($N= 46$, 19.20%).

Table 4. Socio-demographic variables for Iranian women

Socio-demographics	<i>n</i>	%	Socio-demographics	<i>n</i>	%
Age			Occupation		
18-24	29	13.20%	Housewife/unemployed	66	27.60%

25-34	54	24.30%	Other	109	49.80%
35-44	63	28.40%	Missing	54	22.60%
45-54	43	19.00%			
Over 55	21	9.50%	Annual income		
Missing	12	5.60%	Under £10000	101	41.10%
			Between £1000-£1,4999	39	15.90%
Length of stay in UK			Between £15000-£24,999	21	8.80%
Born in UK	10	4.50%	Between £25000-£49,999	22	8.90%
Under 10 years	107	48.20%	Over £50000	5	2.00%
11-20 years	61	27.50%	Missing	51	21.30%
Over 21 years	25	11.30%			
Missing	19	8.50%	Partner's age		
			18-24	7	2.90%
Age of arrival in UK			25-34	25	10.50%
Under 18	33	15.00%	35-44	34	15.10%
Over 18	171	77.00%	45-54	6	2.50%
Missing	18	8.00%	Over 55	0	0.00%
			Missing	167	69.00%
Nationality					
British	11	5.00%	Partner's length of stay in UK		
Born in Iran	207	86.60%	Born in UK	0	0.00%
Born in the UK	17	6.70%	Under 10 years	56	23.40%
Missing	4	1.70%	11-20 years	36	15.10%
			Over 21 years	1	0.50%
Ethnicity			Missing	146	61.00%
Asian	161	67.40%			
Mix	6	2.50%	Partner's age of arrival in UK		
Other	53	22.20%	Under 18	8	3.30%
White	13	5.40%	Over 18	89	37.20%
Missing	6	2.50%	Missing	142	59.40%
Migration status			Partner's religion		
Claiming asylum	7	2.80%	Muslim	83	34.70%

Rejected asylum	1	0.50%
Settled status	135	56.50%
Limited visa	47	19.70%
Missing	49	20.50%

Marital status

Single	39	16.30%
In relationship	12	5.00%
Married	129	54.00%
Divorced	20	8.40%
Separate	3	1.10%
Widowed	2	0.60%
Other	1	0.40%
Missing	34	14.20%

Religion

Muslim	94	39.30%
Christian	16	6.70%
No religion	32	13.80%
Missing	97	40.20%

Education

No education	0	0.00%
Primary	3	1.30%
High school	15	6.30%
College	34	14.20%
Degree	97	40.60%
Masters	43	18.00%
PhD/Doctorate	18	7.50%
Missing	29	12.10%

Christian	19	7.90%
No religion	10	4.20%
Missing	127	53.10%

Partner's education

No education	0	0.00%
Primary	3	1.30%
High school	22	9.20%
College	24	10.00%
Degree	39	16.30%
Masters	21	8.80%
PhD/Doctorate	23	9.60%
Missing	107	44.80%

Partner's annual income

Under £10000	46	19.20%
Between £10000-£1,4999	23	9.60%
Between £15000-£24,999	19	7.90%
Between £25000-£49,999	21	8.80%
Over £50000	10	4.20%
Missing	120	50.20%

Definition of IPA

Table 5 shows that 'Hitting and leaving marks' was the item most frequently defined as constituting IPA (N=159, 66.50%) and dealing with a woman's 'Financial matters' was the least frequently defined item of IPA (N=159, 66.50%) amongst Iranian women. Dealing with a woman's 'Financial matters' was also the most selected item (N= 38, 22.40%) under the category of 'Don't know'. Over half of Iranian women identified the two items of 'Cheating' and 'Sending sexy messages' as IPA (N= 126, 52.70%).

Table 5. Frequency table for individual items for Iranian women’s definition of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	This is abuse		This is not abuse		I don't know		Left blank	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Physical</i>								
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks on her	159	66.50%	8	3.30%	3	1.30%	69	28.90%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	153	64.00%	8	3.30%	9	3.80%	69	28.90%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	154	64.40%	11	4.60%	6	2.50%	68	28.50%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	150	62.80%	12	5.00%	8	3.30%	69	28.90%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	154	64.40%	11	4.60%	7	2.90%	67	28.00%
6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	151	63.20%	14	5.90%	6	2.50%	68	28.50%
7. Spitting at partner	144	60.30%	14	5.90%	13	5.40%	68	28.50%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	156	65.30%	10	4.20%	5	2.10%	68	28.50%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	137	57.30%	11	4.60%	19	7.90%	72	30.10%
25. Locking the partner in the house	154	64.40%	11	4.60%	5	2.10%	69	28.90%
27. Restricting partner’s movement	152	63.60%	10	4.20%	10	4.20%	67	28.00%

Emotional

8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	155	64.90%	9	3.80%	6	2.50%	69	28.90%
9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	153	64.00%	11	4.60%	5	2.10%	69	29.00%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	137	57.30%	18	7.50%	14	5.90%	70	29.30%
11. Threatening to take away children from partner	145	60.70%	13	5.40%	13	5.40%	68	28.50%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	129	54.00%	23	9.60%	19	7.90%	68	28.50%
15. Telling partner what to wear	121	50.60%	30	12.60%	19	7.90%	69	28.90%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	120	50.20%	28	11.70%	23	9.60%	68	28.50%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	131	54.80%	27	11.30%	13	5.40%	68	28.50%
18. Shouting at partner	150	62.80%	15	6.30%	7	2.90%	67	28.00%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	124	51.90%	30	12.60%	18	7.50%	67	28.00%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	146	61.10%	9	3.80%	16	6.70%	68	28.50%
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	122	51.00%	29	12.10%	21	8.80%	67	28.00%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	138	57.70%	17	7.10%	18	7.50%	66	27.60%

31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	127	53.10%	29	12.10%	15	6.30%	68	28.50%
<i>Sexual</i>								
12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	150	62.80%	8	3.30%	11	4.60%	70	29.30%
<i>Stalking</i>								
22. Secretly following or watching partner	118	49.40%	26	10.90%	27	11.30%	68	28.50%
<i>Financial</i>								
29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	84	35.10%	48	20.10%	38	15.90%	67	28.00%
<i>Other</i>								
13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	126	52.70%	24	10.00%	22	9.20%	67	28.00%
28. Having an argument with partner	75	31.40%	73	30.50%	24	10.00%	67	28.00%
30. Sending sexy messages to other women	126	52.70%	24	10.00%	23	9.60%	66	27.60%

Legal knowledge of IPA

Table 6 shows that 'Hitting and leaving marks' (N=150, 62.80%) was most frequently seen and dealing with a woman's 'Financial matters' was least frequently seen as legally defined as IPA (N=49, 20.50%) amongst Iranian women. Dealing with a woman's 'Financial matters' and being told 'What to wear' were the highest rated items (N= 66, 27.60%) followed by deciding on who a woman should be 'Friends with' (N= 65, 27.20) under the category of 'I Don't know'.

Table 6. Frequency table for individual items for Iranian women's legal knowledge of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	This is abuse		This is not abuse		I don't know		Left blank	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Physical</i>								
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks her	150	62.80%	4	1.70%	13	5.40%	72	30.10%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	118	49.40%	11	4.60%	11	15.10%	74	31.00%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	118	49.40%	9	3.80%	36	15.10%	75	31.50%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	111	46.60%	14	5.90%	40	16.70%	74	31.00%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	118	49.40%	11	4.60%	38	15.90%	72	30.10%
6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	116	48.50%	13	5.40%	37	15.50%	73	30.50%
7. Spitting at partner	93	38.90%	20	8.40%	52	21.80%	74	31.00%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	131	54.80%	10	4.20%	23	9.60%	75	31.40%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	102	42.70%	16	6.70%	43	18.00%	78	32.60%
25. Locking the partner in the house	132	55.20%	10	4.20%	22	9.20%	75	31.40%
27. Restricting partner's movement	117	49.00%	11	4.60%	35	14.60%	76	31.80%
<i>Emotional</i>								
8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	126	52.70%	7	2.90%	34	14.20%	71	29.80%

9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	131	54.80%	9	3.80%	25	10.50%	74	31.00%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	96	40.20%	26	10.90%	43	18.00%	74	31.00%
11. Threatening to take away children from partner	111	46.40%	14	5.90%	39	16.30%	75	31.40%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	71	29.70%	32	13.40%	60	25.10%	76	31.80%
15. Telling partner what to wear	58	24.30%	39	16.30%	66	27.60%	76	31.80%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	58	24.30%	41	17.20%	65	27.20%	75	31.40%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	59	24.70%	40	16.70%	64	26.80%	76	31.80%
18. Shouting at partner	87	36.40%	29	12.10%	48	20.10%	75	31.40%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	67	28.00%	37	15.50%	58	24.30%	77	32.20%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	98	41.00%	18	7.50%	46	19.20%	77	32.20%
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	69	28.90%	36	15.10%	58	24.30%	76	31.80%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	65	27.20%	40	16.70%	57	23.80%	77	32.20%
31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	53	22.20%	47	19.70%	63	26.40%	76	31.80%
<i>Sexual</i>								
12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	120	50.20%	8	3.30%	36	15.10%	75	31.40%
<i>Stalking</i>								
22. Secretly following or watching partner	81	33.90%	28	11.70%	54	22.60%	76	31.80%

Financial

29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	46	19.20%	49	20.50%	66	27.60%	78	32.60%
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Other

13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	80	33.50%	34	14.20%	49	20.50%	76	31.80%
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28. Having an argument with partner	45	18.80%	60	25.10%	57	23.80%	77	32.20%
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30. Sending sexy messages to other women	60	25.10%	46	19.20%	56	23.40%	77	32.20%
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Experience of IPA

Over half of Iranian women (N= 83, 54.60%) who had completed the experience column indicated the experience of at least one form of IPA. The experience of IPA included current relationship (N= 48, 38.70%), previous relationship (N= 41, 33.10%), and both previous and current relationship (N= 34, 27.40%). Table 7 shows that 'Shouting' was the most disclosed item on the questionnaire (N= 59, 24.70%), followed by being told 'What to wear' (N= 50, 20.90%), and being told where a woman 'Can and can't go' (N= 42, 17.60%). Being 'Kicked NOT leaving marks', 'Biting NOT leaving marks', 'Spitting', and being 'Locked' in the house were equally the least disclosed forms of IPA (N=131, 54.80%). The item that was most frequently left with 'I do not wish to disclose' was being forced to 'Have sex' with husband (N=8, 3.30%). A high number of Iranian women had left the item of 'Locking the partner in the house' blank (N=92, 38.50%).

Table 7. Frequency table for individual items for Iranian women's experience of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	Experienced		Not Experienced		I don't know		Do not wish to disclose		Left blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
	Physical									
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks her	32	13.40%	117	49.00%	2	0.08%	5	2.10%	83	34.70%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	31	13.00%	114	47.70%	3	1.30%	5	2.10%	86	36.00%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	20	8.40%	125	52.30%	3	1.30%	5	2.10%	86	36.00%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	22	9.20%	122	51.00%	5	2.10%	5	2.10%	85	35.60%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	15	6.30%	131	54.80%	4	1.70%	3	1.30%	86	36.00%
6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	12	5.00%	131	54.80%	4	1.70%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%
7. Spitting at partner	13	5.40%	131	54.80%	4	1.70%	4	1.70%	87	36.40%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	20	8.40%	123	51.50%	4	1.70%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	26	10.90%	117	49.00%	3	1.30%	2	0.08%	91	38.10%
25. Locking the partner in the house	11	4.60%	131	54.80%	3	1.30%	2	0.08%	92	38.50%
27. Restricting partner's movement	19	7.90%	126	52.70%	3	1.30%	2	0.08%	89	37.20%
Emotional										
8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	26	10.90%	118	49.40%	5	2.10%	3	1.30%	87	36.40%

9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	20	8.40%	119	49.80%	7	2.90%	4	1.70%	89	37.20%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	18	7.50%	125	52.30%	4	1.70%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%
11. Threatening to take away children from partner	19	7.90%	124	51.90%	4	1.70%	4	1.70%	88	36.80%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	42	17.60%	100	41.80%	4	1.70%	4	1.70%	89	37.20%
15. Telling partner what to wear	50	20.90%	95	39.70%	3	1.30%	3	1.30%	87	36.40%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	38	15.90%	101	42.30%	8	3.30%	2	0.08%	90	37.70%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	28	11.70%	114	47.70%	5	2.10%	4	1.70%	88	36.80%
18. Shouting at partner	59	24.70%	86	36.00%	4	1.70%	2	0.08%	88	36.80%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	27	11.30%	117	49.00%	4	1.70%	2	0.08%	89	37.20%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	16	6.70%	126	52.70%	4	1.70%	3	1.30%	90	37.70%
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	28	11.70%	111	46.40%	9	3.80%	2	0.08%	89	37.20%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	36	15.10%	109	45.60%	2	0.08%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%
31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	32	14.00%	113	47.30%	2	0.08%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%

Sexual

12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	23	9.60%	115	48.10%	5	2.10%	8	3.30%	88	36.80%
Stalking										
22. Secretly following or watching partner	28	11.70%	111	46.40%	9	3.80%	2	0.08%	89	37.20%
Financial										
29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	39	16.30%	95	39.70%	12	5.00%	3	1.30%	90	37.70%
Other										
13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	26	10.90%	109	45.60%	12	5.00%	3	1.30%	89	37.20%
28. Having an argument with partner	81	33.90%	57	23.80%	6	2.50%	6	2.60%	89	37.20%
30. Sending sexy messages to other women	18	7.50%	114	47.70%	13	5.40%	3	1.30%	91	38.10%

Justification of male violence

Table 8 shows the mean and standard deviation of Iranian women's attitude towards a man hitting his wife in 15 different situations on a five-point scale. The lower Mean scores indicated more acceptance of male violence. Therefore, the results indicated that Iranian women were more likely to justify a man hitting his wife if she 'Hits him' ($M= 4.18$, $SD= 1.12$), followed by if she 'Flirts' with another man ($M= 4.32$, $SD= 1.14$), or if she 'Cheats' on him ($M= 4.32$, $SD= 1.18$). The standard deviation on all these three items indicated that they also had the largest variation in answers compared with other items on the scales. This means that Iranian women's answers varied more across these three items than any other items on justification of male violence. Even though Iranian women used the open-ended question in this section to explain their answers, nothing additional to what they had already answered earlier was added for further analysis.

Table 8. Mean and Standard deviation of justification of male violence amongst Iranian women living in the UK

Variables	Mean	SD
Hits him	4.18	1.12
Flirts	4.32	1.14
Cheats	4.32	1.18
She provokes him	4.42	1.06
He is unwell	4.49	0.95
Revealing clothes	4.56	0.98
He is drunk	4.57	0.95
Threatens	4.57	0.92
Doesn't respect	4.65	0.84
Doesn't listen	4.66	0.82
Spends too much	4.66	0.81
Refuses sex	4.67	0.80
Swears	4.67	0.76
Doesn't do chores	4.68	0.79
Nags	4.73	0.72

4.1.3. Identifying variables for regressions

ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, and *t*-tests were conducted on the IVs and four DVs of 1) definition of IPA, 2) legal knowledge of IPA, 3) experience of IPA, and 4) justification of male violence to identify the significant variables for the regression analysis. The analysis began by recoding and collapsing the IVs into fewer levels to ensure that each level of IV had satisfactory observation values to accommodate for the analysis (Table 9).

Table 9. Recoding and collapsing the IVs for Iranian women

Variables	Before collapsing		Variables merged		New variables	
	<i>N</i>	%			<i>N</i>	%
Ethnicity						
Asian	161	69.10	White+ Mix+ Other= Other	Asian	161	67.40
White	13	5.60		Other	72	32.60
Mix	6	2.60				
Other	53	22.70				
Residency Status						
Claiming asylum	7	3.70%	Leave to remain= Settled status, Rejected asylum + Claiming Asylum + Limited Visa = Asylum or Visa	Settled status	134	70.90%
Rejected asylum	1	0.10%		Asylum or Visa	55	29.10%
Limited visa	47	24.60%				
Leave to remain	134	70.60%				
Marital Status						
Married	128	60.70%				
Divorced	20	9.50%		Separated	30	14.40%

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In relationship	12	5.70%	Separated + Widowed + Divorced=	Married	140	67.00%
Separated	5	2.40%	Separated, In relationship + Married=	Single	39	18.60%
Single	39	18.50%	Married, Other=	Missing		
Widowed	5	2.40%				
Other	2	0.80%				

Education

No education	0	0.00%				
Primary school	3	1.40%		Up to college	52	24.60%
High school	15	7.10%	No education + Primary + High school	Obtained degree	97	46.00%
College	34	16.10%	+ College=	Up to college, Degree=	62	29.40%
Degree	97	46.00%	Obtained degree, Masters + PhD=			
Masters	43	20.40%	Postgraduate studies			
PhD/Doctorate	19	9.00%				

Income

Up to £10,000	101	53.70%				
Between £10,000 and £14,999	39	20.70%		Up to £10000	101	53.70%

Between £15,000 and £24,999	21	11.20%	Up to £15000 + £25000= Between £10000 and £25000, Up to £50000 + Over £50000= Over £25000	Between £10000-£25000	60	31.90%
Between £25,000 and £49,999	22	11.70%		Over £25000	27	14.40%
Over £50,000	5	2.70%				

Religion

Muslim	94	66.20%	Atheist+ No religion= No religion	Muslim	94	66.20%
Christian	16	11.27%		Christian	16	11.27%
Atheist	8	5.63%		No religion	32	22.53%
No religion	24	16.90%				

Partner's

Education

No education	0	0.00%	Degree + Masters + PhD= Higher education, No education + Primary + High school + College= Not higher education	Up to college	49	37.10%
Primary school	3	2.30%		Obtained degree	39	29.50%
High school	22	16.70%		Postgraduate studies	44	33.40%
College	24	18.20%				
Degree	39	29.50%				
Masters	21	15.90%				

PhD/Doctorate	23	17.40%				
Partner's income						
Up to £10,000	46	38.70%				
Between £10,000 and £14,999	23	19.30%		Up to £10000	46	38.60%
Between £15,000 and £24,999	19	16.00%	Up to £15000 + £25000= Between £10000 and £25000, Up to £50000 +	Between £10000-£25000	42	35.30%
Between £25,000 and £49,999	21	17.60%	Over £50000= Over £25000, I don't know= Missing	Over £25000	31	26.10%
Over £50,000	10	8.40%				

One way between subject ANOVA was conducted to indicate whether there were significant differences in the mean score of perception of IPA (DV) across IVs of Iranian women in the UK (see Table I). IVs included categorical variables of the participant's 'Religion', participant's 'Marital status', participant's 'Income', 'Partner's income', 'Partner's religion', and 'Partner's education'. The assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance, sample size, and independent observations were met indicating that the ANOVA was reliable. A Tukey HSD post hoc test was selected for this study and the effect size Eta squared (η^2) was calculated using the following formula:

$$\eta^2 = \frac{\text{Sum of squares between groups}}{\text{Total sum of squares}}$$

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was selected to examine the relationship between the continuous IVs of 'Age', 'Age of arrival in the UK', 'Length of stay in the UK', 'Partner's age', 'Partner's age of arrival in the UK', 'Partner's length of stay in the UK' with the four DVs (see Table II). Preliminary analyses (outliers and distribution of data) indicated that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Finally, *t-tests* were carried out to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of perception of IPA (DV) and IVs of 'Residency status' (see Table III, a), 'Language of the questionnaire' (see Table III, b), and 'Ethnicity' (see Table III, c). The significant variables for ANOVA, correlation, and the *t-test* are presented below. Following Hosmer and Lemeshow's (2000) purposeful selection, the significance value was set at the 0.1 for the correlation, ANOVA, and *t-test* to choose from a large set of IVs and construct regressions that best fitted the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. All IVs with the significance value of 0.1 are presented below.

Definition of IPA

There was a weak, negative correlation between 'Age' and Iranian women's definition of IPA, $r=-.17$, $n=151$, $p<.1$. Younger age in the participants was associated with a greater breadth of definition in IPA. This means that younger Iranian women defined more items as IPA. There was a statistically significant difference in women's definition of IPA for 'Marital status' $F(2,137)=3.85$, $p=.024$. Tukey HSD Post-hoc comparisons indicated that women who were 'Separated' ($M=26.62$, $SD=2.77$) had significantly greater breadth of definition in IPA than women who were 'Married' ($M=23.14$, $SD=7.04$). There was also a statistically significant difference in women's definition of IPA for 'Education' $F(2,148)=2.94$, $p=.056$.

Women with 'Postgraduate' qualifications ($M= 25.67$, $SD= 4.47$) had significantly greater breadth of definition in IPA than women who had 'College' qualification ($M= 22.24$, $SD= 7.49$).

Legal knowledge of IPA

There was a statistically significant difference in women's legal knowledge of IPA for 'Marital status' $F(2,132) = 3.19$, $p = .044$. Tukey HSD Post-hoc comparisons indicated that women who were 'Separated' ($M= 23.32$, $SD= 7.25$) had significantly better legal knowledge of IPA than women who were 'Married' ($M= 17.78$, $SD= 8.98$). There was also a statistically significant difference in women's legal knowledge of IPA for 'Education' $F(2,142) = 2.27$, $p = .107$. Women with 'Degree' qualifications ($M= 19.72$, $SD= 8.14$) had significantly better legal knowledge of IPA than women who had 'College' qualification ($M= 15.94$, $SD= 8.66$). There was a statistically significant difference in women's legal knowledge of IPA for 'Income' $F(2,133) = 6.16$, $p = .003$. Tukey HSD Post-hoc comparisons indicated that women who earned 'Over £25000' a year ($M= 21.26$, $SD= 9.06$) had significantly better legal knowledge than those who earned 'Under £10000' ($M= 15.97$, $SD= 8.16$). The effect size was medium (.09). Similar results were found for partners' 'Income' $F(2,97) = 3.09$, $p = .05$.

The Tukey HSD test indicated that Iranian women had significantly better legal knowledge of IPA if their partners earned 'Over £25000' ($M= 21.26$, $SD= 9.05$) than those who earned 'Under £10000' a year ($M= 15.97$, $SD= 8.16$). The effect size was medium (.06). There was also a statistically significant difference for 'Marital status' $F(2,104) = 5.96$, $p = .004$. Iranian women had significantly better legal knowledge if they were 'Separated/divorced' ($M= 26.50$, $SD= 3.56$) rather than being 'Married' ($M= 17.87$, $SD= 8.66$). The effect size was medium (.10). Husband's 'Religion' was another significant IV ($F(2,95) = 4.72$, $p = .011$) as Iranian women who had 'Muslim' partners ($M= 19.07$, $SD= 8.54$) had significantly better legal knowledge than women with 'Christian' partners ($M= 12.29$, $SD= 8.56$). The effect size was medium (.09). There was a weak positive correlation between women's 'Length of stay in the UK' and their legal knowledge of IPA, $r = .20$, $n = 151$, $p < .05$, as longer length of stay in the UK was correlated with better legal knowledge of IPA. There was a weak, negative correlation between 'Husband's age of arrival to the UK' and women's legal knowledge of IPA, $r = -.17$, $n = 151$, $p < .05$. Younger age of arrival in husbands was associated with better legal knowledge in Iranian women. There was also a significant weak positive correlation

between 'Husband's length of years in the UK' and the participant's legal knowledge $r=.26$, $n=97$, $p<.001$ as longer stay in the UK for husbands was associated with better legal knowledge in Iranian women.

Experience of IPA

There was a statistically significant difference in the indication of the experience of IPA for 'Marital status', $F(2,104)=12.31$, $p<.001$. Iranian women who were 'Separated/divorced' indicated significantly higher experience of IPA ($M=20.33$, $SD=8.24$) than women who were 'Married' ($M=6.45$, $SD=6.87$) or 'Single' ($M=6.26$, $SD=6.47$). The effect size was large (.29). There was also a statistically significant difference in the disclosure of the experience of IPA for 'Religion', $F(3,123)=12.37$, $p=.001$, as women who were 'Christian' ($M=16.60$, $SD=10.04$) indicated significantly higher experience of IPA than women who were 'Muslim' ($M=7.12$, $SD=6.68$), or had 'No religion' ($M=7.71$, $SD=7.49$). The effect size was medium (.15).

Justification of male violence

There was a weak, negative correlation between 'Age' and Iranian women's definition of IPA, $r=-.14$, $n=160$, $p<.1$. Younger age in the participants was associated with lower acceptance of male violence. There was also a statistically significant difference in women's definition of IPA for 'Education' $F(2,156)=2.66$, $p=.073$. Women with 'Postgraduate' qualifications ($M=70.30$, $SD=10.98$) had lower acceptance of male violence than women who had 'College' qualification ($M=65.37$, $SD=11.91$).

4.1.4. Regression analysis

Regression analysis was selected to determine if any of the IVs (socio-demographic variables) were significant predictors of the DVs (perception of IPA) in Iranian women. But first, the appropriate IVs had to be identified for the construction of the regression. Using the purposeful selection method, all the significant variables were dummy coded and inserted into regressions to help identify variables that, by themselves, were not significantly related to the outcome but made an important contribution in the presence of other variables. Table 7 provides a visual presentation of all the tested IVs and DVs with their P values. The three IVs of 'Education', 'Income', and 'Marital status' were inserted into the variables even if they did

not have significant value of $p < .1$ for their theoretical support on perception and experience of IPA. The reference category for each variable is highlighted in bold.

Table 7. Data set variables and their *P* values for the purposeful selection model on Iranian women

Independent variables	Definition of IPA	Legal knowledge of IPA	Experience of IPA	Justification of male violence
ANOVA				
Religion	0.605	0.209	0.001*	0.149
Marital status	0.024*	0.044*	<.001*	0.082
Income	0.230	0.003*	0.166	0.242
Education	0.056*	0.107*	0.449	0.073*
Partner's religion	0.166	0.011*	0.923	0.545
Partner's income	0.197	0.050*	0.407	0.206
Partner's education	0.190	0.292	0.145	0.538
Correlation				
Age	0.040*	0.137	0.481	0.070*
Age of arrival in the UK	0.138	0.738	0.619	0.466
Length of stay in the UK	0.689	0.017*	0.818	0.215
Partner's age	0.143	0.364	0.810	0.271
Partner's age of arrival in the UK	0.232	0.031*	0.415	0.697
Partner's length of stay in the UK	0.755	0.009*	0.752	0.544

T-test

Language of questionnaire	0.407	0.703	0.219	0.772
Residency status	0.331	0.970	0.878	0.497
Ethnicity	0.087	0.210	0.364	0.095

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .1

Once the study was satisfied that the constructed regressions best fitted the DVs, 4 multiple linear regressions of 1) definition of IPA, 2) legal knowledge on IPA, 3) experience of IPA, and 4) justification of male violence were performed to investigate the ability of the IVs to predict the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK. Preliminary analyses indicated that no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity had occurred.

Definition of IPA

The results of the regressions (Table 10) found that the IVs significantly predicted Iranian women's definition of IPA ($F(7, 143) = 3.56, p = .001$). Being separated predicts a significantly greater breadth of definition of IPA ($\beta = .24, p = .024$) than being married or being single. Education is also a significant predictor of women's definition of IPA as having college qualification predicts a significantly narrower definition of IPA amongst Iranian women ($\beta = -.17, p = .048$) than other education categories of having a degree or postgraduate education. Another significant predictor of women's definition of IPA was age. Younger age in women predicts a greater definition of IPA than older age ($\beta = -.22, p = .015$). The IVs explained 15% of the variance in the breadth of definition of IPA.

Table 10. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting breadth of definition in Iranian women (N = 239)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	CI 95% (B)
R²	0.15***			
Age	-0.12	0.05	-0.22*	0.7/1.34
Married				
Separated	4.69	1.63	0.24**	0.87/1.16
Single	1.67	1.52	0.10	0.80/1.25
Degree				
College	-2.60	1.30	-0.17*	0.87/1.15
Post-graduate	1.68	1.37	0.11	0.71/1.41

Under £10000

Between £10000-£25000	2.02	1.20	0.13	0.93/1.07
Over £25000	-0.18	1.82	-0.01	0.76/1.32

Note. *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Legal knowledge of IPA

The results of the regressions (Table 11) found that the IVs significantly predicted Iranian women's legal knowledge of IPA in the UK ($F(8, 88) = 2.60, p = .013$). An annual income of between £10000 and £25000 ($\beta = .24, p = .020$) predicts significantly better legal knowledge than an annual income of under £10000 or over £25000 a year. The IV explained 20% of the variance in the legal knowledge of IPA in Iranian women.

Table 11. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting legal knowledge in Iranian women (N = 239)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	CI 95% (B)
R²	0.20*			
Married				
Separated	4.37	2.58	0.17	0.92/1.09
Single	1.60	1.57	0.09	0.92/1.09
Degree				
College	-3.34	2.15	-0.16	0.86/1.17
Post-graduate	-2.49	2.26	-0.13	0.69/1.45
Under £10000				
Between £10000-£25000	4.68	1.97	0.24*	0.71/1.41
Over £25000	4.67	3.07	0.17	0.86/1.17
Partner age of arrival	-0.08	0.10	-0.09	0.68/1.46

Partner length of stay in UK	0.10	0.09	0.14	0.66/1.52
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Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Experience of IPA

The results of the regressions (Table 12) found that the IVs significantly predicted Iranian women's disclosure of the experience of IPA ($F(8, 119) = 6.10, p < 0.001$). Marital status was a significant predictor as being separated predicts significantly higher disclosure of IPA ($\beta = .43, p < 0.001$) than being married or single. Being Christian also predicts a higher disclosure of the experience of IPA ($\beta = .28, p < 0.001$) than being Muslim or having no religion. The IVs explained 32% of the variance in the experience of IPA in Iranian women.

Table 12. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting disclosure of the experience of IPA in Iranian women (N = 239)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	CI 95% (B)
R²	0.32***			
Married				
Separated	10.17	1.86	0.43***	0.93/1.07
Single	-0.23	1.73	-0.01	0.86/1.16
Degree				
College	0.60	1.56	0.03	0.86/1.17
Post-graduate	-0.24	1.61	-0.01	0.71/1.41
Under £10000				
Between £10000-£25000	1.90	1.43	0.11	0.92/1.09
Over £25000	-0.76	2.16	-0.03	0.76/1.32
Muslim				
Christian	8.74	2.43	0.28***	0.96/1.04
No Religion	0.40	1.83	0.02	0.89/1.12

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Justification of male violence

The results of the regressions in Table 13 found that the IVs did not significantly predict Iranian women's justification of male violence ($F(7, 152) = 1.74, p = .103$).

Table 13. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting justification of male violence in Iranian women (N = 239)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	CI 95% (B)
R²	0.74			
Age	-0.16	0.08	-0.19	0.75/1.34
Married				
Separated	0.30	2.62	0.01	0.87/1.16
Single	-1.53	2.45	-0.05	0.80/1.25
Degree				
College	-3.88	2.10	-0.15	0.87/1.15
Post-graduate	0.78	2.19	0.03	0.03/0.71
Under £10000				
Between £10000-£25000	3.02	1.93	0.13	0.93/1.07
Over £25000	2.74	2.93	0.08	0.76/1.32

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

4.2. Non-Iranian women

Mirroring the formatting of the results on Iranian women, this section will present data including 1) response rate, 2) descriptive analysis, 3) identifying variables for regression, and 4) regression analysis on non-Iranian women in the UK.

4.2.1. Response rate

There was a response rate of 242 (80.67%) out of 300 distributed questionnaires. A total of 200 (67.00%) papered questionnaires and 100 (33.00%) online questionnaires were distributed to non-Iranian women. Most women chose to complete the questionnaire on paper ($N= 180$, 81.00%) rather than online ($N= 42$, 19.00%). The language of the questionnaire remained as English for this part of the study. Twenty cases were later removed due to incomplete data leaving 222 valid cases (74.00%).

4.2.2. Descriptive analysis

This section will present the descriptive data on the socio-demographic variables (IVs) of non-Iranian women and their perception of IPA (DV) which will include their 1) definition of IPA, 2) legal knowledge of IPA, 3) experience of IPA, and 4) justification of male violence.

Socio-demographic variables of non-Iranian women

The socio-demographic variables of non-Iranian women included their 'Age' ($M= 31.70$, $SD= 19.63$, range: 18-103), 'Age of arrival in the UK' ($M= 18.64$, $SD= 6.69$, range: 1-30), and 'length of stay in the UK' ($M= 8.08$, $SD= 10.71$, range: 1-52). The three variables of 'Age', 'Age of arrival in the UK', and 'Length of stay in the UK' were changed from continuous to categorical variables to breakdown the demographic variables of the participants. Table 14 shows that most of the participants who were not of English ethnicity were 'born in the UK' ($N=60$, 27.00%), and therefore had 'British' nationality ($N=182$, 82.00%) which mostly consisted of two dominant ethnic backgrounds of 'White English' ($N=126$, 56.80%) and 'Asian Pakistani' ($N=29$, 13.10%). The current sample mainly consisted of women who were in a 'Relationship' ($N= 88$, 39.60%) with 'No religion' ($N= 98$, 44.10%). Within these women, most had obtained 'College' qualification ($N= 95$, 42.80%) and had an income of 'Under £10000' ($N= 141$, 63.50%). Non-Iranian women's partners' demographic variables also showed that 'College' qualification was the highest obtained qualification ($N= 45$, 20.30%). Most of the partners were also on an annual income

of ‘Under £10000’ ($N= 30, 13.50\%$), and were described as having ‘No religion’ ($N= 77, 34.70\%$).

Table 14. Socio-demographic variables for non-Iranian women

Socio-demographics	<i>N</i>	%	Socio-demographics	<i>n</i>	%
Age			Religion		
18-24	139	62.60%	Muslim	51	23.00%
25-34	25	11.30%	Christian	62	27.90%
35-44	15	6.80%	No religion	98	44.10%
45-54	11	5.00%	Other	11	5.00%
Over 55	29	13.00%	Missing	0	0.00%
Missing	3	1.30%			
			Marital status		
Length of stay in UK			Single	81	36.50%
Born in UK	60	27.00%	In relationship	88	39.60%
Under 10 years	25	11.30%	Married	36	16.20%
11-20 years	7	3.20%	Divorced	0	0.00%
Over 21 years	1	0.50%	Separate	1	0.50%
Missing	129	58.10%	Widowed	0	0.00%
			Other	4	1.80%
Age of arrival in UK			Missing	12	5.40%
Under 18	9	4.10%			
Over 18	29	13.10%	Migration status		
Missing	184	82.90%	Claiming asylum	0	0.00%
			Rejected asylum	0	0.00%
Sexual orientation			Settled status	76	34.20%
Heterosexual	195	87.80%	Limited visa	13	5.90%
Homosexual	3	1.40%	Missing	133	59.90%

Bisexual	19	8.60%			
Other	2	0.90%			
Do not wish to answer	2	0.90%			
Missing	1	0.50%			
Nationality					
British	182	82.00%			
Bulgarian	4	1.80%			
Qatari	2	9.00%			
American	2	9.00%			
Arab	2	9.00%			
Lithuanian	1	0.50%			
Portuguese	3	1.40%			
Sri Lankan	1	0.50%			
Pakistani	2	9.00%			
Sudanese	3	1.40%			
Italian	2	9.00%			
French	4	1.80%			
Zimbabwean	1	0.50%			
Indian	2	9.00%			
Malaysian	1	0.50%			
Canadian	1	0.50%			
German	2	9.00%			
Kenyan	1	0.50%			
Chinese	1	0.50%			
Jamaican	1	0.50%			
Missing	4	18.00%			
			Education		
			Primary	0	0.00%
			High school	17	7.70%
			College	95	42.80%
			Degree	82	36.90%
			Masters	17	7.70%
			PhD/Doctorate	11	5.00%
			Missing	0	0.00%
			Occupation		
			Housewife	1	0.50%
			Other	199	89.60%
			Missing	22	9.90%
			Income		
			Up to £10,000	141	63.50%
			Between £10,000 and £14,999	17	7.70%
			Between £15,000 and £24,999	19	8.60%
			Between £25,000 and £49,999	22	9.90%
			Over £50,000	6	2.70%
			Partner's religion		
			Muslim	13	5.90%
			Christian	28	12.60%
			No religion	77	34.70%

			Other	5	2.30%
Ethnicity			Missing	99	44.60%
White English	126	56.80%			
White other	15	6.80%	Partner's education		
Mixed white and black	3	1.40%	No education	1	0.50%
Mixed other	5	2.30%	Primary	2	0.90%
Asian Indian	12	5.40%	High school	22	9.90%
Asian Pakistani	29	13.10%	College	45	20.30%
Asian Bangladeshi	4	1.80%	Degree	41	18.50%
Asian Chinese	2	0.90%	Masters	9	4.10%
Asian Other	6	27.00%	PhD/Doctorate	3	1.40%
Black African	7	3.20%	Missing	99	44.60%
Black Caribbean	4	1.80%			
Black Other	1	0.50%	Partner's income		
Arab	3	1.40%	Up to 10 000	30	13.50%
Other	3	1.40%	Up to 15 000	17	7.70%
Missing	2	0.90%	Up to 25 000	27	12.20%
			Up to 50 000	26	11.70%
			Over 50 000	7	3.20%
			I don't know	14	6.30%
			Missing	101	45.50%

Definition of IPA

Table 15 shows that ‘Punching but NOT leaving marks’ was most frequently defined (N=159, 66.50%) and ‘Shouting’ the least frequently defined item of IPA (N= 64, 28.80%) amongst non-Iranian women. Dealing with a woman’s ‘Financial matters’ was also the most selected item (N= 37, 16.70%) under the category of ‘Don’t know’.

Table 15. Frequency table for individual items for non-Iranian women’s definition of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	This is abuse		This is not abuse		I don’t know		Left blank	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Physical</i>								
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks her	208	93.70%	4	1.80%	3	1.40%	7	3.20%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	208	93.70%	8	3.60%	4	4.80%	2	0.90%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	213	95.90%	5	2.30%	2	0.90%	2	0.90%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	208	93.70%	6	2.70%	5	2.30%	3	1.40%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	210	94.60%	7	3.20%	3	1.40%	2	0.90%
6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	178	80.20%	19	8.60%	21	9.50%	4	1.80%
7. Spitting at partner	186	83.80%	21	9.50%	12	5.40%	3	1.40%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	211	95.00%	5	2.30%	1	0.50%	5	2.30%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	198	89.20%	10	4.50%	10	4.50%	4	1.80%
25. Locking the partner in the house	165	74.30%	36	16.20%	16	7.20%	4	1.80%
27. Restricting partner’s movement	198	89.20%	11	5.00%	8	3.60%	5	2.30%

Emotional

8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	207	93.20%	4	1.80%	7	3.20%	4	1.80%
9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	211	95.00%	4	1.80%	2	0.90%	5	2.30%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	175	78.80%	23	10.40%	18	8.10%	6	2.70%
11. Threatening to take away children from partner	192	86.50%	10	4.50%	16	7.20%	4	1.80%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	181	81.50%	21	9.50%	16	7.20%	4	1.80%
15. Telling partner what to wear	166	74.80%	38	17.10%	14	6.30%	4	1.80%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	170	76.60%	33	14.90%	14	6.30%	5	2.30%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	174	78.40%	27	12.20%	16	7.20%	5	2.30%
18. Shouting at partner	132	59.50%	64	28.80%	21	9.50%	5	2.30%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	177	79.70%	23	10.40%	18	8.10%	4	1.80%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	185	83.30%	17	7.70%	16	7.20%	4	1.80%
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	182	82.00%	22	9.90%	14	6.30%	4	1.80%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	165	74.30%	36	16.20%	16	7.20%	4	1.80%

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31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	152	68.50%	43	19.40%	22	9.90%	5	2.30%
<i>Sexual</i>								
12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	210	94.60%	3	1.40%	4	1.80%	5	2.30%
<i>Stalking</i>								
22. Secretly following or watching partner	118	84.70%	18	8.10%	12	5.40%	4	1.80%
<i>Financia l</i>								
29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	130	58.60%	49	22.10%	37	16.70%	6	2.70%
<i>Other</i>								
13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	87	39.20%	97	43.70%	34	15.30%	4	1.80%
28. Having an argument with partner	34	15.30%	169	77.90%	14	6.30%	5	2.30%
30. Sending sexy messages to other women	89	40.10%	105	47.30%	23	10.40%	5	2.30%

Legal knowledge of IPA

Table 16 shows that ‘Strangling/choking’ a woman (N=186, 83.80%), followed by ‘Hitting and leaving marks’ on a woman (N=182, 82.00%), and having ‘Sex with a woman’ against her will (N=183, 82.40%) were most frequently seen as legally recognised forms of IPA. ‘Having an argument’ (N=172, 77.50%), ‘Sexting’ (N=151, 68.00%), and ‘Cheating’ (N=141, 63.50%) were least frequently seen as legally recognised forms of IPA (N=49, 20.5%) amongst non-Iranian women. Dealing with a woman’s ‘Financial matters’ was most frequently put under the column of ‘I don’t know’ (N= 68, 30.60%) followed by being told where a woman ‘Can and can’t go’ (N= 52, 23.40%).

Table 16. Frequency table for individual items for non-Iranian women’s legal knowledge of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	This is abuse		This is not abuse		I don’t know		Left blank	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
	<i>Physical</i>							
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks on her	182	82.00%	10	4.50%	25	11.30%	5	2.30%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	172	77.50%	13	5.90%	33	14.90%	4	1.80%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	174	78.40%	12	5.40%	30	13.50%	6	2.70%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	161	72.50%	13	5.90%	42	18.90%	6	2.70%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	168	75.70%	17	7.70%	30	13.50%	6	2.70%
6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	132	59.50%	32	14.40%	48	21.60%	10	4.50%
7. Spitting at partner	114	51.40%	56	25.20%	43	19.40%	9	4.10%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	186	83.80%	16	7.20%	13	5.90%	7	3.20%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	153	68.90%	32	14.40%	30	13.50%	7	3.20%
25. Locking the partner in the house	165	74.30%	30	13.50%	20	9.00%	7	3.20%

27. Restricting partner's movement	151	68.00%	37	16.70%	27	12.20%	7	3.20%
<i>Emotional</i>								
8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	163	73.40%	21	9.50%	31	14.00%	7	3.20%
9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	182	82.00%	13	5.90%	21	9.50%	6	2.70%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	109	49.10%	55	24.80%	51	23.00%	7	3.20%
11. Threatening to take away children from partner	139	62.60%	31	14.00%	44	19.80%	7	3.20%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	88	39.60%	76	34.20%	52	23.40%	6	2.70%
15. Telling partner what to wear	64	28.80%	101	45.50%	51	23.00%	6	2.70%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	67	30.20%	110	49.50%	38	17.10%	7	3.20%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	73	32.90%	104	46.80%	38	17.10%	7	3.20%
18. Shouting at partner	62	27.90%	115	51.80%	37	16.70%	8	3.60%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	98	44.10%	78	35.10%	39	17.60%	7	3.20%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	130	58.60%	47	21.20%	38	17.10%	7	3.20%

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24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	96	43.20%	70	31.50%	49	22.10%	7	3.20%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	151	68.00%	37	16.70%	27	12.20%	7	3.20%
31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	58	26.10%	118	53.20%	38	17.10%	7	3.20%
<i>Sexual</i>								
12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	183	82.40%	15	6.80%	16	7.20%	8	3.60%
<i>Stalking</i>								
22. Secretly following or watching partner	149	67.10%	36	16.20%	29	13.10%	8	3.60%
<i>Financial</i>								
29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	8	3.60%	95	12.80%	68	30.60%	51	23.00%
<i>Other</i>								
13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	39	17.60%	141	63.50%	36	16.20%	6	2.70%
28. Having an argument with partner	23	10.40%	172	77.50%	20	9.00%	7	3.20%
30. Sending sexy messages to other women	38	17.10%	151	68.00%	26	11.70%	7	3.20%

Experience of IPA

The descriptive analysis found that most of the non-Iranian Iranian women who had completed the experience column indicated the experience of at least one form of IPA (N= 161, 72.5%). The experience of IPA included current relationship (N= 29, 20.0%), previous relationship (N= 70, 48.3%), and both previous and current relationship (N= 46, 31.7%). Within the non-Iranian sample, 'Shouting at partner' (N= 67, 30.0%) and being told 'Who to be friends with' (N= 46, 20.70%) were the most, and 'Spitting' at partner (N= 186, 83.80%) was the least disclosed item of IPA amongst non-Iranian women (Table 17). Both items of being 'Secretly followed' and 'Cheating' (N= 9, 4.10%) had equally the highest frequency under the category of 'I don't know, whilst dealing with 'Financial matters' had the highest frequency under the column for 'I do not wish to disclose' (N=24, 10.80%).

Table 17. Frequency table for individual items for non-Iranian women’s experience of IPA

Type of Intimate Partner Abuse	Experienced		Not Experienced		I don’t know		Do not wish to disclose		Left blank	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<i>Physical</i>										
1. Hitting partner AND leaving marks her	30	13.50%	170	76.60%	3	1.40%	3	1.40%	15	6.80%
2. Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	29	13.10%	170	76.60%	4	1.80%	2	9.00%	17	7.70%
3. Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her	20	9.00%	28	12.60%	3	1.40%	1	0.50%	21	9.50%
4. Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her	28	12.60%	169	76.10%	3	1.40%	1	0.50%	21	9.50%
5. Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her	14	6.30%	184	82.90%	3	1.40%	1	0.50%	20	0.90%

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6. Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her	17	7.70%	181	81.50%	4	1.80%	1	0.50%		
7. Spitting at partner	14	6.30%	186	83.80%	2	0.90%	1	0.50%	19	8.60%
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	17	7.70%	178	80.20%	1	0.50%	1	0.50%	23	10.40%
21. Hitting his partner but apologising	29	13.10%	166	74.80%	3	1.40%	1	0.50%	22	9.90%
25. Locking the partner in the house	45	20.30%	150	67.60%	4	1.80%	0	0.00%	23	40.40%
27. Restricting partner's movement	25	1.30%	170	76.60%	4	1.80%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%

Emotional

8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	19	8.60%	182	82.00%	1	0.50%	0	0.00%	20	9.00%
9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an object	14	6.30%	184	82.90%	2	0.90%	1	0.50%	21	9.50%
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings	25	11.30%	173	77.90%	2	0.90%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%

11. Threatening to take away children from partner	12	5.40%	186	83.80%	2	0.90%	1	0.50%	21	9.50%
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go	43	19.40%	156	70.30%	2	0.90%	0	0.00%	21	9.50%
15. Telling partner what to wear	37	16.70%	161	72.50%	3	1.40%	0	0.00%	21	9.50%
16. Telling partner who to be friends with	46	20.70%	153	68.90%	2	0.90%	0	0.00%	21	9.50%
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited	20	9.00%	175	78.80%	5	2.30%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%
18. Shouting at partner	67	30.00%	131	59.00%	1	0.50%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner	24	10.80%	173	77.90%	2	0.90%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy	17	7.70%	178	80.20%	4	1.80%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices	31	14.00%	161	72.50%	8	3.60%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally	45	20.30%	150	67.60%	4	1.80%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%

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31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish	25	11.30%	172	77.50%	3	1.40%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%
<i>Sexual</i>										
12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	26	11.70%	173	77.90%	2	0.90%	1	0.50%	20	9.00%
<i>Stalking</i>										
22. Secretly following or watching partner	21	9.50%	169	76.10%	9	4.10%	0	0.00%	23	10.40%
<i>Financial</i>										
29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters	14	6.30%	179	80.60%	5	2.30%	24	10.80%	0	0.00%
<i>Other</i>										
13. Cheating on his partner with another woman	39	17.60%	152	68.50%	9	4.10%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%
28. Having an argument with partner	103	46.40%	90	40.50%	4	1.80%	0	0.00%	24	10.80%

30. Sending sexy messages to other women	25	11.30%	172	77.50%	3	1.40%	0	0.00%	22	9.90%
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Justification of male violence

Table 18 shows that most participants did not justify male violence as the majority selected ‘Strongly Disagree’ for the items on the attitude scale. The most acceptable situations to hit a woman was if she ‘Hits’ her partner ($M= 3.69$, $SD= 1.32$), followed by if she ‘Cheats’ on her husband ($M= 4.50$, $SD= 0.98$) and if she ‘Provokes him’ ($M= 4.64$, $SD= 0.81$). Looking at the standard deviation, the largest variations in the answers belonged to where a woman ‘hits’ her husband ($M= 3.69$, $SD= 1.32$). Even though non-Iranian women used the open-ended question in this section to explain their answers, nothing additional to what they had already answered earlier was added for further analysis.

Table 18. Mean and Standard deviation of justification of male violence amongst non-Iranian women living in the UK.

Variables	Mean	SD
Cheats	4.50	0.98
She provokes him	4.64	0.81
Doesn't respect	4.66	0.79
Flirts	4.66	0.82
Threatens	4.68	0.75
Hits him	3.69	1.32
He is unwell	4.76	0.66
He is drunk	4.77	0.67
Swears	4.78	0.6
Nags	4.82	0.59
Revealing clothes	4.82	0.54
Spends too much	4.83	0.62
Doesn't listen	4.86	0.54
Doesn't do chores	4.87	0.53
Refuses sex	4.88	0.52

4.2.3. Identifying variables for regressions

ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, and *t*-test were conducted on the IVs and four DVs to identify the significant variables for the regression analysis on non-Iranian women. Following the analysis of the sample on Iranian women, the analysis began by transforming and reducing the number of categories to increase the statistical power (Table 19).

Table 19. Recoding and collapsing the IVs for non-Iranian women

Variables	Before collapsing		Variables merged	New variables	
	<i>N</i>	%		<i>N</i>	%
Nationality					
British	182	83.50%	British	182	83.50%
Bulgarian	4	1.80%	Other	36	16.50%
Qatari	2	0.90%			
American	2	0.90%			
Arab	2	0.90%	<i>Bulgarian + Qatari + American +</i>		
Lithuanian	1	0.50%	<i>Arab + Lithuanian + Portuguese +</i>		
Portuguese	3	1.40%	<i>Sri Lankan + Pakistani + Sudanese</i>		
Sri Lankan	1	0.50%	<i>+ Italian + French + Zimbabwean</i>		
Pakistani	2	0.90%	<i>+ Indian + Malaysian + Canadian</i>		
Sudanese	3	1.40%	<i>+ German + Kenyan + Chinese +</i>		
Italian	2	0.90%	<i>Jamaican = Other</i>		
French	4	1.80%			
Zimbabwean	1	0.50%			
Indian	2	0.90%			
Malaysian	1	0.50%			

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Canadian	1	0.50%
German	2	0.90%
Kenyan	1	0.50%
Chinese	1	0.50%
Jamaican	1	0.50%

Residency Status

British	17	19.10%	Leave to remain= Settled	Settled status	76	85.40%
Claiming asylum	13	14.60%	status, Rejected asylum +	Asylum or Visa	13	14.60%
Rejected asylum	0	0.00%	Claiming Asylum + Limited Visa			
Limited visa	0	0.00%	= Asylum or Visa			
Leave to remain	59	66.30%				

Ethnicity

White English	126	57.30%	Indian + Pakistani + Bangladeshi = Asian, White other + Mixed white and black + Mixed other + Chinese + Asian Other + Black African +	White English	126	57.30%
White other	15	6.80%		Asian	45	20.40%
Mixed white and black	3	1.40%		Other	49	22.30%
Mixed other	5	2.30%				
Asian Indian	12	5.50%				

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Asian Pakistani	29	13.20%	Black Caribbean + Black Other
Asian Bangladeshi	4	1.80%	+ Arab + Other = Other
Asian Chinese	2	0.90%	
Asian Other	6	2.70%	
Black African	7	3.20%	
Black Caribbean	4	1.80%	
Black Other	1	0.50%	
Arab	3	1.40%	
Other	3	1.40%	

Religion

Muslim	51	23.00%	Muslim	51	23.00%	
Christian	62	27.90%	No religion + Other = Other	Christian	62	27.90%
No religion	98	44.10%		Other	109	49.10%
Other	11	5.00%				

Marital Status

Married	36	17.10%	In relationship + Married=	Married	124	60.50%
Divorced	0	0.00%	Married, Separated + Widowed	Single	81	39.50%
In relationship	88	41.90%	+ Divorced + Other= Missing			

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Separated	1	0.50%
Single	81	38.60%
Widowed	0	0.00%
Other	4	1.90%

Education

No education	0	0.00%	No education + Primary + High school + College= Up to college, Degree= Obtained degree, Masters + PhD= Postgraduate studies	Up to college	112	50.50%
Primary school	0	0.00%		Obtained degree	82	36.90%
High school	17	7.70%		Postgraduate studies	28	12.60%
College	95	42.80%				
Degree	82	36.90%				
Masters	17	7.70%				
PhD/Doctorate	11	5.00%				

Income

Up to £10,000	141	68.80%	Up to £15000 + £25000= Between £10000 and £25000, Up to £50000 + Over £50000= Over £25000	Up to £10000	141	68.70%
Between £10,000 and £14,999	17	8.30%		Between £10000-£25000	36	17.60%
Between £15,000 and £24,999	19	9.30%		Over £25000	32	13.70%

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Between £25,000 and £49,999	26	10.70%
Over £50,000	6	2.90%

Partner's religion

Muslim	13	10.60%		Muslim	13	10.60%
Christian	28	22.70%	No religion + Other = Other	Christian	28	22.80%
No religion	77	62.60%		Other	82	66.00%
Other	5	4.10%				

Partner's Education

No education	1	8.00%		Up to college	70	56.90%
Primary school	2	1.60%	Degree + Masters + PhD=	Obtained degree	41	33.30%
High school	22	17.90%	Higher education, No	Postgraduate studies	12	9.80%
College	45	36.60%	education + Primary + High			
Degree	41	33.30%	school + College= Not higher			
Masters	9	7.30%	education			
PhD/Doctorate	3	2.40%				

Partner's income

Up to £10,000	30	24.80%		Up to £10000	30	30.00%
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Between £10,000 and £14,999	17	14.00%	Up to £15000 + £25000=	Between £10000-£25000	44	44.00%
Between £15,000 and £24,999	27	22.30%	Between £10000 and £25000, Up to £50000 + Over £50000=	Over £25000	26	26.00%
Between £25,000 and £49,999	26	21.50%	Over £25000, I don't know=			
Over £50,000	7	5.80%	Missing			
I don't know	14	11.60%				

Sexual orientation

Heterosexual	195	88.20%				
Bisexual	3	1.40%	Heterosexual= Heterosexual,	Heterosexual	195	89.00%
Homosexual	19	8.60%	Bisexual+ Homosexual+ Other=	Other	24	11.00%
Other	2	0.90%	Other, Do not wish to disclose=			
Do not wish to disclose	2	0.90%	Missing			

One way between subject ANOVA was conducted to indicate whether there were significant differences in the mean score of perception of IPA (DV) across IVs in non-Iranian women (see Table III). IVs included categorical variables of the participant's 'Ethnicity', participant's 'Education', participant's 'Religion', participant's 'Income', 'Partner's income', 'Partner's religion', and 'Partner's education'. The assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance, sample size, and independent observations were met indicating that the ANOVA was reliable. Significant ANOVA results were followed up with Tukey HSD post hoc analysis. *Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient* was selected to examine the relationship between the continuous IVs of 'Age', 'Age of arrival in the UK', and 'Length of stay in the UK' with the four DVs (see Table V). Preliminary analyses indicated that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. And finally, *t*-tests were carried out (see Table VI) to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of perception of IPA (DVs) and three IVs of 'Residency status' (see Table VI , a), 'Sexual orientation' (see Table VI , b), 'Marital status' (see Table VI , c) and 'Nationality' (see Table VI , d]. Like the analysis of Iranian women in the UK, the significance value was set at the 0.1 for the purposeful selection of IVs and the variables for which significant relationship were found are presented below.

Definition of IPA

There was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women's definition of IPA for 'Income' ($F(2,184) = 2.65, p = .073$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that women who stated that had an annual income of 'Over £25000' ($M = 28.07, SD = 5.06$) had significantly greater breadth of definition than those who earned 'Up to £10000' a year ($M = 25.74, SD = 4.89$). The effect size was small (.17). The results found that there was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women's definition of IPA for 'Religion' ($F(2,158) = 5.54, p = .005$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that women who stated that they had 'No religion' ($M = 27.48, SD = 3.36$) had significantly greater breadth of definition than those who were 'Muslim' ($M = 24.50, SD = 5.68$). The effect size was medium (.07). There was also a significant difference in women's definition of IPA for 'Education' $F(2,200) = 3.82, p = .024$. Women who had a 'Postgraduate degree' had significantly greater breadth of definition ($M = 28.50, SD = 3.01$) than women with 'College qualification' ($M = 25.93, SD = 4.78$). The effect size was small (.04). There was also a statistically significant difference for 'Ethnicity' of non-Iranian participants (F

(2,159) =5.71, $p=.004$). ‘White English’ women had significantly greater breadth of definition ($M= 27.21$, $SD= 3.42$) than ‘Asian’ women ($M= 24.51$, $SD= 5.92$). The effect size was small (.02).

There was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women’s definition of IPA for ‘Husband’s religion’ $F(2,89) =6.40$, $p=.003$. Non-Iranian women had significantly greater breadth of definition if their husbands had ‘No religion’ ($M= 27.48$, $SD= 3.50$) than those women who stated that their husbands were ‘Muslim’ ($M= 22.30$, $SD= 8.30$). The effect size was medium (.13). ‘Age’ of the participants was positively associated with women’s definition of IPA $r= .13$, $n=200$, $p<.01$. Older women had significantly greater definition of IPA. Older ‘Age of arrival in the UK’ was positively associated with women’s definition of IPA $r= .52$, $n=36$, $p<.01$. Women who had arrived in the UK at an older age, had significantly greater definition of IPA. There were significantly negative associations between ‘Length of years in the UK’ and women’s definition of IPA $r= -.40$, $n=35$, $p<.05$, and justification of male violence $r= -.52$, $n=38$, $p<.01$. Longer stay in the UK was associated with narrower breadth of definition and a higher justification of male violence. The small number of non-Iranian participants were small for the correlations as most women were born in the UK.

Legal knowledge of IPA

There was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women’s legal knowledge of IPA for ‘Religion’ $F(2,158) =5.60$, $p=.004$. Women had significantly better legal knowledge if they had ‘No religion’ ($M= 21.45$, $SD= 6.44$) than those who were ‘Muslim’ ($M= 17.28$, $SD= 7.48$). The effect size was medium (.07). There was also a statistically significant difference in legal knowledge of IPA for ‘Education’ $F(2,194) =4.31$, $p=.015$. Women who had ‘Postgraduate degree’ ($M= 22.08$, $SD= 5.89$) had significantly better legal knowledge than women with ‘College qualification’ ($M= 17.97$, $SD= 8.38$). The effect size was medium (.06). There was also a statistically significant difference for ‘Ethnicity’ of non-Iranian participants ($F(2,159) =2.85$, $p=.06$). ‘White English’ women had significantly better legal knowledge of IPA ($M= 20.72$, $SD= 7.24$) than ‘Other’ women ($M= 17.48$, $SD= 6.35$). The effect size was small (.02). ‘Husband’s religion’ was another significant difference $F(2,89) =5.03$, $p=.009$ as women’s legal knowledge was significantly better if their husbands had ‘No religion’ ($M= 21.33$, $SD= 6.30$) than those who were married to ‘Muslim’ men ($M= 14.10$, $SD= 8.05$). The effect size was medium (.10). There was a weak positive relationship

between age and legal knowledge $r = .21$, $n = 194$, $p < .01$, as older women had better legal knowledge.

Experience of IPA

Although the ANOVA found that there was a significant difference in women's disclosure of the experience of IPA for 'Husband's religion' $F(2,89) = 3.21$, $p = .045$, post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that there was no significant difference between any of the groups of husband's religion and non-Iranian women's disclosure of the experience of IPA. 'Age' was positively associated with women's experience of IPA $r = .12$, $n = 185$, $p < .1$ as older women were more likely to indicate the experience of IPA. 'Age of arrival' was another significant positive association $r = .12$, $n = 185$, $p < .1$. Older age of arrival to the UK was positively associated with the disclosure of the experience of IPA $r = .46$, $n = 39$, $p < .1$, as women who had arrived in the UK at an older age were significantly more likely to indicate the experience of IPA. In addition, there was a difference in the scores for 'Heterosexual' and 'Other' groups of 'Sexual orientation' $t(165) = -1.61$, $p = 0.11$. Non-Iranian women with 'Other' sexual orientation ($M = 7.95$, $SD = 10.76$) indicated significantly higher experience of IPA than 'Heterosexual' women ($M = 5.54$, $SD = 5.44$)

Justification of male violence

There was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women's definition of IPA for 'Income' ($F(2,200) = 2.49$, $p = .086$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that women who stated that had an annual income of 'Over £25000' ($M = 72.64$, $SD = 3.09$) had significantly lower acceptance of male violence than those who earned 'Between £10000 and £25000' a year ($M = 68.25$, $SD = 10.04$). The effect size was small (.16). There was a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women's justification of male violence for 'Religion' $F(2,158) = 7.29$, $p = .001$. 'Christian' women had significantly lower acceptance of male violence ($M = 72.63$, $SD = 4.17$), followed by women with 'No religion' ($M = 71.00$, $SD = 5.74$), and women who were 'Muslim' ($M = 67.31$, $SD = 9.53$). The effect size was medium (.08). There was a statistically significant difference for 'Ethnicity' of non-Iranian participants ($F(2,159) = 4.84$, $p = .009$). 'White English' women were significantly least accepting of ($M = 71.26$, $SD = 5.97$) than 'Asian' women ($M = 66.54$, $SD = 12.83$). The effect size was small (.02).

There was also a statistically significant difference in non-Iranian women's justification of male violence for 'Husband's religion' $F(2,89) = 3.31, p = .041$. Non-Iranian women were least accepting of male violence if their husbands had 'No religion' ($M = 71.36, SD = 4.84$) than those who had 'Muslim' husbands ($M = 67.00, SD = 9.03$). The effect size was medium (.07). Older age of arrival to the UK was positively associated with justification of male violence $r = .46, n = 39, p < .1$, as women who had arrived in the UK at an older age were significantly less accepting of male violence. There was a significant negative association between 'Length of years in the UK' and justification of male violence $r = -.52, n = 38, p < .1$ women had higher justification of male violence if they had been in the UK for a longer period. The small number of non-Iranian participants were small for the correlations as most women were born in the UK.

4.2.4. Regression analysis

Like the study of Iranian women, the categorical IVs were transformed into dichotomous variables to prepare for purposeful sampling of non-Iranian women's results (Table 20). The three IVs of 'Education', 'Income', and 'Marital status' were inserted into the variables even if they did not have significant value of $p < .1$ for their theoretical support on the perception and the experience of IPA. Preliminary analyses indicated that no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity had occurred. The reference category for each variable is highlighted in bold.

Table 20. Data set variables and their P values for the purposeful selection model on non-Iranian women in the UK.

Independent variables	Definition of IPA	Legal knowledge of IPA	Experience of IPA	justification of male violence
ANOVA				
Religion	0.005*	0.004*	0.42	0.001*
Income	0.07*	0.17	0.89	0.09*
Education	0.024*	0.015*	0.19	0.39
Ethnicity	0.004*	0.06*	0.86	0.009*
Religion of partner	0.003*	0.009*	0.045*	0.041*
Income of partner	0.31	0.73	0.59	0.53
Education of partner	0.24	0.83	0.66	0.88
Correlation				
Age	0.06*	0.003*	0.10*	0.78
Age of arrival in the UK	<.001*	0.33	0.07*	0.003*
Length of stay in the UK	0.19	0.86	0.052*	<.001*
T-test				
Residency status	0.99	0.18	0.46	0.78

Marital status	0.97	0.60	0.67	0.51
Sexual orientation	0.33	0.96	0.11*	0.65

Note. Statistical significance: *p <.1

Definition of IPA

The regressions (Table 21) showed that the IVs significantly predicted non-Iranian women's definition of IPA ($F(7, 195) = 3.44, p = .002$). However, 'Religion' was the sole predictor of women's breadth of definition. Being 'Muslim' predicted significantly narrower definition of IPA ($\beta = -.29, p < .001$) than Christian or Muslim women. The IVs explained 11% of the variance in women's definition of IPA.

Table 21. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting the definition of IPA in non-Iranian women (N = 222)

	R ²	B	SE	β	CI 95% (B)
	.11**				
<i>Education</i>					
Degree					
College		0.47	0.72	0.48	0.83/1.20
Post-graduate		2.13	1.21	0.15	0.67/1.49
<i>Income</i>					
Under £10000					
Between £10000-£25000		0.12	0.94	0.01	0.90/1.11
Over £25000		1.07	1.19	0.07	0.70/1.44
<i>Marital status</i>					
Married					
Single		0.42	0.73	0.04	0.88/1.14
<i>Religion</i>					
Other religions					
Muslim		-3.32	0.87	-0.29***	0.81/1.23
Christian		-1.07	0.80	-0.10	0.84/1.20

Note. *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Legal knowledge of IPA

The regressions (Table 22) found that the IVs significantly predicted non-Iranian women's legal knowledge of IPA in the UK ($F(5,191) = 2.44, p=.036$). 'Education' is a significant predictor of legal knowledge as post-graduate education predicts a significantly better legal knowledge of IPA ($\beta = .18, p=.04$) than having a degree or below. The IVs explained 6% of the variance in women's legal definition of IPA.

Table 22. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting legal knowledge of IPA in non-Iranian women (N = 222)

	R ²	B	SE	β	CI 95% (B)
	.06**				
<i>Education</i>					
Degree					
College		1.44	1.13	0.10	0.84/1.19
Post-graduate		3.92	1.9	0.18*	0.68/1.47
<i>Income</i>					
Under £10000					
Between £10000-£25000		1.35	1.48	0.07	0.91/1.10
Over £25000		1.34	1.84	0.06	0.72/1.38
<i>Marital status</i>					
Married					
Single		-1.62	1.11	-0.11	0.95/1.05

Note. *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001

Experience of IPA

The results of the regression (Table 23) for the experience of non-Iranian showed that the IVs did not significantly predict the disclosure of the experience of IPA amongst non-Iranian women UK ($F(7,177) = 1.60, p=.14$).

Table 23. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting experience of IPA in non-Iranian women (N = 222)

	R ²	B	SE	β	CI 95% (B)
	0.06				
<i>Education</i>					
Degree					
College		1.61	0.10	0.13	0.83/1.21
Post-graduate		-0.44	1.67	-0.2	0.67/1.49
<i>Income</i>					
Under £10000					
Between £10000-£25000		-0.22	1.43	-0.01	0.74/1.34
Over £25000		0.35	1.72	0.02	0.64/1.58
<i>Marital status</i>					
Married					
Single		0.02	0.98	0.01	0.93/1.08
<i>Sexual orientation</i>					
Other					
Heterosexual		-2.10	1.40	-0.16	.099/1.01
Age		0.05	0.03	0.15	0.68/1.50

Note. *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001

Justification of male violence

The IVs significantly predicted justification of male violence ($F(7, 211) = 2.07, p=.048$).

‘Ethnicity’ is a significant predictor of justification of male violence. Asian ethnic backgrounds predict a significantly higher justification of male violence ($\beta = -.21, p=.005$)

than English or any other ethnicity. The IVs explained 6% of the variance in women's justification of male violence in Table 24.

Table 24. Summary of multiple regression analyses for variables predicting justification of male violence in non-Iranian women (N = 222)

	R ²	B	SE	β	CI 95% (B)
	0.06*				
<i>Education</i>					
Degree					
College		-0.73	1.15	-0.05	0.83/1.20
Post-graduate		0.78	1.92	0.03	0.68/1.48
<i>Income</i>					
Under £10000					
Between £10000-£25000		-2.44	1.49	-0.12	0.91/1.10
Over £25000		0.78	1.89	0.03	0.70/1.43
<i>Marital status</i>					
Married					
Single		0.33	1.16	0.02	0.88/1.14
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White English					
Asian		-4.06	1.42	-0.21**	0.84/1.19
Other		-0.73	1.4	-0.04	0.93/1.08

Note. *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001

4.3. Comparison of Iranian and non-Iranian women

Four independent samples *t*-tests were carried out to compare the perception of Iranian and non-Iranian women of IPA against women in the UK (Table 25). The results showed that there were no significant differences in the two groups of Iranian and non-Iranian women in their breadth of definition and their experience of IPA. However, a significant difference was found between Iranian and non-Iranian women's legal knowledge of IPA, $t(250) = 3.71$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed) as Iranian women had better legal knowledge of IPA ($M = 20.72$, $SD = 6.66$) than non-Iranian women ($M = 14.85$, $SD = 7.20$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 1.78, 95% CI: 0.96 to 2.56) was large ($\eta^2 = .85$). There was also a significant difference between Iranian and non-Iranian women's justification of male violence, $t(459) = -30.23$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). The results showed that Iranian women had higher justification of male violence ($M = 43.42$, $SD = 37.21$) than non-Iranian women ($M = 68.42$, $SD = 14.14$). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 25.01, 95% CI: 30.23 to 19.27) was large ($\eta^2 = .89$).

Table 25. Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics for comparing the perception of Iranian and non-Iranian women towards intimate partner abuse against women in the UK

	Perception of IPA						95% CI for Mean Difference		t	df
	Iranian women			Non-Iranian women						
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N				
Definition	23.16	4.66	98	22.38	4.27	204	0.28, 1.85		1.46	300
Legal										
Knowledge	20.72	6.66	53	14.85	7.2	199	3.79, 7.95		5.60***	87
Experience	3.90	6.38	105	3.48	6.22	191	1.09, 1.92		0.54	294
Attitude	43.42	37.21	239	68.42	14.14	222	30.01, 19.91		9.66***	309

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

4.4. Chapter summary

Quantitative analysis was employed for a general understanding of women's perception of IPA in the UK. Two groups of Iranian and non-Iranian women were compared to examine their differences and similarities in perception of IPA against women. The results concluded that there was disparity in Iranian women's disclosure of their ethnicity as many believed that they were Asian, whilst others believed that they were White, Mixed, or Other. Iranian women were around twice more likely than non-Iranian women to indicate the experience of IPA in their current relationship. Most Iranian women were married with nearly one in three being a housewife or unemployed despite two third of these women having a degree or above. Iranian women were also generally younger but more educated than their husbands and non-Iranian women.

The physical item of hitting and not leaving marks on a woman was the most frequently defined item of IPA both by definition and legal knowledge in non-Iranian women. Items such as telling a woman what to wear or who to be friends with were generally seen to be mostly legal by both Iranian and non-Iranian women even though one in two Iranian women defined these items as IPA. Both items of being told what to wear or who to be friends by partner were also amongst the most experienced items of IPA in both samples of women. Iranian women had mostly indicated the experience of IPA in their current relationship, and non-Iranian women in their previous relationship. Although over half of Iranian women defined and legally classed husband forcing intercourse with wife as IPA, this item was the least disclosed item of IPA as Iranian women chose to select the box for 'I do not wish to disclose'. Furthermore, when asked about their attitudes towards a man hitting his wife, the most justifiable situation to hit a woman was if she hit her husband, cheated, flirted, or provoked her husband according to both Iranian and non-Iranian women.

Amongst the socio-demographic variables that can predict Iranian women's perception of IPA, being young and divorced/separated from husband predicts a greater definition, whereas, having college education as the highest obtained qualification predicts a narrower definition of IPA. Greater breadth of definition refers to more items being identified as IPA, whilst narrower definition of IPA refers to less items being identified as IPA. For non-Iranian women religion is a predictor of their definition of IPA as Muslim women have a narrower definition of IPA. Having an annual income of between £10000 and £25000 predicts a better

legal knowledge for Iranian women, whilst post-graduate education predicts a significantly better legal knowledge of IPA ($\beta = .18, p = .04$) in non-Iranian women. Even though non-Iranian women's socio-demographic variables were not able to predict their experience of IPA, being Christian and separated/divorced predicts a higher disclosure of the experience of IPA amongst Iranian women. Having an Asian ethnic background can predict higher acceptance of male violence amongst non-Iranian women, nevertheless, the same cannot be said about Iranian women as their socio-demographic variables were not able to predict their justification of male violence. This study found that both samples had similar high negative attitudes towards male violence against women. However, despite Iranian women having a generally better legal knowledge than non-Iranian women, their attitude was significantly more accepting of male violence compared with non-Iranian women.

Chapter 5: Discussion of survey findings (phase one)

Introduction

This chapter will present the discussion from phase one of the research which used quantitative methods to assess the ability of the socio-demographic variables in predicting the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. The discussion of quantitative study begins by discussing the challenges of recruitment before examining the role of socio-demographic variables in women's definition, legal knowledge, and experience of IPA in addition to their attitudes towards male violence. The similarities and the differences in the perception of IPA between the two groups of Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK will also be discussed.

5.1. The challenges of recruiting Iranian women

Britain's openness to diversity means that the UK's population is becoming more diverse over time. With ethnic minority women more likely than any other group to face additional barriers in relation to IPA (Women's aid, 2020), a brief review of the literature calls for a greater consideration of the socio-demographic variables that could contribute to the perception of IPA amongst ethnic minority women in the UK. It should be noted that studying different groups come with its own challenges. Previous studies of migrant women have found that the fear of deportation or the prior experience with law enforcements in countries of origin may deter undocumented migrants from participating in research (Brown, 2009) especially when the research is in relation to IPA (Ingram, 2007, Nicolaidis et al., 2010). Others suggest that some groups have historical reasons to mistrust the intentions of researchers regardless their migration status (Mechanic & Pole, 2013).

In the case of Iranian women, they have previously been difficult to recruit due to their fear of jeopardising their migration status (Ansari & Abdolmabou, 1988; Darvishpour, 1999) or the taboos attached to Iranian women (Hosseini-Kaladjahi 1992; Dehghani-Firoozabadi et al., 2017; Zare et al., 2019). According to Rosenbaum and Langhinrichsen-Rohling (2006), it is the sensitive nature of the IPA that makes women's willingness to take part as one of the most fundamental challenges of each study. Saying this, the recruitment of non-Iranian women was a simpler task. For this study, it was the recruitment of Iranian women that posed as one of the main barriers to conducting research.

Aghtaie (2016) illustrated that the politicization of IPA in Iranian women puts a barrier between the researcher and the participants which limits the researcher's access to the information about women's perception of IPA and attitudes towards male violence. The current study is consistent with Aghtaie's (2016) findings. Despite Iranian women's willingness to participate in the current study, the main challenge of recruitment for this study was on the day of the presidential election when the researcher was given permission to attend the embassy grounds from 9am to 7pm. It was not long before the researcher was asked about her own political views by the participants. The participants asked the researcher if she had voted and who she had voted for. The researcher was advised to vote for Rouhani (the current president) by dozens of women before they agreed to complete the questionnaire. Considering the challenges of recruiting Iranian women, the researcher felt that she had no choice but to vote for Rouhani despite her own political views to help speed up the recruitment process. This request of voting for Rouhani from the participants continued throughout the day with some women asking for proof before they agreed to take part in the questionnaire. Perhaps, this was because Rouhani's opponent was known to conduct harsh punishments and Rouhani appeared to be a better option out of the two for many Iranians.

Iranian women's political concerns extended to the fear of the researcher potentially working or having secret relations with the government. Some verbalised these concerns whilst others trusted the researcher and openly admitted to being in an abusive relationship by asking for legal advice. The request for legal advice mainly consisted of immigration and family law questions in which the researcher would refer the participants to the debrief sheet and signpost different agencies. Many of these women were apprehensive of contacting the provided helplines stressing that the language barrier would minimise their chances of receiving the right support. At this point, the researcher would divert women's attention to the IKWRO's helpline. IKWRO is an Iranian and Kurdish organisation for women in the UK which support women with IPA and cultural related issues. Most importantly, the current study had a good response rate from Iranian women despite the challenges that it faced.

5.2. Perception of IPA

Definition of IPA

Physical abuse was the most frequently defined form of IPA for both Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. In addition, the findings revealed that over half of Iranian women defined

husband's infidelity or sending explicit messages to another woman as IPA. The findings support Taherkhani et al. (2014) study of Iranian women's perception of IPA which found that Iranian women considered a husband's betrayal as the most intolerable form of IPA whilst interpreting this act as public humiliation. The concept of husband's infidelity has been a hot topic in feminist scholars in the recent years (see Kwansah-Aidoo & Owusu, 2017; Hao, 2017; Jadhav, 2018), with Utley (2017) going as far as categorising husband's infidelity as a form of IPA. The socio-demographic variables of women have also been known to play a crucial role in how their perception of IPA is shaped (Carlson & Worden, 2005; Pole et al., 2008; Kingston et al., 2016).

Religion, for instance, has been labelled as one of the dominant contributing variables to the perception of IPA amongst Muslim Middle Eastern women (Usta, Feder, & Antoun, 2014). Aghtaie (2016) suggested that religious Iranian women generally held views that were consistent with the Sharia law and Iranian state's gender ideology. The current findings are partly in line with Aghtaie's (2016) findings as it demonstrates that being Muslim predicts a narrower definition of IPA amongst non-Iranian women in the UK. However, the same cannot be said about Iranian women as religion did not predictor Iranian women's perception of IPA. Yet, this study's contrasting findings to Aghtaie's (2016) do not override Aghtaie's (2016) conclusion, rather, it draws attention to the small number of Iranian women who affiliated with Islam in this study. This suggests that the current findings may have shown different results if the study had solely focussed on Muslim Iranian women. Nawa (2018) stated that although Iran's statistics show that 99% of Iranians are Muslim, many Iranians do not affiliate with Islam and pretend to follow Islam only to escape the heavy punishments for religious conversion in Iran. In a recent study by Darwish (2018), it was also found that many Iranian women converted from Islam to Christianity after migration to Canada.

A quick glance at the current findings confirms Darwish's (2018) conclusion by indicating that only less than half of Iranian women declared themselves as Muslim in the UK. The comparison between the two groups also showed that around half of the Iranian women had left this category unanswered, whereas all non-Iranian women had completed this category. Moallem (2005) explained Iranian's views on Islam by referring to the political roots of Islam for Iranians. Moallem (2005) stated that many Iranians in the West disown Islam to separate themselves from Iran's political Muslim fundamentalists. Tezcür, Azadarmaki, Bahar, &

Nayebi (2012) further stated that that Iranians associate religiosity and Islam with the Iranian regime which means that those who seek democracy do not wish to be affiliating with Islam. Despite the literature on the role of religion in Iranian women's perception of IPA and the current findings, this study decided to exclude religion from the next phase of the study (qualitative phase) to avoid political sensitivity amongst the participants.

Besides religion, other socio-demographic variables such as low level of educational attainment has also been found to contribute to the perception of IPA (Hindin, 2003; Trinh, Oh, Choi, To, & Do, 2016). In line with this, the current findings revealed that low level of education in Iranian women predicts a narrower definition of IPA. However, another point worthy to mention about this study is Iranian women's exceptionally high level of education. This study indicated that Iranian women were not only generally more educated than non-Iranian women, but they were also generally more educated than their own partners. Despite this study's attempts to rule out recruitment bias by recruiting Iranian women from various settings (i.e. religious, educational, and other places of gatherings), the current findings showed that around two third of the Iranian women were qualified at degree level or above.

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, the pursuit of higher education in Iranian women is not a new phenomenon. Contrary to the feminist concerns about the low representation of women in the field of education (see Chanana, 2012; Zhao & Wry, 2016; Bhopal, 2019), Iranian women have, over the past 40 years, outnumbered Iranian men in higher education (Shavarini, 2005; Sadeghi, 2008; Rezai-Rashti, Mehran & Abdmolaei, 2019) despite their limited job options (Rezai-Rashti & Moghadam, 2011). This study found that one in three Iranian women was a housewife or unemployed despite two third of these women having a degree or above. As Hadianrasnani (2008) pointed out, the rate of Iranian women's economic participation is still low and most Iranian women are financially dependent on their husbands.

Even though higher level of education enhances Iranian women's chances of a good career in addition to giving them higher status in the society (Shavarini, 2005, 2006), many remain unemployed due to the restrictions posed on women and must agree to marriage for economic protection (Tizro, 2012). This implies that Iranian women should be able to freely choose to go into employment when they live in the UK. However, the current findings are contradictory to previous studies of Iranian women as the findings revealed that around one

in three Iranian women in the UK were still a housewife or unemployed with a low income despite their good level of education. Motevaliyan et al. (2017) also found that two third of Iranian women in his sample were housewives.

Darvishpour (1999) investigated employment in Iranian women and stated that Iranian women's inclination to pursue careers in Sweden resulted in their financial independence which consequently led to an increase in their separation from their partner. Later, Darvishpour (2002) concluded that while divorce is still a taboo in Iran, Iranian women in Sweden consider divorce as an opportunity to rebuild their life. The current findings show that many Iranian women in the UK were married and not in employment, whilst nearly one in two Iranian women indicated the experience of IPA in their current relationship. However, being divorced or separated from husband was able to predict a greater definition of IPA in Iranian women, Furthermore, the current findings which demonstrated that younger age can predict a greater definition of IPA amongst Iranian women was consistent with Wallach et al. (2010) who found that younger migrants from patriarchal cultures assimilated more than their elders to the egalitarian values.

Legal knowledge

As Hoodfar and Sadeqi's (2009) pointed out, Iranian women are united when they seek gender equality and a change in their legal rights. Aghtaie (2016) also emphasised that the Iranian women's access to the internet has produced a generation of women who are aware of their rights and therefore less resistant to the gender discriminatory policies. The current findings support for the literature on Iranian women's legal knowledge. In fact, Iranian women of the current study were found to have significantly better legal knowledge of the UK's justice system in relation to IPA than non-Iranian women in the UK.

It is important to note that the literature's small focus on the role of socio-demographic variables in predicting women's legal knowledge of IPA, made this study one of the firsts in the field to investigate such effects. Despite Tran, Nguyen, and Fisher's (2016) findings that women on low income were more accepting of IPA, the current findings indicated that an average income of between £10000 and £25000 predicted better legal knowledge than any other income for Iranian women. Post-graduate education predicted better legal knowledge of IPA amongst non-Iranian women which supports the recent evidence on education's ability to

improve knowledge of IPA (Sprague et al., 2016; O'Connor, Nittis, Robertson, Leggett, & Charoenrat, 2019).

Indicating the experience of IPA

One of the first observations that can be made from this study is that both Iranian and non-Iranian women mostly found items such as telling a woman what to wear or who to be friends with legal. However, these items were amongst the one of the most disclosed items in both samples of women. Whilst feminist researchers label acts like telling a woman what to do as controlling behaviour (Yllö & Bograd, 1988; Khosravi, 2009), others insist that attention to culture is essential to understand what constitutes IPA as ethnic minority women may not believe that they are experiencing what we call IPA (Mechanic & Pole, 2013).

In addition, the current findings demonstrated that the participants who had indicated the experience of IPA were mostly from their current relationship and for non-Iranian women from their previous relationship. Bearing in mind that Iranian women were well knowledgeable about the UK's legal system in relation to IPA in this study, it was unexpected to find that around half of these women were still in a relationship that they described as abusive. Studies of Iranian women refer to the taboos surrounding the divorce amongst Iranian women (Darvishpour, 1999; Zare, Aguilar-Vafaie, Ahmadi, & Mirzaei, 2019). As Afroz (2019) stated, divorce is a means of freedom for any woman in an unpleasant marriage, however, being a divorcee woman can also be a negative term and bring difficulties to women in some cultures. Moreover, Taherkhani et al. (2019) suggested that the stigma attached to being divorced in Iranian women builds a barrier which stops them from leaving an abusive relationship. In addition, Kar (2000) insisted that the Iranian law encourage IPA to deter women from leaving abusive husbands and to abide by the Islamic marriage contract.

Whilst on the topic of marriage, the current findings also revealed that the least disclosed item of IPA amongst Iranian women was marital rape which is consistent with previous studies of a similar nature in Iranian women (Darvishpour, 1999; Jamshidimanesh et al., 2013). As mentioned in the previous chapters, Haghi (2018) believed that the cultural and religious boundaries make Iranian women less inclined to talk about their marital affairs. Reluctancy to disclose marital affairs in women has also been witnessed in other cultures

where women believed that marriage was part of their private life (see Hawkey et al., 2019). In fact, Lynch et al. (2017) labelled women's beliefs to keep their marital intercourse a private matter as a "cultural myth" rooted in old beliefs that a wife is a husband's private property. This study disagrees with Lynch et al.'s (2017) labelling of the women's beliefs as "cultural myth", rather, this study agrees with Bent-Goodley (2005) who proposed that that cultural variations in women should be reframed as strengths rather than barriers.

Mechanic and Ahrens (2019) also highlighted that at times, women's cultural differences specify resilience and protective factors mitigating the risk IPA for these women, therefore, studies need to become more sensitive to cultural variations. However, the current findings emphasise that the cultural variations cannot be identified for Iranian women in the UK due to the inconsistency in their answers to the question of ethnicity in this study. Following the guidance of ONS (2001), this study asked Iranian women to specify which ethnicity they identified with. The results demonstrated that although most women had correctly identified themselves as Asian, some wrongly classed themselves as White, Other, whilst some even left this category unanswered. These findings provide alarming evidence which needs to be taken into consideration when implementing culturally appropriate measures for Iranian women who indicate their experience of IPA. Iranian women may not be able to receive the right support if the official UK data does not correctly detect their cultural needs.

Another important factor in identifying women's risk of experiencing IPA is examining the role of their socio-demographic variables in predicting their indication of the experience of IPA. The discrepancy in the literature of IPA shows that religion can act as both a risk (Kim, 2018) and protective factor (Lehrer, Lehrer, & Krauss, 2009). However, when it comes to religious affiliation, studies have concluded that Muslim women are more likely to indicate the experience IPA than any other religion (Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, & Mozumder, 2003; Moore, 2008). Although Ammar, Couture-Carron, Alvi, and Antonio (2013) stated that if compared with women who do not affiliate with any religion, Muslim women indicate lesser rate of IPA than non-Muslim women. The current findings do not concur with the literature as Christianity was able to predict higher disclosure of IPA amongst Iranian women. Being separated or divorced was also able to predict Iranian women's disclosure of IPA which is consistent with previous studies (Lacey et al., , 2016; Scott, 2018). Additionally, Rasoulia et

al.'s (2014) findings also showed that divorced Iranian women are more likely than married women to indicate the experience of IPA.

Justification of male violence

Ample evidence exists in the literature which suggests that the justification of male violence depends on the woman's socio-demographic variables including her ethnicity (Bent-Goodley 2004; Ahrens et al. 2011), religion (Kpozehouen et al., 2018), education (Hamzeh, Farshi, & Laflamme, 2008), income (Copp, Giordano, Longmore, & Manning, 2019), or even acceptance of patriarchy (Valdovinos & Mechanic, 2017). The current findings are concurrent with Peek-Asa et al. (2002) who found that Mexican and American women had similar attitudes towards male dominance. In this study, Iranian and non-Iranian women were also similar in their attitudes towards male violence. Additionally, the findings indicated that whilst having South Asian ethnic variables was able to predict higher acceptance of male violence amongst non-Iranian women, the socio-demographic variables of the Iranian women were not able to predict their attitude towards male violence.

Despite having significantly better legal knowledge than non-Iranian women, Iranian women were significantly more accepting of male violence than non-Iranian women. The current findings on Iranian women's attitudes towards male violence may once again provide evidence for studies that suggest Iranian women's attitudes towards IPA is largely influenced by their social and cultural features (Fasaie & Isari, 2012; Rahbari, Najmabadi, & Shariati, 2014; Zare et al., 2017). It must be noted that one of the key findings of this study is that the socio-demographic variables of men had no significant role in women's perception of IPA which support previous Iranian studies that suggested cultural influences are more likely to shape IPA than the husband's socio-demographic variables (see Faramarzi et al., 2005).

5.3. Chapter summary

The literature suggests that women are less inclined to participate in the studies of IPA. Nevertheless, the current findings show that both Iranian and non-Iranian women were inclined to participate in this study. There was, however, the challenge of recruiting Iranian women on the day of the Iranian presidential election which proved to be challenging. On the day of the presidential election, most participants stated that they would only engage with the researcher if the researcher voted for their chosen candidate. Alternatively, this study's focus was to identify the role of socio-demographic variables in predicting the perception of IPA amongst Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. Therefore, starting with religion, affiliation with Islam was found to be a predictor of a narrower definition of IPA amongst non-Iranian women. The findings are in line with the previous literature, however, considering that Iran is a Muslim country, it was unexpected to find that religion did not predict the definition of IPA in Iranian women.

A deeper look at Iranian women's responses, shows that only less than half of Iranian women in this study affiliated with Islam, and half left this category unanswered. The findings may be in line with the literature which suggests that Iranians in the West, especially those who seek democracy, disown Islam to separate themselves from Iran's political Muslim fundamentalists (Moallem, 2005; Tezcür et al., 2012). Still, the current findings on Iranian women's affiliation with Islam merits further investigation. The findings further indicate that whilst younger age and being divorced or separated can predict a greater definition, low level of education predicts a narrower definition of IPA in Iranian women. Although the findings are in line with the literature suggesting that women with less education are more likely to support IPA, another key finding of this study was the high level of educational attainments amongst Iranian women.

Since both samples of Iranian and non-Iranian women consisted of migrants, the current findings reject previous literature on higher level education amongst migrants. It is evident from this study that Iranian women's exceptionally high educational attainments are consistent with the literature on the symbolic meaning of education representing empowerment in the patriarchal structure both within their own family and society amongst Iranian women (Shavarini, 2005; Rezai-Rashti, Mehran & Abdmolaei, 2019). However, it is worthy to mention that despite their high levels of educational attainments, the findings also

revealed that around one in three Iranian women in the UK were still a housewife or unemployed with a low income.

Unlike the study of Darvishpour (1999, 2002) who found that Iranian women in Sweden were more likely to leave their husbands after gaining financial independence through employment, many Iranian women in the UK were still married to men who were described as abusive. To add to this, the findings further indicate that Iranian women have significantly better legal knowledge of the UK justice system in relation to IPA than non-Iranian women. Of the socio-demographic variables, an average income of between £10000 and £25000 predicted better legal knowledge for Iranian women, whilst, post-graduate education predicted better legal knowledge for non-Iranian women.

Bearing in mind that Iranian women were well knowledgeable about the UK's legal system in relation to IPA in this study, it was unexpected to find that around half of these women were still in a relationship that they described as abusive. On that note, it is worthy to highlight previous research in relation to divorce and separation in Iranian women which suggests that the taboos and the cultural shaming that is attached to Iranian women after divorce is likely to act as a deterrent (Aguilar-Vafaie et al., 2019). In line with this, the current findings revealed that the least disclosed item of IPA amongst Iranian women was marital rape.

Additionally, Christianity was able to predict higher disclosure of IPA amongst Iranian women, therefore, the current findings do not concur with the literature on the role of religion in the disclosure of IPA. However, the findings support the literature on the ability of marital status and being separated/divorced in predicting Iranian women's disclosure of IPA. It is worth noting that when it came to their attitudes towards male violence towards wives, the findings revealed that even though Iranian women had better legal knowledge of IPA than non-Iranian women, they were significantly more accepting of male violence than non-Iranian women. In addition, none of the Iranian women's socio-demographic variables was able to predict their attitudes towards male violence since both groups of Iranian and non-Iranian women had similar negative attitudes towards male violence against women irrespective of their backgrounds. In support of Peek-Asa et al.'s (2002) findings, this study showed that even though both groups of women had similar attitudes towards male violence, their perception of IPA differed between the two groups of Iranian and non-Iranian women.

This may once again provide evidence for studies that emphasise on Iranian women's attitudes towards IPA as concept that is largely influenced by their social and cultural features rather than a specific characteristic.

On the other hand, the findings cannot fully reject the idea that attitudes towards male violence depends on women's background, as having South Asian ethnic variables was able to predict higher acceptance of male violence in non-Iranian women in the UK. However, on the final point the current findings argue that the inconsistency in Iranian women's responses to the question of their ethnicity is a major concern for this study as this indicates that their data is likely to be lost if they report IPA to the authorities. Additionally, their cultural needs may be missed resulting in inadequate support that is not tailored to the needs of Iranian women.

Chapter 6: Findings from the interviews (phase two)

Introduction

Considering the multi-dimensionality and complexity of IPA (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005), a qualitative study was designed to address the third objective of this research. Following from the quantitative findings discussed in the previous chapter, this qualitative study provides a detailed account of how Iranian women in the UK perceive IPA, by men against women. In this chapter, the developed themes will be described in turn, with supporting quotations from the interviews to emphasise on the researcher's interpretation of the results. Each participant was asked to read a vignette that depicted IPA against women. The participants were then asked about their thoughts on the couple's relationship in the vignette. Each interview was analysed line-by-line with a focus on male domination through which Iranian women's perception of IPA could be shaped. For example, when a participant stated, "boys have a much higher sex drive [than women]." This was coded as normalising male sexual aggression towards women. This code was later added to the sub-theme of *Normalising male dominance*. Template analysis was used to analyse the data.

6.1. Template analysis

Using template analysis, a template was built to enable this study to take a tailored qualitative approach in understanding Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. There was a total of 16 semi-structured interviews. Five of those interviews were conducted in English and eleven in Farsi. All the themes were subsequently revised and reviewed by the project supervisor until the data was saturated within the final template (Table 26). The final template identified four top level themes encompassed within Iranian women's interviews. The second, third, and fourth level themes were encapsulated within the main themes as demonstrated in the simplified version of themes presented below (Table 26).

Table 26. Simplified version of the final study template

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patriarchy in a new context 2. Expectation of women <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Expectations of educated women 2.2. Expectations of wisdom and age 2.3. Expectations of married women <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.3.1. Participants' expectations of married women 2.3.2. Iranian society's expectations of married women 2.4. Expectations of freedom <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4.1. Right to freedom <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4.1.1. Freedom in being independent 2.4.1.2. Freedom in having control over one's body 2.4.1.3. Freedom before the Islamic Revolution 2.4.2. Misuse of freedom 2.5. Comparing the expectations of the lives of Iranian and non-Iranian women 3. Participants' understanding of IPA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. What the participants defined as IPA 3.2. Normalising IPA 3.3. Romantisizing IPA 3.4. Help and support network <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.4.1. Barriers to seeking legal help 3.4.2. Mothers as the first point of contact 3.4.3. What help the participants think should be available to them 4. The complexity of divorce in Iranian women
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Given that IPA is a result of patriarchy and the oppression women (Abraham, 1998), adopting a feminist perspective was an important aspect of this study. The results reveal that male domination forms around women's position in life as men use different tactics to dominate women in different contexts. Highlighting the cultural and the social context of Iranian women's lives in the UK, the results demonstrate that Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their perception of IPA. Starting with patriarchy in Iranian women's lives, the template analysis will describe each themes in the following order of 1) Patriarchy in a new context, 2) Expectation of women, 3) Participants' understanding of IPA, and 3) The complexity of divorce in Iranian women to show how the perception of IPA stems from male dominance and the oppression of women.

1. Patriarchy in a new context

This theme is one of the key findings of this study as it demonstrates how men use different ways to put women in the position of submission. Patriarchy is further highlighted where male domination presents in a different light to control women at different stages of their lives. Farah who was divorced and worked as a hairdresser spoke about her husband who had indirectly controlled her life by removing her options of being independent. Although Farah's husband had allowed her to work, she was still expected to do all the housework, take care of the children, and provide a sexual service for him at night. Farah's account also indicates that patriarchy is embedded in Farsi's language as any sense of ownership and entitlement is taken away from women and male guardianship is reinforced. Iranian women are led to believe that they live at their father's and later move to their husband's house.

We lived at my father's house when we first got married. We got our place when my first child was born. I used to spend a lot of time on my own in my husband's house, so I went to work when my children started school. I went to my friend's hairdressing salon and started to work there but my husband didn't help me out in the housework. We used to get home together from work, sometimes he used to arrive home before me, but he never did anything. So, I had to work in the kitchen until 11pm and cook his food in addition to cooking my lunch and the kids' lunch for the next day. I used to pay the nursery more than I was supposed to because they had to look after the children until I finished work. Hairdressing was difficult, I was on my feet all day and it I used to get really tired after work. I left it shortly after because I didn't have any help. I wasn't able to keep up with all the work. It was difficult for me to be on my feet at work and at home until late at night. I had to then be reminded of my role as a wife at the end of the night and sexually satisfy my husband. And I said that I will not work until he helped me in the house. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Farah's account indicated loss of personhood as she had lost her sense of self by being forced to provide a sexual service to her husband. Farah's account also showed a sense of control. It was clear that Farah wanted to be in control of her decisions in life and by stating that "I said that I will not work until he helped me in the house" Farah had convinced herself that she had chosen to stay at home and be full time housewife. This subtle form of abuse was also highlighted by other participants as other features of male domination that are implemented

by men to subjugate Iranian women are highted below. In the case of Azita, her husband had repeatedly damaged her self-esteem by telling her that she was unable to do anything because she could not speak “good English”. Azita talked about how her husband’s controlling behaviour “planted a fear” in Azita and changed her life. Looking back, Azita had developed a sense of shame and failure for not achieving a more independent life.

When I had first come to England, my husband used to say that I could not speak good English and say that I could not manage to do a lot of things in here. He used to say that I needed to acquire a lot of skills to be able to work. As if he planted a fear in me. This made me miss things that I could have done 20 years ago and now I have to regret not doing those things. I should have done those things. My life should not be the way it is now after 23 years of being in the UK. Azita, 52

As mentioned, this theme demonstrates how men use the context of a woman’s life to deny her of her independence and freedom. Farah’s account below reveals that patriarchal structures cast a shadow of male domination over Iranian women lives regardless of their country of residence. In some case, Iranian women are tricked into visiting families in Iran where men can have more control over them.

My friend’s husband took her to Iran to see family and kept her passport saying that he was keeping it safe. But he didn’t give her passport back. He then reported her [to the authorities] for stealing from him and for converting her religion to Christianity. He wanted her to either be imprisoned or to be hanged. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Another participant talked about her friend’s husband who had prevented her from learning about her rights in the UK. Leila described how her friend’s husband had made Leila’s friend financially dependent on him by withholding information about her entitlement to benefits and financial support from the government.

My friend’s husband had told her that she had to pay for the rent. But she couldn’t pay the rent because she didn’t work, so she was always grateful that he was looking after her. She could get benefits, but she didn’t know at the time. She loved him very much and believed him for a long time. She then went to college and found out about her

rights. She also learnt that she was being abused. So, she contacted a lawyer who advised her to leave the house and contact the police. She contacted the police after leaving her house and the police and social workers helped her find a hostel. She was well supported and now goes to uni and studies. I am so happy for her. Leila, housewife, 42

2. Expectation of women

This theme reflects the participants' expectations of themselves and of others. It was found that there were many expectations of Iranian women by Iranian women with an emphasis on women's sexuality. All participants had expectations that were tied to strong beliefs of how women should be in different aspects of their lives. These expectations were reflections of the participants' endorsement or rejection of the traditional gender roles. For example, Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles were more accepting of femininity values and qualities. "Good women" were considered to be daughters who protect their family's honour by refraining from any sexual activity before marriage, wives who satisfy their husbands' every need and ensured that their family's reputation remained intact, and mothers who sacrificed their lives to look after their children.

Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles appeared to be more judgemental of women who did not comply with the expected roles of "good women". Iranian women's quest for independence was perceived as rebellious by the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles. These participants believed that women had "too much" freedom in the UK, and this has created "traitors" amongst Iranian women who leave their husbands. This theme revealed that at times, the participants referred to Iranian women who did not adhere to the traditional gender roles as women who are given "too much" freedom by their husbands. The perception of women who did not comply with the expectations of "good women" justified the derogatory terms that were used to describe Iranian women.

Consequently, the notion of masculinity and femininity was endorsed amongst the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles. This theme identified that Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles were more accepting of the patriarchal social norms as they normalised sexual aggression and engaged in victim blaming. Male domination and sexual aggression against women were justified by some of the Iranian

women in this study and perceived as the expression of “love” and “in the best interest” of women.

The participants who rejected the traditional gender roles, expressed the Iranian society’s expectations as a burden of responsibilities on their shoulders. The cultural expectations and the traditional gender roles put a strain on Iranian women, especially, in circumstances where they had to make sacrifices for their husbands and children. The cultural expectations had created barriers to women’s right over their own body, their independence and most importantly, their future goals. Women who rejected the system of traditional gender roles felt that their freedom had been taken away by their fathers who emphasised on their chastity, and by the Islamic regime which is run “by men for men”. Pahlavi’s era (pre-Islamic Revolution) was referred to as the time of “freedom” for the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles as they talked about their lost rights since the Revolution. This theme highlights how Iranian women who were against the traditional gender roles feared that their daughters may follow their footsteps. So, the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles discourages their daughters from seeing the participants themselves as role models, and instead, encouraged them to be more independent and pursue their own careers in life. These participants envied the life of English women as English women were perceived to be strong women who fought for their rights and women who took care of themselves. Although there was not a precise cut off point for Iranian women who endorsed or rejected the traditional gender roles, women in each group had attributes that shared common ground with the participants of that group.

2.1. Expectations of educated women

For Iranian women in this study, an educated woman had higher qualificational attainment at the university level. But higher education came with various expectations for Iranian women. Whether it was in relation to IPA or the women’s demeanour in general, educated women were expected to act in an “intelligent manner” in all situations. However, the definition of intelligence varied amongst the participants. An educated woman was expected to live well and free from any form of abuse.

Obviously, she is an educated girl who cannot use her talent. She is being abused by her partner. Even her family are not intelligent or wise enough to give her advice. Like

she has a very bad life in my opinion... I think she doesn't know what she should expect from life. I think she is being abused, but, as an educated girl ... I don't know. Her relationship is very, very complicated. You never know why some people are attached to the wrong people and what makes them accept things in the relationship. Yasamin, university lecturer, 30

Education was thought to lead to employment and thus financial security for Iranian women. Education and income were a powerful combination that were believed to give Iranian women confidence and courage to be independent. There was so much expectation of educated women as independent women that women like Hengameh could not understand why Samira (the character from the vignette) would stay in an abusive relationship. Hengameh said “She [Samira] has the money and is educated, so she cannot be scared”. However, Mehri who was an educated woman was particularly concerned that educated Iranian women were at a higher risk of becoming a victim of IPA than any other Iranian woman. Mehri suggested that the expectation of an independent life free from IPA could deter educated Iranian women from seeking help as they are expected to help other women escape abuse.

People think that because she is educated, she can support herself financially. So, there is this expectation that she *can* never experiences abuse, *but she should educate other women on this as well. She should have the courage to leave the relationship herself.* Mehri, research fellow, 55

2.2. Expectations of wisdom and age

Iranian women were expected to act in a particular manner in accordance to their age and experience. For Iranian women, older age was accompanied by wisdom. This sub-theme demonstrates how Iranian women were expected to use their ‘wisdom’ to guide them in their marriage. However, the definition of wisdom heavily relied on the participants’ personal interpretations. Below is an example of two contrasting interviews about the expectations of how Samira (the character from the vignette) should act in accordance with her age. Sheila who endorsed the traditional gender roles, believed that women should not upset their husbands. Here, Sheila highlights Samira’s age and makes a point about how Samira still doesn’t know how to “react to her husband’s wishes”.

She [Samira] is 30 years old and you'd think that she would know how to react to her husband's wishes at this age, but she doesn't. If she was 18 years old, then you could say that she doesn't have any experience. Sheila, Part-time Baker, 34

On the other hand, Yasamin who rejected the traditional gender roles referred to her younger self as someone who would not know how to challenge IPA and talked about how she keeps boundaries with her current boyfriend. Yasamin's reference to her young self and her older self indicates a sense of empowerment as views herself as an independent woman who makes her own decisions in life.

Y: If this situation [husband telling her what to do] happened to me when I was younger, I wouldn't talk about it and just be sad, but if someone was to tell me what to do now, I would know how to respond. At least I think I know.

Interviewer: How would you respond?

Y: I have been in a similar situation and I told my boyfriend that he can never give any suggestion unless I ask him. I told him that this is something really personal. I am the only one who decides, and because I love you; it doesn't mean that you can cross boundaries. Yasamin, university lecturer, 30

Sheila pointed out Samira's age at 30, whilst Yasamin (who was 30 at the time of interview) compared herself to Samira. Both participants expected Samira to respond appropriately to her husband's requests regarding Samira's dress code and her demeanour. On the one hand, Sheila who endorsed the traditional gender roles believed that by standing up to her husband, Samira had reacted in an unacceptable manner towards her husband's wishes. On the other hand, Yasamin insisted that women should make all the decisions in their lives and men have no right to "cross boundaries". This theme showed how the same scenario could be perceived differently by two Iranian women with different views about traditional gender roles.

2.3. Expectations of married women

Marriage also came with expectations. The difference between the participants laid with their endorsement or rejection of traditional gender roles. If endorsed, the expectations were accepted and the rules were embraced as part of an Iranian woman's life. If rejected, the

expectations were a burden on Iranian women as they built barriers to the participants' future and their happiness. The participants who rejected the expectations, blamed their culture and Sharia law as they feared for their daughters' futures. It was therefore decided that this theme should be split into two sub-themes to distinguish between what the society expects from women and what women want. The themes were 1) *Participants' expectations of married women*, for those participants who felt that women should comply with their expected gender role, and 2) *Society's expectations of married women*, for participants who felt that the expectations were not their own but that of the society.

2.3.1. Participants' expectations of married women

Focussing on the participants' own expectations of a married woman, this theme revealed that the participants who endorsed traditional gender roles positioned women in stereotypical roles within society. These participants did not feel pressured into doing anything if they endorsed the traditional gender roles themselves. Sheila was an example of an Iranian woman who endorsed the traditional gender roles and claimed that men have guardianship over women as she stated that "She [Samira] belongs to her husband and should do as he wishes." In another interview, one participant explained how a good wife should behave.

A woman should never disrespect her husband. Disrespect means she shouldn't swear or use bad language. Even if he [husband] says something to you, you shouldn't react to it in that moment. Let him say whatever he wants because in that heat of the moment, you say something and he say something, then there is a war. And a little argument turns into a massive argument. Azam, property developer, 75

This theme showed that the participants who endorsed the traditional roles thought that it was disrespectful to allow the man to do any of the housework. An example can be seeing below from a participant who described her uncle's marriage to a "female dominated family".

You won't believe it. I have seen this (female domination) in my own family. It was actually my uncle's second wife. His first wife had passed away, so he married a woman to could look after his children and to cook for him. But soon he found that she had come from a female dominated family. Women used to make big decisions in her family. My uncle used to say it was so female dominant that he once saw his brother-in-

law washing the dishes in the house. I mean these things happen in Iranian families too where women do such things to their husbands. It is important that both parties respect each other. Vida, housewife, 44

For women who had expectations that were consistent with the society's expectations of a 'good woman', it was hard to believe that other women could think differently. This was evident from Vida's statement when she started her sentence by saying "you won't believe it". For Vida, a man who washes the dishes in his house was so extraordinary that she expected the interviewer to also be shocked from hearing this.

2.3.2 Iranian society's expectations of married women

This theme highlights the pressure of Iranian society and the expectations of women that are embedded in Iran's religion and culture. Unlike the previous sub-theme, the participants whose experiences were covered by this theme rejected the traditional gender roles and contested the feminine norms of their society. The participants who rejected the traditional gender roles believed that the expectations of married women were still evident in Iranian communities in the UK. In addition, the participants felt that the expectations of them as women were different to what they wanted to do with their own lives. The expectations were obstacles in the participants' way of achieving a more independent and a happier life. Many participants blamed their suffering on their culture and Sharia law. Many of the participants expressed being powerless and feeling helpless in their marriage. One participant referred to an Iranian proverb which was often said to her as a child bride. *Besooz o besaaz* comes from Soozesh which is translated as burning in Farsi. *Besooz o besaaz* is translated as 'you burn and tolerate'. This refers to enduring the pain of being abused. Iranian women are asked to endure the pain of IPA because they are wives and mothers. This young child bride was reminded of her role as a mother and a wife every time she asked her parents to help her leave her husband.

Besooz o besaaz means that this is your situation now that you're married. You have to leave your rights behind because you need to be a good mother and a good wife. You have to keep your marriage no matter what otherwise you are not a mother. Anahita, housewife, 52

The participants explained that Iranian women are expected to sacrifice their careers as mothers and are often blamed for unsuccessful marriages.

I can say that it is culturally accepted that women give up their work because they want to raise kids... You know some people actually believe that women have certain roles, and they are blamed if their marriage is not successful. Yasamin, university lecturer, 30

Whilst Yasamin drew attention to the cultural expectations of married women, Farah put more emphasis on the religion and the male dominated legal system that tell women to focus on their duty as wives. Challenging the notion of women as asexual beings, Farah added:

Clerics say that women should be at their husband's service anytime, anywhere. So, a woman cannot complain because she will be blamed by the Iranian legal system for not doing her duty as a wife. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Fatemeh stated that there is so much pressure and expectations from families and friends that the husbands will be mocked if they do not conform to these expectations. These expectations are centred around the norms of femininity and masculinity. The participants mentioned the term “zan zalil” which is used to refer to men who are not masculine.

Fatemeh: Yea, like they say that this man is helping. not really his duty. Some of them will say oh this poor man. They think that he is oppressed in his marriage. They may even start talking behind him and even make jokes in front of him and his wife.

Interviewer: What sort of jokes?

Fatemeh: I don't know if they have the concept in English. They call him zan zalil.

Interviewer: can you explain zan zalil?

Fatemeh: zan zalil is a man who is not masculine enough. He has to listen to his wife. Typically, he is man who helps in the house. They say that a father's job is to bring home money and to play with children. He is not supposed to change nappy. Feeding

the child and these kinds of things are not masculine in Iranian culture in general. So, when he does these things people may call him a loser. Fatemeh, researcher, 27

Sometimes the pressure on the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles was so much that they were worried about their daughter's future as the women of the next generation. The participants regretted following their mothers as role models in their marriage. This theme revealed that Iranian women who rejected the traditional gender roles did not want to be their daughter's role models, instead, they advise their daughters to learn from their mother's mistakes and not to put up with abuse.

Women still do things that their mothers did in Iran even though these women live over here [in UK]. Perhaps not to that extent as their mothers, but women still follow their mothers... I also learnt things from my mother. I can see a bit of that in my eldest daughter[...]My eldest has inherited my culture subconsciously and I can see that in her behaviour. I see how she does the housework and how she interacts with other people[...]I always tell my daughter not to follow my footsteps like I did with my own mother. I saw my mother putting up with so much [abuse] when she lived with my dad and I did the same with my husband. I tell my daughter not to make my mistakes. My daughter was born in the UK and she sees herself as an English girl, she tells me that she doesn't like certain parts of our culture and I tell her not to follow the things that she doesn't like about our culture. Azita, 52

2.4. Expectations of freedom

This theme identified that the concept of freedom was a multifaceted construct for all Iranian women who participated in this study. All the participants in this study felt entitled to have freedom. The difference between the participants was that although most felt that Iranian women were deprived of their freedom, some felt that Iranian women expected too much freedom and misused the freedom that they had in the UK. As anticipated, the expectations of freedom relied on Iranian women's endorsement or rejection of traditional gender roles. Those participants who rejected the traditional gender roles, challenged ideologies that framed motherhood as the sole symbol of femininity and sexuality. These Iranian women asserted that they had the right to freedom. This theme was consequently divided into two third level themes of right to freedom and misuse of freedom. The *Right to freedom* theme

referred to women who felt that Iranian women were not given equal opportunities by the men in their family and the society which deprived them of their freedom. The theme labelled as *Misuse of freedom* referred to women who believed that Iranian women take advantage of their freedom in the UK.

2.4.1. Right to freedom

This theme helps convey one aspect of the systematic nature of oppression of women by men. Iranian women whose experiences were covered by this theme talked about their independence and freedom being controlled and dominated by men in their family. For these participants, freedom included higher education, employment, choice of clothing, being able to visit family, having intimacy before marriage, and many other things. Being independent and having control over their own body were the main aspects of freedom. This theme demonstrated that Iranian women held their fathers, brothers, and the society accountable for stripping Iranian women from their rights to full personhood. Here, the participant talked about some of the most intimate parts of their lives as they tried to shed light on Iranian women's oppression by men. For Iranian women whose experiences were covered by this theme, freedom referred to setting their own individual life goals and having control over their own body and sexuality. This theme also included Iranian women's perception of their freedom before the Islamic revolution. As a result, sub-themes of *Freedom in being independent*, *Freedom in having control over one's body*, and *Freedom before the Islamic revolution* were developed.

2.4.1.1. Freedom in being independent

Iranian women's fight for freedom is evident in this theme as this theme covered the experience of the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles. The participants perceive marriage to be an obstacle in their path of independence. A "typical Iranian marriage" was described by many of these women as one that takes a woman's independence away and restricts her freedom. The expected roles of being a 'good' mother or wife did not allow these women to achieve their goals in life.

F: I think it's a typical Iranian marriage (referring to the vignette).

Interviewer: Why is that?

F: I remember some of my friends. I know other educated women who don't work when they get married... I haven't been in the UK for a long time, but I have Iranian friends who are activists in the UK. They are not married, they are independent.

Interviewer: How do you describe being independent?

F: It is not related to financial things. It is about when you make your own decision like whether you want to study or work. Whether you want to be a mother or not. I think these things describe your independency[...] Even if women try to have a job, they struggle to do that. Because their husbands, their own family, and the in laws family they always encourage them to follow their husband's needs. And they try to support the husband career and stay at home and look after children. They don't try to achieve anything for themselves in their life. Fatemeh, researcher, 27

Whilst Fatemeh put more emphasis on women's attainment of independence via education and employment, she explicitly pointed out that being independent is about having a choice. An example of women's choice being taken away as a form of oppression is explained by Leila who talks about her sister in law's quality of life after marriage. Leila explained how despite every effort to be independent, women can lose every aspect of their independence after marriage.

My own sister-in-law, she is an engineer and has been married for 6 years, but she hasn't worked since her marriage. She is not allowed to go and visit her family because her husband doesn't allow her to. Leila, housewife, 42

Becoming an independent woman was so important to the participants that they described how they encouraged their daughters to acquire skills and become financially independent after marriage.

My mother had taught me that a girl should learn something. I wanted my daughters to learn things more than just the housework. I wanted them to have their hands in their pockets and to be independent when they got married. Azam, property developer, 75

Some participants felt that their identity as an Iranian woman would be questioned if they decided to leave their marriage in pursuit of freedom and independence in the UK. Anahita had just left her husband from her arranged marriage as a child bride. Anahita talked about being judged by other Iranian people.

They [other Iranians] say that she acts like she is Western and has lost her roots.

They'd say that she is not a good wife leaving her husband as soon as she saw a bit of freedom. Anahita, housewife, 52

2.4.1.2. Freedom in having control over one's body

Having control over their own bodies was another aspect of having freedom for Iranian women. All women whose experiences were covered by this theme felt that their sexuality and motherhood was controlled by men. Fatemeh even described the choice of motherhood and “whether you want to be a mother or not” as part of having independence. Another participant revealed how her family's honour depended on her chastity as young girls. One participant explained how her the amount of her mehrieh (money given to the bride after divorce to be able to financially support herself) legally depended on her virginity. Leila's dad had made a legal contract with the groom that allowed Leila to finish school. In addition, the groom was to refrain from having intimate relations with Leila until she was 18 years old. In Iran, mehrieh would be halved if the bride and the groom do not have intimate relations during their marriage. By proving that Leila was no longer a virgin at the time of divorce, Leila's dad would have been able to receive the full mehrieh for Leila. Here, Leila describes the “humiliation” that she felt when she was taken to the medical examination room by her father to prove that she was no longer a virgin after marriage.

My dad finally agreed with my mum and married me off to this man under the condition that my husband would not touch me and that I would continue my studies whilst living with him until I reached the age of 18. I was lucky because he never touched me whilst I lived at his house and he kept his promise, but he was addicted to opium. I lived with him and his family for a year and I wasn't allowed to contact my mum during this time I had to be escorted by him. He [ex-husband] was horrible to me. I was in and out of court for 3 years until I got divorced. I had to go for medical examination to prove that I was a virgin. I don't know if you know the Iranian law, but I would only get half of my

mehrieh if I was a virgin. But I would get the full mehrieh if I was not a virgin. The doctor confirmed that I was a virgin, I was checked up everywhere you know.

Interviewer: how did you feel during this process?

L: Such a bad feeling. This is insulting. I tolerated so much. Sometimes I think to myself... I don't have my mum anymore to talk to her about these things. I always asked my dad about how they let me go through with the examination. Leila, housewife, 42

Mina addressed her own marital issues around intercourse with her husband as she held her father and brother accountable for telling her that sexual intercourse is for “bad girls”. When the recording of the interview stopped, Mina talked about how much her men in her life had dominated her sexuality. The experiences were too painful for Mina to repeat for the purpose of recording the interview.

If a woman is not a virgin, it shows that she is bad girl and people look at her as if she is a prostitute. I, myself had the same problem as well because of my brother and father. Although I did have a boyfriend, it was always hidden, and they didn't know. They used to always tell me that I shouldn't even have a boyfriend and should be 'a good girl'. So, for me this caused me to think that I was a bad girl if I had sex with my boyfriend and later on even with my husband. Mina, accountant, 37

Iranian women in this study stated that having freedom of going out without being questioned by their father and brothers outweighed the pressure and the stigma that the society puts on divorced women.

It's to a point now in Iran that they [women] want to be a divorcee so that they can go and get money off the rich guys. There is the stigma about divorced women anyway, so, they just do what they want. Because once they are not a virgin, they will have freedom and their family cannot tell them when to come home. Funny thing is that the freedom that the kids in England have before marriage, our kids have them after marriage.

Hengameh, driving instructor, 34

However, none of the participants endorsed this lifestyle as they believed that it would lead to more problems.

After they [women] get divorced, they [women] are not virgin, so women can do whatever they want. This will cause women to have a bad life and have more problems as divorced women. Mina, accountant, 37

Below is another example of an Iranian woman who had used all her resources to maintain some control over her body. Farah, who saw herself as an independent woman described how she used her limited legal right to have some control over her body. Farah's condition for marriage was that she would choose her own outfits.

Farah: One of my relatives married a guy who even forced her to wear a chador (full-body cloak). He put a chador over her head.

Interviewer: Would have accepted to wear a chador?

Farah: Never. One of my conditions when marrying my ex-husband was that he should not tell me to wear a hijab. I told him that I didn't want to wear a hijab. Farah, hairdresser, 60

2.4.1.3. Freedom before the Islamic revolution

Women generally thought that they had more freedom before the Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979. This theme revealed that the participants referred to their freedom before the Islamic revolution by comparing their dress code before and after the Islamic revolution, by commenting on their rights, and by pointing out the difference in the treatment of women in Iran. The participants whose experiences were covered by this theme believed that Iranian men have used Shari law to "do what they want" in the name of religion. It must be mentioned that these participants rejected the traditional gender roles. Anahita's interview shed light on a few major changes since the Islamic revolution. Anahita talked about dress code, polygamy, IPA, and a male dominated court system.

We had rights 40 years ago. The Islamic revolution ruined us women, and it started by us being forced to wear a hijab. Before Islamic Revolution, when I was a teenager, no man would look at you if you and another man were in love. Your names would belong together, and no man would bother you in the streets. None of this matter now. Things slowly changed after revolution [...] Men were told that they could marry up to four

wives. They were permitted to be violent towards women and when women complained, all the judges were men. So nobody was there to defend women anymore[...] people used to say to me, if you keep complaining and not sleep with him, he [husband] is going to get a second wife. They used to joke about it. But, why joke about something so sensitive? Anahita, housewife, 52

Hengameh talked about Iranian men who use religion to gain control over women as she believed that the oppression of women was a result of culture and the Islamic regime of Ayatollahs.

It was bad after the Islamic revolution because women had to wear a hijab. Suddenly men became fixated on seeing women and their bodies so they would stare [...] men used religion to do and get what they wanted. Hengameh, driving instructor, 34

Comparing women's status before and after the Islamic revolution, Farah talked about the process of taking away her "personal freedom" as a woman.

Farah: Me, my mum, sister, and younger brother attended a protest in favour of Shah. We wanted Shah to stay. Women who supported Khomeini (Islamic revolution) wore hijabs to show their support, but some of these women didn't wear a scarf because Khomeini had said that hijab was optional. Obviously, he was lying, and stupid women believed him. You know, our personal freedom was taken away with Islamic revolution.

Interviewer: Can you explain what you mean by personal freedom to me?

Farah: Yes, things like the freedom to wear what you want as a woman. Around a year after the revolution, people, well mostly men went on the streets and shouted "yaa roosari, yaa too sari".

Interviewer: What does this mean?

Farah: 'Roosai' is the scarf worn over the head and 'too sari' means hitting someone on the head. Like beating up. It meant either wear a hijab or get beaten up. I wasn't there, but I know women stood on the opposite side of the road and shouted back saying that they would not wear a roosari or a hijab. It wasn't long before we saw men on motorbikes patrolling the city [Tehran]. These were men employed by the government

and were very aggressive. These bike men would slash across women's faces and their lips if women did not have a hijab. There were hundreds of bike men. It was scary. They also targeted young men with long hair. Then hijab became compulsory in official places like in the post office. Then it was compulsory in the schools. And then it was illegal for women to go out without hijab. I used to carry a scarf with me all the time in my bag because I feared the bike men. I didn't want my face to be slashed by a blade. This is only one of the examples of how the Islamic revolution slowly took our personal freedom from us as women. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Unlike the some of the participants in this study, the eldest participant did not believe that women had more freedom before the Islamic revolution. Azam felt that Iranian women have always lived in the shadow of patriarchy where they have been forced to seek permission for their outfits. But Azam also believed that Iranian women have more freedom now because they are free to choose their clothing under their manteau. Manteau is a light overcoat that Iranian women are required to wear outside. A manteau can be worn with or without chador (full-body cloak).

Nowadays you guys live a lot better than us. Women were so misfortunate in the old days. Girls weren't allowed to do anything. They never got permission to do anything from their families or their husbands. The girls wanted to be free, date boys, and wear certain clothing. But the husband would tell the woman what could wear outside. The old days were terrible. Now women dress very freely. Even though women say that there is no freedom in Iran, they still wear revealing clothes under their manteau. Azam, property developer, 75

Azam had not realised that the Islamic government of Iran had legalised the control of women's dress code since the revolution. With such strict rules on women's dress codes, men in the family were no longer required to worry about what women wore outside because women's dress codes were regulated and controlled by the Islamic republic of Iran.

2.4.2. Misuse of freedom

This theme specifically covered the perspective of Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles. It was revealed that the participants who endorsed the traditional

gender roles believed that Iranian women misused their freedom in marriage and in the UK. Freedom in marriage referred to marriages where husbands had little or no say in their wives' decisions. If the participants referred to the freedom of Iranian women in the UK, they usually discussed Iranian women's misuse of their freedom by leaving their husbands for other men and turning into "traitors".

Some women come here and like the freedom in here leaving their husbands and end up having a boyfriend. They come to this country and gain education and jobs then leave their husbands. They leave their husbands as soon as they find someone new, this is like being a traitor [...] It happens in here [in UK] more often because they [Iranian women] are free. This is actually common in Iranian women because UK is less restrictive than Iran and women always ask for freedom. This is why they want freedom. To do these things. Vida, housewife, 44

The terms used to describe Iranian women who wanted to be independent and make their own decisions by the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles were derogatory. Being a housewife was viewed as "lazy" because women were expected to help their husband and have a part-time job at home. Referring to the vignette, one participant thought that it would be acceptable for husbands to restrict their wives because nobody is aware of what women do to make their husbands think a certain way.

Iranian women are lazy. They might cook and look after the kids, but that is all they do. Samira [vignette character] saw that her husband's business was doing well and thought she could be lazy and just use that money and just enjoy herself at home... her husband didn't want Samira to work, but we don't know what other things she's done before to make him think this way. Sheila, Part-time Baker, 34

2.5. Comparing the expectations of the lives of Iranian and non-Iranian women

Many differences were identified in the expectations between the lives of Iranian and non-Iranian women by the participants. Azam said "women are not badbakht [in the UK]. They are the ones in charge." There is no direct translation for this word in English, but it can be roughly translated as someone who is misfortune and worthy of pity. Azam implied that Iranian women are misfortune because of their culture. The participants also appeared

envious of English women's lives as English women were perceived to be stronger women "who fight for their rights". For Azita, English women's reputation and respect in the community would not depend on how well they manage their marriage. Furthermore, English culture was seen to be a culture of equality where men are not mocked for doing the house chores and women treat themselves to time in the garden to "sit in the sun". Azita is an example of a case where a woman envious to experience some of the basic pleasures of life, which she may have desired to have but the society has denied her access to such pleasure because she is a mother.

European women have rights, and they give themselves a break from all the housework. But I as a housewife can't have a break if I wanted to. For example, I wanted to go and sit in the garden today because it was sunny. But one of my children wanted me to do something for her and I had leave everything and go do that thing. In the English culture, the mother would say that this is my break and my time to enjoy the sun and nobody should take that away from her [...] I haven't been to many English gatherings, but... I feel that their get togethers are so valued that they talk about more important things than IPA. The problem with IPA is more in Iranians than other people in the UK. I feel that maybe 1% or less English women speak about IPA, but Iranians talk about IPA a lot more because they are always involved in it. English men and women know their own and each other's rights, therefore respect each other. Boundaries are usually known. But these boundaries are not clear in Iranians, so there is more friction. Azita, 52

3. Participants' understanding of IPA

This theme examined Iranian women's understanding of IPA and their attitudes towards male dominance by exploring the participants views on Hamed's actions (from the vignette). There was evidence of financial abuse, emotional abuse, marital rape, physical abuse, and other elements of coercive control which denied Samira of her independence and freedom in the vignette. Therefore, the vignette was used as a reference to engage in discussions about what the participants perceived to be IPA. All but one participant had a good knowledge which is later discussed in this theme. This theme revealed that although all Iranian women in this study disagreed with at least one of Hamed's actions towards Samira, some of the participants partially justified certain aspects of Hamed's abusive behaviour. Despite

condemning Hamed's actions towards Samira, many participants showed acceptance towards male dominance and normalised masculinity by insisting that Hamed didn't hit his wife "that hard" or that he had "lost control". Themes of victim blaming also surfaced after the Samira's behaviour was labelled as provocative. Women were viewed as asexual beings who have no sexual desires and no right to their own sexuality. However, participants who rejected the gender roles believed that Iranian women are sexually oppressed for being objectified and treated as an object to be valued for its use. Regardless of their views, the Iranian society's pressure on married women to be available for the husband's sexual needs made many Iranian women feel incompetent as wives. This theme demonstrated that Iranian women continue to be victims of marital rape because they are part of a patriarchal society that labels them as the properties of men. Marital rape was often referred to as '*azare jensi*' (sexual harassment) and sometimes as '*tajavoz*' (sexual attack) amongst the participants. Iranian women usually described a "friend" who has been victim of marital rape. This theme identified that the participants were prompted to identify avenues and resources that can help support Iranian women in the UK. This theme was therefore divided into four sub-themes of 1) what the participants defined as IPA, 2) normalising IPA, 3) romanticizing IPA, and 4) help and support network.

3.1. What the participants defined as IPA

This study showed that Iranian women's definition of IPA was similar amongst the majority of them. Referring to the vignette, all women agreed that the male character of the vignette (Hamed) should not hit his wife (Samira), should not force intercourse with her, and should not take her inheritance money away from her. This theme illustrates that amongst the participants who felt that Samira's experience of intercourse with her husband can be labelled as IPA, they referred to marital rape as '*azare jensi*' (sexual harassment) or '*tajavoz*' (sexual attack). Although condemned, most of the participants believed that the intercourse between a husband and wife was a private matter that needed to be resolved amongst themselves. For example, Sheila recognised that Hamed was wrong in forcing intercourse with his wife, yet she also believed that Samira "has done well by not telling anyone about separating her bed. It's no one's business". As mentioned earlier, most Iranian women were highly knowledgeable of the UK's legal system except for one participant named Azita. Even though Azita had lived in the UK for over 20 years, her perception of UK's legal system was

very much in line with Iran's legal system. When asked about her views on the legal support that Samira may be able to receive, Azita responded:

I don't know about the law in here. It says that the redness on her face disappeared from her house to her mother's house. Maybe she needs to provide evidence to take her husband to court or sue him, you know to show where he has hit her. Or maybe she needs to ask Navid [male character in the vignette] to be a witness in court for her. If he hit her in private, she might still need a witness or to provide medical report that she has been physically hurt to prove that she is not lying. I don't know how much legal support a woman can get in here. Azita, 52

There is, once again, suggestion that IPA is a private matter. Azita's interview demonstrated that proving credibility is a challenge that many women must face. Azita's lack of knowledge about her rights in the UK meant that she believed the same patriarchal rules are applied here in the UK. The next interview emphasised that Iranian women's challenge to prove their credibility as women who are victims of IPA stretches beyond legal matters. Below, Mina's statement demonstrated that even when Iranian women are believed in the court of law, their credibility is still questioned by their community.

My husband told me that one of his friends had a fight with his wife and he hit her. But so lightly that it didn't leave a mark. The woman then goes in the shower under hot water and self-harms so that it leaves marks and bruises. She then reported him and put him behind the bars for 3 years. Mina, accountant, 37

The above account by Mina not only minimises the severity of IPA, but also, places blame on the victim for her husband's imprisonment. The credibility of husband's statement is at no point questioned by Mina. Instead, the husband's aggression is minimized and overlooked. The normalisation of male dominance and IPA against women was a common theme amongst Iranian women in this study. This topic is further explored in the next of 'normalising male dominance'.

3.2. Normalising IPA

This theme focussed on the participants' justification of Hamed's actions which included hitting Samira, taking her inheritance money away from her, forcing intercourse with her against her will, and demands to change her clothing or interactions with others. This theme revealed that although the participants disagreed with Hamed's behaviour, some believed that there "must have been a reason" behind Hamed's actions. Traits that are traditionally viewed as masculine emphasise on power and control that often disregard consequence and responsibility of men's aggressive behaviour. Within this theme, statements such as he "didn't hit her that hard", he "lost control", or that somebody had "told him what to do" were made to excuse Hamed's actions. This theme shows that Iranian society's perception of women as asexual beings who lack any sexual interest contributes to the rape culture by normalising marital rape. Different ways were used to legitimise rape some of which are highlighted in this theme. For example, marital rape was justified because men were perceived as sexual and women as asexual beings. Even Sara who related more to the English culture than Iranian culture talked about men as "having much higher sex drive than women".

Most of my friends are western, they are not Iranian. They [female friends] have never said anything like they need to have sex with their partners, but they all agree that boys have a much higher sex drive than women. Sara, Teacher training, 23

This theme illustrates that Iranian society's acceptance of femininity and masculinity have contributed to the normalisation of male sexual violence towards women in Iranian women. The belief that women are sexual properties promotes rape culture as can be seen from Mehri's account below.

She [Samira] needs to sleep with him [Hamed] unless he wants it a lot or he is ill minded and doesn't understand her, then that's a different issue. If he wants it once a month then it is not abuse. It is only abuse if she never wants it, and it happens all the time. Mehri, research fellow, 55

In addition, men were perceived to have masculine traits such as aggressive behaviour. Therefore, those who were not physically violent towards their wives were perceived to be "good" men. According to Hengameh, her sister's husband does not allow her sister to leave

the house without him and forced her to wear a hijab in front of visitors, however, the emphasis is put on what a “good man” he is because he has “never hit her”.

My sister is a vet. She is educated and full of ideas. Her husband wasn't like that at the start of their marriage, but he slowly changed and showed his true side. He is such a good man. His life belongs to his wife and his children, but if my sister wants to go anywhere, he says don't. He says that she can only go out with her mother or with him [...] My mum said that last night my sister went to my mum's house and he [her husband] had told her to wear a hijab in front of other men in the house. I don't know what is going on in his head. He is a good man. He has never hit her. Hengameh, driving instructor, 34

In circumstances where men were violent, their violence were minimized and prejudicial attitudes towards the victims increased.

He [Hamed] slaps her for the first time and she goes to her mother's house. Fights and arguments happen, and she goes straight for the option of getting separated. I think she has had other agenda for going to her mum's. Sheila, Part-time Baker, 34

Themes of victim blaming also emerged from Azam who talked about their family friend with a “disrespectful” wife.

Actually, we have a friend. he has so much fear surrounding his wife. For example, he doesn't want anybody to see his wife's body, he doesn't like his wife wearing a manteau (overcoat) because he thinks she should wear chador (full-body cloak). So, he doesn't allow her to wear a manteau when she goes out. His wife also disrespects his family and his parents. I have seen him when he gets very frustrated, he lays his hands on her. In reality it is not the man's fault, it is the woman fault. Azam, property developer, 75

In the case of Azita, she indicated that Samira should be grateful that her husband has apologised to her.

That provoking behaviour is also a behaviour that is not acceptable from the woman. For example, she wears revealing clothes and tell him that she has done right. That she wanted to and that she felt like it. He might be the sort of person who never hits his wife, but she has created such conditions so that he loses tolerance and ends up doing such thing.

Interviewer: Would you still class this as IPA if she had provoked him?

A: Yes and no. Yes, because he has hit her, no because this lady has tested his tolerance and he was forced to do this. He hit her but then apologised later. Some men hit their wives with no remorse and never apologise. Azita, 52

Furthermore, the statement below from Azita implied that men are the guardians of the woman. Without questioning Hamed's restrictive behaviour, Azita believed that Hamed had assessed his wife's capacity and has reached his decision based on her best interest.

He should say this based on an experience. Like his wife has previously done things with money that haven't been successful now he has come to the conclusion that she doesn't know how to look after money, and he should be in charge. Azita, 52

This theme also revealed that the participants were likely to blame other women when they became victims of a patriarchal system. Husband's behaviour had caused Azam to self-objectify as she compared her beauty to that of the second woman. Looking for someone to blame, Azam is placing blame on her sister-in-law for creating a situation that encouraged Azam's husband to marry another woman.

A: He didn't want to do it [...] they took him and put him in that situation. When the woman saw me, she was shocked herself. she said to him 'you have a wife this pretty, and you are doing this?' She was very pretty you know; she was white and fat. Azam, property developer, 75

In another interview, Farah explained that Iranian women recognise signs of IPA. However, they choose to "minimise" their husband's actions because they are taught to endure their husband's aggressive behaviour and as wives. Women have a duty of providing a calm environment for their husbands.

They [women] minimise their husband's actions because they think that they should put up with it [...] They make excuses for his behaviour. These are Iranian beliefs. We have learnt as Iranian women that you should not retaliate when your husband is shouting and swearing at you. My niece knows that she is in an abusive marriage, but she minimises her husband's abuse all the time. I once asked her why she did this and she said because she didn't know what else to do. She feels that she needs to lie about her husband and pretend that he is a good man. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Justification of male dominance to cope with abuse is more visible in Azam's account who justified abuse to say that it was what she wanted. Referring to herself as a "pretty girl who used to get a lot of attention from the boys", Azam explained that she could not leave her house after becoming a child bride at 14 years of age.

Interviewer: How did it make you feel like when you couldn't leave the house at the age of 14?

Azam: well... in a way I liked to go out alone, but I was also afraid. I was afraid that something would happen or that someone (another man) could approach me and show interest in me. My husband would be very angry with the guy. My husband would kill the guy. Azam, property developer, 75

3.3. Romanticizing IPA

This theme highlights the difference in the participants' interpretations of love. Iranian women's expectation and interpretation of love varied amongst them. Controlling behaviours in men was interpreted as love by some of the participants. For example, Azam talked about how she met her husband who had stalked her from the age of 13. Azam interpreted her husband's stalking behaviour before and after marriage as a sign of love and protection.

Azam: He [husband] was always after me just to know where I went and what I did.

Interviewer: You mean he was after you out of love or he was after you out of jealousy?

A: No, it was love. For example, we would go to shabdolazim with my sisters then all of a sudden, we'd find him there before us. We would ask what you are doing here? he

would say that he had some work to do there. But we knew that he had gone there to see us.

Interviewer: After the marriage, did he ever follow you again?

Azam: No, no. After marriage he didn't follow me anymore. Even when he followed me, it was because he wanted to make sure that no one bothered me. It was out of love. He wanted to look after me. Azam, property developer, 75

Unwanted surveillance of an individual is legally classed as stalking in the UK. But for Azam, it was an act of affection. Azam later explained about how her husband won her heart by secretly following her. She fell in love with him because he showed his love and protection by following her without her knowledge to “look after” her. Azam explained how two men used to secretly follow her whenever she went out. One of these men would later marry her and become her husband. Whilst both men were stalking Azam, there was a clear distinction between the two men for Azam. One was “out of love” and made her feel safe, whilst the other was “scary”.

A few times when I used to go to tailoring, a guy used to follow me, and it would scare me to think that he could approach me... I was always scared that if I went out, he'd cover my mouth and kidnap me. It was scary. So, my brother followed me a few times to catch him out. But he never showed himself. My brother caught my husband secretly following me instead. Azam, property developer, 75

There were also participants who like Yasamin who stated that women should not interpret men's controlling behaviour as a sign of love. The participants who took this position were the participants who strongly rejected the gender roles.

Some women like the guys to tell them what to do. And they believe that if a guy tells you that you cannot wear something, it means that he really likes you. But I don't get the point. Yasamin, university lecturer, 30

3.3. Help and support network

The participants whose experiences were covered by this theme elaborated on the cultural barriers that deter Iranian women from seeking legal and professional help in the UK.

Therefore, this theme intended to use the voice of Iranian women to identify the solutions that could help overcome these barriers. Despite their wealth of knowledge on their legal rights in the UK, the participants' mothers were always the first point of contact during marital problems. However, mothers did not always offer helpful advice. The participants also identified women's groups as a safe space to talk about their marital issues and to seek advice. Although, for those who spoke little or no English, it was hard to participate in these groups due to language difficulties.

One of the key features of this theme was sexual dissatisfaction and unease in marriage in marriage which was believed to be a private matter between the married couple. The participants stated that intimacy in marriage is never talked about despite the challenges that Iranian women face during intimacy with their husbands. This theme highlights the struggle of Iranian women to maintain the title of a 'good wife' as they are under constant scrutiny to maintain their husband's sexual interest. Considering that the definition of a 'good wife' heavily relies on the woman's sexual availability for her husband in the Iranian context, the participants talked about the guilt that they feel if they are sexual dissatisfaction and uneased in marriage.

Iranian society's perception of women as asexual beings who lack sexual interest takes Iranian women's right to have a sexuality. Therefore, such important issues remain hidden in the Iranian society. Additionally, Iranian society's perception of Iranian women as lacking sexual interest, can lead to inner conflicts for Iranian women who experience sexual dissatisfaction in marriage. Having their sexuality denied and construed as subservient to men's sexuality was perceived as a form of oppression by the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles in this study. Many of the participants also talked about Iranian women who are victims of marital rape, however, reporting husband for rape was rarely considered. Instead, women sought other avenues for help such as family and couples counselling. Most participants believed that the problem of Iranian couples stemmed from their lack of education and their limited knowledge of intimacy in marriage. Only one participant openly shared her experience of having sexual dissatisfaction and unease in her marriage. For this participant, counselling and therapy had helped, but only when the professionals were from Iran and had a good understanding of Iranian culture. The three sub-themes of Barriers to seeking legal help, Mothers as the first point of contact, and What help

the participants think should be available to them will help shed light on the cultural expectations of Iranian women and the challenges that they face when in marriage.

3.3.1. Barriers to seeking legal help

By exploring the barriers to decision making and leaving an abusive relationship in Iranian women, this theme helped elucidate women's oppression in the private realm of their households. As mentioned earlier, one of the key findings of this study was around women's sexuality. Many Iranian women believe that they have no right over their sexuality, so, they experience feelings of shame and guilt if they were sexually dissatisfied in their marriage. Iranian women felt that they have no right over their sexuality and the fear of being judged or labelled as an incompetent wife prevented them from seeking help. In one case where a participant sought help from the professionals, she felt that she was misunderstood and shortly disengaged with the service. This theme further demonstrates how the endorsement of rape culture risks further victimisation of Iranian women by discouraging the victims from seeking help. In most cases, help was sought as the last resort as women believed that a "good wife" doesn't "keep threatening her husband" with authorities. Religion and culture were perceived to be the root of the problem. Referring to her duty to keep IPA a private matter, Maryam referred to a hypothetical "mask" that Iranian women must wear to protect their *aaberu* (reputation and respect in the community).

We have some things in our culture like aaberu. In our culture we say that neighbours shouldn't know what happens in my house. As a woman, I should put a mask on and tolerate everything to protect my aaberu. Maryam, housewife, 36

Vida believed that women must be aware of their rights in the UK so that they can receive the right support.

For Iranian women who come to the UK it depends on whether they want to know about their rights in the UK. If a woman doesn't learn about her rights in the UK, she will be limited to her cultural views and limitations and will not get anywhere. When an Iranian woman doesn't know of her rights in the UK, she cannot defend herself. But she can if she has awareness and will know if she is being abused. Religious and personal views also prevent a woman from learning things. Vida, housewife, 44

This theme revealed that the participants were also concerned about the help available in the UK to detect deception and abuse for victims who are not familiar with the UK's legal system.

They [Iranian women in the UK] tolerate a lot more especially during first few years of their marriage because they don't know what their rights are legally. Men tend to take advantage of this and treat them as if they are still in Iran. So Iranian women won't even know that they are victims of IPA when they first come to the UK. Farah, hairdresser, 60

Seeking help would present as more challenging if their image as a "good" wife was going to be questioned. Usually referring to their "friend's experience", the participants talked about the pressure on Iranian women to be sexually available for their husbands' sexual needs at all times. Sexually dissatisfied women experience guilt and shame for their sexuality.

In Iranian families, it is really bad not to have sex with the partners. Especially for women if they don't have sexual relationships with their husbands because in our culture it is the women's duty to have intercourse and satisfy their husbands. So maybe she [Samira] felt guilty of herself that she is not good, she is not good in bed. Mina, accountant, 37

Mina was the only participant who shared her personal experience with the interviewer. She continued to say that she has not told anyone about the sexual dissatisfaction and unease in marriage because she fears that she will be judged by others. Mina also talked about Iranian women who are being blamed for their husband's infidelity.

If I tell anyone they will blame me saying why didn't you do that, what is the reason, and you have to do this because men should be satisfied on you. If he is satisfied with you, he will not see other women. Mina, accountant, 37

Below, Azita describes women as asexual beings who “should” be available for their husbands. Disregarding women’s sexual desires, Azita’s view on reporting her husband for marital rape is an indication of the patriarchal culture in which women are responsible for keeping their husbands sexually satisfied.

I think these things (forced intimacy in marriage) could happen to ourselves even. If I was to report my husband every time this happened, well I don't think that reporting would ever happen anyway in this situation... You cannot keep reporting your husband, these things could happen a few times a week or a few times a month. A woman can't keep reporting and threatening her husband. A woman should want to be intimate with her husband. Azita, 52

3.3.2. Mothers as the first point of contact

As mentioned earlier, the participants were well knowledgeable about their rights in the UK. In fact, some expressed their gratitude by telling the interviewer about how “grateful” they were to the UK’s government for protecting women. Despite their knowledge of their legal rights, mothers were always the first point of contact for Iranian women who encountered marital difficulties. Like Sheila, some believed that their mothers offered valuable advice. Once again, the severity of IPA is minimised below as “small things”.

Iranian mothers have already done this once... they know what they talk about. You need to have one dad to all of your kids otherwise you are not a good role model for your children, so of course, they [mothers] will tell you to go back and not to separate [from your husband] over small things. Sheila, Part-time Baker, 34

Azita continued:

Divorce should be the last decision. I have heard that even in England, the couple fights on average 40 times before they get a divorce because you don't just get a divorce easily. So, the mother is right especially because a few people are to be blamed for this scenario. Azita, 52

Others were not as keen on asking mothers for advice. In the example below, Maryam indicated that women are usually told to be grateful to their husbands who are their male guardians and are looking after them.

I have seen many women around me who call their mums in Iran when they have a problem. Their mums say all men are like this and you should be happy that he is looking after you abroad. Very rarely have I seen a mum telling her to go and get help and not to listen to other people. I have barely seen this. They usually say go back and might just cry with their daughters. Maryam, housewife, 36

This theme showed that regardless of their age and status, Iranian women in this study tended to choose mothers as their first point of contact. Sara, a young participant who had grown up in the UK identified Hamed and Samira's relationship as abusive. Still, mother's house was perceived to be the best option because Sara believed that victims of IPA would not be supported to leave the abusive partner immediately.

Sarah: He [Hamed] raped her. I don't know in terms of organisation; I don't know if there is an official organisation [for help]. Samira should... it's hard because even if she went to the police, she can't prove anything. That's the shitty thing about stuff like this, that you can't prove it unless he did it with such force that he abused her. I mean she could try to go to the police, but it might make things worse.

Interviewer: How could it get worse?

Sara: Because she can't prove it, he can always lie, and it might make things worse for her and the police might just try to forget that.

Interviewer: How could things get worse for her?

Sara: Because he will always know that she went to the police and it's not enough for him to have immediate effect and for the punishment to be like immediate. So, it'll be like an ongoing case and she is the one who has to live with him.

Interviewer: Could she go to anyone?

Sarah: She could go and stay at her mum's if she wanted to.

Sara, Teacher training, 23

3.3.3. What help the participants think should be available to them

As mentioned, Iranian women must face several cultural and religious challenges before seeking help. Networking and women's only organisations were found to be helpful. Psychologists with a good understanding of Iranian women's cultural limitations were also found to be helpful, especially, in relation to sexual dissatisfaction and unease in marriage in marriage. Here, the participants insisted that Iranian women did not need "encouragement" to come forward and to report IPA. Rather, it is the lack of understanding of IPA against women in the wider UK society, rather than specifically the Iranian community.

I don't think that Iranian women lack encouragement to come forward about things like this [IPA]. Maybe they are encouraged to go to older generation and ask them to give them advice on what to do... Even though women are encouraged to come forward a little, the society isn't always understanding. Atoosa, student, 18

One of the solutions that was suggested by the participants to support victims of IPA was education for both Iranian men and women about marital sex.

Without proper education they [men] wouldn't know whether the woman actually enjoys the intimacy or not. Most Iranian women have a problem with their husbands in bed because their husbands don't understand them. They just don't know how to treat a woman. Hengameh, driving instructor, 34

The participants also talked about the importance of networking and attending women's organisations to receive support. Fatemeh believed that Iranian women would benefit from participating in workshops about IPA in Farsi. Fatemeh emphasised on networking outside of Iranian communities in the UK to help Iranian women gain awareness.

Networking is very important. Organisations need to have interpreters or Farsi speaking sessions. I don't know if any exist. I think it would be helpful if women received information about IPA in the language that they speak so that they can ask for help. Fatemeh, researcher, 27

There were mixed reviews on whether these women's groups would benefit from having "mixed gender" sessions on IPA. Azita was one of the participants who believed that men and women would benefit from "mixed groups".

I think there needs to be awareness for men too. Sometimes men don't know what they are doing is wrong and the media can help them understand that something that they think is OK to do can actually be IPA. it becomes normal behaviour [...] The problem with having separate gender groups is that women will give right to themselves and men will do the same, so it will be better to have mixed gender gatherings so that everyone can share their views. Azita, 52

Others believed that having mixed group will discourage women from discussing IPA especially if they are new to the Western culture..

Women's groups are useful. Because when women first arrive here, they can't say much if men are present in these groups. Women only groups where women talk about their rights will be more informative to women. Anahita, housewife, 52

Mina was the only participant who disclosed her own personal experience of sexual dissatisfaction and unease in marriage problems in marriage. Mina had seen a psychologist in the UK but insisted that the root of the problem was not understood, and she continued to be sexually dissatisfied with her husband. It was only when Mina contacted an Iranian psychologist in Iran who was able to help her and her husband understand their intimacy problem. Mina stated that the psychologist had told her that many Iranian couples have the same problem because women are told that "good girls" should not have intercourse before marriage which can lead to future problems in women as they "subconsciously" believe that intercourse makes them "bad women". On that note, Mina said that she would only recommend an Iranian psychologist to women who have similar experiences as herself in their marriage because the psychologist needs to have a good understanding of Iranian women's culture.

As I told you, I have similar problem. I would still tell her [Samira] that it's better to have consultancy with psychologist because maybe psychologist can help with her past

or make her eyes open about other countries' cultures that she could use. Especially when someone is living outside of Iran. I would tell her it's not good to have a consultant who is not Iranian because they cannot deeply understand our culture but it's better to have an Iranian consultant to guide her on what is better for her. Mina, accountant, 37

4. The complexity of divorce in Iranian women

This theme illustrates the difficulties that are experienced by Iranian women in the UK. Cultural barriers and stigma around divorced women added a new layer to the complexity of divorce for Iranian women. The participants expressed sadness when talking about the involvement of their friends and families in their lives after getting a divorce. It was stated that men felt entitled to ask questions about the participants' sexuality after divorce. Iranian women who did not conform to the prevailing gender norms and the expectations of "good wives" in this study faced sexual harassment and name calling. Despite all the challenges, the divorce itself was seen to be a step towards independence and a new life for Iranian women especially in the West.

Divorce can give financial independence if she is dependent on her husband. She can have more independence after divorce and have a new life for herself. She can be more peaceful, go back to education and work again. I know a woman who has found her identity after her divorce in the UK. She started work and is making jewellery. Maryam, housewife, 36

But as mentioned earlier, women's social and cultural challenges meant that these women had to cross many barriers before reaching their goals after their divorce. The challenges included being blamed for having an unsuccessful marriage, name calling, and sexual harassments.

The social aspect of divorce is challenging because the woman is not going to be able to have the same situation in the society. The society is going to put her under pressure like maybe there was something wrong with you, if you were not ... You know some actually believe that women have certain roles and they are blamed if their marriage is not successful and that's another thing. The society will label her, and people would

say that she cannot do what she should have done. And people give their opinion and tell her that she is not good at some things. Yasamin, university lecturer, 30

Some of the participants found the name calling one of the most hurtful parts of a divorce. The participants felt that the labelling of divorced women came with serious repercussions for Iranian women which resulted in their mistreatment by their family, friends, and other men. *Sar be havaa* was especially used to refer to Iranian women who had sought divorce in the UK which indicates that the term was tied to the perception of 'bad' women who misused their freedom in the UK.

I don't know if you have heard of this, but as soon as Iranian women leave their husbands especially when they come to Europe, they are labelled as 'sar be havaa' [...] It means that she came and saw freedom and became careless. Leila, housewife, 42

Another described how women who are divorced or widowed become victims of sexual harassments. Anahita explained how men feel entitled to divorced women because these women will not have a male guardian.

You become 'Beeveh' (divorced/widowed), you become 'Meeveh' (fruit) after divorce [...] they say that once divorced or widowed, a woman becomes a ripe fruit. So, any man can touch her and take a bite out of that fruit. Men cannot touch her if she is a virgin. Anahita, housewife, 52

Some of the participants had left Iran to be from the labelling, only to encounter similar problems in the UK.

H: I got divorced from him [ex-husband] but he used to always bother me after our divorce and men used to look me differently, that's why I left Iran.

Interviewer: Have you experience this here in the UK?

H: Yes, from Iranians and Asians. But they never touched me. They just requested it [sex]. Hengameh, driving instructor, 34

Therefore, Iranian women in this study continued to minimise IPA to justify their stay in the abusive marriage. As Azita explained that “some things only happen every now and then, so you don’t get a divorce after once or twice [of IPA].” Despite all the challenges and the difficulties, Iranian women’s sense of empowerment was evident after their separation from their husband. Farah had tried to separate from her husband for years before her migration to the UK. She eventually managed to divorce her husband after he hit her in the UK.

Farah: I went to the police after he hit me. I didn’t go back to his house. I rented my own house and lived with my kids after that.

Interviewer: How did you feel after your divorce?

Farah: I had a great feeling because nothing would upset me anymore. I didn’t have to live with him anymore. It was a lot healthier for my kids too. They didn’t have to see their parents fight and argue all the time. Farah, Hairdresser, 60

There are a several point that must be highlighted from Farah’s statement. As mentioned, patriarchy dominates Farsi language by removing ownership from women and reinforcing their life in their father’s and later their husband’s house. Farah’s interview shows that for the first time she felt a sense of achievement as she had her own house. Feeling empowered, Farah disconnected herself from her husband but continued to think about her children. This indicates that women continue to prioritise their children over their own freedom and happiness.

6.2. Chapter summary

The Template Analysis revealed that patriarchal structures cast a shadow of male domination over Iranian women lives who participated in this study. Rooted in patriarchal structures, there are expectations of Iranian women as daughters, wives, and mothers that need to be met before an Iranian woman can call herself a “good woman”. A “good woman” is defined as a daughter who protects her family’s honour by refraining from any sexual activity before marriage, a wife who satisfies her husband’s every need and ensures that her family’s

reputation remained intact, and a mother who sacrifices her life to look after her children. For Iranian women who endorsed these expectations, they believe that sometimes other Iranian women misuse their “freedom” in the UK and leave their husband.. For those women who reject these expectations, they challenged patriarchy by asserting their own rights and rejecting the traditional gender roles. Iranian women who rejected the traditional gender roles express that the burden of responsibilities has taken their “freedom” away by creating barriers to their right over their own body, their independence, and their future goals. Iranian women believe that these expectations are a combination of their culture, religion, and the Islamic regime of Ayatollahs.

This study found that most Iranian women used the term “sexual harassment” to refer to marital. The perception of women as asexual and men as sexual beings contributed the rape culture in which rape was justified. This study saw that the normalisation of IPA discouraged Iranian women from seeking help as they feared being judged for taking their marital problems outside of their house. Disregarding women’s sexuality had led to other problems such as sexual dissatisfaction and unease in marriage for some of the participants in this study. Some of the women in this study felt compelled to satisfy their husband’s sexual needs against their own will. Feeling sexually dissatisfied in their marriage, many of these women felt guilty for their sexuality. Those women who sought help from professionals, found that the professionals were unable to help them due to their lack of knowledge about patriarchy in the Iranian culture.

Cultural taboos and the stigma around divorced women created barriers to seeking help. Therefore, mothers tend to be the first point of contact if Iranian women encounter any marital problems. In addition, women’s groups were found to be helpful if Farsi interpreters were available. Overall, Iranian women in this study believed that education led to financial security which was seeing as a pathway to independence and freedom.

Chapter 7: Discussion of the interview findings (phase two)

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results from phase two of the mixed method research. Template analysis was used to analyse the results. As Creswell (2000) stated, the focus of a qualitative study is not the generalization of the data but the acquisition of comprehensive information about each account. Echoing Creswell's (2000) statement, the accounts in this study were not intended to reflect a representative sample of all the Iranian women in the UK, but to help open up a discourse for future research to draw upon. Additionally, a detailed discussion of the findings from Chapter 6 will take place. As the findings are presented, references are made to the existing theoretical and empirical studies. Areas of concurrence and divergence with the previous findings of other studies will also be highlighted.

Sharing common cultural values and language with the participants was advantageous to this study as it helped build a trusting relationship between the interviewer and the participants. This trusting relationship was valued especially during the interviews that involved a degree of intimate conversations and self-disclosure. All Iranian women who participated in this study were thankful to the researcher for giving them an opportunity to voice their views about IPA. Azam (one of the participants) said: "Thank you. I have been waiting for decades for an opportunity like this, for someone to listen to Iranian women's problems". Another point worth highlighting during Azam's interview is that she requested to have her 2 daughters and her two grandsons (one 27 and one 30 years old) present during her interview. When asked about this, Azam replied: "I want everybody to hear about my story". It was clear that for some of the participants, feeling heard was the driving force behind their decision to participate in the current study. As Kar (2000) stated, the voice of Iranian women is often absent in relation to IPA. Hence, feminist research is required to help Iranian women's voices be heard (Moghissi, 2016). French and Swain (1997) stated that one way to empower women is by giving them a voice to tell their story. This study agrees with French and Swain (1997) as Azam's account demonstrated a sense of empowerment from telling her story and that she finally had a voice.

7.1. Perception of IPA

This study sheds light on the unequal gender relations by highlighted how IPA is used to control and to subjugate women. In common with feminist scholars, the current findings

highlight gender inequalities by addressing the patriarchal relations that are formed through gender (Mayer, 2012; Lieb, 2019) to encourage violence against women (Malik & Lindahl, 1998; McHugh, 2005; George & Stith, 2014). As mentioned in the previous chapters, patriarchal societies promote power relations by reinforcing practices that are informed by traditional gender roles (Connell, 2002; Kim & Motsei, 2002). It is suggested that women's attitudes towards gender roles shape their perception of IPA (Haj-Yahia, 1998; Riaz et al., 2004; Lowe et al., 2018). In line with previous findings, this study established that Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their perception of IPA. Though, of course, one must be wary of over-generalising from a single qualitative study, the current findings could provide insight into the perception of Iranian women in the UK. Considering that the traditional gender roles are formed within the patriarchal structures, understanding patriarchy in the Iranian context was an important aspect of this study. As Anderson (2005) pointed out, feminist researchers are required to consider how the context of gender inequality in patriarchal structures influences IPA against women. Therefore, the next section of the discussion will cover 1) Patriarchy, 2) Gender roles and the expectations of women, 3) Understanding IPA from Iranian women's perspectives, and 4) The complexity of divorce in Iranian women.

7.1.1. Patriarchy

The findings highlight the foundation of patriarchy in the families of the Iranian women who agreed to take part in this study. The participants who had experienced prejudice and inequality against them due to their gender often commented on how their oppression started from their 'father's house' before their guardianship was handed over to their husbands as their male guardians. The participants were expected to behave in accordance with their role as beliefs and values inculcated through Iranian culture determined their traditional feminine role. As young girls, Iranian women in this study were told to be 'good' and keep their family's honour by refraining from any sexual activity. Fathers decided when daughters were ready for marriage which resulted in several child marriages amongst the participants. The emphasis on women's sexuality continued as the participants were expected to be 'good' wives and provide a sexual service for their husbands. If the participants rejected their expected role, they were reminded that their lack of sexual availability could push their husbands into marrying a second wife. The findings provide support for literature as previous studies have maintained that Iranian families are never been completely free of a patriarchal

system (Afshar, 1989; Aghtaie, 2016). Research has also consistently shown that patriarchy starts from Iranian households where fathers maintain the subordination of women (Jalali, 2005) and women's exposure to IPA becomes justifiable (Ezazi, 2002). Though it could be said that the current findings are limited to one qualitative study, it is evident that oppression of Iranian women at household level was not limited to the current findings.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the core tenet of feminist research is women's entrapment by various forms of male domination (Walby, 1994). In line with feminist research, this study was able to point out that patriarchy takes different forms to fit in with different stages of Iranian women's lives. For example, one participant (Azam) talked about a decrease in male domination over Iranian women since the Islamic revolution. According to Azam, Iranian women have more freedom in choosing their clothes under their manteau (overcoat) and their fathers or husbands cannot tell Iranian women what to wear anymore. This study revealed that male domination over the participants has not lessened, rather, it has taken a different form to fit in with the context of Iranian women's lives. What Azam had not acknowledged was that by making hijab compulsory, the Islamic Republic of Iran had only served to entrench the patriarchal system and to ensure further oppression of women. This suggests that patriarchy is contextual and takes different forms to fit in with women's lives. Therefore, the findings agree with Collins (1990) who asserted that patriarchy is a shifting set of social relations in which men oppress women and exercise varying degrees of power and control. Given these variations, patriarchy is best understood contextually (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992; Stark, 2009). For Iranian women who participated in this study, patriarchy was not limited to their home country as it formed around various aspects of their lives including migration.

In terms of migration, studies suggest that patriarchy is reconstructed when women migrate to the West (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). It is suggested that certain elements of male domination are discarded, some modified, and some continue to be reinforced after women's migration (Parrado & Flippen, 2005). Iranian studies are no different as they consistently find that Iranian women continue to live within patriarchal structures even after migration from Iran (see Afshar, 1989; Ghvamshahidi, 1995; Ezazi, 2002; Aghtaie, 2016). The current findings are parallel with previous findings as it indicated that patriarchy had taken a new form to fit in with the participants' lives in the UK. Themes of what Maciel et al. (2009) referred to as

the 'invisible male power' were found in this study when Iranian women were denied their independence and freedom by their husbands. From deceiving women into going back to Iran (as a way of stopping them from coming back to the UK), to using subtle ways of controlling women, Iranian women in this study continued to find themselves under male domination in the UK. On that note, the present study disagrees with Darvishpour (2002) who suggested that the male domination over Iranian women weakens after migration to the West. Rather, it suggests that male domination changes with fit in with women's lives. Moreover, the current findings challenge the assumption that Iranian women would be able to escape IPA after migrating to a new country with more egalitarian rights (see Darvishpour, 1999). Instead, the findings demonstrated that Iranian women who participated in this study continued to be oppressed under male domination in the UK.

As Maciel et al. (2009) suggested, the emphasis on gender equality in the West can result in other dominating behaviour designed to compensate for its loss. Referring to the oppression of women in less patriarchal cultures, Stark (2009) stated that victims of coercive control feel greater shame in a society that celebrates gender equality compared to a society where the oppression of women is encouraged. Concurring with Stark (2009), this study found that the participants felt shame when they talked about their oppression, especially, when they talked about their experience in the UK. Iranian women in this study regretted their lives when they reflected on their missed opportunities in achieving independence in the UK. Independence usually referred to higher educational attainments of university degree or above and career options.

It must be mentioned that depriving women of their independence in a new country is not limited to Iranian families. Menjívar and Salcido (2002) found that the position of women as migrants often contributes to IPA by isolating women's access to the community and limiting their job prospects. In addition to the consistencies between the current findings and Stark's (2009) suggestion of shame amongst women who are oppressed in countries that promote egalitarian values, this study found that some of the Iranian women were caught between their traditional gender role and their wish for a more modern lifestyle. Some of the participants in this study envied the life of English women as English women were perceived to live free of male domination. Therefore, further support is provided for Jalali (2005) who

stated that Iranians are caught between their traditional gender roles and the acceptance of more Western family relationships.

In line with previous studies (see Campbell, 1983; Graham, 2016; Moder, 2019), the findings suggest that patriarchal rules violated the right to personhood for women in this study. As Crawford et al. (2009) stated, women's identity and sense of self are strongly influenced by the culture and society that they live in. Given that women's sense of self is stripped by patriarchal structures, researchers must first challenge women's subordination before any attempts are made to reclaim women's full personhood (Moder, 2019). In the context of Iranian women, Aghtaie (2016) added that many Iranian women feel that IPA denies them the opportunity of full personhood. The current findings provide support for literature by suggesting that patriarchy denied the participants right to personhood in this study. As women, the participants in this study were restricted to what they could and could not do both in Iran and in the UK which took away their sense of self. Islamic revolution, religion, and culture were blamed by this study's participants for not respecting Iranian women's rights to full personhood.

The findings also indicated that patriarchy is embedded in Farsi's language. On analysis, it was found that any sense of ownership and entitlement was taken away from women in Farsi as male guardianship was reinforced. Unequal distribution of gender power was recorded in women's language during the interviews as Iranian women referred to their childhood home as their 'Father's house' followed by their marital home as their 'husband's house'. Although this is a much less explored area, this study is not the first to detect male domination in language (see Balogun, 2010). Studies of feminism refer to language as one of the ignored, yet powerful sites to exercise patriarchal rules (Hassanpour, 2001; Lassen, 2011). As Schippers (2007) stated, the overarching features of patriarchy that cross-cut contexts cannot be overstated. In line with this, the present study posits that there are also elements of oppression in some of the Farsi proverbs that are gender biased and relate to women. Proverbs such as *besooz o besaaz* (a woman must endure pain as a mother or wife) or *beeveh meevah* (a woman without man is sexually accessible) objectify women by emphasising on their sexuality. By that account, the findings agree with Balogun (2010) in stating that such proverbs are discriminatory and violate the rights and dignity of women in any culture.

7.1.2. Gender roles and the expectations of women

Consistent with feminist studies, this study found that there are culturally expected roles that are considered as appropriate for men and women (Malik & Lindahl, 1998; Dellinger, 2004; Altenburger et al., 2017). The findings demonstrate that in addition to the universal expectations of women (e.g., motherhood and reproduction), there were expectations that were culturally specific to Iranian women in this study (e.g., keeping the family's honour). As suggested, the social system defines appropriate as well as inappropriate behaviour in an intimate relationship for women (Klein, Campbell, Soler, & Ghez., 1997) which grants male supremacy (Lynch et al., 2017). These expectations are socially determined restrictions that reinforced the traditional gender roles by emphasising on women's sexuality and their feminine identity (Walby, 2004). Rooted in the patriarchy, the traditional gender roles were found to promote gender inequality and the oppression of Iranian women in this study. Gender inequality was more visible when the participants were expected to be 'good' by refraining from any sexual activity as girls, satisfy their husbands' sexual needs as wives, and sacrifice their goals for their children as mothers. As Neyer and Bernardi (2011) stated, such emphasis on women's sexuality will only serve to reinforce the subordination of women.

Studies suggest that women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles influence their perception of IPA (Nabors, & Jasinski, 2009; Ferrer-Pérez, Bosch-Fiol, Sánchez-Prada, & Delgado-Álvarez, 2019). This is because women who endorse the traditional gender roles hold conservative views on women's liberation ideology and freedom that are consistent with patriarchal systems (Marecek & Frasch, 1977; Al Fassi, 2016). Consistent with previous findings, the present study revealed that Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their perception of IPA. Literature was further supported when the findings indicated that the participants' endorsement of traditional gender roles encouraged accepting views towards IPA against women (see Berkel, Vandiver, & Bahner, 2004; Nabors, & Jasinski, 2009; Ferrer-Pérez et al., 2019). Though there was not a precise cut off point for the participants who endorsed or rejected the traditional gender roles, Iranian women in each group had attributes that shared common ground with women in that group.

The findings illustrated that the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles perceived feminine values and qualities as their own. In addition, the stereotyping of gender

roles in this study produced preconceptions about the attributes that are ought to be possessed by 'good' women. Good women were expected to prioritise their husband's desires over their own needs. This study also showed that Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles showed prejudicial attitudes towards women who did not adhere to the social construction of traditional gender roles. To be precise, Iranian women who did not adhere the traditional gender roles were labelled as 'bad' for lacking the values of a 'good' woman by the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles. In addition, men were perceived to be superior to women, hence, their domination was justified. As the result, themes of victim blaming and normalisation of IPA were found amongst Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles. The findings therefore mirrored Meyers's (1996) findings as it showed that the representation of women was polarised into 'good' or 'bad' dichotomy in which Iranian women were either innocent or blamed for their victimization to IPA. Such strong views towards women who did not adhere to the traditional gender roles implied that the perception of IPA amongst Iranian women in this study was rooted in patriarchy. The findings further demonstrated that patriarchy disguised the gendered patterns of male domination and control over Iranian women which resulted in the normalisation of IPA amongst the participants who endorsed the traditional gender roles.

On the other hand, Iranian women who rejected the gender roles in this study narrated their understanding of IPA with a tenor that acknowledged gender relations as the source of their oppression. With women's rights lost immediately after the Revolution (Moghissi, 2016), Iranian women who rejected the gender roles stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran exerts power over women by running a country 'for men by men'. The participants also depicted a sense of power and hope, which, in some cases extended to a boast about the way in which they negotiated the challenges of patriarchy. For example, one participant (Farah) boasted about keeping her scarf in her bag and refusing to wear her hijab for the first two years of Islamic revolution. Therefore, the findings can provide support Sattari (2020) who claimed that Iranian women transform their oppression into means of empowerment by negotiating better opportunities in the public realm. However, as Maciel et al. (2009) stated, it is the male power and domination that determines how far women can push against patriarchy. In spite of their limited options, Iranian women in this study were empowered by the privileges that they had created for themselves within patriarchal structures. Religion was blamed for Iranian women's oppression by the participants who rejected the gender roles. Therefore, the findings

agree with Gangoli et al. (2019) in suggesting that men use religion as a way of controlling women and justifying male domination.

Apart from religion, culture was also blamed for the oppression of Iranian women by Iranian women in this study. However, Reddy (2008) argued that by categorising IPA as primarily cultural, the IPA's position within the wider spectrum of gender violence may unintentionally be ignored. On that note, this study takes the position that the oppression of Iranian women in this study is embedded in the Iranian society which uses religion, culture, and political power to reinforce male domination. As suggested, patriarchal systems thrive on the status of women in their community or society because women's traditional gender roles will ensure that women are placed a subordinate position (Hartmann, 1981; Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002). With this in mind, the current findings suggest that the emphasis on the role of Iranian women as caring and emotional individuals who require male protection has ensured that the position of Iranian women is kept inferior to men.

Ogu (2018) stated that the gender role expectations disempowers women as they are prevented from making their own decisions. The present study agrees with Ogu (2018) as Iranian women who rejected the expectations of being a 'good' woman referred to the traditional gender roles as a burden of responsibilities that disempowered them in this study. Kar's (2000) research which was conducted over two decades ago also showed that Iranian women were expected to do all the household chores and adhere to their gender role even if they worked outside. In line with Kar (2000), this study found that the traditional gender roles had created barriers to the participants' rights over their own body, their independence, and their future goals. Contesting feminine attributes, education and financial independence were seen to be a route towards freedom, and to some extent, gender equality by Iranian women in this study.

The current findings demonstrate that education was not only a symbol of empowerment, but also perceived as a deterrence against IPA towards Iranian women in the present study.

Although the current findings support literature on women's independence and empowerment, it also highlights that the assumption of independent women as women who would be able to resist male power can deter women from seeking help (e.g., Hutchinson & Hirschel, 1998; Shavarini, 2005; Lotf Abadi et al., 2012b). As Lensink (2019) stated, the

efforts to promote women's empowerment can become counterproductive in patriarchal contexts where there are stigmas and expectations attached to women. Kennedy and Prock (2018) also highlighted that anticipatory stigma and negative social reactions can contribute to further victimisation of women. Consistent with literature, the findings indicated that the disproportionate expectation of educated Iranian women can, in some cases, increase their risk of their victimization by preventing women from seeking help in fear of stigmatisation.

Referring to the barriers in Iranian women's independence, Jalali (2005) asserted that Iranian women can be labelled as inadequate and incompetent wives if they pursue their dream of becoming independent over their traditional gender roles. According to Jalali (2005), the cultural expectations and the traditional gender roles can result in an inner conflict for Iranian women. There is consistency between the current findings and previous studies in demonstrating that Iranian women's career goals are hindered by family priorities (Jalali, 2005; Behboodi, Ordibeheshti, Esmaeili, & Salsali, 2017). Similar findings emerged from the present study in which Iranian women continued to prioritize their role as wives and mothers even if they rejected the traditional gender roles. Iranian women's inner conflict became more visible in this study when they talked about feeling inadequate and regretful for not accomplishing their goals in life and for prioritizing their expected role as mothers and wives. Even so, Iranian women continued to adhere to their expected roles as mothers and wives to keep their family together. The current findings should not undermine the non-Iranian women's oppression since prioritization of family values is not specific to Iranian women. As Burman (1993) stated, the social construction of gender roles forces women in UK and elsewhere in the world to fulfil their expected mother duties. Such expectations can be observed in every culture where ideologies of mothering functions are used to keep women economically subordinated (Herman & Lewis, 2012).

The current findings indicate that Iranian women in this study were under constant scrutiny regardless of their attitude towards traditional gender roles. Age was another aspect of Iranian women's lives that was accompanied with expectations in this study. It was found that older age in Iranian women was expected to make them wiser in their response to their husbands' demands. Cherlin (2009) referred to wisdom in marriage as a tool to keeping a healthy marriage. Indeed, all Iranian women in this study agreed with Cherlin's (2009) definition of wisdom. However, wisdom was perceived differently amongst Iranian women. If Iranian

women endorsed the traditional gender roles, they expected women to be more attentive to their husbands' needs. In contrast, women who rejected the traditional gender roles, expected older women to challenge power relations and to stand up for their rights.

7.1.3. Understanding IPA from Iranian women's perspectives

The findings were successful in obtaining comprehensive accounts of Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. This study found that Iranian women acknowledged that the extent of IPA stretched beyond physical abuse. However, Iranian women's endorsement of the traditional gender roles limited the degree to which these women perceived the seriousness of IPA. As mentioned, not all women in this study endorsed the traditional gender roles, but those who did, were likely to minimise the extent of IPA. Therefore, the findings are consistent with previous studies in suggesting that women's perception of IPA is shaped by their attitudes towards traditional gender roles (Nabors, & Jasinski, 2009; Ferrer-Pérez, Bosch-Fiol, Sánchez-Prada, & Delgado-Álvarez, 2019). As mentioned, the traditional gender roles are defined by the patriarchal systems (Hartmann, 1981; Murnen, Wright, & Kaluzny, 2002; Neyer & Bernardi, 2011; Altenburger et al., 2017) which normalizes IPA within the family structure (Namy et al., 2017). In support of literature, this study found that women who endorsed the traditional gender roles and adhered to the patriarchal rules were likely to normalise IPA (Bhanot & Senn, 2007; Uthman et al., 2009; Sánchez-Prada et al., 2020) and to have victim blaming attitudes (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008; Grubb & Turner, 2012).

The endorsement of the traditional gender roles reinforced the notion of a 'good' women as an obedient wife in this study. Consequently, any woman who did not adhere to the expected role of a 'good' was expected to be corrected by her husband. The perception of men as superior to women justified IPA against women. For example, a man who controlled his wife's financial affairs was viewed as a man who had his wife's 'best interest' at heart. By controlling his wife's income, the man was admired as an intelligent male guardian who knew how to look after his family's finances. Such perception of women as individuals who lack the ability to make their own decisions appeared to be associated with the minimization of IPA and victim blaming attitudes amongst Iranian women in this study.

In line with Larrabee (2016), this study also showed that the view of women as caring and emotional individuals was used by men to keep Iranian women in the private sphere. The idea that IPA must remain within the private sphere of family life is a patriarchal belief that keeps IPA hidden and can limit Iranian women's knowledge of their legal rights. This was evident from one of the interviews in which an Iranian woman believed that the UK's justice system was similar to that of Iran. The findings demonstrated that strong expectations about the role of women held Iranian women who participated in this study in the position of subordination which normalised IPA against women. The perception of men as masculine beings who are not in control of their strengths and sexual urges also justified various aspects of IPA against women. The next section provides useful insight into how attitudes towards gender roles influenced Iranian women's understanding of various aspects of IPA including marital rape in this study.

7.1.3.1. Iranian women as asexual beings

Reflecting on the inability to achieve equal personhood, a few of the participants in this study stated that they had lost their sense of self and individuality by being forced to provide a sexual service for their husband. The findings therefore concur with feminist research which argues that patriarchal rules violate the right to personhood for women (see Campbell, 1983; Graham, 2016; Moder, 2019). Drawing on the traditional gender roles of Iranian women, the findings showed that the participants' roles as women were centred around their sexuality as women. The participants in this study were expected to refrain from any sexual activities before marriage and expected to provide a full sexual service to their husbands after marriage. As mentioned, the strict moral and the rigid social conduct amongst women give them high values for restraining their sexuality (Abraham, 1999; Okazaki, 2010). But women are expected to fulfil their husband's sexual needs in marriage (Merghati, Whelan, & Cohen, 2008). According to Yeganeh, Farahani, Farzad, and Moghaddesin (2020), Iranian society's expectations of Iranian women's sexuality before and after marriage creates problems when women's sexualities are taken away from them before expecting them to conform to their traditional role and provide a sexual service to their husbands as 'good' wives. Abdolmanafi, Nobre, Winter, Tilley, and Jahromi (2018) added that the pressure and the guilt that is passed onto Iranian women around their sexuality is the main cause of Iranian women's sexual dissatisfaction and unease in their marriage.

In keeping with previous studies (Abdolmanafi et al., 2018; Yeganeh et al., 2020), the findings illustrated that the expectations put a great deal of pressure on some of the participants in this study as they were left with a feeling of guilt for experiencing sexual dissatisfaction and unease in their marriage. As Kar (2000) stated, sex after marriage comes as a compulsion that violates the rights of Iranian women. Having their sexuality denied and construed as subservient to men's sexuality was perceived as a form of oppression by the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles in this study. However, the participants who had sought professional help about their intimacy in marriage, had found that their culture and background were the main barriers between them as Iranian women and the professionals they consulted.

The findings also emphasised on the disproportionate expectation of the participants to attend to their husband's sexual demands. In fact, the expectations were to such extent that Iranian women were blamed for their husband's infidelity in this study. One participant stated that she was reminded by her family and friends that her husband would practice polygamy if she refused intimacy with him. Similar findings emerged from Taherkhani's (2014) study who found that husband's infidelity is likely to humiliate Iranian women for being incompetent wives and unable to satisfy their husband's sexual needs. The findings once again emphasise the expectation of Iranian women to keep their family together. The assumption that women are asexual beings and should serve their husband's sexual needs was observed in several accounts in this study. As Aghtaie (2016) stated, the belief that women are passive receivers of male sexual gratification can blur the line between force and personal choice for Iranian women. This leads to a key finding in this study which revealed that Iranian women felt compelled to satisfy their husband's sexual needs against their own will.

This study established that the expectation of women as asexual and men as sexual beings justified marital rape amongst the participants. Tizro (2013) stated that Iran's legalisation of marital rape in the name of *tamkin* (sexual obedience to husband) has contributed to the acceptance of marital rape amongst Iranians. An important part of the current findings was that although Iranian women in this study lived outside of Iran's Sharia law, the majority still believed that a woman had a duty to satisfy her husband's sexual needs. The present findings can provide support for Tizro (2013) by demonstrating that Iranian women in this study continued to abide to the rules of *tamkin* in the UK. These findings also agreed with

Babazadeh et al. (2014) as it was found that the fear of being labelled as an incompetent wife deterred Iranian women from seeking help for marital rape in this study. It could be said that the present findings also support feminist studies in implying that the focus on objectifying women's body for the purposes of male sexual arousal once again accepts men's sexual desires as out of their control and promotes rape culture (Gavey, 2005; Strain et al., 2016). Signs of acceptance of rape culture could be observed in the present study where the traditional interpretation of religious doctrine along with the cultural acceptance of traditional gender roles contributed to Iranian women's view that marital rape did not exist.

Aghtaie (2011) emphasised that male sexuality and men's desire to have unlimited sex are treated as natural and beyond their control in patriarchal societies such as Iran. In line with this, the findings demonstrated that marital rape was rarely recognised as violence against women during the interviews. This suggests that rape can only be understood by addressing unequal gender relations and domination of women's sexuality (Sanday, 1981; Hester, 2003). In this study, Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles were more likely to excuse and normalise marital rape than women who rejected the traditional gender roles. Either way, both groups of women continued to be victimized. Women who endorsed the traditional gender roles accepted that sexual submission to their husbands was part of their duty. At the same time, women who rejected the traditional gender roles continued to be victimized because they feared the stigma against them as 'bad' women. The findings support Viki and Abrams (2002) suggestion that rape victims avoid seeking help if they are expected to abide by the gender rules because they fear that others may react negatively and blame them for inappropriate conduct.

Another point worthy to note is that marital rape was not an easy topic to discuss with Iranian women in this study. Consistent with previous findings (Amoakohene, 2004; Garrusi et al., 2008; Eftekhar et al., 2010), Iranian women were not inclined to talk about intimacy in their marriage. Whilst this chapter is rightly focussed on the qualitative findings, it is worth mentioning that Iranian women were also less inclined than non-Iranian women to talk about marital rape in the first part of the study (quantitative findings). Therefore, the use of vignette was especially helpful in obtaining data about marital rape. The study showed that after many prompts Iranian women eventually talked about marital sex with the interviewer. However, their nervous laughs, uncomfortable body language, and at times their expressions of anger

illustrated the emotional difficulties that Iranian women were experiencing at the time of interview. Of course, all participants were treated in line with the feminist ethics of care (see Chapter 3, Ethics of care). In spite of that, talking about intimacy in marriage was a challenge for Iranian women in this study as the participants usually referred to their ‘friend’s experience’ of marital rape. Inconsistency in referring to marital rape was expected as there is no Farsi word for marital rape. In a recent study, Naghavi et al. (2019) found that three out of ten Iranian women used the Farsi word *tajavoz* for marital rape whilst others used different terms in their study. In this study, most of the participants used the term *azare jensi* (sexual harassment) to refer to marital rape. Out of 16 participants, three said *tajavoz* (sexual attack), one said *chizaa ye jensi* (sexual things), and seven said *azare jensi* (sexual harassment).

Feminist activists insist that women should be encouraged to report marital rape and should not treat rape as a private matter because it is a cultural myth rooted in beliefs that wives are husbands’ private properties (Lynch et al., 2017). The findings revealed that even though all Iranian women were aware that forcing intercourse in marriage was wrong and could have some sort of legal consequence for their husbands in the UK, marital rape was mostly seen as the man’s lack of understanding about his wife and intimacy in marriage. For this reason, many Iranian women did not recommend taking legal actions against husbands. Instead, they recommended counselling and education as the way forward for both Iranian men and women to avoid marital rape. Such findings further highlight the beliefs that were rooted in patriarchy and the excuses made by Iranian women in this study to minimize marital rape. It is important to note that minimizing marital rape is not limited to this study as scholars have also found that normalisation of rape within relationship occurs in the West (see Monson, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, & Binderup, 2000; Basile, 2002; Kuriakose, 2019). Consistent with feminist studies (e.g., Radford & Stanko, 1991; Buchwald, et al., 2005), men’s sexual aggression was perceived as natural by Iranian women in this study. Hence, rape was tolerated and to some extent normalised by the majority of the participants.

Romanticising IPA

There was evidence from some participants in this study that they not only accepted but to some extent romanticised IPA. The present study concurs with Papp et al. (2017) who suggested that romantic beliefs in women from cultures with stronger patriarchal identities were related to controlling behaviours in men. The findings indicated that jealousy and

possessiveness were perceived as acts of love by these Iranian women who believed that men were protectors of women. Iranian women in this study interpreted abuse as love, to the extent that even after enduring the pain and trauma, women still hoped for an opportunity for marriage with the abuser. For example, one participant revealed that she ended up marrying her stalker because she believed that he was in love with her.

In terms of perception of stalking amongst Iranian women, the findings mirrored that of Melton (2007) who found that most victims of stalking believed that their partner expressed his love through excessive attention. In the context of Iranian women in this study, the findings marked patriarchy as the driving force behind women's identity which revolves around marriage. As Peta, McKenzie, Kathard and Africa (2017) stated, such attitudes towards gender roles are likely to amplify the promotion and reproduction of IPA in patriarchal societies. It must be mentioned that although the results cannot be generalised to the perception of all Iranian women in the UK, it could provide insight into how various types of men's controlling behaviours are perceived by women. Additionally, the present study agrees with Edwards (1987) as it demonstrates that the construction of love is shaped by male domination and female submission. Similar results have been found by other researchers. For example, a Zimbabwean study found that rape victims hoped for love and marriage with their perpetrator (Peta, McKenzie, Kathard, & Africa, 2017). Therefore, it can be said that the perception of men as the protectors and guardians of women is not limited to Iranian women as other studies have also found similar results (e.g., Chacham, Simão & Caetano, 2016; Peta et al., 2017).

7.1.3.2. Coping with IPA

The findings showed that the participants encountered different types of patriarchal obstacles in similar circumstances and so, improvised different responses to IPA. This is in line with the interpretation from previous research which suggested that coping strategies are complex in cultures where patriarchy is embedded in the social, political, and legal structures of society (Zakar et al., 2012). Denying some aspects of oppression was one of the coping strategies used by some of the participants in this study. Farah's account can be drawn on to demonstrate how denying certain aspects of oppression helped her cope with IPA. Farah had talked about the impossible task of managing household chores, childcare, and satisfying her husband's sexual demands with a full-time job. Farah's husband had used subtle methods of

coercive behaviour to ensure that his wife remained financially dependent on him. As the result, Farah was forced to give up her job and to be a full-time mum. It must be noted that, like Farah, some of the participants were not in a position to challenge male domination and patriarchy at every opportunity.

In Farah's case, she had convinced herself that she had chosen to stay at home and to leave her job. Farah's tone during the interview was proud when she talked about leaving her job. The same tone of voice was used earlier in her interview when Farah boasted about challenging patriarchal rules. During the interview, Farah made a point by emphasising her choice to leave her job. Farah was proud that she had challenged patriarchy at every opportunity with her tone and posture changing to more confident and assertive every time she talked about it. Based on the interview with Farah, it appeared that Farah viewed herself as a fighter against patriarchy and still denied some aspects of oppression to endure the oppression. This was an important finding in this study. Farah's account could reflect the widespread belief that women from patriarchal cultures do not understand the severity of IPA (see Ahmad, Riaz, Barata, & Stewart, 2004; Mahapatra, 2012) due to lack of legal knowledge on IPA (Mirrlees-Black, 1995). However, this study highlights Farah's account as a coping strategy and a way to endure IPA. Ezazi (2002) who also studied IPA amongst Iranian women stated that Iranian women may make light of the situation as a coping strategy to minimize the pain that they suffer as the result of IPA.

Despite the findings to suggest that some Iranian women deny aspects of their oppression, this study falls short of providing support for previous studies that focus on the minimization of IPA as a cultural strength (Ting, 2010) and resilience (Himelein & McElrath, 1996). Instead, the findings are in favour of Hooks (2014) who stressed that women's endurance of oppression can be falsely labelled as strength, hence, justify their oppression. Stewart (2017) also suggested that the emphasis on Black women's strengths and independence in oppression serves to keep women subordinated under "superficial empowerment". Of course, Hooks' (2014) research was focussed on Black women and the notion of Strong Black Women, but there are similarities between the findings of current study and that of Hooks (2014) that it worth pointed out. As mentioned, the perception of educated Iranian women as women who are able to resist IPA was identified as a barrier to seeking help amongst Iranian women in this study. This was due to the disproportionate expectations of educated Iranian

women which stopped them into seeking help as ‘independent’ women. The notion of ‘independent’ Iranian women could provide insight into the lives of Iranian women in this study who were not able to seek help due to their high educational attainment. As a result, it is imperative to acknowledge Iranian women’s endurance of IPA, but in the same breath, be cautious about framing their endurance to avoid feeding into the notion of ‘independent’ Iranian women.

7.1.4. The complexity of divorce for Iranian women

As mentioned, this study found that the social structure of the wider society in the UK can compel Iranian women to stay in abusive relationship regardless of the context that they live in. For instance, one participant talked about doubting her abilities as she had been told by her husband that she was not able to adequately speak English. Such findings provide support for Crawford et al. (2009) who suggested that women doubt their ability in abusive relationships which, in effect, increases their dependence on their husbands. Additionally, the findings agreed with Lynch and Graham-Bermann (2004) in showing that IPA takes away women’s self worth and personal values. Scholars consistently suggest that women continue to stay in an abusive relationship due to low self-esteem (Bortolan, 2018), depression (Anderson, Renner, & Bloom, 2017), and wider social structures such as social class (Gibson-Davis, Magnuson, Gennetian, & Duncan, 2005) and social status (Bauer, Rodriguez, Quiroga, & Flores-Ortiz, 2000).

According to Darvishpour (1999), financial independence is one of the key features in Iranian women’s decision to leave an abusive relationship. Although this study supports Darvishpour’s (1999) claim, it stresses that separation from the perpetrator requires more than financial security. The findings reveal that the view of Iranian women as women who are able to achieve full independence after leaving abusive relationships can feed into the expectations of Iranian women and mask the problem of patriarchal societies. That is, the consequences of being labelled as an incompetent wife and an unwanted woman.

Separation and divorce put Iranian women in a difficult position, particularly, in view of the earlier reported findings that established the importance of conforming to the traditional gender roles. Meeting the expectations of being a ‘good’ woman can create inner conflict for women if they decide to reject the expectations (Jalali, 2005; Cunningham & Baker, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, 'good' wives are expected to keep their marital problems including IPA private which is another way to dominate women in the household (Umubyeyi et al., 2016; Lynch et al., 2017). Drawing on the participants' inner conflict, the findings showed that some of the participants felt that a woman should not report her husband to the authorities. These accounts supported the notion of a 'good' wife as a woman who keeps her marital problems private. Therefore, the present study supports Taherkhani et al. (2017) by demonstrating that expressing attitudes such as the need to protect marriage, considering divorce as a despicable act, and considering IPA as normal in married life prevented Iranian women in this study from seeking help.

The present study indicated that cultural exclusion and being separated engendered feelings not only of being alone and unwanted, but also of being marginalised from the Iranian community. As Crawford et al. (2009) stated, women's identity and sense of self are strongly influenced by the culture and society that they live in. These influences affect women's decision to leave an abusive relationship (Crawford et al., 2009). On that note, it can be said that losing their sense of self poses a challenge for Iranian women who feel that their identity and their moral values are questioned when they seek divorce in the UK. The findings are consistent with previous studies (e.g., Moghadam, 1992; Rostami-Povey, 2007) in suggesting that the collision of tradition and modernity, particularly in the acceptance of traditional gender roles, resulted in cultural crisis amongst some of the participants. Therefore, divorce can reflect badly on Iranian women. This study was also consistent with Janghorban et al. (2015) who found that many Iranian women use their mothers as one of the primary sources for advice when encountering marital difficulties. The findings showed that although a range of help and support is available for women who are victims to IPA in the UK, Iranian women struggle to receive the right support that is tailored to their needs and this results in silence suffering amongst these women.

Iranian communities were experienced as another source of stigma for divorced Iranian women in this study. The findings are consistent with Darvishpour (1999, 2002) who suggested that Iranian women are faced with hurtful gossips and comments by their community after divorce. This study found that the participants were referred to as *Sar be havaa* if they sought separation from their husband in the UK. *Sar be havaa* is another derogatory term which can be roughly translated as a woman who has gone astray and has

lost her roots. Referring to the patriarchal structures of Iranian communities, Ghvamshahidi (1995) stated that Iranian women are at their most vulnerable to these hurtful comments when they do not have any 'male guardian' to look out for them. Lensink (2019) also stated that the efforts to promote women's empowerment can become 'counterproductive' in patriarchal contexts where there is stigma attached to divorced women. Whilst the findings of the present study acknowledge the points made by Ghvamshahidi (1995) and Lensink (2019), it suggests that researchers should try to avoid unintentional use of the patriarchal terms and labelling women's empowerment as 'counterproductive'. Rather, more ways to support Iranian must be identified to empower Iranian women in their journey of becoming more independent in the UK.

The findings showed that some of the Iranian women in this study had gone to extreme lengths to achieve some form of independence and freedom. According to the findings, some of the Iranian women were prepared to deal with the stigma of being divorced in exchange for control over their body. Men have ownership of their wives in patriarchal societies, but Darvishpour (2002) suggested that men's ownership vanishes when they separate from wives. The results partially support Darvishpour's (2002) statement, but also emphasise on complexity of divorce amongst Iranian women by highlighting the taboos and stigmas that divorced Iranian women had to endure in the present study.

Regardless of the stigma and taboos attached to divorced Iranian women, the findings revealed that Iranian women felt empowered and were filled with the feeling of accomplishment after separation. Additionally, the participants were found to use the Farsi terms that referred to their house as their own house after separation rather than their husband's house. It is worth noting that despite feeling empowered, one Iranian woman in this study continued to talk about the safety of her children after her divorce with the interviewer. Although the prioritization of the role of motherhood has been evidenced in previous studies of Iranian women in Iran (see Behboodi et al., 2017) and in the West (see Jalali, 2005), this study agrees with O'Reilly (2016) who stated that motherhood itself has become an index of oppression to control women around the world.

In contrast to the findings of much Western feminist research (e.g. Sandberg et al., 2019; Bermea et al., 2020), none of the 16 Iranian women in the current study talked about

emotional dependency on the perpetrators of IPA. It must be noted that this does not indicate that Iranian women do not feel the emotional attachment in an abusive relationship, rather, it once again portrays Iranian women's unique perspective of an abusive relationship in this study. The majority of Iranian women in this study referred to the freedom after divorce and how women's lives could change after they cut ties with the traditional gender roles. But the participants also noted that their freedom came with the cost of stigmatization and taboo from their community. The findings once again highlight resilience amongst Iranian women by demonstrating that the participants who rejected the traditional gender roles continued to focus on the opportunities that were available to them in the UK. It is therefore important to consider Iranian women's life as a combination of two distinct parts of before and after divorce.

7.2. Chapter summary

The findings illustrated that the patriarchal structures of Iran cast a shadow of male domination by enforcing rigid gender roles over Iranian women in this study. It was found that IPA is grounded in gender inequality and the construction of binary gender roles. This context created entitlement for men and vulnerability for Iranian women who participated in this study. In line with this, Iranian women attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their perception of IPA. The findings showed that Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles were likely to minimize, justify, and even romanticise IPA. Themes of victim blaming were also evident amongst women who endorsed the traditional gender roles. In addition, Iranian women who did not adhere to the traditional gender roles were perceived as unworthy women who lack values of a 'good' woman.

Those participants who rejected the traditional gender roles blamed the patriarchal structures of Iranian families, culture, religion, and Iranian legal system for creating barriers to their freedom. They believed that the social and cultural mindset regarding appropriate female social roles and the cultural attributes inhibited their right to the social and economical opportunities available to them in the UK. The findings of this study revealed that many Iranian women challenged gender stereotypes that reduce women to sexual objects, by actively searching for independence, thereby defying femininity as the only feature of their identity. Despite the oppressive attitudes and barricades that were created by the patriarchal systems, Iranian women in this study attempted to gain control in their lives and claim their rights by educating themselves and creating financial opportunities.

The findings revealed that Iranian women used various coping strategies to deal with IPA (such as denying certain aspects of oppression) which highlighted their resilience. In addition, they looked for opportunities to leave if they believed that their relationship was abusive. On that note, this study supports Bent-Goodley's (2007) suggestion that the considerations of culture as a frame for understanding experiences of, and responses to IPA ought not to always be interpreted as barriers or limitations, but rather, as sources of strength and resilience. Of course, being financially independent was an important aspect of freedom and independence. However, the cultural and wider societal barriers were major deterrents to leaving abusive relationships for Iranian women in this study. This suggests that although separation from husbands was seen to be an option to 'freedom', the cultural shame and stigma towards

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divorced women was an issue that followed Iranian women irrespective of the country of residence. Counselling and education have been known to help Iranian women, however, a good understanding of their culture and background acts as a necessity to understand IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter will integrate the findings from phase one and phase two of the research to draw on the conclusion. The aim of this research was to understand how Iranian women in the UK perceive IPA by men towards women, and what influences such perceptions. Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the research was divided into phase one (quantitative study) and phase two (qualitative study). Phase one relied on quantitative methods to identify the predictive variables that contribute to women's perception of IPA. The data gathered from quantitative study represented the foundation of this research as it helped construct semi-structured interviews for the qualitative study in phase two. The results from each phase were analysed separately before they were synthesised here, to generate a more comprehensive understanding of Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. A feminist standpoint was taken to maintain a congruent theoretical framework throughout the research.

8.1. Iranian women's perception of IPA

By comparing the perception of IPA between Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK, the present research was able to gain a general understanding of the similarities and the differences between the two groups. The results showed that the socio-demographic variables of age and education are able to predict perception of IPA amongst Iranian women. A key finding of phase one was that Iranian women had significantly better legal knowledge of IPA than non-Iranian women in the UK. However, Iranian women had significantly more accepting attitudes towards male violence towards women than non-Iranian women in the UK. Phase two of the research was able to explore IPA further by constructing semi-structured interviews based on the results from phase one. Stretching beyond Iranian women's socio-demographic variables, phase two showed that Iranian women's attitudes towards the traditional gender roles influenced their perception of IPA against women. To conclude, whilst certain socio-demographic characteristics were able to predict the perception of IPA, Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their understanding of IPA in the UK.

8.1.1 Living in patriarchal structures

Given that Iranian women have more legal rights and financial security in the UK, the findings from phase one raised the question of why over half of the participants had indicated the experience of at least one form of IPA in their current relationship. The findings also showed that even though two in three women had higher education in this study, that the institution of Iranian marriages had not changed to reflect greater gender equality amongst the participants after their migration to the UK. Instead, patriarchy had taken a different form to fit in with Iranian women's lives in the UK. The findings also indicated that the traditional gender roles continued to be reinforced to promote further oppression of Iranian women in this study. In the context of Iranian women, the traditional gender roles produced preconceptions about the attributes that were ought to be possessed by 'good' women. As 'good' wives, women in this study were expected by their community to put their husbands' needs above theirs and most importantly, submit to their husbands' sexual demands.

This study found that assigning Iranian women to an asexual status on the grounds of their gender denied them of having any sexuality. Therefore, Iranian women who were sexually dissatisfied in their marriage ended up feeling guilty because they were told that good wives should provide sexual service to their husbands. This study illustrated that the disproportionate expectation of Iranian women to submit to husband's sexual demands was to such extent that Iranian women were often blamed for their husband's infidelity. Similar findings emerged from Taherkhani's (2014) study who found that husband's infidelity is likely to humiliate Iranian women for being incompetent wives and for being unable to satisfy their husband's sexual needs. In support of Taherkhani's (2014) study, the findings revealed that over half of Iranian women in this study defined husband's infidelity as a form of IPA because Iranian women were blamed for lacking the ability to keep their husbands sexually satisfied. This is not to say that one definition of IPA should take any priority over the other, but that understanding women's perception of IPA from different a perspective can help mitigate unidentified forms of IPA against Iranian women in the UK. The findings also revealed that the fear of being labelled as incompetent wives who are unable to manage marriage life is a barrier to seeking help in Iranian women.

This study also found that the view of men as sexual beings who are unable to control their sexual urges normalised marital rape and increased the risk of vicimization amongst Iranian

women. The religious mandates and the Sharia law's emphasis on women's sexuality blurred the lines between women's personal choice and force in this study. In this study, marital rape was mostly seen as the man's lack of understanding about his wife and intimacy in marriage. For this reason, many Iranian women did not recommend taking legal actions against husbands, instead, they recommended counselling and education as the way forward for both Iranian men and women.

Since rape within intimate relationship is also normalised in the West (see Monson, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, & Binderup, 2000; Basile, 2002; Kuriakose, 2019), Denov and Piolanti (2019) suggested that culturally tailored response and the intervention strategies should be applied to ensure that victims of rape receive appropriate support. This study agrees with Denov and Piolanti's (2019) suggestion. Whilst criminalising marital rape is a crucial step to battling IPA against women, it will not have a full effect unless deeply rooted patriarchal norms are dismantled and professionals gain a better understanding of the context of Iranian women's lives. Iranian women will require courage to come forward with issues related to intimacy in marriage and their disappointment in the services may prevent them from seeking further help. This necessitates highly skilled professionals with a good level of understanding of IPA and sexual abuse to help Iranian victims feel supported to come forward. As Rahman (2018) stated, understanding religious and cultural views on sexuality and how they can affect sexuality in women is critical in opening lines of communication with women who suffer from this problem.

This study offered a rare opportunity for Iranian women to address the cultural difficulties that they encounter in relation to IPA in the UK. Researchers often focus on leaving abusive relationships as the key to empowering women (Choice & Lemke, 1997, Werner-Wilson, Zimmerman & Whalen, 2000). However, the findings demonstrated that despite their high level of resilience, leaving an abusive relationship came with many cultural and societal challenges for Iranian women in this study. The findings also highlight and add evidence to the important role played by specialist organisations and professionals in supporting Iranian women in the UK. Even though the findings showed that Iranian women tended to go to their mothers as the first point of contact, professional help was still considered by some of the participants. However, Iranian women were discouraged from seeking help if they felt that their cultural barriers were misunderstood by the professionals in the UK.

8.1.2. Attitudes towards traditional gender roles and perception of IPA

Despite the expectation of women to adhere to the traditional gender roles, not all Iranian women in this study agreed to these rules. The findings showed that some Iranian women endorsed whilst others rejected the traditional gender roles. Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles, were likely to minimise IPA against women. At times, IPA was even romanticised and perceived as an expression of love by men. The findings revealed that Iranian women who endorsed the traditional gender roles showed prejudicial attitudes towards women who did not adhere to the notion of ‘good’ women. In addition, themes of victim blaming, and normalisation of IPA were found amongst women who endorsed the traditional gender roles.

The findings indicated that Iranian women who rejected the traditional gender role referred to the expectations of being a ‘good’ woman as a burden of responsibilities that disempowered them. The lack of control and the expectations puts a strain on Iranian women in this study especially in circumstances where they are expected to make sacrifices in their marriage. Therefore, the traditional gender roles were perceived as barriers to women’s rights over their body, their independence, and their future goals. The findings highlight that Iranian women’s high educational attainment is a quest for empowerment in the patriarchal structure of their own family and Iranian society. A sense of empowerment and control was found in Iranian women who rebelled against patriarchal rules. In spite of their limited options, Iranian women in this study were empowered by the privileges that they had created for themselves within patriarchal structures. But denying some aspects of oppression took place as a way of coping with patriarchy in circumstances where they could no longer reclaim their right. By denying individualised oppression, Iranian women were able to continue with their fight against male domination and IPA.

The findings further support Gangoli et al. (2019) who suggested that both minority and majority (i.e., White English women) victimization is complicated by their status, patriarchal norms, and legal systems in the UK. Therefore, minority women are more vulnerable to specific forms of abuse that are specific to that culture (Gangoli et al., 2019). In the context of Iranian women, the findings indicated that the specific forms of abuse included various forms of coercive control, child marriage, and forced marriage. The findings also revealed that

Iranian women continued to remain in an abusive relationship because of the taboos and the stigma that followed them after divorce. It would be fair to say that radical feminism provides a theoretical lens that makes sense of the current findings. That is, Iranian women are born into a patriarchal structure where male domination and the traditional gender roles influence their choices and directions in life.

This study revealed that the perception of IPA can be best understood within a paradigm that acknowledges the gendered power relations. It can be concluded that whilst certain socio-demographic characteristics were able to predict perception of IPA, Iranian women's attitudes towards traditional gender roles had a fundamental role in shaping their understanding of IPA. Though of course, one must be wary of over-generalising the results of this study, it is hoped that the findings from present research can provide ground for future emancipatory approaches to IPA against women who migrate from strong patriarchal societies in UK. Criminalising IPA is a crucial step in battling abuse against women. Saying this, the criminalisation of IPA will not have a full effect unless deeply rooted patriarchal norms are dismantled and professionals gain a better understanding of the context of Iranian women's lives. In addition, cultural blindness to Iranian women's problems equips perpetrators with a powerful tool to oppress these women further. Therefore, the present research hopes to alter the perception of cultural stereotypes against Iranian victims of IPA and help identify those at higher risk of victimization. Finally, the present research does not intend to undermine IPA amongst non-Iranian women in the UK. It is hoped that the results of this study will instigate further research in this understudied area, particularly in the context of Iranian women.

8.2. Limitations

Although this research has provided important insights into the experience of IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK, the methodological challenges to conducting culturally sensitive research on IPA cannot be avoided. On a general level, one could say that the research's focus on heterosexual relationships has excluded homosexual Iranian women, so, the research could be oppressive in itself. However, this study argues that the present research aimed to focus on gender relations and the domination of Iranian women by men. Therefore, the focus on the heterosexual relationship was as imperative to the research. Besides, there was the likelihood of disengagement from the research by Iranian women due to the stigma attached to the LGBT women in the Iranian communities. As Abdi and Van Gilder (2016) found, Iranian women who identified as homosexual isolated themselves from Iranian communities in America because they were not accepted by their community. However, it is important that IPA research does not dismiss Iranian women with homosexual identities in the West and carries out research to identify the underlying similarities and differences amongst heterosexual and homosexual women's perception of IPA. Though this limitation can be applicable to both phases of the present research, phase one and phase two had their own limitations that are explained respectively.

Phase one (quantitative study)

One limitation of this study could be that the diversity within each group was neglected in favor of between group differences for the comparison between Iranian and non-Iranian women in the UK. Additionally, Iranian women in this study cannot be representative of other minority groups in the UK. Iranian women's unique perception of IPA was shaped by various aspects of their lives that may not be generalizable to other ethnic minority groups in the UK. Indeed, this study has not claimed that the sample of Iranian women could be representative of all ethnic minority women in the UK. However, certain parts of the findings may be applicable to other minority women who come from strong patriarchal cultures.

Whilst on the topic of a representative sample, it is important to mention that non-probability sampling is not good representation of the population. However, the choice of sampling in this research was an appropriate sampling method due to the limited access to the participants especially Iranian women in the UK.

Another limitation that can be referred to is the translation of the questionnaire which was initially developed in English and then translated to Farsi. Even though back-translation was used to ensure the accuracy of the questionnaire, there was still a chance of misunderstanding the questionnaire amongst non-Iranian women. There are several limitations with the use of questionnaires. As Czaja and Blair (2004) stated, using online questionnaire (i.e., Qualtrics) is an interactive design that ensures only those questions that are applicable to the participant (based on responses to previous questions) are presented. Although Czaja and Blair's (2004) suggestion gives credit to this study for using Qualtrics, it is important to note that many participants used the traditional method of pen and paper to complete the questionnaires. This means that many of the participants did not have the option of clicking on the skip button and this could have resulted in further complications. However, the participants' answers to the questions depended on more than just the method of administration of the questionnaire. As Vogt, Gardner and Haeffele (2012) noted, using pen and paper can encourage the participants to answer questions in the way that they think is socially appropriate.

Additionally, the participants may be reluctant to answer the questions with complete honesty or they may leave questions unanswered due to cultural reasons. For instance, the item of 'being forced to have intercourse' received the highest score under the category of 'I do not wish to disclose' from Iranian participants during this study. Luckily, the current research was able to explore this item further by using qualitative methods to build on the responses from phase one. This was important as the responses could have a significant impact on the validity of the findings. Another point worth mentioning is that the participants were limited to specific questions about IPA. Therefore, there was a chance that the questionnaire had missed on unidentified forms of IPA against women. This study assumed that Iranian women had similar perception of IPA as non-Iranian women in the UK and a questionnaire was developed based on that assumption. It later became clear that Iranian women's perception of several types of IPA was different to that of non-Iranian women. Nevertheless, phase two of the research which was the qualitative phase was able to overcome this limitation by allowing the participants to elaborate on their perception of IPA.

Phase two (qualitative study)

In phase two, the researcher conducted interviews with Iranian women about a vignette that depicted IPA against an Iranian woman in the UK. Arguably, interviews can prove to be time

consuming and complex. Much preparation was required prior to meeting; the times and places of the meetings had to be agreed with each participant, the interview questions needed to be pre-determined with appropriate probes and prompts noted down. Additionally, questions need to be crafted so that they yield not one-word answers, but enough information to understand the participants' perspective. A major limitation of this study could be the translation. Challenges in the interpretations and the representations of meaning in data are further complicated when cultural contexts differ, and inter-lingual translation is required (Nes et al., 2010). This study used two bilingual translators who were of Iranian origin and had good knowledge of both Iranian and British culture for phase one and phase two to overcome cultural differences. Still, there could have been instances where cultural contexts were not identified.

Referring to the use of vignettes in IPA research, Hughes and Huby (2004) stated that a frequent criticism regarding the use of vignettes is the unresolved debate surrounding the relationship between belief and action. This raises the important issue of how the reality of Iranian women was captured from the vignette. After all, there could have been a difference between what Iranian women believed they would do in a situation and how they behaved in real situation. Lastly, there are limitations to using template analysis that should be acknowledged. As discussed in the earlier chapters, template analysis has many features that demonstrate its suitability for the current research, especially, its use of *a priori* themes which allowed phase two to build a template based on the results from phase one. However, it is also important to mention that template analysis focuses on across case rather than within case analysis which inevitably loses the value of individual accounts of IPA.

8.3. Reflexive Statement

As mentioned in the previous chapters, reflexivity is crucial to feminist research as it is to most qualitative approaches in general. It also complies with the feminist ethics of care that focusses on power relations between the researcher and the participant. Reflexibility is the degree and the influence that the researcher exerts either intentionally or unintentionally on the research findings (Jootun, McGhee, & Marland, 2009). The aim of reflexivity is to be aware how the researcher's subjectivity impacts on the research and to demonstrate this to the reader to aid their judgement of the research process. This increases the credibility of the research whilst involving a process of on-going mutual shaping between the researcher and

the research (Attia & Edge, 2017). According to Edge (2011), there are two interacting elements of reflexivity: 1) prospective and 2) retrospective reflexivity. Prospective reflexivity is concerned with the effect of the researcher on the research. Within prospective reflexivity the researcher understands the importance of knowledge, feelings, and values he or she brings to research before reaching the findings. Retrospective reflexivity is concerned with the effect of the research on the researcher. Attia and Edge (2017) stressed that whilst prospective reflexivity is often referred to in literature in relation to the researcher's status, gender, or ethnicity, retrospective reflexivity is usually disregarded in research.

Speaking of reflexivity, Cooper and Rogers (2014) referred an 'insider' researcher as researcher who has good knowledge of the participants' background stating that the insider role is a powerful reflexive position which can assist in gaining insight into the participant's understanding of lived experience. However, a disadvantage to having an insider role is that the participants may not want their cultural views to be public (Attia & Edge, 2017). Furthermore, the insider role and the participant can take shared knowledge for granted and therefore not explore some aspects of the phenomenon under investigation as deeply as one should. To overcome such challenges, the present research reviewed IPA literature both in English and Farsi to ensure that the research was adapted and tailored to Iranian women's cultural needs. For example, the category of 'sexual orientation' was removed from the Iranian questionnaire due to the sensitivity around this topic. This process of going back and forth to ensure that the research was culturally appropriate, helped the researcher develop. This process added a new meaning to her experience as a researcher and helped the researcher gain deeper insight into her evolving research practice (retrospective reflexivity).

Whilst analysing phase two of the research, the researcher had applied her own subjective knowledge of IPA into the research. For example, the researcher used the item of stalking in the questionnaire with the assumption that Iranian women would also find this behaviour insulting. Realising that Iranians do not have a word for 'stalking', the researcher assumed that it was due to a patriarchal society that did not recognise this crime. Instead, she found that stalking can in fact be a symbol of love and affection between couples. Throughout the research, it became evident that the researcher's views were largely Western despite her Iranian heritage and her attempts to reduce researcher bias. Another point worthy to mention is the researcher's own experience of IPA in a previous relationship could have

influenced the interpretation of the data. Most importantly, the researcher began this research in hope of empowering Iranian women as ethnic minority women who are unaware of their rights in the UK with a tone of sympathy for these women as they were believed to be these helpless women who had migrated from a patriarchal culture where they had no rights. By the end of this research, it became clear that Iranian women not only knew their rights, but also asked and fought for their rights. The researcher noted down some her feelings during the data collection in phase one and phase two in line with ethics of care which can be found in Appendix 13.

8.4. Implications of the research

Feminism has gained international recognition for creating a platform upon which women fight against patriarchy. Hence, this research emphasises that gathering academic knowledge on its own is not enough and that feminist research is required to link into action. Such approach is likely to increase the social support services offered to minority women as well as addressing the cultural issues surrounding IPA, thereby enhancing the well-being of minority women. This study contributes to the growing body of literature by establishing an understanding of how cultural differences and social implications shape Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. The results not only identify potential problems that can put Iranian women in a vulnerable position, but also gives weight to research on the perception of minority women in the UK.

One of the most general implication of this research is that IPA should not be treated as a unitary phenomenon, rather, it should be treated as an international problem that is subjected to the cultural differences and individual interpretation of IPA. This means that what may be considered as IPA in one culture, may be interpreted as a different behaviour in another culture. Walby et al. (2017) asked for a shared definition of IPA in the UK in order to overcome this issue. However, the current results suggest that this may prove to be a challenging task if women perceive IPA differently. Instead, the results suggest that more focus should be on understanding the influence of patriarchy on women's perception of IPA. Whilst criminalising IPA is a crucial step to battling violence against women, it will not have a full effect unless deeply rooted patriarchal norms are dismantled and professionals gain a better understanding of the context of Iranian women's lives.

Other implications of this research suggest that the picture of minority women as passive victims of their cultures should not impede the Western understanding of their resilience and protective factors. For example, Mirrlees-Black (1995) stated that many women lack legal knowledge of IPA and may not see what happens to them as a crime. However, as the first in the field to study legal knowledge and IPA amongst Iranian women in the UK, this research stresses that Iranian women had a better understanding of their rights in the UK than non-Iranian women in this study. However, they remained in an abusive relationship due to a number of different reasons that included culture, religion, and other social circumstances. Therefore, instead of forcing Western views on what other women from different cultures should define as IPA, more focus should be on the understanding of what influences their perception of IPA.

Awareness of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in Iranian culture was an important part of this study. For instance, some of the participant believed that IPA including marital rape could be resolved with counselling and other family-oriented intervention methods. Therefore, researchers must understand the sensitivity around this subject especially with women who have been taught to keep their marital affairs private. The researcher's background and his/her good understanding of Iranian culture can allow future studies to have a greater insight into Iranian women's perception of IPA in the UK. Therefore, a good understanding of Iranian culture and background acts as a necessity to understanding issues surrounding IPA where Iranian women's less frequent use of formalized help seeking is not labelled strength, but as women' way of enduring IPA.

It is hoped that the present research can be a starting point for future research to investigate the complexity of gender norms and to build a framework that increases understanding of women's unique perspective of IPA. Overall, efforts should be made to capture and disclose the demographic diversity of IPA research samples by studying other ethnic minority women in the UK. This will yield answers to crucial IPA questions that are specific to an ethnic group and are still unidentified in the UK. Finally, as Mechanic and Pole (2013) highlighted, the deployment of culturally blind intervention efforts will likely fail. Mothers are usually the first point of contact for Iranian women even when they live in the UK. Future studies could investigate the role of mothers in Iranian women's lives when Iranian women face IPA to understand how strategies can be developed in the UK to help identify victims of IPA. Given

the historical stigmatization, oppression, and stereotyping of Iranian women, researchers are ought to endeavour to conceptualize how different aspects of religion, society, and culture contribute to IPA against women. Additionally, this study showed that patriarchal structures followed Iranian women as the concept of patriarchy also laid within their family unit even when their migration to the UK. Thus, further research should be conducted to identify other contributing socio-demographic variables to Iranian women's perception of IPA.

8.5. Practical applications

The present research offers insight into Iranian women's perception of IPA and highlights changes that can help identify Iranian women who are at higher risk of victimization in UK. It is important to understand that the stigmatization of divorced Iranian women in this study prevented some of the participants from leaving an abusive marriage. This implies that services should be aware of cultural issues that can appear after separation for Iranian women. Another important point that needs to be noted is that certain legal terms may deter Iranian women from seeking help as this study found that some participants did not wish to criminalize their husband's behavior. Therefore, flexibility in terminology when referring to different types of IPA especially with ethnic minority women is recommended.

Researchers and professionals in the field need to be aware that some Iranian women may seek help to rebuild their marriage rather than breaking their marriage. Some of the Iranian women who were victims of IPA in this study were more likely to opt for counselling and therapy, than seeking legal assistance. After all, the majority of the participants had good legal knowledge about IPA in the UK. However, the notion of 'independent' Iranian women could provide insight into the lives of Iranian women in this study who were not able to seek help due to their high educational attainment. It is therefore imperative to acknowledge Iranian women's endurance of IPA but be cautious about framing their endurance to avoid feeding into the notion of 'independent' Iranian women. Good knowledge of Iranian culture, especially expected gender roles, is also recommended to professionals.

Future intervention methods should offer counselling and sex educational programs tailored to Iranian men to help them overcome issues surrounding IPA. More educational programs should be offered to Iranian men so that they do not feel that the traditional image of an ideal man has been undermined by their wives if wives work outside of the house.

These men may use violence to improve their image through violence which was found to cause further problems in some of the Iranian families in this study. As mentioned earlier, leaving an abusive relationship is not as clear cut and it comes with many cultural challenges for Iranian women in the UK despite their high level of endurance. It is therefore important to considering women's life as two distinct parts of before and after divorce. Unlike most studies of IPA, Wager (2015) suggested restorative justice to help partners build a violence-free and fulfilling relationship. Restorative justice is often used to empower victims of crimes by allowing the victims to tell the offender about the impact of the crime on their lives. Wager (2015) suggested that an approach such as restorative justice sheds light on the women's commitment to an abusive relationship to be seeing as an asset to promote positive change rather than a psychological aberration that focusses on entrapment and hopelessness. Restorative justice may be applicable to Iranian families where there is a conflict between cultural expectations and traditional gender roles. However, the findings support Ahmad, Driver, McNally, and Stewart (2009) in suggesting that any prevention approach to address IPA should include tailored community education, social services to reduce vulnerability, and cultural competency of professionals.

Women's only groups should offer interpreters and translators to encourage Iranian women to engage in these groups. Al Fassi (2016) suggested that gender equity is only possible through increased societal acceptance of women's freedom in their everyday lives. And one way to increase Iranian women's freedom in the UK is to offer free educational programs as acquiring new skills can help Iranian women feel more independent and less trapped in a patriarchal structure. A comparison study between Iranian women in the UK and Iranian women in other Western countries such as Sweden would also be valuable to compare the help and support available to Iranian women in these countries.

Finally, the results offer a variety of recommendations for conducting more culturally competent IPA research starting from the formulation research question to the consideration of policy and practice implications of research findings. Future studies on women must reflect sensitivity to the range of diversity among women of varying nationalities and ethnicities in the UK. Future research may also consider ways to enhance the research process for both participants and researchers, culminating in more valid findings.

Services need to be responsive to the needs of not just Iranian, but all women and offer ongoing support during and after leaving an abusive relationship. Different categories for 'ethnicity' should be added to the UK's official statistics to prevent the underreporting of IPA as ethnic groups of Iranians in the UK remains incomplete and demands clarification. It can be very hard for a woman to admit to being in an abusive relationship and seek help, therefore, they should not feel pressured into either leaving or staying. Rather, support and intervention methods tailored to their cultural and personal needs must be organized. This necessitates services being provided by highly skilled professionals with a good level of understanding in this area.

9. References

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10. Appendices

Appendix 1. Categories of IPA and other items

Physical

1. Hitting and bruising- Hitting partner AND leaving marks her
2. Hitting no bruising- Hitting partner but NOT leaving marks on her
3. Punching no bruising- Punching partner but NOT leaving marks on her
4. Slapping no bruising- Slapping partner but NOT leaving marks on her
5. Kicking no bruising- Kicking partner but NOT leaving marks on her
6. Biting no bruising- Biting partner but NOT leaving marks on her
7. Spit- Spitting at partner
19. Strangling/choking or suffocating partner
21. Hitting his partner but apologising
25. Locking the partner in the house
27. Restricting partner's movement

Emotional

8. Verbally threatening to harm partner or children
9. Threatening to harm partner or children with an article
10. Threatening to take away partner's belongings
11. Threatening to take away children from partner
14. Telling partner where she can and can't go
15. Telling partner what to wear
16. Telling partner who to be friends with
17. Deciding when/which family member can be visited
23. Blackmailing partner about disclosure of intimacy
24. Searching in partner's belongings and devices
26. Embarrassing partner intentionally
31. Telling partner if she can wear makeup/nail polish
18. Shouting at partner
20. knowledge of security pins/passwords of his partner

Nazanin Shiraj

Sexual

12. Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to

Stalking

22. Secretly following or watching partner

Financial

29. Dealing with partner's Financial matters

Other

13. Cheating on his partner with another woman

28. Having an argument with partner

30. Sending sexy messages to other

Perception of Intimate Partner Abuse

INFORMATION SHEET (Questionnaire)

You are being invited to take part in a study about the perception of intimate partner abuse against women. Before you decide to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me if you wish. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to explore women's perceptions of intimate partner abuse perpetrated by a man against a woman.

Do I have to take part?

It is your decision whether or not you take part. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form, and you will be free to withdraw at any time before the analysis and without giving a reason. This means that you can withdraw your answers until end of April 2017.

Will my immigration status be affected if I participate in this study? (If applicable)

We are independent from the Home Office. This means that your details will stay confidential and your answers will not affect your immigration status.

What will I need to do?

If you agree to take part in the research you will be asked to complete a set of questions on a questionnaire that will take up to 20 minutes.

Will my identity be disclosed?

Nazanin Shiraj

All information disclosed within the questionnaire will be kept confidential and anonymous as I will not ask for your name and address (you will be identified by a number). Your identity will remain hidden throughout the study.

What will happen to the information?

All information collected from you during this research will be kept secure and any identifying material, such as names will be removed in order to ensure anonymity. It is anticipated that the research may, at some point, be published in a journal or report. However, should this happen, your anonymity will be ensured, although it may be necessary to use your words in the presentation of the findings and your permission for this is included in the consent form.

Who can I contact for further information?

If you require any further information about the research, please contact me on:

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher)

E-mail nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk

Telephone 01484 471337

Professor Nigel King (supervisor) n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540

Dr Tammi Walker (co-supervisor) email: t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 471460

درک از خشونت خانگی

برگه اطلاعات (پرسشنامه)

از شما دعوت می شود که در مطالعه ای راجع به درک از خشونت خانگی شرکت کنید. قبل از اینکه تصمیم بگیرید در این مطالعه شرکت کنید، حایز اهمیت است که بدانید چرا این پروژه تحقیقی به اجرا گذاشته شده و چه مسائلی را شامل می شود. لطفا زمانی را اختصاص دهید تا اطلاعات زیر را به دقت خوانده و در صورت تمایل با من تماس بگیرید. اگر هر بخشی واضح نبود و یا اگر شما به اطلاعات بیشتری نیاز داشتید لطفا با من در تماس باشید.

این کار تحقیقی راجع به چیست؟

هدف از این کار تحقیقی بررسی نگرش زنان نسبت به خشونت خانگی است.

آیا لازم است که من حتما مشارکت کنم؟

مشارکت کردن یا نکردن در این کار تحقیقی بسته به تصمیم شماست. اگر تصمیم گرفتید که شرکت کنید، از شما تقاضا می شود که فرم رضایت نامه را امضا کنید و شما مختار خواهید بود که هر زمان که تمایل داشتید تا قبل از مرحله تحلیلی این مطالعه بدون ارایه دلیل از مشارکت کناره گیری کنید. این بدین معناست که شما فرصت دارید تا پایان ماه آوریل ۲۰۱۷ پاسخهایتان را از این کار تحقیقی کنار بکشید.

آیا مشارکت من در این پروژه تحقیقی تاثیری در وضعیت اقامت من خواهد گذاشت؟ (اگر که سوال شامل حالتان می شود)

ما مستقل از وزارت کشور هستیم. این بدان معناست که مشخصات شما محرمانه خواهد ماند و پاسخهای شما تاثیری بر روند وضعیت اقامت شما نخواهد گذاشت.

چه کاری لازم است که انجام دهم؟

اگر پذیرفتید که در این پروژه تحقیقی شرکت کنید، از شما درخواست خواهد شد که به یکسری از سوالات که پاسخ به آنها حدودا ۲۰ دقیقه زمان می برد جواب دهید.

آیا هویت من مشخص خواهد شد؟

تمام اطلاعات ارایه شده در پرسشنامه محرمانه و بی ذکر نام خواهد بود چرا که من اسم و آدرس شما را نخواهم پرسید. (هویت شما تنها با یک عدد مشخص می شود). هویت شما در طول زمان این کار تحقیقی پنهان باقی خواهد ماند.

اطلاعات چگونه نگهداری خواهند شد؟

تمام اطلاعات جمع آوری شده از شما در زمان این کار تحقیقی در جای امنی باقی خواهد ماند و هر گونه اسناد هویتی همانند اسم حذف خواهد شد تا اطمینان از پنهان بودن نام افراد حاصل شود. پیش بینی می شود که این کار تحقیقی در برهه ای از زمان به صورت گزارش یا مقاله به چاپ خواهد رسید. با این حال، در صورت چنین اتفاقی، هویت شما پنهان خواهد ماند. گرچه ممکن است که از کلامات شما به عنوان منبع در ارایه نتایج استفاده شود، که اجازه شما برای این امر در فرم رضایت نامه منظور شده است.

برای اطلاعات بیشتر با چه کسی میتوانم تماس بگیرم؟

برای اطلاعات بیشتر در مورد این کار تحقیقی با من تماس بگیرید. اطلاعات تماس من هست:

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher)

E-mail nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk, Telephone 01484 471337

Professor Nigel King (supervisor) n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540

Dr Tammi Walker (co-supervisor) email: t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 471460

Appendix 3. Consent form

A. Consent form in English

CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Perception of Intimate Partner Abuse

It is important that you read, understand and sign the consent form. Your contribution to this research is entirely voluntary and you are not obliged in any way to participate, if you require any further details please contact your researcher.

I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this research as outlined in the information sheet version 1, dated 01.03.2017

I am 18 years or over

I consent to taking part in this study

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time before analysis without giving any reason

I give permission for my words to be quoted (by use of pseudonym/numerical value)

I understand that the information collected will be kept in secure conditions for a period of 10 years at the University of Huddersfield

I understand that no person other than the researcher/s and facilitator/s will have access to the information provided.

I understand that my identity will be protected by the use of pseudonym/numerical value in the report and that no written information that could lead to my being identified will be included in any report.

If you are satisfied that you understand the information and are happy to take part in this project please put a tick in the box aligned to each sentence and print and sign below.

Signature of Participant:	Signature of Researcher:
Print:	Print:
Date:	Date:

One copy to be retained by Participant / one copy to be retained by Researcher)

B. Consent form in Farsi

فرم رضایت نامه

عنوان پروژه تحقیقی: درک از خشونت خانگی

مهم است که شما فرم رضایت نامه را خوانده، متوجه شده و امضا کنید. مشارکت شما در این پروژه کاملاً اختیاری است و شما به هیچ وجه مجبور به شرکت در این پروژه نیستید. اگر به جزییات بیشتری نیازمندید، لطفاً با محقق این پروژه تماس بگیرید.

من کاملاً متوجه ماهیت و اهداف این کار تحقیقی شده‌ام که در برگه اطلاعات، نسخه ۱، مورخه ۱۳۰۱۷.۲.۱ تنظیم شده است

- من ۱۸ یا بالای ۱۸ سال هستم
- رضایت می‌دهم که در این پروژه شرکت کنم.
- واقفم که حق کنار کشیدن از این کار تحقیقی را در هر زمانی قبل از شروع مرحله تحلیلی کار - بدون نیاز به رایه. دلیل - دارم

اجازه می‌دهم که به کلمات من ارجاع شود (با استفاده از اسم مستعار/ و یا عدد)

واقفم که اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده در شرایطی امن به مدت ۱۰ سال در دانشگاه هادرسفیلد نگهداری خواهد شد. م

واقفم که هیچکس جز محقق/محققان و دست‌اندرکاران این پروژه به اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده دسترسی نخواهند داشت.

واقفم که هویت من با استفاده از نام مستعار/ویا عدد در گزارش محفوظ خواهد ماند و هیچ اطلاعات نوشته شده‌ای که منجر به آشکار شدن هویتم شود در هیچ گزارشی گنجانده نخواهد شد.

اگر که شما اطمینان به درک اطلاعات ارایه شده و رضایت خاطر از مشارکت در این پروژه را دارید، لطفاً در مربعی که روبروی هر کدام از جملات گنجانده شده علامت زده، این صفحه را پرینت کرده و جدول پایین را امضا کنید.

امضا شرکت کننده:	امضا محقق:
_____	_____
امضا:	امضا:
_____	_____
تاریخ:	تاریخ:
_____	_____

یک نسخه نزد شرکت کننده باشد/یک نسخه نزد محقق.

Appendix 4. Questionnaire

A. Questionnaire in English

You

1. Nationality (please tick)
Iranian (born in Iran) Iranian (born in UK)- Go to Q5 British - Go to Q5
2. Ethnicity
Asian White Mixed race Other
3. Migration status (Please tick if applicable)
 Claiming asylum (awaiting response) rejected asylum limited visa leave to remain
4. Age upon arrival in the UK (if applicable)
5. Years of being in the UK (if applicable)
6. Date of birth
7. Religion
8. Marital status (please tick)
9. Single Married Separated Widowed Divorced
other(please state) ...
10. Highest level of education obtained
 No education Primary high school college university degree PhD/doctorate
11. Occupation
12. Your income
 Under £10000 £10000-£15000 £15000-£25000 £25000-5000 Over 50000

Your partner

1. Age upon arrival in the UK (if applicable)
2. Years of being in the UK (if applicable)
3. Date of birth
4. Religion
5. Highest level of education obtained
 No education Primary high school college university degree PhD/doctorate
6. Partner's income
 Under £10000 £10000-£15000 £15000-£25000 £25000-5000 Over 50000

Please circle one (Yes, No, I don't know) in each column. The last column is about your experience and is completely voluntary. Please note that the following questions focus on men as perpetrators of intimate partner abuse (domestic violence).

	I would say that this is intimate partner abuse	I believe that under the British law, this act would be classed as intimate partner abuse	I have experienced this act in current/previous relationship (optional)
Hitting partner <u>AND</u> leaving marks her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Hitting partner but <u>NOT</u> leaving marks on her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Punching partner but <u>NOT</u> leaving marks on her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Slapping partner but <u>NOT</u> leaving marks on her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Kicking partner but <u>NOT</u> leaving marks on her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Biting partner but <u>NOT</u> leaving marks on her	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Spitting at partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Verbally threatening to harm partner or children	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Threatening to harm partner or children with an article used as a weapon	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure

e.g. a knife, tool, telephone, chair.			I do not wish to disclose
Threatening to take away partner's belongings	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Threatening to take away children from partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Having sex with partner when she doesn't want to	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Cheating on his partner with another woman	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Telling partner where she can and can't go	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Telling partner what to wear	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Telling partner who to be friends with	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Deciding on when and which family member can be visited	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Shouting at partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose

Strangling/choking or suffocating partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Having knowledge of security pins and/or passwords of his partner even when she doesn't want to	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Hitting his partner but apologising/crying afterwards stating that he is sorry	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Secretly following or watching partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Blackmailing partner about disclosure of their relationship (e.g. threatening to tell people that that they had sex)	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Searching in partner's belongings and devices	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know I do not wish to disclose
Locking the partner in the house to prevent her from leaving	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Embarrassing partner intentionally	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Restricting partner's	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure

movement (e.g. tying her up or grabbing her hands to restrict her movement)			I do not wish to disclose
Having an argument with partner	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Dealing with partner's Financial matters	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Sending sexy messages to other women without partner's knowledge	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I don't know	Yes No I am not sure I do not wish to disclose
Telling partner when and where she can wear makeup/nail polish			

Optional- If you decided to fill out the experienced column, was you experience based on your

Current relationship Previous relationship Both

Please circle one of the following for each question (remember, there is no right or wrong answer).

Strongly disagree Disagree Not sure Agree Strongly agree
 1 2 3 4 5

I would not blame a man for hitting his partner if...

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. She shouts or threatens him..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. She swears at him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. She nags him about his salary/family/other | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. She cheats on him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. She doesn't respect his family (verbally or physical) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. She flirts with another man | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. She wears revealing clothes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. She refuses to have sex with him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. She hits him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. She doesn't do the household chores | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. She spends too much money | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. She doesn't listen to him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

13. He is drunk and is not aware of his actions	1	2	3	4	5
14. He is unwell/ill	1	2	3	4	5
15. she provokes him/winds him up (give an example below)	1	2	3	4	5

Slip

If you are happy to be contacted for the follow up of this study, please fill out this slip and return to the researcher with your questions.

Your unique identification code:

Your phone number:

Your email:

B. Questionnaire in Farsi

در هر ستون، لطفاً دور یکی از گزینه های (بله، نخیر، نمیدانم) خط بکشید. ستون آخر مربوط به تجربه شخصی شماست و کاملاً اختیاری است. لطفاً توجه داشته باشید که سوالات پیش رو تنها روی مردان به عنوان شریک زندگی و عاملین اصلی خشونت خانگی تمرکز دارد.

من خود این عمل را در رابطه کنونی/گذشته خود تجربه کرده ام. (اختیاری)	به نظر من، در قانون انگلستان، این عمل به عنوان خشونت خانگی شمرده می شود	به عقیده من این خشونت خانگی است	
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که دست بزن دارد و جای ضربه هایش روی تن زن نمایان است.
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که دست بزن دارد ولی جای ضربه هایش به روی تن زن <u>نمایان نیست</u>
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که مشت میزند ولی جای مشت‌هایش روی بدن زن مشخص <u>نیست</u>
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که سیلی میزند ولی جای سیلی‌هایش روی صورت زن نمایان <u>نیست</u>
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که لگد میزند ولی جای لگدهایش روی بدن زن نمایان <u>نیست</u>
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	شریکی که گاز می گیرد ولی جای دندان‌هایش روی بدن نمایان <u>نیست</u>
بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	مردی که به روی شریکش تف می کند

شریکی که کلاما تهدید به آسیب زن یا کودکش می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
شریکی که با استفاده از وسیله ای همانند چاقو، ابزار کار، تلفن، صندلی، زن و یا فرزندانش را تهدید به آسیب جسمی می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که شریکش را به تسخیر اموالش تهدید می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که شریکش را تهدید به گرفتن (حضانت) فرزندان می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که رابطه جنسی را خارج از خواسته زن به او تحمیل می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که با زن دیگری به شریکش خیانت می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که به شریکش می گوید که کجا می تواند یا نمی تواند برود	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که به شریکش می گوید چه بپوشد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که به شریکش بگوید با چه کسانی می تواند دوستی کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم

مردی که تصمیم می گیرد کی و کدامیک از اعضای فامیل می توانند با آنها معاشرت کنند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که به سر شریکش فریاد می کشد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که دستانتش را دور گردن شریکش می گیرد تا او را خفه کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که اعداد رمز و یا رمزهای عبور شریکش را می داند حتی زمانی که او نمی خواهد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که شریکش را می زند اما پس از آن عذرخواهی/گریه می کند و اضرار پشیمانی می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که پنهانی شریکش را تعقیب می کند یا او را زیر نظر دارد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که شریکش را در مورد افشای روابطشان تهدید عاطفی می کند (به عنوان مثال، او را تهدید می کند که از داشتن رابطه جنسیشان مردم را مطلع خواهد کرد)	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که اسباب و وسایل شریکش را جستجو می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که شریکش را در خانه زندانی می کند تا مانع از ترک او شود	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم

مردی که به عمد شریکش را خجالت زده می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که مانع حرکت شریکش می شود (به عنوان مثال، به جایی می بندتش یا دستانش را می گیرد تا حرکاتش را محدود کند)	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که با شریکش بحث و جدل می کند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که با امور مالی شریکش سروکار دارد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که پیامهای جنسی به زنان دیگر می فرستد بدون اینکه شریکش مطلع باشد	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم
مردی که به شریکش می گوید کی و کجا می تواند آرایش کند/لاک بزند	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم	بله نخیر نمیدانم مایل به پاسخ نیستم

اختیاری - در صورتی که شما تصمیم گرفتید که ستون تجربه شخصی را هم پر کنید، تجربه شما بر اساس کدام رابطه بوده؟

هر دو

رابطه گذشته

رابطه فعلی

لطفاً برای هر سوال دور یکی از گزینه های زیر خط بکشید (در نظر داشته باشید که پاسخ درست یا نادرست وجود ندارد).

کاملاً مخالفم ۵ مخالفم ۴ مطمئن نیستم ۳ موافقم ۲ کاملاً موافقم ۱

من مردی را برای زدن شریکش سرزنش نمی کنم اگر که زن ...

۱. برسر مرد فریاد بکشد یا او را تهدید کند..... ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵

۲. به او فحش دهد ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۳. سر او در مورد درآمدش/خانواده اش/و یا مسایل دیگر غر بزند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۴. به او خیانت کند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۵. به خانواده او (چه کلامی چه فیزیکی) احترام نگذارد..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۶. با مردان دیگر لاس بزند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۷. لباسهای باز بپوشد ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۸. از رابطه جنسی با او امتناع کند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۹. او را بزند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۰. کارهای خانه را انجام ندهد..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۱. ولخرجی کند..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۲. به حرف او گوش ندهد ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۳. مرد مست باشد و واقف به اعمالش نباشد..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۴. مرد مریض احوال/بیمار باشد..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵
۱۵. خشم مرد را تحریک کند/اعصابش را بهم بریزد (در پایین مثال بیاورید)..... ۱ ۲ ۳ ۴ ۵

لطفا پاسخ خود را به سوال آخر توضیح دهید

.....

اگر که رضایت دارید تا با شما در ارتباط با این کار تماس حاصل شود، لطفا ایمیل و شماره تماس خود را در پایین ذکر کنید.

.....

.....

Appendix 5. Debrief

A. Debrief in English

Debrief

Thank you for taking part in this study.

We ask that you do not discuss the nature of the study with others who may later participate in the study, as this could affect the validity of our research conclusions.

If you are happy to be contacted as a follow up to this study, please leave your email and/or phone number on the bottom of the questions sheet. For any questions or concerns, you are welcome to talk with project researcher Nazanin Shiraj (nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk), or with the project supervisors professor Nigel King (n.king@hud.ac.uk) and Dr Tammi Walker (t.walker@hud.ac.uk) of the University of Huddersfield's Human and Health Sciences Department.

If your participation in this study has caused you concerns, anxiety, or otherwise distressed you, you may contact the following sources.

Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

<http://ikwro.org.uk/>

Victim Support

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Women Centre

<http://womencentre.org.uk/services/domestic-violence-support-team/>

Women's Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Domestic Violence Helpline

<http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk>

از مشارکت شما در این کار تحقیقی سپاسگزارم.

از شما خواهشمندیم که راجع به ماهیت این کار با دیگرانی که ممکن است در آینده مشارکت کنند صحبت نکنید، چرا که این امر می تواند اثرات منفی را در دقت نتیجه گیری این کار تحقیقی بگذارد.

اگر که مایل هستید در ارتباط با این کار با شما تماس گرفته شود، لطفا ایمیل/ویا شماره تماس خود را در انتهای پرسشنامه وارد کنید. برای هر سوال یا مسیله ای از شما تقاضا می شود که با محقق این پروژه - نازنین شیراج - یا با اساتید راهنمای پروژه - دکتر ماریا ایونو و دکتر لورا همنند - از دانشکده روانشناسی دانشگاه هادرسفیلد تماس حاصل کنید.

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher)

E-mail nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk

Telephone 01484 471337

Professor Nigel King (supervisor) n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540

Dr Tammi Walker (co-supervisor) email: t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484471460

اگر که مشارکت شما در این کار منجر به ایجاد نگرانی، اضطراب یا ناراحتی از این قبیل در شما شده، می توانید با مراکز زیر تماس بگیرید .

Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation

<http://ikwro.org.uk/>

Victim Support

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Women Centre

<http://womenscentre.org.uk/services/domestic-violence-support-team/>

Women's Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Domestic Violence Helpline

<http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk>

Are you an *Iranian woman*?

Are you 18 or over?

If you have answered yes to the above then you should know that the department of Psychology from the University of Huddersfield is looking for **Iranian women** to participate in a study.

Our **AIM** is to look at the perception of Iranian women on intimate partner abuse. All you have to do is to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire can be completed in English or Farsi (depending on your preference). You can also choose to complete it online or on paper.

For the English link please go to

https://huddersfieldbss.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gRA6CiDVhPIfEF

For the Farsi version of the questionnaire please go to

https://huddersfieldbss.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aaefiruYhNgeVZH

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR HOME OFFICE STATUS WILL NOT BE AFFECTED BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY.

If you would like to take part or require more information about the research, do not hesitate to contact me or my project supervisors on:

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher)

E-mail: nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 471337

Professor Nigel King (supervisor) n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540

Dr Tammi Walker (co-supervisor) email: t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484471460

آیا شما یک خانوم ایرانی در انگلستان هستید؟

آیا سن شما 18 سال یا بیشتر می باشد؟

اگر پاسخ شما به سوالهای بالا مثبت می باشد ، مفتخرم که به اطلاع برسانم که بخش روانشناسی دانشگاه هادرزفیلد مشتاق به همکاری با خانمهای ایرانی در رابطه با امور مطالعاتی در خصوص بررسی تجارب و شرایط حاکم بر خانمهای ایرانی در رابطه با سوء استفاده های اجتماعی در رابطه مشترک (همسر/پارتنر) می باشد.

به جهت تسهیل در تکمیل و جمع آوری نظرات شما عزیزان امکانات مربوط به تکمیل فرم پرسشنامه بصورت (فارسی یا انگلیسی) و همچنین (آنلاین یا چاپ شده) فراهم گردیده است.

(شایان ذکر است نظرات ارائه شده فقط و فقط جهت بررسی مطالعاتی دانشگاه هادرزفیلد استفاده و محفوظ می باشد و هیچ تاثیری بر شرایط اقامتی شما نخواهد داشت.)

- لطفاً جهت انتقال به فرم فارسی گزینه زیر را انتخاب نمائید.

https://huddersfieldbss.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aaefiruYhNgeVZH

- لطفاً جهت انتقال به فرم انگلیسی گزینه زیر را انتخاب نمائید.

https://huddersfieldbss.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gRA6CiDvHPIfEF

-با کمال افتخار آماده پاسخگویی به هرگونه سؤال احتمالی از طریق مسیرهای ارتباطی زیر میباشم:

شماره تماس: 01484 471337

آدرس ایمیل: nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk

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28 August 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

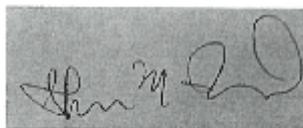
School Research Ethics Panel (SREP) Submission

Applicant Name: Nazanin Shiraj (PhD Candidate)
School of Human and Health Sciences
University of Huddersfield

Research Title: "Intimate Partner Abuse: comparing the perception of
Iranian and British women living in UK Cultural Variations
amongst women living in the UK - Phase 1"

Reference: SREP/2017/012 & SREP/2017/012_Rev1_250818

I confirm that the above titled research project received ethical approval from the School of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel (SREP), University of Huddersfield on 29 March 2017, with a further revision approved on 16 November 2018.



Dr Shaun McDaid
Deputy Chair, School Research Ethics Panel (SREP)
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Professor Rob Gray CBE DL COM FRSE FRS
MBA DSc CFug FRET F RFA
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive



A. Vignette in English

Perception of Intimate partner abuse against women

Haamed and Samira are a young couple in their late 20s who live in the UK and have been married for 1 year. Haamed owns his own business whilst Samira is a qualified GP who has not worked since her marriage to Haamed. Before meeting Haamed, Samira inherited some money from her uncle which Haamed now keeps in his own account as he believes that Samira will not be able to save any money. The other week, Haamed initiated sexual intercourse with Samira which she refused. Haamed had sex with Samira anyway saying that she was not fulfilling her role as his wife. This made Samira upset, but she didn't tell anyone about how she felt and separated her bed from her husband's.

Haamed has a friend called Navid who often comes to visit him. Recently, Haamed has felt that his wife and Navid are perhaps too close at times. Last night, Haamed arrived home and found Navid at his house talking to Samira who was wearing a revealing dress and was laughing and joking with Navid. Later that night, Haamed had an argument with Samira and told her he believed that Samira was having an affair with Navid. Samira denied having an affair. Samira told Haamed that she could wear what she wanted to and that he should not tell her who she could talk to. This angered Haamed and he slapped Samira for the first time. Haamed apologised after a few minutes of slapping Samira. However, Samira left the house and went to her mother's house. By the time she got to her mother's house, there were no red marks from being slapped on her face. Samira's mother advised her to go back to her husband and work on her marriage.

دید و نظر در مورد خشونت خانگی بر علیه زنان

حامد و سمیرا زوجی جوان و حدوداً ۳۰ ساله هستند که در انگلستان زندگی می‌کنند و حدود یک سال است که ازدواج کرده‌اند. حامد صاحب بیزینس خودش است و سمیرا با اینکه مدرک دکترای عمومی دارد از وقتی با حامد ازدواج کرده است کار نکرده است. سمیرا قبل از اینکه با حامد آشنا شود پولی از عموی خود به ارث میبرد که در حال حاضر در دست حامد است زیرا حامد باور دارد که سمیرا نمیتواند پول جمع کند. هفته ای قبل حامد قصد همبستری با سمیرا را داشت اما سمیرا نمی‌خواست. اما در هر حال حامد با او همبستری کرد و به سمیرا گفت که او به عنوان یک همسر نقشش را اجرا نمی‌کند. این سمیرا را ناراحت کرد و باعث شد که او تختش را از شوهرش جدا کند.

حامد دوستی دارد به نام نوید که بعضی وقت‌ها به دیدارش می‌آید.

جدیدا حامد بعضی وقت‌ها فکر می‌کند که همسر او و نوید زیادی به هم نزدیک‌اند. دیشب وقتی حامد به خانه آمد نوید را در خانه اش دید که با همسرش صحبت می‌کند و آنها با هم شوخی و خنده می‌کنند در حالی که همسرش لباسی تن نما بر تن دارد. کمی دیرتر آن شب حامد با سمیرا بحث کرد و به او گفت که باور دارد که سمیرا دارد به او خیانت می‌کند با دوستش نوید. سمیرا این ادعا را رد کرد و به حامد گفت که هر چه بخواهد می‌پوشد و حامد حق ندارد که به او بگوید با کی حرف بزند و با کی حرف نزند. این سخنان حامد را عصبانی کرد و برای اولین بار به سمیرا سیلی زد. بعد از چند دقیقه حامد از سمیرا به خاطر سیلی که به او زده بود عذرخواهی کرد اما سمیرا خانه را رها کرد و به خانه مادرش رفت. تا سمیرا به خانه مادرش رسید هیچ جای قرمزی از سیلی حامد روی صورتش نمانده بود. مادر سمیرا به او نصیحت کرد که به خانه شوهرش برگردد و روی ازدواجشان کار کنند.

Appendix 9. Vignette questions

1. In your opinion, what makes a woman like Samira stay at home and not work after her marriage?
2. What do you think about Haamed keeping Samira's inheritance money from her?
3. In your opinion, does Samira have the right to refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband? Explore the answer.
4. Why do you think that Samira may not feel comfortable in disclosing her experience of intercourse with her husband to anyone?
5. Do you know of anyone or any organisation that Samira could talk to about her experience of intercourse with her husband?
6. Do you think that Haamed was right in raising his hand on his wife?
7. In your opinion, can slapping the partner be called IPA if it does not leave any marks?
8. Would you call it IPA if the partner later apologises about his behaviour?
9. What would you suggest to Samira if she asked for your advice on what she should do?
10. Who else could she talk to if she needed advice about her marriage?
11. What do you think about Samira's mother advising her to go back to her husband and work on her marriage?
12. Do you think that Samira's age (she is in her 20s) could influence how she reacts to her husband's wishes? If so, how?
13. Could Samira have been in a different situation if this scenario had taken place in Iran?

Iranian women's views on intimate partner abuse in the UK

INFORMATION SHEET (version 3, 29.12.18)

You are being invited to take part in a study about the perception of intimate partner abuse perpetrated by a man against a woman. Before you decide to take part, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me if you wish. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the study about?

The purpose of this study is to explore women's perception of intimate partner abuse against women perpetrated by a man against a woman.

Why have I been selected for the study?

You have been selected to take part in this study after you stated that you were willing to be contacted for the second stage of the study in your questionnaire. The interview will give you an opportunity to share your views on the topic of intimate partner abuse. It is your decision whether or not you take part. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form, and you will be free to withdraw at any time before the analysis and without giving a reason. This means that you can withdraw your statement until end of April 2019.

Will my immigration status be affected if I participate in this study?

We are independent from the Home Office. This means that your details will stay confidential and your answers will not affect your immigration status.

What will I need to do?

If you agree to take part in the research you will be asked to take part in a one to one interview with the researcher that will last around 90 minutes. The interview will ask about your views on different scenarios in a relationship.

Will my identity be disclosed?

All information disclosed in the interview will be kept confidential and anonymous as I will not ask for your details. Your identity will remain hidden throughout the study. However, if you reveal an immediate and significant risk of harm to yourself or others, I will need to consult my supervisors as to whether we need to let appropriate services know.

What will happen to the information?

A voice recorder will be used to record the interviews with the participants. However, all of the retrieved information will be stored in a locked drawer where only the researcher will have access to and/or will be stored on the password-protected University systems. All information collected from you during this research will be kept secure and any identifying material, such as names will be removed in order to ensure anonymity. It is anticipated that the research may, at some point, be published in a journal or report. However, should this happen, your anonymity will be ensured, although it may be necessary to use your words in the presentation of the findings and your permission for this is included in the consent form.

If you require any further information about the research, please contact me on:

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher) nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk

Professor Nigel King (supervisor) n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540/01484 472812

Dr Tammi Walker (supervisor) email: t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 471460

B. Information sheet in Farsi

دید زنان ایرانی نسبت به خشونت خانگی در انگلستان

شما دعوت شدید که در یک تحقیق که در مورد خشونت خانگی مردان علیه زنان است شرکت کنید. قبل از اینکه در این تحقیق شرکت کنید مهم است که بدانید تحقیق در مورد چیست و چه اتفاقی می افتد. لطفا اطلاعات زیر را با دقت بخوانید و اگر می خواهید می توانید در موردش با من صحبت کنید. اگر چیزی را متوجه نشدید یا سوالی داشتید حتما بپرسید.

این تحقیق راجب چی است؟

دلیل این تحقیق پیگیری کردن دید زنان در مورد خشونت خانگی مردان علیه زنان است

چرا من برای این تحقیق انتخاب شده ام؟

شما برای این تحقیق بعد از آنکه گزینه «من می خواهم در قسمت دوم این تحقیق شرکت کنم» را در پرسشنامه اول انتخاب کردید. این مصاحبه به شما این فرصت را می دهد که دید خود را در مورد خشونت خانگی بگویید. این کاملا انتخاب خود شما است که در این مصاحبه شرکت کنید و یا نکنید. اگر تصمیم گرفتید که شرکت کنید از شما درخواست خواهد شد که فرم رضایت را امضا کنید و شما هر وقت که بخواهید می توانید از این تحقیق کنار بکشید بدون هیچ دلیلی قبل از روز آنالیزم و تحلیل. این یعنی شما تا آخر آوریل ۲۰۱۹ می توانید کنار بکشید

آیا شرکت در این تحقیق روی وضعیت پناهندگی من تاثیر خواهد گذاشت؟

ما مستقل از هم آفیس هستیم و این یعنی اطلاعات شما محرمانه خواهد بود و پاسخ های شما در وضعیت پناهندگی شما تاثیری نخواهد گذاشت.

من باید چه کاری انجام دهم؟

اگر قبول کنید که در این تحقیق شرکت کنید از شما درخواست خواهد شد که در یک مصاحبه یک به یک با پژوهشگر شرکت کنید که حدود ۹۰ دقیقه طول خواهد کشید. در این مصاحبه از شما در مورد سناریوهای مختلف یک رابطه سوال خواهد شد

آیا هویت من افشا خواهد شد؟

تمام اطلاعات و پاسخ های شما در این مصاحبه محرمانه خواهد ماند و من از شما اطلاعات شخصی نخواهم گرفت و تمام اطلاعات شخصی شما در طول مدت تحقیق پنهان خواهد ماند. اما اگر شما به اطلاع من برسانید که به

خودتان و یا کس دیگری بلافاصله قصد صدمه زدن را دارید من مجبورم به سوپروایزرم و مکان های مناسب اطلاع رسانی کنم.

اطلاعات من چه خواهد شد؟

یک دستگاه صدا ضبط کن استفاده خواهد شد تا مصاحبه را ضبط کند اما اما می اطلاعاتی که در این مصاحبه دریافت می شود در یک کشو قفل شده خواهد ماند که فقط شخص پژوهشگر به آن دسترسی دارد و یا در سیستم دانشگاهی که دارای پاسورد است خواهد بود. تمامی اطلاعاتیکه از شما در این مصاحبه گرفته می شود محرمانه خواهد ماند و هرگونه اطلاعاتی شخصی مانند اسامی حذف خواهد شد تا استعار بودن شما حفظ شود. پیش بینی میشود که زمانی این پژوهش در مجله ای چاپ شود و در این صورت همچنان محرمانه بودن اطلاعات شما حفظ خواهد شد. البته ممکن است از کلمات شما استفاده شود در ارایه دادن نتایج این پژوهش که در این صورت از شما در رضایت نامه درخواست موافقت خواهد شد.

اگر در مورد این پژوهش اطلاعات بیشتری می خواهید لطفا با من تماس بگیرید

Nazanin Shiraj (researcher) nazanin.shiraj@hud.ac.uk Professor Nigel King (supervisor)
n.king@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 472540/01484 472812 Dr Tammi Walker (supervisor) email:
t.walker@hud.ac.uk Tel: 01484 471460

Appendix 11. Consent form

A. Consent form in English

CONSENT FORM

Iranian women's views on intimate partner abuse in the UK

Consent Form (Version 3, 29.12.18)

It is important that you read, understand and sign the consent form. Your contribution to this research is entirely voluntary and you are not obliged in any way to participate, if you require any further details please contact your researcher.

I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this research as outlined in the information sheet version 1, dated 29.12.2018.

I am 18 years or over.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time before analysis without giving any reason.

I understand that the information collected will be kept in secure conditions for a period of 10 years at the University of Huddersfield.

I understand that no person other than the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the information provided.

I understand that my identity will be anonymous throughout the study and the reporting of findings.

If you are satisfied that you understand the information and are happy to take part in this project, please put a tick in the box aligned to each sentence and print and sign below.

<u>Signature of Participant:</u>	<u>Signature of Researcher:</u>
<u>Print:</u>	<u>Print:</u>
<u>Date:</u>	<u>Date:</u>

One copy to be retained by Participant / one copy to be retained by Researcher)

B. Consent form in Farsi

فرم رضایت نامه (Version 3, 29.12.18)**عنوان پروژه تحقیقی: درک از خشونت خانگی**

مهم است که شما فرم رضایت نامه را خوانده، متوجه شده و امضا کنید. مشارکت شما در این پروژه کاملاً اختیاری است و شما به هیچ وجه مجبور به شرکت در این پروژه نیستید. اگر به جزییات بیشتری نیازمندید، لطفاً با محقق این پروژه تماس بگیرید.

من کاملاً متوجه ماهیت و اهداف این کار تحقیقی شده‌ام که در برگه اطلاعات، نسخه، مورخه تنظیم شده است (Version 3, 29.12.18)

- من ۱۸ یا بالای ۱۸ سال هستم
- رضایت می‌دهم که در این پروژه شرکت کنم.
- واقفم که حق کنار کشیدن از این کار تحقیقی را در هر زمانی قبل از شروع مرحله تحلیلی کار - بدون نیاز به رایحه. دلیل - دارم

اجازه می‌دهم که به کلمات من ارجاع شود (با استفاده از اسم مستعار/ و یا عدد)

واقفم که اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده در شرایطی امن به مدت ۱۰ سال در دانشگاه هادرسفیلد نگهداری خواهد شد. م

واقفم که هیچکس جز محقق/محققان و دست‌اندرکاران این پروژه به اطلاعات جمع‌آوری شده دسترسی نخواهد داشت.

واقفم که هویت من با استفاده از نام مستعار/ویا عدد در گزارش محفوظ خواهد ماند و هیچ اطلاعات نوشته شده‌ای که منجر به آشکار شدن هویت من شود در هیچ گزارشی گنجانده نخواهد شد.

اگر که شما اطمینان به درک اطلاعات ارایه شده و رضایت خاطر از مشارکت در این پروژه را دارید، لطفاً در مربعی که روبروی هر کدام از جملات گنجانده شده علامت زده، این صفحه را پرینت کرده و جدول پایین را امضا کنید.

امضا شرکت کننده:	امضا محقق:
_____	_____
امضا:	امضا:
تاریخ:	تاریخ:
_____	_____

یک نسخه نزد شرکت کننده باشد/یک نسخه نزد محقق.

28 August 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

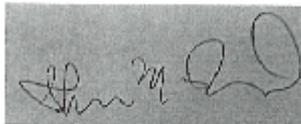
School Research Ethics Panel (SREP) Submission

Applicant Name: Nazanin Shiraj (PhD Candidate)
School of Human and Health Sciences
University of Huddersfield

Research Title: "Perception of intimate partner abuse against women: a comparison study of Iranian and non-Iranian women residing in the UK – Phase 2"

Reference: SREP/2019/011

I confirm that the above titled research project received ethical approval from the School of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Panel (SREP), University of Huddersfield on 1 February 2019.



Dr Shaun McDaid
Deputy Chair, School Research Ethics Panel (SREP)
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Dr Fereshteh Ozgen CBE, UCL, CMI FREng
NBA, ES: CEng, FIET, RHEA
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive



Appendix 13. Reflexivity

Phase one

Today when outside when I was recruiting outside of Embassy, most Iranian women were asking if I had voted and that they would not participate in my study if I don't vote for Rouhani. I found that so strange, but I voted for him anyway. I really did not want to make this research political, but the post brought a completed questionnaire from the Iranian Embassy. One of the women who works at the embassy had filled out the questionnaire. This made me feel very uneasy purely because I do not know what they will have in their system next to my name now. I probably never visit Iran again for safety reason.

Phase two

Today, when interviewing Farah She cried as she talked about her abusive ex-husband. I faced an ethically important moment that forced me to contemplate and consider the tensions between protecting and empowering participants, I felt bad for making her upset and asked if she wanted to stop the interview.

Interviewer: Do you want to stop the interview?

Farah: No, I'm OK. (Farah continues crying as she is wiping her tears).

Interviewer: How about we take a short break?

Farah: OK, that's a good idea.

After 20 minute break, Farah asked to continue with the interview.

Interviewer: Are you sure you want to continue? Because you don't have to.

Farah: Yes, I want to talk about it.

Nazanin Shiraj

Farah she said that she felt better afterwards. All the participants were thankful to me for involving them in the research. They said that they were happy that someone was finally listening to them. One of them even asked her daughters and grandchildren to sit at the table whilst she was being interviewed. She really enjoyed her interview and asked me to let her know if I ever publish my work. I noticed that Iranian women use the word “woman” for a girl who loses virginity, I so I had to be mindful when referring to them.

11. Tables

Table I. ANOVA for Iranian women

ANOVA for Iranian women’s socio-demographic variables and their perception of IPA

Variable	Definition of IPA				Legal knowledge of IPA				Experience of IPA				Justification of male violence			
	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>
<i>Participant</i>																
Marital status	2	3.85	0.23	0.02*	2	3.19	0.21	0.04*	2	18.61	0.56	<.001*	2	0.20	0.05	0.82
Religion	2	0.51	0.01	0.61	2	1.59	0.03	0.21	2	7.32	0.15	<.001*	2	1.94	0.04	0.15
Education	2	2.94	0.04	0.05*	2	2.27	0.03	0.10*	2	0.81	0.01	0.45	2	2.66	0.03	0.07*
Income	2	1.49	0.02	0.23	2	6.16	0.09	0.003**	2	1.82	0.03	0.17	2	1.43	0.02	0.24
<i>Partner</i>																
Religion	2	1.83	0.04	0.17	2	4.72	0.09	<.001*	2	0.08	0.01	0.92	2	0.61	0.01	0.55
Education	2	1.69	0.03	0.19	2	1.25	0.02	0.29	2	1.97	0.04	0.15	2	0.62	0.01	0.54
Income	2	1.65	0.03	0.20	2	3.09	0.06	0.05*	2	0.91	0.02	0.41	2	1.60	0.03	0.21

Note. DV= Breadth of definition of IPA, Legal knowledge of IPA, Experience of IPA, Justification of male violence.

Nazanin Shiraj

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .1$

Table II. Pearson correlation for Iranian women

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all continuous variables in the sample of Iranian women (N= 239)

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Definition	Legal knowledge	Experience	Attitudes
Age	38.49	11.99	-.17*	0.12	0.06	-0.14
Age of arrival to the UK	26.29	12.13	-0.12	-0.02	0.04	0.05
Length of years in UK	11.80	8.85	-0.03	0.20*	0.02	-0.10
Husband's age	43.8	11.84	-0.14	0.09	-0.02	-0.10
Husband's age of arrival to the UK	31.39	9.62	-0.12	-0.22*	-0.09	0.04
Husband's length of years in UK	14.11	11.85	0.03	0.26**	0.04	-0.06

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table III. T-test for Iranian women

III (a). T-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst Iranian women testing for residency status

Variable	Residency status						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	Asylum/visa			Settled status			T	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Definition of IPA	24.49	4.32	41	23.5	7.47	98	-1.02/2.99	0.79	137
Legal knowledge	16.05	8.8	41	18.8	8.69	90	-6.04/.50	- 1.67	129
Experience of IPA	7.7	7.78	33	8.14	8.09	84	-3.70/2.81	- 0.27	115
Attitudes	69.43	10.08	42	68.17	10.11	104	-2.40/4.91	0.68	114

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

III (b). T-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst Iranian women testing for Language of questionnaire

Variable	Language of questionnaire						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	English			Farsi			T	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Definition of IPA	24.63	6.23	49	23.69	7	104	-1.29/3.17	0.83	151
Legal knowledge	17.87	7.97	47	18.45	9	99	-3.59/2.43	-0.38	144
Experience of IPA	6.93	5.81	42	8.53	9	86	-4.54/1.33	-1.08	126
Attitudes	68.66	10.65	56	68.16	10	106	-2.90/3.90	0.29	160

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

III (c). T-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst Iranian women testing for ethnicity

Variable	Ethnicity						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	Asian			Other			T	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Definition of IPA	23.49	6.86	105	25.1	5.6	48	-	-1.43	151
Legal knowledge	17.98	8.97	104	18.98	7.55	42	-	-0.68	144
Experience of IPA	7.38	7.61	88	9.4	8.4	40	-	-1.35	126
Attitudes	67.5	11.61	111	70.16	6.75	51	-	-1.83	160

Note. Statistical significance: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table III. ANOVA for non-Iranian women

ANOVA table for non-Iranian women's socio-demographic variables and their perception of IPA

Variable	Definition of IPA				Legal knowledge of IPA				Experience of IPA				Justification of male violence			
	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	η^2	<i>P</i>
<i>Participant</i>																
Religion	2	5.54	0.07	.005**	2	5.60	0.07	.004**	2	0.87	0.10	0.42	2	7.29	0.08	.001***
Education	2	3.82	0.04	0.024*	2	4.31	0.04	.015*	2	1.66	0.02	0.19	2	0.94	0.01	0.39
Income	2	2.65	0.03	0.07	2	1.78	0.02	0.17	2	0.12	0.01	0.89	2	2.49	0.02	0.09
<i>Partner</i>																
Religion	2	6.40	0.13	0.003**	2	5.03	0.10	.009**	2	3.21	0.07	.045*	2	3.31	0.07	.041*
Education	2	1.47	0.03	0.24	2	0.19	0.03	0.83	2	0.42	0.01	0.66	2	0.12	0.01	0.88
Income	2	1.18	0.02	0.31	2	0.31	0.01	0.73	2	0.53	0.01	0.59	2	0.63	0.01	0.53

Note. DV= Breadth of definition of IPA, Legal knowledge of IPA, Experience of IPA, Justification of male violence.

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table V. Pearson correlation for non-Iranian women

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all continuous variables in the sample of non- Iranian women (N= 222)

Variables	<i>Standard</i>		Definition	Legal knowledge	Experience	Attitudes
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>deviation</i>				
Age	31.70	19.63	0.13	0.21**	0.12	0.02
Age of arrival to the UK	18.35	6.86	.52**	0.17	0.33	0.46**
Length of years in UK	8.31	10.66	0.40*	0.03	0.35	0.52**

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table VI. *T*-test for non-Iranian women

VI (a). *T*-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst non-Iranian women testing for residency status

Variable	Residency status						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	Asylum/Visa			Settled Status			T	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Definition of IPA	26.46	4.47	13	26.43	5.39	69	-3.19/3.14	-0.02	80
Legal knowledge	17.23	8.71	13	20.48	7.72	63	-1.54/8.03	1.35	74
Experience of IPA	4.91	2.34	11	6.18	5.53	55	-2.13/4.68	0.75	64
Attitudes	70.17	5.27	12	70.70	6.25	76	-3.26/4.32	0.28	86

Note. Statistical significance: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

VI (b). *T*-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst non-Iranian women testing for sexual orientation

Variable	Sexual orientation						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	Heterosexual			Other			T	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Definition of IPA	26.39	4.74	147	27.45	2.44	20	-2.41/0.30	-1.57	165
Legal knowledge	19.65	7.30	147	19.55	7.45	20	-3.35/3.64	0.06	165
Experience of IPA	5.54	5.44	147	7.95	10.76	20	-5.37/0.54	-0.99	165
Attitudes	70.47	7.1	147	71.20	4.18	20	-3.94/2.48	-0.45	165

Note. Statistical significance: **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001

VI (c). *T*-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst non-Iranian women testing for marital status

c. *T*-test and descriptive statistics for perception of IPA amongst non-Iranian women testing for marital status

Variable	Marital status						95% CI for Mean Difference		
	Married			Single			t	df	
	M	SD	n	M	SD	N			
Definition of IPA	26.21	5.76	28	26.27	4.92	60	-2.42/2.31	-0.04	86
Legal knowledge	19.79	7.88	28	18.90	7.23	60	-2.50/4.27	0.52	86
Experience of IPA	4.93	3.62	28	5.55	7.22	60	-3.50/2.52	-0.43	86
Attitudes	68.71	11.68	28	70.12	7.80	60	-5.59/2.78	-0.67	86

Note. Statistical significance: **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001