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**Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers: exploring lived experiences,
intersectionality and support provided by South Asian women's organisations.**

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Abstract

Despite considerable attention paid to lone motherhood in academic research and policy there has been a neglect and resulting invisibility of Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim (PBM) lone mothers. Indeed, lone motherhood literature has largely focused on employment and less so on everyday lived experiences, barriers and opportunities. Similarly, despite grassroots South Asian (SA) women's organisations being documented as a crucial voice for marginalised women, there is little known about the support these provide to lone mothers. Thus, conducting research in these areas is a sociological priority.

Drawing on an intersectionality lens and informed by works of black feminist scholars (e.g. Crenshaw 1991; Phoenix 1994; Yuval-Davis 2006; Bhopal 2009), the study on which this thesis is based involved participant observations conducted during eight months of fieldwork at a SA women's organisation in Northern England (SAW's Place), alongside 30 interviews with lone mothers, organisation workers and external partners.

The thesis unpacks the 'closed box' of the often homogenised 'lone mother' (Duncan and Edwards 1999) and 'SA women' categories. Some of the key topics and themes examined include the diverse routes to lone motherhood; stigma; social policy related needs and barriers (e.g. migration, employment, housing and financial barriers) and the support and resources offered by women's organisations like SAW's Place. In this way the thesis contributes to developing an intersectional theoretical approach to examining PBM lone mothers' struggles, agency, resilience, experiences of exclusion, recovery and adaptation. It demonstrates how participants' positionalities as women cut across racialised, ethnic, cultural, religious, class and migrant identities to shape experiences of lone motherhood, highlighting commonalities and differences. It also contributes to challenging perceptions surrounding PBM women, families and traditional discourses of patriarchy, and illustrating the continued vital need of SA women's organisations. The thesis delivers a range of methodological insights relating to reflexivity, researcher positionality (challenging the insider-outsider dichotomy) and conducting reciprocal research with SA women and organisations.

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Terminology

black. Within British sociology of race the term 'black' has been highly contested. It has previously been used as a political category by African and Asian groups in the UK to highlight the disadvantages they face in relation to White groups (Modood 1994), as well as in relation to women organising. It reflected a shared experience of historical exploitation, structural disadvantage and discrimination (Sudbury 2001; Alexander 2009; Brah 2009). The applicability of the term black to Asian people has been criticised. Modood (1994) argues that it prevents a full articulation of oppression, overlooking diversity in experiences, cultural difference, specific needs and concerns of the Asian community. Asian's are particularly racialised through culture, ethnicity and religion, the term black ignores this (Modood 1994; Alexander 2009). African groups have also been a focus of cultural racism, especially in relation to family, absent fathers and lone parenting (Song and Edwards 1997; Reynolds 2001). Although black is now viewed as more central to the African identity, it still has resonance in this study in relation to shared historical experiences of racism, political exclusion and racialisation, the emergence of black feminism and African and South Asian women organising.

Izzat. This Urdu word refers to honour, respect, dignity and chastity. Within South Asian culture this is particularly referred to in relation to protecting female sexuality and women's honour, which is attached to male protection and underpins "ideal notions of femininity" (Guru 2009, p. 286).

Lone mothers. Reflecting official definitions, lone mothers are defined as those who do not live with a partner (divorced, separated, widowed or never-married) and have dependent children (Churchill 2007; McCarthy 2012; ONS 2019).

Migrant brides. Those who migrate to a country after marriage where their husband is situated (Charsley 2005b; Alexander 2013). They are also often considered as 'dependent migrants'; "those whose migration is undertaken in order to follow a person on whom they are economically dependent" (Evans and Bowlby 2000, p. 473). The thesis will use the term migrant bride.

Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim. Another shared identity amongst participants in this study is a Muslim identity. It should be noted that not all Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are Muslim (e.g. Christian minorities). Differences and similarities in experience amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers will be illustrated.

Sabar. An Arabic and Urdu word, *sabar* is often translated as 'patience'. It is presented as an Islamic virtue and moral dimension (Mahmood 2005; Qureshi 2013; 2018). Although it can have "different dimensions, meanings and uses" (Qureshi 2013, p. 123). In this study *sabar* refers to women's agency, perseverance, strength and resilience as well as patience. Chapter 4 provides an in-depth account of *sabar* in relation to participants' experiences.

South Asian. This is referred to those whose "cultural and familial backgrounds originate from the subcontinent of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, including people from East Africa." (Anand and Cochrane 2005, p. 196; Marshall and Yazdani 2000). This category incorporates people of different religious backgrounds (Anand and Cochrane 2005). This term will be referred to here in relation to existing literature; 'South Asian' is used in many studies to refer collectively to those of Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds. South Asian identities have often been defined by culture and represented as homogenous (Salway 2007; Alexander 2009). These broader groups will be unpacked in this study.

Abbreviations

CAB - Citizens Advice Bureau

DA - domestic abuse

DV - domestic violence

ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages

PBM - Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim

SA - South Asian

SAW's Place - South Asian Women's Place (pseudonym for case study organisation)

UC - Universal Credit

Chapter 1: Introduction

The experience of lone motherhood amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim (PBM) women has been a largely neglected area of research within sociological studies. Interrupting the academic silence in this area is a sociological priority, as not doing so risks ignoring the specific experiences, needs and interests of PBM lone mothers and denying their presence in British society. This research could not be timelier as PBM women continue to face marginalisation, racialised and gendered assumptions about their identity, for example being viewed as lacking agency, informed by "dominant whitewashed constructions" (Bowler and Razak 2020, p. 64) and face specific disadvantage due to their accumulating intersectional identities. The extra layer of barriers, disadvantage and opportunities they face as lone mothers is under-researched. Furthermore, despite grassroots South Asian (SA) women's organisations being crucial voices for marginalised women in the past (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985; Guru 2009), little is known about their role in supporting lone mothers. Drawing on an intersectionality approach and research conducted with lone mothers, workers and key stakeholders at a SA women's organisation the thesis addresses these interlinking research gaps.

This opening chapter provides a background, rationale and summary of the study. It is organised into four sections: biography and research context; research aims, questions and contributions; an introduction to SAW's Place, the setting in which this research is situated and finally the chapter structure of the thesis.

1.1 Biography and research context

The interest in exploring PBM lone motherhood reflected my own biography and experiences of being brought up in a lone mother household. Looking back, I remember the struggles and barriers my mother faced as a lone mother such as improving her English skills, managing money and striving to provide me with a good upbringing. There were also opportunities that came with being a lone mother, like feeling a sense of independence. I also remember occasionally accompanying my mother during the school holidays to a local advice centre and waiting what seemed like an endless wait to me for our turn to be supported with a query or

issue, for example sorting out utility bill payment methods. Over time we learned together to address such tasks ourselves. For me, what came across was her strength as a lone mother. Often my mother and I would discuss how there seemed to be a gradual increase in marital breakdown and lone motherhood amongst Pakistani women within our wider social circle of friends and family, and in our immediate surroundings. This personal observation can be reflected in wider trends of PBM lone motherhood emerging in the literature.

Mokhtar and Platt (2009, p. 97) have given the example of Pakistani lone parents as a group in which lone parenthood is "of a rarity", situating them as 'new' lone parents. This is because the stability and sanctity of marriage is argued to be highly valued amongst SAs (Yeung and Park 2016). Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw (2014) argue that, in the past, despite facing marriage difficulties, divorce was previously uncommon and resisted, and women worked to improve their situation within marriage. However today, particularly amongst young people, divorce is increasingly supported if marriage does not work out (Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw 2014). Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw (2014) state there is an increasing trend of divorce and marriage instability amongst British Pakistanis. Furthermore, statistics from the Labour Force Survey (January-March 2018) reveal that 14.3% of Pakistani and 9.6% of Bangladeshi family households are lone mother headed (ONS 2018). Additionally, Lindley, Dale and Dex (2004) have pointed out that the vast majority of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers have been married and tend to be widowed, divorced or separated, rather than single. This is a clear indication of the prevalence of lone motherhood within these ethnic groups yet there is a lack of research exploring their experiences of lone motherhood. Mokhtar and Platt's (2009) quantitative study and Sinha's (1998) study focusing more broadly on Asian lone mothers are two notable exceptions, though the latter is now dated.

Looking towards broader lone parent statistics, overall lone parents make up around a quarter of families with children in England, and single parents are still largely women, nine in every ten (Rabindrakumar 2018). Lone parenthood is not permanent, lasting around five years, according to Rabindrakumar's (2018) report for the single parents charity, Gingerbread. Women, however, face longer periods of lone parenthood than men. Thus, lone motherhood can be seen as a stage within the life course. Individuals move in and out of lone motherhood. The prevalence of lone motherhood amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi family households is

significantly lower than its prevalence in Black, African, Caribbean, Black British and White family households (ONS 2018). However, statistics accounting for lone mother headed households can omit those that "live in multi-generational households or can be at odds with mothers' own understandings of their family, which can stretch beyond households and generations" (Churchill 2007, p. 172; McCarthy 2012). Marital status and residency of 'dependent' children has been central to policy formation and official definitions of lone parents (Churchill 2007; McCarthy 2012; ONS 2019). Therein, lone parents are defined as those who do not live with a partner, including being divorced, separated, widowed or never-married. Family and household are often conflated (Churchill 2007). Mothers' everyday understandings of family can be diverse. For example, McCarthy (2012) states that lone mothers felt their children's fathers were 'like family' due to their continued involvement after separation. Additionally, SA households can consist of extended families. Thus, a lone mother family unit can be nested within a couple headed household, for example a lone mother living with her parents, and so missed off in statistics accounting for 'households'. In summary, this means lone motherhood numbers are underestimated to some extent.

Much of the focus on lone motherhood in the UK is situated in the social policy discipline, particularly in relation to employment and the welfare state. Lone motherhood studies have been criticised for not exploring maternal worlds on lone mothers' own terms (Bell and Ribbens 1994; Head 2005). Previous studies have overwhelmingly focused on lone motherhood amongst those from White ethnic backgrounds (e.g. Churchill 2007; Carroll 2018) or ethnic background has not been distinguished (e.g. Miller and Ridge 2013). However, Duncan and Edwards (1999) have been central in beginning to racialise lone motherhood by including Black, African-Caribbean and west African women in their comparative study. Yet ethnic diversity within the broader category of 'lone mother' has largely been ignored and PBM lone motherhood has not been addressed. This might be, in part, due to the stereotypical perceptions surrounding Muslim women and the traditional marginalisation of women of colour in gender debates and family research. There is growing critique that race and ethnicity are missing dimensions within the social policy discipline, with calls for greater attention to be paid to both (see Meer 2020).

Early advocates of this include Duncan and Edwards (1999, p. 4) who have criticised research for presenting lone mothers as a homogenous group with “similar social positions, social relations and social behaviours”. Instead, they argue that different social groups of lone mothers ‘behave’ differently and lone motherhood alone does not determine their positions. Thus it is acknowledged in this study that, although PBM women's positionality as lone mothers will expose them to experiences in common with other lone mothers like, for example, policy pressures to commit to employment, their lived experiences can be shaped by other collective identities that they have (Duncan and Edwards 1999; May 2010), namely their ethnic, racial, cultural, gendered, classed and religious identities. These intersecting dimensions of identity will create distinct disadvantages, barriers, opportunities and subjective lived experiences of lone motherhood. Therefore, the thesis draws upon an intersectionality lens, informed by key black feminist thinkers (Crenshaw 1991; Brah, 1996; Yuval-Davis 2006; Collins and Bilge 2016), to understand PBM lone mothers' experiences as situated in and shaped by their intersectional collective identities and the wider structures of power associated with these, for example, patriarchy and the welfare state. It will contribute to illustrating similarities and differences between and within the broader category of PBM lone mothers, comparing experiences of participants with those of lone mothers and PBM women from previous studies. This will account for what McCall (2005) terms intracategorical complexities. The thesis provides a significant and much needed contribution to understanding PBM lone mothers' lived experiences and how such experiences can be better understood via an intersectionality approach.

Significantly, the thesis encompasses two often marginalised, stigmatised and over generalised categories or identities: the lone mother and the PBM woman. Lone mothers have been portrayed as a social threat and problem in British society and social policy discourses (Duncan and Edwards 1999). They have been stigmatised and portrayed negatively through popular media (Carroll 2019). Similarly, PBM women and migrants have been marginalised in academic research, often considered as 'hard to reach' groups (Bhopal 2010; Turner and Wigfield 2016). Their voices have been neglected except in specific areas where they have been over-researched, for example employment, migration and marriage. Beyond academia, in the public domain, they are frequently at the centre of government papers and policies in relation to being vectors of integration, particularly through an emphasis on an

inability to speak English. Examples of this are the Casey Review (Casey 2016), which has been highly criticised for targeting Muslim communities (BBC 2016), and the Integrating Communities Strategy Green Paper (MHCLG 2018). For instance, continuing earlier constructions of Muslim communities (Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013), Casey (2016, p. 169) presented them as living 'parallel lives' as well as highlighting English proficiency issues amongst (Pakistani and Bangladeshi) Muslim women and also stating that "a shared language is fundamental to integrated communities". Continuing this narrative, Sajid Javid (then secretary of state) presented a story of translating for his mother due to her difficulties with English, arguing this illustrated "issues such as language skills create barriers to integration" (MHCLG 2018, p. 9). Such narratives reinforce lazy stereotypes (see Chapter 2, for an in-depth English language and integration discussion). Through "the lens of race, ethnicity or religion, migrant or minority women are ambiguously positioned as the personification of cultural difference, located within and contained by the boundaries of 'community'" (Alexander 2013, p. 337). Importantly, through giving voice to PBM women and exploring their experiences of lone motherhood, the study will contribute to contesting these politicised and racialised stereotypical perceptions and presenting the strength and agency of PBM women.

One way in which the construction of PBM women has been challenged is in relation to SA women organising and coming together (SA incorporates women of different ethnic and religious backgrounds including PBM women, see Terminology). SA women's organisations and black feminists have previously challenged the cultural and sexist oppression women face within the SA community and the racist oppression within British society. Together, women have put issues such as domestic violence (DV), forced marriage, racism and workers' rights on the political agenda (Brah 1996; Takhar 2003; 2011; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012). Thus, such grassroots organisations have been a crucial voice for SA women situated in England. Additionally, in relation to lone motherhood, when advocating for more research to be conducted privileging the voices of Black lone mothers, Song and Edwards (1997) have argued for it to be conducted in collaboration with the black organisations supporting them. Support networks and organisations can be a crucial factor in lone mothers' lives and even more so for migrant women who may have a lack of family support in the UK and have difficulties in navigating wider society and structures. How central are SA women's

organisations to PBM lone mothers' lives, what forms of support are offered and how do they facilitate women's agency? This is a significant research interest of this study.

1.2 Research aim, questions and contributions

Overall, the research aims to explore the lived experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women who are widowed, separated, divorced or never-married. It focuses on the barriers and opportunities of lone motherhood and how PBM lone mothers' experiences are similar or different to those of lone mothers in previous studies in relation to their intersecting identities. The role of SA women's organisations in their lives will also be explored. The specific research questions which will be addressed are:

1. What are the lived experiences, perspectives, barriers and opportunities faced by PBM lone mothers?
2. Which identities and wider structures become salient in shaping their experiences of lone motherhood?
3. How useful is an 'intersectionality' framework for exploring experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women?
4. In what ways do SA women's organisations and their partners support and facilitate the agency of PBM lone mothers and what interventions are required?

In addressing these research questions the study will contribute to enhancing understanding and knowledge of PBM lone motherhood, which is under-researched and under-theorised. It will illustrate the unique lived experiences of lone motherhood amongst this group, about which little is known. The thesis asserts the importance of recognising lone motherhood amongst PBM women and their experiences that are shaped by their intersecting identities and positionalities. It will advance race, ethnicity and religion as important dimensions which should be accounted for in lone mother and social policy studies. It will also contribute to theoretical knowledge on intersectionality, assessing its usefulness and enhancing its applicability as an analytical framework to capture 'lived experiences'. Going beyond academic contributions, it will also address specific policy-related needs of PBM lone mothers derived from actual lived realities. The study will also present and inform practices of SA

women's organisations while demonstrating the important role they play in PBM women's lives. More broadly it will inform and contribute to gender, race and ethnicity, policy and family studies.

To address these research questions and contributions a single-case study research design was employed (Yin 2014) providing an in-depth exploration of a SA women's organisation and the lone mothers who access its services, situated in a Northern English city. The pseudonym SAW's Place is given to the organisation. Overall, seventeen months were spent at SAW's Place. This consisted of two months of initial volunteering, eight months conducting fieldwork and further volunteering spread over seven months. During fieldwork I conducted participant observations with lone mothers by taking on a volunteer role. There were three elements to this: providing one-to-one support to Pakistani lone mothers in advice sessions, attending an employment course and observations with a Bangladeshi worker supporting Bangladeshi lone mothers at advice sessions. I attended two advice sessions a week (one with Pakistani women and one with Bangladeshi women). Each session lasted between two to five hours depending upon how busy the service was on the day. Overall a total of approximately one hundred and fifty-eight hours were spent conducting fieldwork (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2, for an in-depth breakdown). Alongside observations a total of thirty interviews were conducted: sixteen with PBM lone mothers, eight with SAW's Place workers, two with trustees and four with external partners who represent organisations that worked with SAW's Place in some capacity. Thus, a substantial mixed methods approach was taken. An introduction to the research setting is provided below.

1.3 SAW's Place

At the edge of the city centre stands, what seems to be, a small building from the outside, a sometimes lively and at other times quiet advice centre and often a lifeline for SA women. It is called SAW's Place. Seated in the waiting area by the reception are women, some of whom may be lone mothers, waiting to join classes, courses or to gain support from advocates. Situated in small shared offices are advice workers who call the reception or come across to the waiting area to welcome the next woman who requires support. SAW's Place is a warm, comfortable, friendly, confidential and safe space in which women can gain help in sorting

and overcoming the everyday issues and queries they are faced with, and in which they can share a small story about their day amongst a sometimes busy and struggling life. It is in this setting that the research took place and I met the lone mothers and workers around which the thesis is centred.

SAW's Place has been located within its community for over twenty-five years. It initially began through a group of SA women working with the local community who were seeing many Pakistani women being referred requiring help and support. They saw that a service tailored to the needs of SA women was required. They later decided to set up a centre for SA women with the support of the local council and professional women. Thus, SAW's Place was set up to serve and support SA women in the city. Initially there was resistance. The organisation was seen as a threat to the local community, being a bad influence on young women and breaking families. This is something experienced more widely by SA women's organisations (Takhar 2003). It was seen as threatening traditional cultural values and norms. As a result, the organisation had to gain the trust of the community overtime, showing that they were there to inform and facilitate agency amongst SA women but to also challenge negative practices such as domestic abuse (DA) and DV in the SA community.

Today SAW's Place is a well-established community organisation, located at the intersection of women and ethnic minority organisations and the wider voluntary sector. It continues to run for SA women by SA women, embedded in a wider tradition of women's activism (Takhar 2011). SAW's Place aims to support all women of the SA diaspora living in the city, including Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian, migrant and British born women. However, their service users are largely women who have migrated to England, quite often through marriage. It supports SA women across the city in which it is located who live in the 30% and 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country (DCLG 2019). The city has an established Pakistani community and growing Bangladeshi community. Over three-hundred women use the service a year. SAW's Place runs with various pots of funds (Harries et al 2020) including the local council and lottery charity funds. The organisation also works to raise money for its own hardship fund for women facing destitution. It does this through small initiatives like selling donated clothes, for example. However, SAW's Place has also been facing increasing cuts to funding over the years. This reflects a picture of recession, "a climate of pronounced austerity" (Featherstone

et al 2012, p. 177) and emphasis on competitiveness and market based mechanisms hitting the wider voluntary sector in which it is located. More specifically small organisations and those that represent marginalised and "BME" groups have been disproportionately disadvantaged (Harries et al 2020). Under the guise of 'austerity', services and provisions are increasingly being taken away from those that need them the most (Jones et al 2016; Harries et al 2020). SAW's Place continues to adapt, survive and thrive in an increasingly hostile environment and negative political backdrop towards racialised minorities and migrants, including Muslim women, and views that it is wrong to prioritize the needs of a specific group over another (Harries et al 2020) while not accounting for the structural disadvantages they face.

SAW's Place offers a wide range of services and courses which are constantly reviewed and adapted to the needs of service users over time. There were a range of courses and sessions running during my time at SAW's Place including employment and well-being courses. English classes run throughout the year including both formal ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes and informal conversation based classes. They also run services specifically targeted at elderly women and young girls. They do not have services specifically dedicated to lone mothers, although they make up a significant proportion of their service users. What remains core to the organisation is its advice sessions which run across the week, on-site at SAW's Place, as well as through outreaches in deprived areas of the city. For example, there is a specific outreach for the Bangladeshi community who are largely situated in a different part of the city to SAW's Place. Advice sessions are structured on a first come first served basis. A range of support is provided in these sessions including but not limited to: reading letters, phoning services such as benefit or utility services, applying for and finding social housing, filling in applications and creating CVs etc. Women can also make pre-booked appointments during the week for support with more in-depth and complex scenarios. It is here where volunteering and observations were largely situated.

During the seventeen months spent at SAW's Place I engaged with a core group of staff. They were crucial to gaining access to the organisation and to lone mothers, supported me as a volunteer and they are also participants in this study. An introduction to the workers who

were central to different stages of the research process is provided in Chapter 3, alongside a profile of all of the workers interviewed (see Table 3).

1.4 Thesis structure

Following on from this introduction chapter, **Chapter 2** presents a literature review providing an overview of existing literature in relation to three areas: lone motherhood, PBM women and intersectionality. The first section explores discourses and constructions of lone motherhood, in relation to social policy and empirical studies which explore the lived realities of lone motherhood. The second section explores studies focusing on PBM women in five key areas of previous research: marriage experiences (migration, DA and patriarchy); employment; English language through the lens of integration; divorce and SA women organising. The final section then explores the development of intersectionality theory, its emergence and approaches taken to intersectionality, while situating its use in SA women's studies. The chapter presents an intersectionality framework for exploring PBM lone motherhood. It illustrates research gaps which will be addressed in this thesis.

Chapter 3 will focus on methodology at both a practical and reflective level. Practically, it will outline the study's research design, methods and the practicalities of the research process which was influenced by feminist methodological approaches to conducting qualitative research. It will discuss access, sampling, data collection, translating and analysis, and also provide a profile of lone mothers' key demographic backgrounds. In taking a reflective approach, the chapter will contribute to challenging the oversimplified insider-outsider dichotomy and will revisit traditional standpoint feminist debates based around reflections of how my positionality as a young British Pakistani Muslim woman influenced the research process drawing on the work of Phoenix (1994), Bhopal (2001; 2009; 2010) and others. Finally, it will also reflect on practical ethics and an 'ethics of reciprocity'.

What follows is three findings and discussion chapters. **Chapter 4** is the first findings chapter which focuses on 'the lived experiences of lone motherhood'. It explores the experiences of sixteen lone mothers drawing on interviews and observations. Reflecting participants' discussions of their lived experiences, the chapter starts with a focus on routes into lone

motherhood. Drawing on Qureshi's (2013; 2016) work, it explores narratives of *sabar* and the strategies women employ to cope with and resist adverse marital circumstances, such as DA. It will present initial experiences of women entering lone motherhood, the stigma and surveillance they face and, finally, experiences of motherhood, reflecting that a mother identity is core in their lives. These experiences are situated in gendered, cultural, family, kinship and community relations. Drawing on conceptualisations of 'classic patriarchy' (Kandiyoti 1988; Hunnicutt 2009) and the discourse of women 'escaping patriarchy' through lone motherhood by Duncan and Edwards (1999) it will present the intersecting positionalities which shape PBM women's experiences before and of lone motherhood. Their identity as women will be argued as being central. It will focus on differences, for example class and generational differences, amongst participants unpacking the category of PBM lone mothers. Finally, it will articulate how intersectionality can be drawn upon to gain a better understanding of PBM women's lived experiences of lone motherhood.

Chapter 5 explores lone mothers' journeys to independence. It will focus on the following key areas: financial 'struggles', amongst both unemployed and employed participants; barriers to employment; English language and everyday barriers; social isolation and loneliness; and finally, housing. Although this reflects some focal areas of social policy in relation to lone mothers and PBM women, the lived realities of participants' lives are central to the arguments presented. The chapter demonstrates the barriers, struggles and challenges lone mothers face and how they are, are not, and can be, overcome. It highlights the obstructions that hinder women's independence, from policy working against them, lack of resources, facing limited opportunities, for example in relation to employment and education, and gender inequality, to their husband's continued control in their lives. Taking an intracategorical intersectional approach (McCall 2005), again the chapter draws comparisons amongst lone mothers in the study and shows similarities in experiences due to their shared positionalities across wider structures of disadvantage.

Drawing on observations and, in particular, interviews with SAW's Place workers, key stakeholders and external partners, the final findings chapter (**Chapter 6**) focuses on the multidimensional forms of support SAW's Place offers and its role in facilitating PBM lone mothers' independence, while working with constrained resources. It embeds SAW's Place in

the wider context in which it operates and illustrates the everyday support provided to an often marginalised, excluded and politicised group. There is a focus on the barriers and solutions to women accessing mainstream services and the mediating role SAW's Place plays in relation to this. Again, intersectional threads and differences are presented in this chapter, such as service provision differences between different ethnic groups and the importance of women's Muslim identities. Significantly, these discussions contribute to understanding the practices of activism and doing politics today within SA women's organisations.

Chapter 7 provides a conclusion of the study, drawing together arguments and discussions in relation to addressing the research questions and presenting the distinct sociological, empirical and theoretical, social policy related and methodological contributions of the study. It will provide reflections of the research process and directions for future research. Overall this thesis will demonstrate how the lived experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women can be explored through the analytical lens of intersectionality. It is the first known qualitative study to focus on lone motherhood specifically amongst PBM women applying an intersectionality lens.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

As argued in Chapter 1, there is a lack of literature and research specifically focusing on lone motherhood amongst PBM women. Relatively little is known about this group. With the notable exception of Duncan and Edwards (1999), race and ethnicity is often a missing dimension in lone motherhood studies. By focusing on different areas of literature, a picture can be drawn of how PBM lone mothers' experiences are shaped by the multiple identities they belong to, identifying gaps in knowledge and significant areas of exploration in order to address the study's research questions. Thus, the literature review is divided into three sections focusing on lone motherhood literature, experiences of PBM women and an in-depth exploration of intersectionality and black feminism. Adopting an intersectionality analytical framework will allow for an extended comparison of diversity, differences and similarities in experiences amongst PBM lone mothers and in comparison to mothers in both existing lone motherhood and PBM women studies.

2.2 Lone motherhood in the UK

2.2.1 The social construction of lone motherhood

The literature review begins with exploring how lone motherhood has been constructed and conceptualised in public and policy domains, a key focus of existing lone motherhood literature. As the literature outlines, over time there has been a classed, gendered and racialised construction of lone parents. In regards to a gendered construction, there has been particular attention paid to lone mothers who have been vilified and problematised as a key 'threat to society' and instigators in the breakdown of the traditional nuclear family norm (Song 1996; Song and Edwards 1997). Song and Edwards (1997) argue that lone motherhood results in a lack of support from the father who is traditionally seen as the breadwinner and parent who provides guidance, support and moral supervision to children. Furthermore, Duncan and Edwards (1997a) outline how lone mothers are constructed as active agents in the creation of an underclass. There is a political argument that the emergence of lone

motherhood creates an economically inactive 'culture of dependency', leading to the collapse of the traditional work ethic (Duncan and Edwards 1997a; 1997b). In this construction, Duncan and Edwards (1997a) argue that there has been particular focus on unemployed never-married lone mothers, with popular media presenting them as 'choosing' to have children and live off the welfare state, 'choosing' not to work. Moreover, 'undeserving' never-married teenage mothers have been accused of entering lone motherhood to obtain social housing (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Fitzpatrick and Pawson 2007; Ponsford 2011). The welfare state is viewed as encouraging state dependency (Duncan and Edwards 1997a). Therefore, lone mothers have been constructed as a moral and financial 'social threat' to society (Duncan and Edwards 1997a; 1997c). Additionally, lone mother constructions have also been racialised in the past to include Black African women (Song and Edwards 1997; Jørgensen 2012). Song and Edwards (1997, p. 235) argue that the construction of Black African lone mothers as welfare reliant and 'baby mothers' - that is "having children by a series of different 'baby fathers' who are uncommitted to fatherhood and family life" - enabled the mainstream media to direct the gaze, problematise and play out the negative constructions of lone mothers described above on Black African women. This construction also problematised Black African men.

Additionally, lone motherhood has also been constructed as a 'social problem' in the public and political arena (Duncan and Edwards 1999). According to Duncan and Edwards (1997a), this perspective acknowledges lone mothers do not choose to be reliant on welfare. Rather poverty and economic and social causes beyond their control, such as low paid work or a lack of childcare provision, lead to welfare dependency. Lone motherhood is not always planned so that mothers live off the state; it can be an unexpected event in an individual's life (Song 1996). Notably, in both popular 'social threat' and 'social problem' constructions, lone motherhood is viewed negatively. The literature demonstrates that there has been a sense of stigma attached to being a lone mother, for example the construction of welfare dependency (Carroll 2019). These constructions of lone motherhood influence and are embedded in policy approaches which impact lone mothers, particularly in relation to encouraging employment participation and a focus on parenting.

In regards to employment, lone motherhood literature has overwhelmingly focused on this (Head 2005; Mokhtar and Platt 2009). In relation to this study, it is important to explore such literature as policy encouraging employment shapes the lived experiences of PBM lone mothers and has been central in positioning lone mothers as potential workers. Much of the literature outlines and evaluates policies focusing on whether they are appropriate in enabling lone mothers' labour market participation and improving their situations. Encouragement of lone mothers' employment has been gradually introduced in the UK since the 1980s (Jordan 2018), specifically through 'welfare-to-work'. Jordan (2018) outlines a full introduction to welfare-to-work or the 'workfare' state, as he refers to it, began following the election of the New Labour government in 1997. Welfare-to-work is the idea that state benefits should provide temporary support leading into employment, which should become the norm (Miller and Ridge 2008). It has been argued that its introduction was associated with wider international and national welfare shifts including the encouragement of women's labour market participation, creating an employment based welfare state and emphasis on individual responsibility attached to the market (Gray 2001; Miller and Ridge 2008; Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020).

Like other unemployed individuals, lone mothers were required to attend compulsory work focused interviews (Hewitt 1999; Henricson 2012). Additionally, since 2008 lone parents were gradually transferred from Income Support to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and expected to comply to full jobseeker requirements when their youngest child reached a certain age (James 2009; Rabindrakumar 2018). From 2008 lone parents would move onto JSA if their youngest child was aged twelve or over, and this decreased to the youngest child being aged seven or over in 2010 (James 2009; Rafferty and Wiggan 2011; Rabindrakumar 2018). There was an introduction of stringent conditionality attached to JSA including mandatory job searching requirements (Millar and Ridge 2008; Haux 2011; Rafferty and Wiggan 2011). Various in-work financial incentives were introduced to 'make work pay', including the national minimum wage, child and working tax credits and childcare tax credit (Miller and Ridge 2008).

Kowalewska (2015) argues that the New Labour government's policies have reflected a 'social problem' construction of lone motherhood. Unemployment was partly blamed on irresponsible attitudes and behaviours aggravated by dependency on benefits (Kowalewska

2015). Notably, they emphasised that unemployment was a problem of inequality and poor behaviours were used as a mechanism to cope with structural barriers in accessing employment and education opportunities (Kowalewska 2015). Workless households were perceived to be the main cause of poverty (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). Overall, there is an idea that lone mothers can secure independence, reduce state dependency and escape poverty through employment (Rafferty and Wiggan 2011).

Furthermore, the encouragement of employment has been linked to concerns about parenting skills. Lone mothers were criticised as being less likely to deliver positive outcomes for their children than couple families because of poor parenting practices and unstable family arrangements (Dermott and Pomati 2016). This reflects social problem and social threat constructions of lone motherhood in relation to breakdown of the family and traditional parenting practices. By focusing on the relationship between employment and parenting through analysing government policy documents, Churchill (2007) found that employment was seen as crucial in child upbringing as orientations towards welfare and work could be transmitted to children. Employment was constructed as allowing for personal, social and economic benefits (Churchill 2007). It would offer social mobility and financial security for lone mothers and their children (Churchill 2007). Furthermore, there was an emphasis on individual responsibility and exceptions to work, particularly caring for children, were subject to greater scrutiny (Pulkingham, Fuller and Kershaw 2010; Rafferty and Wiggan 2011). Pulkingham, Fuller and Kershaw (2010) argue that lone mothers were treated primarily as workers and only secondarily as carers. Therefore, in reviewing the literature, it can be argued that policy constructs an image of the 'good' lone mother as one who participates in employment, contributes to the economy and provides a sense of financial security for her children.

These policies were carried forward and intensified under the 2010-2015 Coalition government, consisting of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats (Patrick 2014). There was a continuing emphasis on paid work as being the best form of welfare and an assertion of employment as being the primary duty of a 'responsible citizen' (Patrick 2014). However, Kowalewska (2015) argues that there was a shift in the construction of lone motherhood under the Coalition government. Lone mothers were viewed as a 'social threat' to the social

order. An overgenerous benefit system was blamed as encouraging idleness and dependency, creating an underclass of claimants lacking the work ethic of mainstream society (Patrick 2014; Kowalewska 2015). Reflecting an underclass discourse, lone mothers' worklessness was blamed primarily on behavioural failures which were exacerbated by welfare dependency (Kowalewska 2015). The unemployed were contrasted to 'hard-working families' (Patrick 2014) and taxpayers who are doing the right thing by working and putting back into the system (Kowalewska 2015).

This stronger construction and emphasis of lone motherhood as a 'social threat' led to greater conditionality, sanctions and cuts. Reforms under the Coalition government included cuts to unemployment and child benefits, no or low increases in out-of-work support in areas like council tax and housing costs, and the introduction of 'Universal Credit' (UC) (Kowalewska 2015; Andersen 2020). Further, under the Welfare Reform Act 2012 tough sanctions were introduced, for example a sanction of three years without benefits if claimants failed to comply with work-related conditions three times (Patrick 2014). Transference from Income Support to JSA was lowered to the youngest child aged five or over (DWP 2011; Miller and Ridge 2013) and later in 2017 to three (Rabindrakumar 2018). Patrick (2014) argues that this was justified through the assertion that greater conditionality and sanctions would 'help' individuals into work. Government work programmes employ a 'work first' approach pushing and pressuring people into work (Lindsay et al, 2019). Going further, the Benefit Cap was also introduced by the Coalition government under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This policy limited the amount of benefits non-working households could receive per week and has been argued to discriminate against lone parent households, and thus women as they make up the majority of lone parents, as they received the highest levels of benefits (Fenton-Glynn 2015).

Finally, recent policies suggest less specific attention paid to lone mothers on a broader policy level. Lone parent families have been included in the construction of the Conservative government's 'troubled families' programme which plans to 'turn around' the lives of the most troubled families (Crossley and Lambert 2017). Thus, they are grouped with all individuals, parents and families that go against society's moral codes. More recently there has been an emphasis on support needed for 'just about managing' families who face insecurity and struggle (Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020), although they are not vilified like troubled

families. Again this shows lone mothers being grouped in families which are struggling. Both illustrate the disadvantage lone mothers continue to face. In all, the policies outlined above by the Coalition and Conservative governments, have been presented here to show the real impact they can have on the financial circumstances of lone mothers, including the PBM lone mothers in this study.

Overall, this section presents the construction of lone mothers in the UK as a 'social problem' and as a 'social threat' to society, social order and the traditional family. In particular, there has been an overwhelming focus on welfare state dependency, employment and parenting. It is noted that these policy approaches follow an 'individual economic rationality', assuming financial considerations are at the heart of lone mothers' decisions to take up paid work (Duncan and Edwards 1999). This is particularly demonstrated through the creation of financial in-work incentives and cuts to benefits. However, empirical literature which explores the lived realities of lone motherhood demonstrates that financial considerations are not always central to employment decisions. Rather, lone mothers face many barriers to employment and in employment, including financial struggle. Their identity and role as 'mothers' is also central to their decision making. The next sub-section will focus on these areas. Patrick (2014) argues that government policies have failed to adequately reflect the lived realities of those receiving welfare benefits. As the literature in this section demonstrates, lone mothers are targeted and regulated by welfare policies. Pulkingham, Fuller and Kershaw (2010) argue that this should be explored in the context of lone mothers' everyday lives. The hidden dimensions of state activity that lone mothers have to negotiate, and how they manage on welfare, should be explored (Pulkingham, Fuller and Kershaw 2010). Thus, the next sub-section will pay attention to literature exploring the lived realities of lone motherhood.

2.2.2 The lived realities of lone motherhood

Starting off with employment, the literature argues that in reality there are many other barriers to employment for lone mothers beyond financial considerations which social policy does not fully consider. Barriers include poor health, a lack of labour market opportunities, low educational attainment, no prior employment history or no recent work experience (Haux

2011; Rafferty and Wiggan 2011). Childcare provision is also problematic. There is a lack of flexibility and access to paid-for provision, and high costs are a key issue (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004; Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020). The UK has some of the highest childcare costs in Europe (Kanji 2018). Although, under UC, low income parents can claim back up to eighty-five per cent of formal childcare costs, Hill, Hirsch and Davis (2020) argue that there is low awareness about entitlement and the process, and parents have to wait for reimbursements. This is a barrier in taking up employment, resulting in participation in part-time employment which is low-paid and low-skilled (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). Where state support fails parents, Hill, Hirsch and Davis (2020) have found that childcare from informal support networks is crucial for both couples and lone parents. Without childcare from extended family, for example grandparents, many parents would not have the option to work and maintain a steady income (Kanji 2018; Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020). This demonstrates the importance of informal support networks in relation to employment participation. However, Hill, Hirsch and Davis (2020) also noted that some participants had no close extended family available to support them. Lone mothers can face childcare constraints due to a lack of support networks and being solely responsible for childcare (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). A key area to explore in this study will be whether childcare is a significant barrier to employment for PBM lone mothers.

A comprehensive study of lone motherhood in relation to lived experiences of employment is a longitudinal study, consisting of three interviews over time, by Miller and Ridge (2008; 2013). The sample consisted of lone mothers who were previously unemployed and had entered employment. It covered employment experiences under New Labour reforms 2004-2007. The study found that before employment lone mothers were in training, education or volunteering (Miller and Ridge 2013). Importantly, Miller and Ridge (2013) argue this illustrates that moving into work is a process that takes place over time. Developing skills for employment is crucial. This challenges constructions which view lone mothers reliant on welfare as deviant, lazy and irresponsible; the lone mothers in the study were engaged in some form of activity from which they progressed into work. Over time, lone mothers changed jobs to accommodate family needs. Feeling better-off in work was only possible because of tax credit top-ups as their wages alone were not sufficient. Achieving financial security through employment was challenging as they remained in low-paid work. It was

difficult to escape poverty through employment and lone mothers were "constantly struggling to make ends meet", faced debt and many faced a "cliff-edge" by the third interview due to the financial support of child tax credits coming to an end as children had grown up (Miller and Ridge 2013, p. 572-573). The significance of this study here is that it challenges the emphasis of employment being the best route out of poverty and illustrates that lone mothers face financial barriers within employment. This articulates a mismatch between policy and lived realities of lone motherhood. However, this study is quite dated as it evaluates experiences under New Labour's policies.

More recent studies have presented the 'struggles' lone mothers face, both in and outside employment. Austerity and social security cuts have resulted in many individuals being compelled to prioritise necessities such as paying the rent and bills over food and wellbeing, as the consequences for not paying the former are severe (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015a; 2015b). Furthermore, Stack and Meredith (2018) conducted a study focusing on lone mothers' financial hardships and the impact upon their personal health and wellbeing. Participants described facing daily financial 'struggle' and "making difficult compromises" (Stack and Meredith 2018, p. 239) such as reducing their own food intake to feed children and not heating the home to save money. Thus, there is much strategising and self-sacrifice involved in coping and managing financially (Ponsford 2011; Patrick 2014; Stack and Meredith 2018). Lone mothers also withdrew from social interactions due to "an embarrassment of having little money", leading to social isolation and feelings of loneliness (Stack and Meredith 2018, p. 236). In all, financial hardship is documented as impacting lone mothers' mental health and wellbeing, causing stress, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and sleeplessness (Stack and Meredith 2018). Much energy is devoted to caring for children (Stack and Meredith 2018). Furthermore, Housing Benefit (also under UC) does not always cover rent, leaving tenants to make up for shortfalls (Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020). Once claiming UC many face a delay to receiving money (Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020). Where the state fails to support families and there is a lack of resources, Hill, Hirsch and Davis (2020) again find that informal social support networks of family and friends can be an important safety net. They are a third source of welfare. They are able to provide financial, emotional and practical support acting as a 'lifeline' (Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020).

Further articulating policy mismatch, Miller and Ridge's (2013) study, alongside other studies (e.g. Himmelweit and Sigala 2004; Churchill 2007; Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020), finds that a major factor impacting lone mothers' employment preferences is in regards to motherhood and their responsibilities as 'good mothers'. In these studies, lone mothers strongly felt that their children and duties as mothers should come first. This may also be linked to meeting social and traditional cultural expectations of the 'good', 'selfless' and 'intensive' mother, where it is viewed that maternal caring responsibility for the child should be prioritised (Hays 1998). Mothers emphasised that they looked for work fitting around their family life and informal family childcare available to them, sometimes resulting in the rejection of employment with longer hours and higher wages (Miller and Ridge 2013). Children also preferred mothers working part-time and within school hours (Miller and Ridge 2013). Importantly for some, their duties as mothers resulted in reliance on welfare as the moral and self-sacrificing course of action (Churchill 2007) although, pursuing employment can be positive for mothers. Head (2005) has cited lone mothers experiencing boredom and social isolation in the home for example when children are at school. The studies demonstrate the tensions lone mothers face between requirements to work and spending time with children. Neo-liberal policy approaches devalue and do not consider women's unpaid care work (Ahmed 2008; Andersen 2020). These lived experiences of lone mothers clash with policy rhetoric, 'individual economic rationality' and attitudes towards lone mothers as first and foremost citizen workers.

This reflects what Duncan and Edwards (1999) term the 'gendered moral rationalities' of lone mothers. "These are collective and social understandings about what is the proper relationship between motherhood and paid work" (Duncan and Edwards 1999, p. 3). Gendered moral rationalities are about the understandings lone mothers hold about their identities as mothers and their responsibility towards children, particularly as lone mothers (Duncan and Edwards 1999). As part of their study, Duncan and Edwards (1999) conducted interviews with working-class and middle-class White and Black, African-Caribbean and west-African lone mothers. They found that lone mothers had different ideas of what 'good' mothering entailed and the relationship between motherhood and employment. For some paid work did not fit with mothering, whereas for others paid work was central to their role as mothers. The latter felt that being a good mother was not solely about taking care of

children but also financially providing for them and allowing them to learn from the example of their mother working (Duncan and Edwards 1999).

Duncan and Edwards (1999) found these attitudes were quite notably influenced by collective racial and ethnic identities. Social class differences between White women were overshadowed by traditional views about motherhood and paid work being incompatible. Some middle-class White women felt their identity as a worker and mother were separate. Therefore, they had a 'primarily mother' identity giving a primacy to caring (Duncan and Edwards 1997a; 1999). However Black lone mothers felt paid work and motherhood should be combined rather than separated and children's needs could be met through employment. Duncan and Edwards (1997a; 1999) term this as 'mother worker integral'. This is also influenced by culture. For instance, in African-Caribbean cultures paid work and mothering are culturally viewed as two interlocking functions which the ideal mother takes on (Reynolds 2001). PBM lone mothers' views may also be influenced by cultural and religious norms. Furthermore, a key drawback is that these studies predominately focus on motherhood in relation to employment. Head (2005) argues that there is a lack of research that focuses on lone mothers' maternal worlds and the importance of motherhood in their lives. This study will address this gap in relation to PBM lone mothers.

Nevertheless, Duncan and Edwards' (1999) empirical study has been instrumental in starting to bring forward differences within the category of 'lone mother', as the above example demonstrates. Although it is dated, being almost two decades old, it is highly relevant here. Duncan and Edwards (1999, p. 4) have criticised research on lone mothers as viewing them as a homogenous group with "similar social positions, social relations and social behaviours". They argue that "we need to go inside the 'closed box' of the category lone mothers and examine social differences and social behaviour within it" (Duncan and Edwards 1999, p. 5). May (2010) further argues that the category of lone mother has been uncritically applied as a category of analysis by researchers without fully considering diversity. The identity of 'lone mother' may not be significant in determining positions and experiences rather membership in other social groups of identity, for example ethnic background, may also shape their experiences, understandings and behaviours (Duncan and Edwards 1999; May 2010). Song and Edwards (1997) have nicely illustrated this in relation to Black African-Caribbean lone

mothers. They argue that a significant barrier in their lives is racial stereotyping and that this will specifically impact their experiences as lone mothers, something which their White counterparts do not experience.

It is important to note here, the recent studies presented in this sub-section do not consider ethnicity or race as a significant dimension. In many cases the race and ethnicity of lone mothers is not mentioned in recent research (e.g. Miller and Ridge 2008; Stack and Meredith 2018) and where it is (e.g. Churchill 2007) there is a lack of exploration of the differences in experiences between lone mothers of different backgrounds. However, there are notable exceptions. A quantitative study by Mokhtar and Platt (2009) focused on different ethnic groups in relation to welfare benefit exit in Slough including White, Black Caribbean, African, Pakistani and Indian lone mothers. Another dated study, Sinha's (1998) published thesis, highlighted the particularities of Asian lone motherhood with a particular focus on cultural experiences. It included Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. Sinha (1998) also concluded that their low living conditions were similar to those of the wider lone mother population in Britain. However, an intersectionality approach was not taken in these studies and racialised debates of Asian lone motherhood were not advanced further. While Duncan and Edwards' (1999) study does take into account race and ethnicity as a significant dimension of lone mothers' identities by drawing attention towards lone motherhood amongst Black, African-Caribbean and west-African women, there has been an increasing invisibilisation of the experiences of PBM lone mothers in both academia and the public domain. There is a lack of in-depth qualitative research focusing solely on this group. Accounting for diversity, differences and similarities amongst lone mothers is a significant gap in recent lone mother studies, which this study will also address in relation to PBM lone mothers' experiences.

Consequently PBM lone mothers will, as lone mothers, face policy pressures to participate in employment, barriers to employment and financial struggles, as presented here. However, they may have different lived experiences of lone motherhood due to other categories of identity they belong to, namely their ethnic, racial, cultural, classed, gendered and religious identities. These different dimensions of identity may create distinct disadvantages, opportunities and experiences of lone motherhood. The following section will focus on PBM women in the UK. It will present five sub-sections, the first three of which focus on: marriage

experiences, including migration, DA and patriarchy; employment; and English language through the lens of integration. Research regarding PBM women has been preoccupied within these three areas in particular, as opposed to lone motherhood. The fourth sub-section focuses on emerging literature surrounding divorce and the final sub-section focuses on SA women organising. There is much literature focusing on Pakistani women in comparison to Bangladeshi women and PBM women's experiences are often homogenised in the broader SA category (see Terminology).

2.3 Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim women in the UK

2.3.1 Marriage experiences: migration, domestic abuse and patriarchy

Mass migration to the UK of Pakistani and Bangladeshis began in the 1950s with the labour market migration of men as a result of historical colonial relationships and to help rebuild the British economy (Charsley 2005b; Alexander 2013). Later, from the 1960s, wives and children were called over by men as a result of tightening UK commonwealth immigration legislations (Shaw 2000; Alexander 2013). Alexander (2013) argues that women constituted significant agents of transformation for settlement though this has largely been overlooked. Women's arrival initiated the formation of distinct religious and cultural communities with the establishment of mosques, schools and shops (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Alexander 2013). This aimed to sustain culture. Shaw (2000) focuses on the settlement of Pakistanis in Oxford. Women contributed to family businesses and set up paid work within the home, for example sewing and cooking (Werbner 1990; Brah 1994; Shaw 2000). Women were not employed outside of the household due to an importance of protecting their *izzat* (respect and honour, also see Terminology) and *purdah* (gender segregation), a traditional norm with the view that women should not mix with men (Shaw 2000; Ahmed 2008). However, Shaw (2000) also acknowledges that women faced barriers due to a labour market recession, discrimination and heightened childcare responsibilities, without family to support them. Importantly this points out both structural barriers and cultural constraints to mainstream employment. It also contradicts the construction of PBM women as not being active participants in the labour market, showing the hidden paid work they have done in the UK, contributing to the economy informally.

Today marriage is established as the main form of migration to the UK amongst Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Charsley, Benson and Hear 2012). This is of particular significance for this project as most participants in this study migrated to the UK after marriage. Charsley (2005b) and Gardner (2006) argue that transnational marriages between kin are highly valued in Pakistani and Bangladeshi cultures. It is seen as crucial in strengthening bonds and fulfilling obligations to kin, creating social mobility, financial security and a better life for migrant brides and migrant husbands, maintaining financial connections to Pakistan and facilitating relatives' migration (Shaw 2000; 2001; Charsley 2005b; Gardner 2006; Kallivayalil 2010; Charsley, Benson and Hear 2012). Caste is also traditionally an important consideration in marriage (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). A spouse from Pakistan may be seen as more traditional and religious than someone born in the UK (Charsley 2005b; Shaw and Charsley 2006). Therefore, transnational marriage can be mutually beneficial, providing a sense of security (Charsley 2005b). However, there is also increasing marriage to spouses in the UK (Charsley 2005b). Charsley (2005b) finds that there is a sense of risk for women in marriage as brides move to their husband's home. In particular, migrant brides who migrate after marriage can experience a sense of displacement, social isolation and loneliness having to adapt to a new environment, family and home (Alexander 2013; Charsley and Liversage 2015).

PBM women traditionally have a devalued position within marital families and are dependent upon husbands (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). The traditional patriarchal division of labour and cultural norms assign men as breadwinners and decision makers, while women are located firmly within the household (Bhopal 1997; Dale et al 2002; Salway 2007). Some of this is shared more broadly across gendered family roles, for example women taking on the unpaid domestic and familial care work (Andersen 2020). Women are expected to be self-sacrificing, good wives who maintain the harmony of the home (Sinha 1998; Shankar, Das and Atwal 2013; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019). Polygamy is also cited as occurring amongst Muslim men and can be a cause of marital conflict (Ahmed and Bould 2003; Charsley and Liversage 2013). Charsley and Liversage (2013, p. 62) define polygamy as "being simultaneously married to more than one spouse". This is allowed in Islamic law under certain conditions (Charsley and Liversage 2013). It is also very important here not to reproduce negative racialised

constructions of SA and Muslim men and families by illustrating more positive narratives. A recent study by Britton (2019, p. 48) about the personal lives of Muslim men describes shifting gender and generational relationships with "changing involvement in caring as part of familial responsibilities". It presents a positive construction of husbands having positive emotional, intimate and supportive relationships with their wives (Britton 2019). Thus, there are diverse experiences of married life.

There are many studies which find experiences of DA and DV amongst SA women. These are issues which impact women regardless of their background (Tonsing and Tonsing 2019) but for PBM women DA can be embedded in gendered cultural patriarchal systems and ideologies presented in marriage, family and the extended household (Kallivayali 2010; Mirza 2017). There are a wealth of studies focusing on DA experiences (e.g. Kandiyoti 1998; Guru 2009; Kallivayali 2010; Shankar, Das and Atwal 2013; Chowbey 2016; 2017; Mirza 2017; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019). DA includes experiences of controlling behaviour, economic abuse, physical and psychological violence. For example, in Chowbey's (2017) study exploring 'economic abuse' experiences of Pakistani Muslim and Gujrati Hindu mothers, she found husbands prevented women's use of economic resources through various mechanisms. In this instance, husbands prevented employment, controlled welfare benefit finances, jeopardised women's long-term savings and used their customary marriage gifts. Husbands can thus have control over women's economic resources (Guru 2009; Chowbey 2016; 2017).

Significantly, in SA cultures marriage is found to be more than a relationship between couples; it is also a relationship between family members (Charsley and Shaw 2006; Mirza 2017). The mother-in-law in particular is cited as playing a significant role in women's experiences of married life in joint families. Studies have found that traditionally mothers-in-law exert control over daughters-in-law and claim their son's primary allegiance (Kandiyoti 1988; Dale et al 2002). The mother-in-law, daughter-in-law relationship can be characterised with tension and hostility (Mirza 2017). Focusing on DA by mothers-in-law, Mirza (2017) asserts that mothers develop close relationships with their sons. This can be threatened by the daughter-in-law who may convince her husband to move into a new home and break from the traditional joint household. To avoid this many mothers-in-law try to ensure daughters-in-law do not gain the loyalty of husbands. They suppress the development of intimacy

between their sons and their wives (Kandiyoti 1988; Mirza 2017). Strategies to achieve this, as described by daughters-in-law, involve the 'constant ear-filling' of sons through complaints about daughters-in-law, asserting control by isolating daughters-in-law, constraining them to the household or subjecting them to verbal or physical abuse (Mirza 2017). Mothers-in-law, whose lives and marriages themselves have been shaped by these patriarchal relations such as control by their own mother-in-law and husband, exercise power and control in relation to younger family members. In this way they are both challenging and reinforcing the patriarchal status quo within the family. Mirza's (2017) study is based on interviews with eleven Pakistani Muslim daughters-in-law, therefore it cannot be generalised that this hostile relationship is experienced by all. Although Alexander (2013) and Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling (2014) also find that Bangladeshi migrant brides can be subjected to DV involving husbands and mothers-in-law.

Immigration status can make Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrant brides more vulnerable to DA, DV and mistreatment as they may fear deportation, that is no longer having the right to remain and no recourse to public funds, and they have less protection from their natal family who are at a distance (Charsley 2005b; Anitha 2008; 2011; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014; Mirza 2017). Under the Domestic Violence Rule the state offers a concession for those that can provide certain proofs of DV, enabling women to leave abusive relationships (Anitha 2008; 2011). However, often women are not aware of such rights as they do not have access to this information (Anitha 2008; Mirza 2016). Escaping and surviving abusive marriages can be one possible route into lone motherhood for PBM women. More insight is required as to how women leave such marriages, particularly for those who experience legal immigration barriers, and the impact that surviving DA or DV has on women's lives as lone mothers.

PBM women, especially migrant brides, are particularly depicted as isolated, passive and lacking agency (Charsley 2005a; Bhopal 2009; Alexander 2013) (also see discussions in Chapter 1). There is an assumption that they are passive to control by husbands and mothers-in-law. By presenting such literature there is a risk of reasserting this. Therefore, it is important to explore the agency of PBM women. Kandiyoti (1988) and others (Rodger and Herbert 2008; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014) contest this dominant depiction arguing that women cope with patriarchal constraints through 'patriarchal bargains'. This is the idea

that women strategise and negotiate within patriarchal constraints (Kandiyoti 1988). For example, a daughter-in-law's position can eventually change especially if they have a son (Kandiyoti 1988). Having a son gives a daughter-in-law "the hope of one day becoming a powerful mother-in-law, ultimately superseding the power and control of her own mother-in-law" (Mirza 2017, p. 399). Thus, women are caught in a patriarchal cycle, again both challenging and reinforcing the patriarchal status quo. Women live strategically within cultural norms rather than transgressing them (Jahan 2011). They are also able to negotiate in the household and successfully create changes in their lives, improving their positions (Rodger and Herbert 2008). Going back to Chowbey's (2017) study further demonstrates this. Chowbey (2017) presents the many strategies women used to gain finances and financial independence, for example requesting money in the name of children's needs and aiming to engage in paid work. Women also drew upon their religious beliefs to defend their Islamic right to having and spending money (Chowbey 2017). This study challenges the dominant depiction of PBM women as passive individuals, submissive to husbands and articulates their agency through the strategies they adopt.

These experiences challenge traditional notions of patriarchy. The concept of patriarchy often focuses on gendered inequality; patriarchy is defined as "social arrangements that privilege males, where men as a group dominate women as a group, both structurally and ideologically" (Hunnicut 2009, p. 557). In revisiting patriarchy Hunnicutt (2009) criticises this simplistic false universalism, arguing that there are varieties of patriarchal structures with different manifestations among cultures. Alongside the 'gendered lens', Hunnicutt (2009) argues for the recognition of patriarchal systems being bounded with other systems of domination, like the state for example, and structures of hierarchy, like the old dominating the young. As presented above, Kandiyoti's (1988; 1998) theorisation of 'patriarchal bargains' and 'classic patriarchy' is useful here in relation to SA cultures. Under classic patriarchy women are "subordinate not only to all the men but also to the more senior women, especially their mother-in-law" (Kandiyoti 1988, p. 278). Here there are cross-cutting hierarchical systems of age, class, culture and ethnicity associated with patriarchy alongside gender (Kandiyoti 1988; Mirza 2017). Institutions such as the family, kinship, marriage and the state can support these systems of domination. This is also reflected in Mirza's (2017) study where she criticised the assumption that all women share the same experiences of DA

simply because of their identity as women. Here gender inequality is seen as a root cause of abuse in marriage which is viewed as a couple problem. Mirza (2017) demonstrates difference is connected to cultural kinship relationships, structures and hierarchies of power between women, determined by age and positionality in the family, allowing mothers-in-law to exercise control.

The literature regarding experiences of marriage, including migration, DA, DV and patriarchal relations, demonstrates that the unique lived experiences PBM women face relates to their position as women within Pakistani, and Bangladeshi and broader SA cultures. The importance of marriage indicates PBM women are more likely to become lone mothers through divorce, separation or widowhood, and less likely to be out-of-wedlock mothers. The literature also illustrates experiences of DA, DV and men's polygamy within marriage as potential routes to lone motherhood. Senior women within the family, particularly mothers-in-law, will also play a significant role in PBM women's experiences, particularly in relation to DA and relationships with husbands. Although there is much literature presenting experiences of marriage, there is a significant gap in understanding how negative experiences in marriage, such as women not having any finances, go on to shape PBM women's experiences of lone motherhood, away from husbands and the extended family. Finally, the literature increasingly presents the agency of PBM women. Through exploring lone motherhood this study will further contribute to challenging stereotypical racialised perceptions of PBM women. Thus, agency and the strategies used by lone mothers will be a significant line of inquiry.

2.3.2 Employment barriers

Public and academic attention has been preoccupied with PBM women's labour market participation, as opposed to focusing on lone motherhood. Much literature has outlined the barriers and disadvantages they face to and in employment. Salway (2007) has cited life-stage factors, like marriage and childbearing, and a lack of 'human capital', as barriers. Low levels of educational qualifications and lack of English language proficiency are cited as key barriers to employment (Salway 2007; Turner and Wigfield 2013). However, barriers and experiences can be diverse and are affected by differences and divisions such as class, age, and generation

(McCall 2005; Bhopal 2009). Differences are noted according to generation. A lack of English fluency and recognisable qualifications is a major barrier for first-generation migrants and women (Dale et al 2002; Turner and Wigfield 2013). They have the lowest level of education qualifications amongst migrant groups in the UK (Turner and Wigfield 2013). In their study, Dale et al (2002) have found that some younger generations born or brought up in the UK had recognisable qualifications and worked whereas others who were married with low levels of qualifications were more likely to stay at home. Bagguley and Hussain (2016) also point out that there is increased participation of British-Pakistani and British-Bangladeshi women in higher education. There are changing generational aspirations amongst parents regarding daughters' education (Bhopal 2009; Ijaz and Abbas 2010). Turner and Wigfield (2013) found social class plays a key role in differences in educational attainment. They found that highly educated women came from 'professional and managerial' families. Evans and Bowlby (2000) found middle-class women had professional occupations, excellent English skills, high educational qualifications and were able to tap into husbands' professional social networks to gain paid work. Therefore, class is a significant factor in regard to education and employment opportunities.

The literature describes PBM women as taking on a 'primarily mother' identity (Duncan and Edwards 1999) where importance is attached to the identity and status of motherhood and there is a belief that parenting and family should take priority over personal career aspirations (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Ahmed 2008). In traditional Islamic teachings mothers are symbols of selfless devotion and their self-sacrificing love is idealised (Oh 2010). According to Oh (2010), the 'nursing mother' is described by key Islamic texts as one who will receive divine reward. In Islam, women are particularly responsible for children's good upbringing and education (*tarbiyah*) (Din 2017). A traditional cultural expectation of women to take care of children, family and the household (Ahmed 2008; Harriet 2008; Nadim 2014) can lead to debates in the family regarding women's employment (Evans and Bowlby 2000). Further, Ahmad, Modood and Lissenburgh (2003) have found many mothers are reluctant to use childcare services or leave their children with non-family members due to distrust of strangers and the high costs of childcare. Another reason for not taking up paid work, for migrant Pakistani women in Evan and Bowlby's (2000) study, was that time was spent on household activities and involvement in the community, although participants did aspire to employment

as they felt it was important for financial reasons, well-being and self-esteem. Some women were forced to take up jobs due to financial necessity. Evans and Bowlby (2000) have also found that many women felt having children was not inconsistent with employment. Britton (2019) has also found husbands' can be supportive of women's employment. Therefore, a change in attitudes towards the relationship between childcare and employment is illustrated, but a primarily mother norm is still somewhat prevalent.

There are also notable generational differences in attitudes towards employment. Dale et al (2002) have found that older women were more likely to accept their role in the home. There is a traditional idea of *pardah* and views of older generations that "daughter[s]-in-law don't go out" (Ahmed 2008, p. 10). Whereas younger single women born in the UK were more likely to argue against traditional gender roles and were determined to find a way to combine employment and childcare, and husbands of the same generation were also supportive of this. Younger women highlighted the distinction between tradition and religion. They rejected the former and argued that it was acceptable to take up paid work while being devout Muslims (Dale et al 2002). Furthermore, Bhopal (2009) has found that young women are no longer expected to be the homemaker and stay at home. Women want to get a job and are more likely to delay having a family. This illustrates a shift in attitudes towards 'gendered moral rationalities' and an increasing gap between social realities and traditional cultural norms. PBM women are a changing group. However, in relation to this study, it is not known what the views and 'gendered moral rationalities' of PBM lone mothers are.

Ethnic penalties, racism and Islamophobia

Quantitative studies indicate that PBM women also face considerable structural barriers to employment. It is recognised in the literature that these barriers are associated with their racialised identities, positionality and identities as ethnic-religious minorities and 'women' within this. Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to be in long-term unemployment with fewer chances of socio-economic mobility than Indians (Modood and Khattab 2016). Class and higher education attainment linked with ethnicity also has an impact here (see Khattab et al 2011; Khattab 2012). Significant factors disadvantaging Pakistani and Bangladeshi found in many studies are 'colour racism' and religious discrimination (e.g.

Khattab 2009; Khattab et al 2011; Khattab 2012). Within this, culture is found to be the main mechanism through which ethnicity and religion operate to reinforce disadvantage, discrimination and prejudice (Khattab 2009; Khattab et al 2011).

Muslim women are found to suffer the largest penalties among ethno-religious minorities in the UK (Cheung 2014). As Muslim religious minorities they are perceived as 'culturally alien' (Khattab 2009), not able to fit into the workplace culture. For example, Tariq and Syed (2017, p. 512) outline that "Islamic faith requires modest dressing from women, particularly in the public space". In certain workplaces women are expected to dress in specific ways, for example wearing a skirt, and Muslim women may be "frowned upon" because of their clothing choices, especially for wearing a *hijab* (headscarf) (Tariq and Syed 2017, p. 512; Khattab 2012). Furthermore, women face disadvantages associated with more macro issues of 'Islamophobia' and intolerance which can result in hostility within the workplace (Tariq and Syed 2017). This illustrates the significance of a Muslim identity in labour market disadvantage.

Qualitative studies have found employers have stereotypical views of PBM women, seeing their role as mothers as conflicting with employment (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Tariq and Syed 2017). One participant in Tariq and Syed's (2017) study was not promoted due to her employer perceiving she would leave her job once she had children. Any qualifications and work experience from abroad are also not recognised (Evans and Bowlby 2000). It is important to take into account these structural barriers in focusing on PBM lone mothers' labour market participation. Such barriers are less likely to be faced by non-Muslim White and Black African women or lone mothers.

Overall, employment literature indicates that as lone mothers, in trying to meet policy pressures to participate in employment, PBM women will have additional barriers due to their position as ethnic minority, migrant, Pakistani or Bangladeshi and Muslim women. Experiences may also differ depending on generation, education and class. The literature presented here predominately focuses on employment barriers of married and single PBM women. What are the specific and additional barriers faced by PBM lone mothers?

2.3.3 English language through an integration lens

PBM women have gained significant public and policy attention in regard to integration. This manifests itself in the racialised stereotypical image of PBM women (Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Alexander 2013) (as described in described in Section 2.3.1). PBM women are seen as the embodiment of a negative culture (Alexander 2013) and “vectors of the integration of their community” (Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012, p. 757). Focusing on government discourses, Karla and Kapoor (2009) find integration policies specifically target Muslims and integration debates are reduced to questions of cultural differences, which are viewed solely in negative terms (Karla and Kapoor 2009). For instance, Bangladeshi women are viewed as backwards looking (Jahan 2011) “alien intruders with a sexist culture” (Karla and Kapoor 2009, p. 1404). Cultural practices such as arranged ‘homeland’ marriages and an orientation towards the ‘homeland’ are viewed as obstacles to integration (Brubaker 2005; Alexander 2013; Charsley, Bolognani and Spencer 2017). There is a continuous emphasis on speaking English, abandoning cultural practices and of loyalty to the nation to fully integrate into society (Karla and Kapoor 2009; Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013). There is also a focus on developing social networks and increasing community cohesion (Karla and Kapoor 2009). The literature argues this neglects the structural inequalities and everyday experiences Muslims face such as experiences of discrimination, deprivation and poverty which can deter integration (Karla and Kapoor 2009; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013; Charsley, Bolognani and Spencer 2017). Altogether, as Alexander (2013) argues, integration and inclusion are seen through the lens of culture with notions of religious, ethnic and racial difference and gender particularly being seen as problematic. PBM women are particularly problematised and pressured to change.

As such, there has been much attention paid to speaking English in relation to ethnic minorities integrating and fully taking part in wider society (Alexander, Edwards and Temple 2007), particularly in government reports (e.g. Casey 2016; MHCLG 2018) (see Chapter 1, Section 1.1). Attention to developing speaking skills is not only about an ability to communicate; rather it is about acquiring British culture (Bhabha 1994; Alexander, Edwards and Temple 2007; Bassel, Monforte and Khan 2018). A focus on integration and English language intensified under David Cameron's Conservative government, with an

announcement of an English teaching programme specifically targeting Muslim women (Turner and Wigfield 2016). Although the specific targeting of Muslim women has been scrutinised, Turner and Wigfield (2016) argue that investing in English classes is a positive development as there is an opportunity to enhance women's social engagement and employment. Yet there has also been a lack of availability and reduction of government funding for English (ESOL) classes as part of austerity measures (Paget and Stevenson 2014; Turner and Wigfield 2016).

This presents a lack of English skills as a major barrier for PBM women. A lack of English language skills is overwhelming presented in literature and public discourse as a key barrier to employment and integration. However, less attention is paid to the impact it can have on PBM women's everyday experiences. Notably, Ahmed (2008) has explored the everyday impact this has on migrant Bangladeshi women. Ahmed (2008) found a lack of English speaking and reading skills can lead to a sense of fear and isolation preventing women from leaving the home or partaking in activities. As such women wanted to learn English to get by on a day-to-day basis. Learning to speak English would allow them to communicate with teachers, at hospitals and understand letters, giving them a sense of independence (Ahmed 2008) and, in turn, reducing women's dependency on husbands and in-laws. To learn English participants felt they needed to put what they learnt in English classes to practice, however this was difficult due to not having opportunities to interact with native English speakers and being surrounded by a Bengali community (Ahmed 2008). Further, family responsibility and childcare was cited as restricting their ability to attend English courses (Ahmed 2008). This study demonstrates the constraints women feel due to a lack of English skills. There is a need to further consider the everyday impact that a lack of English skills has. This is more of a hidden experience amongst PBM women. It will be a key area of exploration in this study because, as lone mothers, PBM women will not have the support of husbands upon whom they can depend if their English skills are lacking. The next section will now turn to emerging literature which focuses on PBM women's experiences of divorce.

2.3.4 Experiences of divorce

The gendered position of PBM women within Pakistani, Bangladeshi and broader SA cultures produces distinct experiences of divorce (Qureshi, Charsley and Shaw 2014). In SA culture divorce is highly resisted and considered as a failure of the wife to maintain the marriage (Guru 2009; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). There is an emphasis on *sabar* (patience, see Terminology for an extended definition) and adjustment, where women believe that their situations may improve over time (Charsley 2005b; Qureshi 2018). Qureshi (2018) argues there is a sense of agency within this. While focusing on *sabar* in relation to Pakistani women and illnesses, Qureshi (2013, p. 120; 2016) has argued that *sabar* involves self-sacrifice, silent suffering and is an "agential capacity". Guru (2009) interviewed Punjabi Indian women finding that divorce had a negative impact on women, creating a sense of stigma. Guru's (2009) findings can be useful in exploring PBM lone mothers' experiences as SA cultures and religions of Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam are perceived as being "united in their exaltation of 'purity' and 'fidelity' of women, as mothers and wives and in their attack against those who deviate from social norms" (Guru 2009, p. 286). Divorce is cited as negatively impacting women's *izzat* which is directly attached to male protection (Guru 2009). Women are viewed as the primary purveyors of culture (Guru 2009). Divorce is seen as a failure of the woman in keeping the marriage together (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014) and threatens family honour (Guru 2009). Divorced women are often perceived as "unrepairable broken glass" (Lawson and Satti 2016, p. 415). They can experience exclusion, hardship, isolation and hostility from PBM and SA communities and family, especially if they have little male protection from their natal family (Guru 2009; Lawson and Satti 2016). They are also pressured to remarry (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014).

Moreover, there can be a sense of danger and vulnerability to sexual exploitation (Guru 2009). Participants in Guru's (2009) study described having to self-police themselves and be careful of attracting male attention or giving any cause for rumours or gossip that may taint their *izzat*. In addition, women who are migrants in the UK can experience concerns regarding their immigration status and may be left without emotional and/or financial support because of not having legal rights to public funds (Guru 2009). This illustrates the negative impact divorce has on women and how this is attached to their positionality as women within cultural contexts and PBM communities.

However, it is important to illustrate the positive impact divorce can have for PBM women. Shaw (2000) argues that for Pakistani women raised in the UK divorce and single parenthood are not as challenging as they would be in rural Pakistan. Shaw (2000) has found that many women have the support of their parents and siblings. Women are able to work or obtain state benefits and council flats to support themselves (Shaw 2000; Guru 2009). They can emerge as stronger, independent and autonomous individuals. Divorce can present opportunities of financial independence; women have better control over their income even if they may be struggling financially (Guru 2009). Women can rediscover themselves, realise their potential, escape and take a stance against oppressive patriarchal cultural traditions (Guru 2009). They can develop a critical insight into the social and cultural environments they live in and their positionality as women within this (Guru 2009). For instance, women with children can find it difficult to find "new male partners who will give them respectability" (Guru 2009, p. 294). This may lead to them concluding that they should remain single and free from male control (Guru 2009). Religious faith and discovering its true meaning can be used by women as a mechanism to cope with divorce and even fight for their right to divorce (Lawson and Satti 2016; Qureshi 2018). Therefore, experiences of divorce also challenge the stereotypical views of PBM women as passive and dependent.

Based upon interviews with two Pakistani divorcees in the US, Lawson and Satti (2016) found that although they felt liberated by divorce, as lone mothers they were overwhelmed with their childcare responsibility which occupied a large amount of their time and they lived on decreasing financial resources. This was especially because of a lack of financial support from former husbands and family (Lawson and Satti 2016). Lone motherhood created a greater challenge for them than their unmarried status (Lawson and Satti 2016). Literature on divorce reflects an additional discourse presented by Duncan and Edwards (1996a; 1999) in relation to lone motherhood, 'escaping patriarchy'. This is a positive construction of lone motherhood acknowledging change in gender relations and the idea that women are "no longer willing to accept control over their lives by individual men" (Duncan and Edwards 1999, p. 39). Thus, through lone motherhood, it is argued, women are able to escape patriarchy and become independent. The experiences of SA women in relation to divorce in existing literature begin to demonstrate the positives and negatives of divorce in relation to 'escaping patriarchy'.

As demonstrated, there are various disadvantages and opportunities associated with divorce for PBM women. Their positionality as women within their cultures, communities and Islam shapes their experiences. Whether they have similar experiences as other lone mothers is another dimension which has not fully been considered and will be addressed in this study. Whether PBM women escape patriarchy upon entering lone motherhood will also be investigated. A crucial form of support for women during or after divorce, separation, DA or DV can be SA women's organisations.

2.3.5 South Asian women organising

SA women's organisations have been prominent in the UK since the 1970s and 80s, providing support to women. They emerged as part of wider 'black' community organisation against racism and migrant struggles (Solomos 2003). Brah (2009) outlines that the term black has previously been adopted politically in the UK context by coalitions amongst African and SA activists. Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe (1985) outline that black was used as a political term to define their common situation and the continued oppression and racism they faced in Britain. Furthermore, Brah (2009, p. 504) argues that "black became a political colour to be worn with pride against colour-based racism". The solidarity between African and SA activists was influenced by anti-colonial struggles and their broadly shared disadvantaged structural positions within British society compared to white individuals; for example they faced racism, social and political exclusion and discrimination in the workplace, housing and education (Sudbury 2001; Solomos 2003; Brah 2009). "Their 'non-whiteness' was a common referent within the racism confronting them" (Brah 2009, p. 504).

More specifically, SA women's organisations emerged as part of black women's movements which aimed to gain recognition for the specific oppressions faced by black women in the UK (Sudbury 2001; Takhar 2011). Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe (1985) outline that this began with African women rejecting that their concerns as black women were secondary to black men's and organising against the sexism they faced, fighting for the rights they had been denied. Later SA women joined to form local organisations and national bodies (Brah 2009). These were efforts for black women to speak for themselves, addressing both racial and sexist oppression (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985). However, it was also acknowledged that there

were differences (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985). For SA women, SA organisations more specifically have been fundamental in challenging both sexist and cultural oppressions women face within the SA community and racist oppression in British society (Takhar 2011). As argued in Chapter 1, such organisations were crucial in placing issues such as DV, dowry, forced marriage and honour killings within the SA community on the political agenda (Bhopal 2009; Takhar 2011). This also challenged the stereotypical image of SA women as passive, demonstrating that they can be actively involved in overcoming their oppression (Takhar 2011).

Today, SA women's organisations have been recognised in many studies as providing crucial forms of support for SA women by standing as a mediator between them and wider society, offering advice, providing linguistic support and having an understanding of the influence of culture on their lives (Alexander, Edwards and Temple 2007; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014; Reddy 2019). They can empower women to independence (Takhar 2011). For example, in Guru's (2009) study of divorce, local SA agencies were important for participants in getting them re-housed and helping with divorce. They were also a place to meet friends and share common experiences (Guru 2009). Furthermore, in Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling's (2014) study exploring the experiences of SA women who were abused by husbands, many women were referred by police or sought support from SA advocacy services to leave their husbands. Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling (2014, p. 154) have found that many women found advocacy support helpful, especially because "staff recognized the influence of the cultural context on women and their marital family members". Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling's (2014) study therefore demonstrates that SA women's organisations can be a crucial form of support for women, especially the most marginalised and excluded. However, SA women's organisations have been criticised by Siddique (2000) for being preoccupied with service provision and being less politically active than in the past. Furthermore, SA women's organisations are also located within ethnic minority organisations and the wider third or voluntary sector. Ethnic networks can be vital lifelines for minorities who can be excluded from accessing wider support networks and resources (Cederberg 2012; Forbes and James 2014). As mediators they can support women in gaining 'confidence' to access wider resources and services (Alexander 2007). Yet, while demands for services increase, organisations are also increasingly

experiencing cuts to service provision and resources under austerity measures (Craig 2014; Harries et al 2020).

Song and Edwards (1997) have previously argued that the support lone mothers receive from social networks, can be an important factor in their lives and an area which should also be of focus in relation to lone motherhood. When Song and Edwards (1997) advocated for research to be conducted advancing the voices of Black lone mothers, they argued for it to be conducted in collaboration with black organisations. This can be taken forward in relation to PBM lone mothers. SA organisations potentially can play a crucial role in supporting marginalised PBM lone mothers to overcome the barriers they face. Little is known about the support and services offered to PBM lone mothers by such organisations.

Both the literature and public domain have been criticised for homogenising PBM women's experiences (Salway 2007; Bhopal 2009). Vertovec (2007, p. 1025) argues that ethnicity or country of origin has been of predominate focus, providing "a misleading, one-dimensional appreciation of contemporary diversity". Vertovec (2007) argues for a focus on how different 'variables' can interplay, for example gender, class and divergent experiences of employment, to create diverse experiences amongst individuals belonging to one ethnic group. By bringing forward the differences amongst and unique experiences of PBM women the literature does exactly this, as does Duncan and Edwards' (1999) argument of acknowledging differences within the category of 'lone mother'. There is also an analytical tool which can help bring the literature together to articulate the unique lived experiences of PBM lone mothers, namely 'intersectionality'. Therefore the next section focuses on the emergence of intersectionality; approaches to intersectionality; its application to exploring the experiences of SA and Muslim women in the UK; and finally, the value intersectionality can bring to exploring the lived experiences of PBM lone mothers.

2.4 Intersectionality and black feminism

2.4.1 Intersectionality's emergence

Intersectionality is the idea that “every person is a crowd, characterized with multiple identities, identifications, and allegiances” (Chun, Lipsitz and Shin 2013, p. 923). It is a tool for creating new identities (Chun, Lipsitz and Shin 2013) and articulating the experiences and disadvantages faced by the marginalised. Intersectionality emerged as a criticism of mainstream Western feminism viewing women united under a common sisterhood against patriarchy (Brah and Phoenix 2004; Bryson 2016). In such an approach black and ‘third world’ women were marginalised and viewed as passive victims who were denied the rights that white women enjoyed (Bryson 2016). Cultural traditions and ‘third world’ men were blamed for their experiences of oppression and Western white women were called upon “to help free their less fortunate sisters” (Bryson 2016, p. 234). The agency and voice of ‘third world’ women was denied and their histories of struggles ignored (Bryson 2016). There was a failure to take into account the power relations that divide women (Brah and Phoenix 2004).

Black feminists rejected the single-axis approach of focusing on gender alone. There was a particular emphasis on the exclusion of race. Feminist and anti-racism approaches were heavily critiqued for treating race and gender as separate systems of oppression (Crenshaw 1991; Bryson 2016). Feminists represented white ideologies focusing on white middle-class Western women and anti-racism approaches explored the disadvantages black men faced (Crenshaw 1991; Bryson 2016; Collins and Bilge 2016). Thus, black women were overlooked in both approaches. Consequently, intersectionality was first introduced as focusing on the ‘triple oppression’ and disadvantages black women or ‘women of colour’ faced being black, women and working class members (Yuval-Davis 2006). Race, gender and class have become the traditional ‘big three’ social categories of identity considered in intersectionality approaches (Yuval-Davis 2006; Bryson 2016), however Bryson (2016) does point out that class is often neglected. Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989; 1991) is usually credited as introducing the term ‘intersectionality’. Although, Collins and Bilge (2016) criticise simply crediting Crenshaw by arguing that intersectionality’s origins lie during periods of social movement politics in the 1960s and 70s. It was incorporated within and across multiple social movements organised by black women and literature associated with this (Collins and Bilge 2016). Aguilar (2012) brings attention to social movements by black women against racism, sexism and national liberation struggles in the US. They framed multiple oppressions as interlocking through the manifestation of ‘double jeopardy’ and ‘triple jeopardy’ while not directly referring to the

‘intersectionality’ of race, gender and class (see Aguilar 2012). This can also be demonstrated in the sub-section on SA organisations. Crenshaw’s coining of the term was a crucial moment in bringing academic attention towards intersectionality and formalising the concept (Collins and Bilge 2016). This became a pivotal turning point for intersectionality.

Crenshaw (1989; 1991) introduced intersectionality in relation to the multiple forms of violence and oppression black women or ‘women of colour’ faced. Specifically, it was advanced in relation to a US employment discrimination legal case where anti-discrimination law did not acknowledge that black women were not being discriminated against as only ‘women’ or only ‘blacks’ but both. Intersectionality spoke directly to the struggles black women were involved in (Chun, Lipsitz and Shin 2013). This involved a ground up approach to intersectionality, presenting the experiences of these women and showing how multiple systems are inseparable and impact their lives (Collins and Bilge 2016). There was an aim to shift feminist focus “toward perspectives grounded in analyses of systematic dynamics and institutional power” (Chun, Lipsitz and Shin 2013, p. 922). Significantly, intersectionality asserted that gender and race, as well as other social categories, are not separate systems of disadvantage rather they are dynamically interconnected (Bryson 2016). Therein, Bryson (2016) asserts experiences of gender vary by race and experiences of race vary by gender. It was a tool to reveal how power works (Chun, Lipsitz and Shin 2013), an initiative for social justice (Collins and Bilge 2016) and a criticism of the dangers a single-axis approach has in ignoring black women. Intersectionality continues to be central in understanding the disadvantages and vulnerabilities faced by black women. However, it is argued that it can be extended beyond black feminism to have universal application to any group of individuals including under-examined groups, the advantaged as well as the disadvantaged (Yuval-Davis 2006; Collins and Bilge 2016; Davis and Zarkov 2017). Since its emergence it has expanded further with various levels of analysis, with identity at its core.

2.4.2 Approaches to intersectionality analysis

Intersectionality is increasingly viewed as a theory of identity (Davis and Zarkov 2017), focusing on political identity and difference at the collective level. Social categories of identity are interrelated and constituted by each other (Patel 2013; Davis and Zarkov 2017). This

results in “multiple and intertwined layers of discrimination and disadvantage” (Tariq and Syed 2017, p. 511). Social categories of identity can therefore place individuals in unique positions, producing unique experiences, oppressions and disadvantages. Intersectionality is often mistakenly criticised and understood as overwhelmingly focusing on identity as a category of analysis which results in structural analysis and inequalities being overlooked (Collins and Bilge 2016). This claim has been strongly contested by Collins and Bilge (2016) who argue that structural analysis has been a part of intersectionality approaches from the onset. Collins and Bilge (2016) shift the focus predominately of identity within intersectionality approaches and illustrate the importance of intersectionality’s original ideas described above. Intersectionality has the potential of offering a holistic and open approach where different levels of analysis can be applied to build a picture of how social groups are marginalised and disadvantaged or privileged while keeping identity at its centre.

For instance, Yuval-Davis (2006) outlines and combines different levels of analysis of identities in intersectionality approaches. This includes analysing the macro axis of power, expressions of social divisions in specific institutions and organisations, power relationships between individuals and also individuals’ own subjective experiences of their daily lives in regards to inclusion, exclusion and disadvantage. Further, Patel (2013) argues for the addition of the global and transnational level and the histories associated with this, for example colonialism and imperialism, and how they shape the local context and individual experiences. Social categories of identity are structured by and connected to structures, institutions and major systems of oppression and power in society, for example racism, sexism and classism which are themselves interlocking (Brah and Phoenix 2004). Intersectionality is about how identities, social divisions, structures and power are constructed and relate with each other to shape experiences.

Yuval-Davis (2006) argues that the overwhelming emphasis on collective identity risks presenting hegemonic discourses and homogenising social groups, rendering invisible the experiences of the more marginalised members of a specific social category. Collins and Bilge (2016) term this as ‘essentialism’ or ‘collective politics’ which does not acknowledge difference when conceptualising identities. There is a multiplication of wider categorical identities instead of shifting constructions of intersectionality (Yuval-Davis 2006). For

example, as argued, PBM women have been presented as a homogenous group (Salway 2007; Bhopal 2009) and differences have rarely been highlighted, for instance generational and class differences. Furthermore, Yuval-Davis (2006) argues for an exploration of how different social categories construct each other and how they relate to the political and subjective constructions of identity and power relations. Difference in perspectives and positioning of individuals should be deconstructed within intersectionality approaches (Yuval-Davis 2006). However, taking into account individual identities and experiences does not mean undermining collective identities, of course individuals belonging in the same social groups share similar social locations within the relations of power (McCall 2005; Collins and Bilge 2016). Individual experiences have structural, political and representational links (Collins and Bilge 2016). Rather identity should be explored on both the shared collective level and the individual personal and subjective level. This also reflects an 'intracategorical complexity' methodological approach to intersectionality which articulates the complexity of experiences within social groups, looking at diversity and difference while also generalising (McCall 2005). The group is presented in detail and complexity (McCall 2005). This approach is associated with traditional approaches to intersectionality according to McCall (2005) and will be applied here in relation to analysing experiences, similarities, differences and diversities amongst PBM lone mothers.

Finally in relation to identity, another form of 'essentialism' is that individuals are seen as having fixed unchanging identities in intersectionality approaches (Collins and Bilge 2016). Offering criticism of this, Collins and Bilge (2016, p. 125) argue that individuals have "multiple 'subjectivities' that they construct from one situation to the next". They express varying combinations of their multiple identities across various social contexts (Bryson 2016; Collins and Bilge 2016). This perspective supports individual agency (Collins and Bilge 2016). It is important to understand "when, how and under which circumstances specific interactions emerge and become salient" (Davis and Zarkov 2017, p. 316). A tension can therefore be seen between collective and individual identity in intersectionality.

Thus, intersectionality offers an open-ended (Cho, Crenshaw and McCall 2013) and expanding approach to explore how different levels of analysis enmesh. It offers conceptual and multi-dimensional empirical insights of the unique experiences and disadvantages individuals and

collectives face. The next sub-section focuses on the application of intersectionality more specifically in regards to SA women in the UK and the labour market.

2.4.3 Intersectionality and South Asian women

Intersectionality has been utilised to explore SA women's experiences. Brah (1996) explores the experiences of the SA community in post-war Britain particularly focusing on women, generation and culture. The 'South Asian' community in her study included Indians, Sikhs, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Brah 1996). Taking an intersectionality approach, Brah (1996) focuses on different areas such as the labour market, school and family. She explores how differences and commonalities are played out, constituted, contested and reproduced in practices, discourses and institutions (Brah 1996). She advocates for the exploration of the complexity and multiplicity of power relations (Brah and Phoenix 2004) and what kinds of inclusions, exclusions, subjects and individual positions they create (Brah 1996). Much like the advocates for intersectionality presented here, Brah (1996) argues that there is a need to go beyond claims which give primacy to one axis of differentiation. Each axis has specific modalities of power relations and intersectionality shows "how these fields of power collide, enmesh and configure; and with what effects" (Brah 1996, p. 248). Although she argues priority can be given to one axis (for example race) and explored in relation to others (Brah 1996).

In addition, Brah (1996) adds a central concept to her take on intersectionality. Central importance is given to 'diaspora space' in her framework (Brah 1996), which is of relevance here. Diaspora refers to a 'journey'; a journey of settling down and putting roots in a new space (Brah 1996). For Brah (1996) it is about the socio-economic, political and cultural conditions in which this settling takes place. For example, diaspora can be constituted through colonialism or the mass global flow of labour into Britain from many SA countries (Brah 1996). Brah (1996) therefore brings in the distinctive histories of migration which Patel (2013) argues for in intersectionality approaches. Diaspora is also about the country to which groups migrate, how individuals are situated in settling countries and the social relations of racism, gender and class. Thus, diaspora space is a mode of genealogical analysis of different kinds of 'borders' and the transmigration across these borders of individuals, cultures and capital

(Brah 1996). It is a space where new forms of belonging and otherness are contested and disadvantages are created (Brah 1996).

Taking the example of labour market participation, Brah (1996) argues that at the time compared to men SA women were found in low-skilled work. SA women were further affected by their structural positions as black workers and disadvantage in comparison to white individuals. As SA men earned less than white men, SA women were more likely to take up full-time employment to support husbands compared to white women (Brah 1996). They were also concentrated in more low-paid jobs than white women, mainly in the manufacturing clothing sector where they were allocated the worse tasks in the production process (Brah 1996). White British individuals were privileged and often found in the best jobs and 'black', SA workers in the worst. They faced discrimination in terms of access to employment, training and promotion (Brah 1987). SA women therefore found their position in the labour market in relation to racism and sexism. Brah (1996) demonstrates that race and gender are interwoven situating SA women in more disadvantaged positions in the British labour market than white women. Here we can see intersectionality as a useful tool in exploring differences and disadvantage faced by this group.

Furthermore, although more recent literature about PBM women largely does not mention intersectionality directly, the literature review of PBM women presented here shows the multidimensional factors and identities at work in shaping the PBM lone mothers' position. Their positionality as women within these are presented as creating unique experiences that often diverge from other groups (e.g. white women). It shows how various social categories intersect with one another and social structures of inequality to produce unique experiences for PBM women in Britain today. Tariq and Syed's (2017) study (also see Section 2.3.2 on employment) focuses on the extent to which gender, ethnicity, religion, agency and family status affect the career progression of SA Muslim women and gaining leadership positions. Twenty qualitative interviews were conducted. In particular, at the analysis stage Tariq and Syed (2017) used an intersectionality framework to understand how gender, ethnicity and religion overlapped to disadvantage participants. The findings present each social category separately and an intersectionality section provides examples of how the different categories intersect. For example, Tariq and Syed (2017) describe a participant who faced discrimination

from a Muslim male manager based on both her faith and gender. The manager told the participant she could not travel to promote her campaign because she would need her husband with her to do so. This shows that it is not just the participant's Muslim identity which can affect her experiences but how others view her position as a woman within Islam. Together these intersecting identities created cultural stereotypes which restricted women's career progression (Tariq and Syed 2017). This illustrates the unique and complex challenges PBM women can face in labour market participation today. Another example has been presented in Section 2.3.1 of Pakistani women's DA experiences where Mirza (2017), drawing on intersectionality approaches, questions the applicability of mainstream feminism, gender inequality, patriarchy and discourses of DA to participants' experiences. It demonstrates differing experiences of DA for this group.

Through these examples, it can be demonstrated that applying an intersectional lens can be crucial in bringing to light how different identities, institutions, structures of power and different situations can shape experiences for PBM lone mothers. Intersectionality can help articulate how PBM lone mothers' experiences are similar, different and unique to other groups (e.g. PBM married women) as well as helping to account for differences and diversity within the broader group of PBM lone mothers. There has been an ascendancy of intersectionality within sociological research, however it is yet to be applied to exploring PBM lone mothers' experiences.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature review presents existing constructions, experiences and key areas of focus in relation to lone motherhood and PBM women. This chapter illustrates a significant marginalisation, absence and invisibilisation of PBM lone mothers in existing lone motherhood studies and PBM women studies. Whereas literature has overwhelmingly been concentrated in other areas, particularly employment. Such literature will be drawn upon when presenting and bridging the current academic silence on PBM lone motherhood which is the central aim of this study. The literature review foregrounds employment, financial struggles, English language, classic patriarchy, constructions of lone motherhood,

independence and divorce as well as the role of SA women's organisations in PBM lone mothers' lives, as central areas of exploration, amongst others.

In particular, throughout this chapter, the importance of considering difference, diversity and complexities in experiences is illustrated, for example generational and class differences amongst PBM women and the differences in 'gendered moral rationalities' shaped by racial, ethnic, cultural and classed identities amongst lone mothers. Thus, an 'intracategorical complexity' methodological approach to intersectionality will be adopted (McCall 2005). This will allow for a focus on PBM lone mothers at neglected points of intersection, uncovering the differences, diversity, similarities and complexities in their experiences. This will entail an extended comparison of PBM lone mothers' experiences to those of lone mothers and PBM women in previous studies, as well as presenting differences and similarities amongst PBM lone mothers in this study (Salway 2007; Bhopal 2009).

Intersectionality is particularly fitting as an analytical framework for exploring lived experiences of PBM lone mothers. An intersectionality approach will be central to addressing the first two research questions (presented in Chapter 1) allowing for the exploration of how different social categories of identity participants' belong to intertwine to create unique lived experiences, perspectives, barriers, disadvantages and opportunities as lone mothers. It will help to assess which identities and positionalities are salient in shaping participants' experiences. For example, is their positionality as women within their culture central in shaping their experiences of lone motherhood? Furthermore, intersectionality will allow for a consideration of the wider structures, systems of power and oppression that shape their experiences, for example the welfare state, discrimination, family and patriarchal relations. In all, this will draw together different levels of analysis drawn out by black feminist researchers' approaches to intersectionality like subjective experiences, collective identities and diaspora space (Crenshaw 1991; Brah 1996; Yuval-Davis 2006). Overall, the study will also contribute to assessing the usefulness of an intersectionality approach in understanding PBM lone motherhood and thus addressing research question three. Finally, a significant gap in literature found here, that this study will explore, is the role and support provided by SA women's organisations in PBM lone mothers' lives. This will address the fourth research question.

Chapter 3 will present the methodology and research process of exploring PBM lone mothers' lived experiences and the role of SA women's organisations in their lives.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide a reflexive account of the research and data collection process while contributing to contemporary methodological debates. It will particularly focus on how my multiple positionalities, as a young British Pakistani Muslim woman, researcher and volunteer, and switching between insider-outsider positionings influenced the research process. This will be presented in relation to engaging in and advancing standpoint feminist and contemporary insider-outsider debate. It will present the challenges and opportunities of conducting qualitative social research with SA women's organisations and particularly with PBM lone mothers who have been largely marginalised from research.

In keeping reflexivity of insider-outsider identities central, the chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section focuses on the research design, methodological and epistemological underpinnings and the second section turns to the research process including the story of access, recruitment, conducting observations, interviewing and ethics. Practical ethics and an ethics of reciprocity and giving back are discussed. The penultimate section covers transcription and translation, finishing off with a section on the data analysis process.

3.2 Research design, methodological and epistemological underpinnings

The methodological underpinnings of this study reflected a black feminist qualitative approach to conducting research. Central to feminist epistemological and methodological approaches was "the debunking of the myth of value-free scientific inquiry", that is positivist approaches (Lee and Renzetti 1993, p. 177). Instead feminist scholars advocated the importance of giving voice to women's experiences on their own terms which is instrumental in improving their situations (Reinharz 1992; Lee and Renzetti 1993; Bhopal 2009; Pillow and Mayo 2014). In particular, interviewing became a flagship feminist method (Pillow and Mayo 2014). Significantly in relation to researcher positionality, feminist approaches to research rejected the traditional separation of the researcher and researched (Lee and Renzetti 1993) and recognised that "research in its very nature is inherently political" (Mirza 1998, p. 80).

Thus, the researcher must have a critical self-awareness of their influence on the research process by adopting 'reflexivity' (Edwards 1993; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Huisman 2008; Bhopal 2010; Pillow and Mayo 2014). "Reflexivity means deconstructing what could have been taken for granted" (Hamdan 2009, p. 400). The researcher's personal beliefs, values and positionings must be considered (Hamdan 2009; Bhopal 2010; Britton 2020).

Similar to the argument presented in Chapter 2, while critiquing a positivist approach, feminism itself was critiqued by black women and other women with labels for ignoring race and taking a white Western centric approach (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). Black feminist theorists seek methodological approaches to address the interlocking forms of oppression women face (Mirza 1993). For instance, taking a standpoint feminist approach, Collins (1991) has argued that black feminist thought can only be produced by black women. Reflecting on two studies exploring race, social class and gender, Phoenix (1994) critiques this standpoint view, questioning the idealisation of matching researcher-researched identities. Phoenix (1994) criticises the assumption that shared identity means the researcher can blend in better and produce better data that captures 'the truth'. She argues against this realist epistemology and advocates for constructionism where the researcher and researched are not always fixed dichotomies and balance can shift during the research process (Phoenix 1994). More recently, Bhopal's (2001; 2009; 2010) work has presented similar conclusions. It is recognised, although black women share commonalities, they will also have diverse experiences due to diversity within the group (Collins 1991; Bhopal 2001). This resonates with more contemporary insider-outsider debates in relation to researcher-researched positionalities and whether a researcher can truly be an 'insider' and produce better data (e.g. Bhopal 2010; Ryan, Kofman and Aaron 2011; McNess, Arthur and Crossley 2015; Britton 2020), in my case due to my identity as a young British Pakistani Muslim female. As Bhopal (2010, p. 191) argues "the insider status is ambiguous, complex and fraught with tensions".

The epistemological approach to methods advocated by black feminist theorists has been influential in this study, particularly the emphasis on advancing the voice of the marginalised in their own terms and legitimising SA women's experiences. Bhabha (2003, p. 156) states that "colonial power produces the colonized as a fixed reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible". PBM lone mothers in particular have been simultaneously

marginalised and othered due to their ethnic, religious and gendered identities but also as lone mothers. As Chapter 2 asserts they are underrepresented in lone motherhood studies and constructed as passive individuals. In taking a feminist methodological approach the research challenges this and aims to explore lone motherhood by prioritising lived experiences (Reinharz 1992; McIntosh and Wright 2019). It is about giving voice and visibility to PBM lone mothers as a political project (McIntosh and Wright 2019). Much like Mirza (1998, p. 81) has reflected on in her research with SA girls and women the research commits to:

"doing non-hierarchical, reciprocal, negotiated, emancipatory and subjective research which would be both about the South Asian women, for the South Asian women, and conducted from within the South Asian women's perspectives".

The research took on an ethnographically orientated research design, in that it was based on researcher immersion in the field and building trust over time. Ethnography does not have one specific definition (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). It has its roots in western anthropology "where an ethnography was a descriptive account of a community or culture, usually one located outside the west" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p. 1) and was associated with studying the 'other' (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). Tuhiwai Smith (1999, p. 67) argues "the ethnographic 'gaze' of anthropology has collected, classified and represented *other* cultures". Ethnographic studies were then employed in Western societies. Within sociology, ethnography was adopted in community studies and most famously by the 'Chicago school' which documented life in the city (Duneier 1992; Anderson 2003; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007 etc.). Significantly here, Katz (1989, p. 70-71) states that "the best ethnographies always break down conventional categories and resemble the lived world of their subjects in the terms of their subjective experiences". Thus, ethnography has been seen as a 'powerful tool' for breaking down stereotypes, particularly regarding Black American men (Duneier, 1992). Although, Duneier (1992) has argued that it has also reproduced stereotypes and created sweeping impressions of individuals and groups. Ethnographic approaches now involve a whole range of methods including observations, formal and informal interviewing and collecting documents (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Ethnography is influenced by a range of theoretical approaches including feminism (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Feminist

approaches are particularly significant to this study and discussions presented here regarding feminist methodology. There is a belief that true knowledge can be generated through the researcher participating and experiencing everyday 'natural' settings (Mason 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007) and that the social world involves "subjective meanings and experiences that are constructed by participants in social situations" (Burgess 1984, p. 64).

More specifically this approach fits with the exploration of lived experiences amongst PBM lone mothers. It allows the researcher to develop an understanding of participants' lives from their perspective and experiences (Reinharz 1992) and participate in real life situations (Mason 2002) in order to achieve the research aim. Crossley (2017) also argues that ethnography has the potential to look beyond the individual to understand how wider structures shape lives. This fits with the intersectional approach taken here (see Chapter 2) where there is an exploration of subjective experiences and how wider structures shape experiences. Additionally, Huisman (2008) states feminist approaches to ethnography are concerned with core values of reflexivity and the social positioning of the researcher with their subjects. Adopting reflexivity throughout this chapter I will engage in how my own intersecting positionality and values impacted the research process. Therefore, overall a black feminist and interpretivist methodological underpinning was applied to this study.

Chapter 1 introduced the rationale for situating the study in a SA women's organisation. A qualitative ethnographic and feminist influenced research design was adopted to address the research questions, allowing for an exploration of PBM lone mothers' subjective lived experiences. A single-case study research design was employed and the fieldwork was situated in a SA women's organisation, SAW's Place (pseudonym). This allowed for an intensive, in-depth exploration of women organising and provided an understanding of the complex everyday experiences of the lone mothers attending SAW's Place (Yin 2014). As introduced in Chapter 1, SAW's Place is a grassroots community organisation which provides a wide range of services, courses and advocacy support for SA women, including PBM lone mothers. A mixed methods approach was taken consisting of participant observations which involved taking on an active role of a volunteer providing advice and support to service users, engaging in informal conversations with lone mothers and conducting semi-structured interviews with lone mothers, SAW's Place workers and external partners. The next

substantial section outlines and reflects on the different stages of the research process. During my time at SAW's Place there were four workers who played a significant role in various aspects of the research design, access and volunteering stage. Thus, it is important to introduce them here:

Saffiyah was the manager of SAW's Place. Saffiyah had lived in the city all her life and was well known in the community due to her previous involvement in local organisations. She had been working at SAW's Place for the longest duration amongst the staff (around eighteen years). Her role involved overseeing the organisation, its development, supervising staff, looking for funding opportunities and feeding back to organisation stakeholders. She was also always around to have a chat with women who regularly attended the organisation.

Khadijah was the first worker I met at SAW's Place and a head worker. She oversaw the day-to-day services, courses and projects the organisation ran as well as the recruitment and ongoing management of volunteers and staff. Khadijah was quite central to the research project, as will be asserted in the story of access. She was an integral form of support for me while supporting lone mothers. She also provided advocacy and advice to service users, particularly in relation to more complex situations and issues which required ongoing expertise and support, for example women facing destitution or requiring immigration and settlement support.

Hafsa worked in the advice sessions on the same day as myself. During training, I shadowed Hafsa while she was supporting women. Alongside Riya (another worker at SAW's Place) she provided advice and support to service users. Hafsa started at the organisation as a volunteer and was passionate about helping the local community. She then attained a paid job at SAW's Place.

Halimah was new to the organisation. She ran advice sessions and appointments with Bangladeshi service users. She was born and brought up in England, of Bangladeshi ethnicity and fluently spoke Bengali (Sylheti dialect). I spent much time at the organisation with Halimah observing her supporting Bangladeshi lone mothers.

Halimah always went the extra mile to provide practical and emotional support to lone mothers.

These four workers/participants were crucial to negotiating my access to SAW's Place and lone mothers, which I detail in the next section and sub-sections.

3.3 Research process

3.3.1 Access

Accessing SAW's Place

In order to access SAW's Place, I contacted the organisation and arranged a meeting with the head worker Khadijah. It is important here to reflect on my identity as a Pakistani Muslim woman as it was essential in gaining access. Being female was an advantage as it provided access to SAW's Place, which would have been denied to men due to the central importance of the organisation being a confidential space for SA women to approach and utilise services, many of whom have been through DA or negative relationships with husbands. There is also an importance of *purdah* (gender segregation) in SA culture and Islam (Jefferey 1976). My Pakistani ethnic identity and language was also essential in gaining access to SAW's Place and thus, the lone mothers attending (Bhopal 2001). Lone mothers attending the organisation's advice sessions predominately have little English language speaking abilities and communicate in Urdu, Punjabi or Mirpuri/Pahari (Himalayan/Azad Kashmir dialect). The language accessibility is one of the main reason women seek support from SAW's Place. My linguistic knowledge (although not fully developed) was therefore key in gaining access and would be crucial in communicating, supporting and building a relationship of trust with the Pakistani lone mothers attending. It is clear that access would have been problematic or even impossible if I did not have this shared gendered, ethnic and linguistic identity (Bhopal 2001; Dwyer and Buckle 2009).

Another identity which became prominent in gaining access was my identity as a researcher, after all I was approaching the organisation to conduct research. Previous 'outsider'

researchers have discussed the 'mistrust' of Muslim communities in researchers due to research becoming political (post 9/11, 7/7) and Muslims being seen as a suspect community (Bolognani 2007; Ryan, Kofman and Aaron 2011). High involvement is required in access and there is an increasing importance of giving back (Bolognani 2007). Bolognani (2007) argues researchers who are unable to produce benefit for participants or the community can struggle. Further there is a wider concern with research being 'extractively orientated' (Neal et al 2016); researchers come into people's lives to do research and then vanish (Gerrard 1995). Thus the 'researcher' identity is problematised. Further, Tuhiwai Smith (1999, p. 170) states in relation to Western knowledge production of Maori people that Maori society has "provided fertile ground for research". Early ethnography distorted Maori social reality entrapping them within a "cultural definition" (ibid). This can also be applied to research with SA or Muslim communities (e.g. Alexander 2009; Britton 2019). Altogether there is a concern that the researcher will run away with the data, producing no benefit to the community. The researcher identity came into play when talking to Khadijah. It was important for Khadijah that I would volunteer before and during conducting the research, therein contributing to the organisation before and while collecting data. Khadijah said in return the organisation would free up more resources for the project, for example space to carry out interviews at SAW's Place. This thus contests the assumption that as an apparent 'insider' gaining access was simple, my outsider identity as a researcher and purpose of approaching SAW's Place was prominent in shaping the terms of access to the organisation.

Additionally, this conversation led to both myself and Khadijah agreeing that volunteering and participant observation was also essential in gaining access to lone mothers and building a relationship of trust with them before conducting interviews. Crucially, Khadijah emphasised that conducting one-off interviews without getting to know lone mothers beforehand may mean they would only share "superficial" details of their lives. In building up a relationship of trust with lone mothers over time they would share their true experiences in confidence. Therefore, a high level of involvement in the organisation and with lone mothers was required in gaining access, as well as a promise of giving back through volunteering. I would then find myself positioned as a volunteer as well as a researcher during my time at SAW's Place meaning it was difficult separating these roles. This reflects feminist approaches to research which emphasise a building of rapport, reciprocity and empathy between the researcher and

the researched allowing individuals to open up about their experiences and feelings (Dwyer and Buckle 2009; Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach 2009). It can result in a less hierarchical, unstructured and informal atmosphere (Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach 2009). Although feminist researchers, and traditional ethnographers, also caution against over-rapport and the researcher becoming a friend to participants (Goffman 1989; Dwyer and Buckle 2009; Hamdan 2009).

Access continued once entering 'the field'

The conversation with Khadijah was central in shaping my activities and time at SAW's Place and the overall research design. I began by volunteering over two months before beginning fieldwork, gaining more insight into the organisation. I engaged in training and learnt how to support service users. Another stage to access was attending a meeting with the workers I would find myself working with during my time there. This provided more understanding of the work SAW's Place did and was an opportunity for workers to provide some input. For instance, Saffiyah (the manager) told me it would be a good idea to separate the volunteering and data collection stage. Upon beginning volunteering I would have to inform service users that I was there to volunteer and would later be conducting research regarding lone motherhood. However, in practice, upon beginning data collection it was difficult to separate my volunteer and observer role as I was conducting research while providing support to lone mothers in the advice sessions. I was also informed that there was no Bangladeshi worker that could participate in observations (the worker I met during volunteering was leaving). This brings me to the story of access to a Bangladeshi worker.

For the Bangladeshi advice sessions, it would not have been possible to support lone mothers myself as an 'outsider'. I do not have a Bangladeshi ethnic background and do not know Bengali. Consequently I had to observe a Bangladeshi worker providing support. Access to working with a Bangladeshi worker developed over time starting from when I was volunteering and during the first two months of fieldwork. There was a new replacement worker of Bangladeshi ethnicity, called Halimah, at the organisation. By chance one day, during volunteering and around a month before beginning data collection, I was sat near reception and a woman came and sat down next to me eating her lunch. We began talking to

each other. I informed her that I was a researcher and during our long conversation she told me she was the new Bangladeshi worker. She further probed into my research and its focus. I told her that I wanted to observe a worker supporting lone mothers in the Bangladeshi advice sessions and asked whether she would potentially be interested. Halimah said that she would be happy to help and would let me know. On another occasion I gave her copies of the informed consent documents which she could go through to learn more about the research, see whether she could translate the information to lone mothers and then decide if she would like to participate. Two months into fieldwork I bumped into her again at SAW's Place. Halimah said she knew of a lone mother who came regularly to her sessions and may be interested in taking part. I said I could come along to her session and we could talk to the lone mother about the project together. However, Halimah said that she would like more time to develop a relationship with the service users first as she herself was new to SAW's Place. We arranged to discuss this further on another day. At this point she was ready for me to come in and observe. The first observation took place three months into fieldwork (February). Thus, Halimah was "a bridge to link into a new social world" (Bhopal 2010, p. 190). This account illustrates the ongoing process of negotiation required to set up research and gain access even once entering the field (Burgess 1984). Access occurs over time and is not necessarily a linear process. The next section focuses on the different elements of observations.

3.3.2 Observations and insider-outsider positionalities

There were three elements to participant observations: observations with Pakistani lone mothers at one-to-one advice sessions, observations with Halimah and Bangladeshi lone mothers at one-to-one advice sessions taking place away from SAW's Place in a local centre and finally an employment course observation. Overall eight months (approximately a total of one hundred and fifty-eight hours) were spent at SAW's Place conducting fieldwork; ninety-four hours over eight months were spent observing supporting Pakistani lone mothers, fifty-four hours over five months observing Bangladeshi advice sessions and ten hours at the employment course. My time was spent predominantly at the advice sessions, beginning with once a week and later twice a week when starting the Bangladeshi sessions. In the advice sessions service users were supported on a first come first served basis. Support was provided to all women as a volunteer however observations were only conducted of sessions with lone

mothers who decided to take part in the study. Women would often state their name and the support they required. In order to identify whether a service user was a lone mother I would often ask them while providing support or find out while supporting them. As I had to find their details in the organisation client system, at times, I would also see their marital status and whether they had children. Thus, I came to know whether they were lone mothers. Similarly, in Bangladeshi sessions Halimah would either already know they were lone mothers, ask them or find out while supporting them.

Upon arriving at SAW's Place, I would often find women already waiting at the waiting area near reception. This was a safe and informal sociable space for women to chat amongst themselves. Very often I found women talking away and engaging with the receptionists while waiting for English classes. I sometimes went to SAW's Place for pre-booked appointments, often arranged by Khadijah or taking place after advice sessions. This was almost always with a Pakistani lone mother, Zahra, who I provided the most support to over the course of fieldwork. In supporting Zahra, I gained a real insight into how SAW's Place supported women in beginning their journeys as lone mothers and requiring support for setting themselves up (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.3 for further discussions in relation to findings). I would accompany Zahra to appointments by bus. Although the actual appointments were not observed field notes were taken of our journeys to and from appointments to capture the journey's purpose, our informal conversations, Zahra's understandings and feelings at the time (ethnographic interviewing). Khadijah and other experienced workers provided practical support, advice and expertise throughout observations which enabled me to support lone mothers in areas I was unsure about. Support was provided to lone mothers in many areas, including applying for housing priority, benefits and jobs, making CVs and calling utility companies. It involved making phone calls to a range of services, such as the local council. Observations allowed for in-depth understandings of lone mothers' everyday lives, the struggles and barriers they faced. This rich data would not have been attainable through interviews alone. Observations were also essential in getting to know lone mothers.

Getting to know lone mothers

Reflecting perceptions of 'insider' researchers, it may be assumed that coming from a Pakistani Muslim ethnic and religious background and being female gave me immediate access and trust amongst Pakistani lone mothers. However, this was not always necessarily the case and did not guarantee access (Bhopal 2010). My outsider positionality as a volunteer who was relatively new to SAW's Place played a central role in this. On many occasions while conducting participant observations lone mothers would much rather see an experienced worker for support who they were already familiar with. This particularly occurred at the beginning as I was seen as a new inexperienced volunteer in comparison to the workers. Interactions with Maryam on two occasions demonstrates this:

I saw Maryam, she went past the office, I said hi, she went to see if the other worker was there (I think Hafsa, but she isn't here today), she came back to me and said she will come to me today. (Fieldnote 09.01.19)

Maryam was also waiting near the reception for support. I told her to come up with me... She said that she wanted to go to the other worker/volunteer, she had a letter from a "vakeel" (solicitor/lawyer) and the other worker/volunteer helped her with it before. She asked me if she could go to her because if she came to me then she would have to explain everything again. (Fieldnote 13.02.19)

It became quite apparent to me that it would take time for service users to seek support from me and to prove that I had some expertise in supporting them, which was developed overtime. It shows that there was no straightforward standpoint position and insider status for me to inhabit (Bhopal 2010). I had to negotiate my position over time. This also indicates that ethnographic research can proceed slowly over time and shows its temporal nature compared to other methods such as interviewing.

Additionally, lone mothers wanted to know more about me while I wanted to get to know about them. They "were given agency and more power by allowing that the researcher could be questioned and 'scanned'" (Bolognani 2007, p. 283). Bolognani (2007) terms this as 'reciprocal exposure', for someone to open up to the researcher, the researcher has to do the same. Further, this is commonly encouraged by feminist researchers and methodology where

they advocate the use of self-disclosure to "place the interaction between the researcher and researched on a more equal footing" (Renzetti and Lee 1993, p. 178), promoting true dialogues and solidarity between women, resulting in more openness and empathy (Edwards 1993; Bhopal 2009). I found myself discussing my own personal life, as the following fieldnote extract demonstrates:

*While filling it out [application form] she asked about me; where am I from, what do I study, when I told her I'm studying a PhD she said I look too young to do that and was happy. She said she was happy to see an Asian girl doing well.... I said I am doing research about Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers..... [towards the end] I said I live with my mother, she was a lone mother. She asked if I see my father, I told her about this but I didn't go into too much detail. She is asking personal questions, getting to know me at the same time as I am getting to know her. She said sorry I am asking you questions when you are wanting to ask me. I said that's fine. She then said that for this reason (that my mum is a lone mother) she wants to help me more.
(First time I met Suwaybah - fieldnote 19.12.18)*

In this fieldnote extract it can be demonstrated revealing that I came from a lone mother headed family and seeing a young woman from the Pakistani community doing well, something she aspires for her own children, resulted in Suwaybah wanting to take part in the research. However, the reflection on sharing my personal biography requires a further level of reflexivity, what Hamdan (2009) terms 'reflexivity of discomfort'. Such reflexivity not only uses reflexivity as a methodological tool to bring forward researchers' subjectivities "but also challenges the researcher" pushing them beyond their "comfort zones" (Hamdan 2009, p. 382 and p. 378). Hamadan (2009) criticises the lack of such reflexivity in feminist research. In the above extract the participant asked me about my father, although I did give her some details, I felt uncomfortable and did not go into too much detail. This questions the extent to which I was open about my own biography and personal experiences and yet wanted lone mothers to tell me about theirs. This also raises ethical questions, questioning the extent to which there was an 'equal footing' (Renzetti and Lee 1993; Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach 2009; Britton 2020).

Additionally, as Britton (2020) has reflected in her own research, disclosure of my own experiences varied, depending on how much participants asked about my own biography. I used the fact that I was brought up in a lone mother household as a way to create an almost shared experience between us, although from different point of views: myself as a daughter of a lone mother and them as lone mothers, and to encourage lone mothers to take part. As did Halimah with Bangladeshi lone mothers: she would often tell them that I was from a lone mother family. Some lone mothers also asked me where I was from, not just in England but also where my family was from in Pakistan. Though I was not from their community or location in Pakistan, some were familiar with the location. For example, this was something a lone mother Zahra and myself discussed one day when we were travelling to an appointment. These aspects provided talking points for lone mothers and myself resulting in a more informal non-hierarchical atmosphere (Bhopal 2009; Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach 2009). This also reflects Phoenix's (1994) assertion that shared gender is not simply the only reason women enjoy talking intimately to other women. Rather she cites other shared identities such as social class and colour. Here personal biography and the 'lone mother' identity was significant.

Altogether, this demonstrates that an insider status is not a given. Although I was better placed than an outsider non-Urdu speaking researcher in gaining access to SAW's Place and service users, it still took time to establish a relationship of trust and rapport with Pakistani lone mothers. This challenges the simplistic notion of ideas such as 'ethnic matching' or emphasis on shared gender identity (Phoenix 1994; Bhopal 2010; Zubair and Victor 2015). This experience of getting to know lone mothers also challenges the perception of SA women as being passive individuals and demonstrates their agency as active agents in the research process. In getting to know Bangladeshi lone mothers I was presented with a different challenge.

In getting to know Bangladeshi lone mothers I found myself positioned as an outsider, as established, I was not from a Bangladeshi ethnic background and did not know Bengali. Working with a Bangladeshi worker (Halimah) was central as support was linguistically tailored to Bangladeshi women in Bengali (Sylheti dialect). Here I began as a non-participant observer, observing Bangladeshi lone mothers and Halimah. Each time a woman came for

support I was introduced by Halimah as a University student researcher, researching about lone motherhood. Once a lone mother was identified the worker would provide a brief summary of the project and then go through the information sheet if lone mothers were happy to participate. Two Bangladeshi participants took part in observations upon meeting me for the first time and the other two during their second or third visit in my presence. My outsider status was evident when women would ask me or the worker whether I was a Pakistani. As observations progressed, I found myself positioned as an insider. Shifting from my ethnic, cultural and gender identity to my situational identity, I noticed that my volunteer identity positioned me as an insider amongst lone mothers. At times the worker would ask me about certain things, for instance whether her response to a school appeal application form was okay or small queries such as whether driving theory tests can be taken in Urdu or Bengali. Also, although I wasn't part of the Bangladeshi community, a lone mother who was looking for work asked if I knew of anyone in the Pakistani community who was looking for employees. I had this shared identity of coming from an ethnic minority SA community in England and possibly being situated in 'ethnic enclaves' (Khattab et al 2010). These accounts of getting to know lone mothers demonstrate the complexities of conducting research across two different ethnic groups of lone mothers and my shifting insider-outsider positionality. However, as an 'outsider', conducting observations with Bangladeshi lone mothers was more complex than those with Pakistani lone mothers, as the next section's reflection illustrates. This will present differences in conducting observations with both ethnic categories.

Observations with Bangladeshi lone mothers

Burgess (1984) asserts that researchers do not adopt one role, such as a non-participant or participant observer, that is adhered to rather roles can be developed overtime. As asserted, although I assumed that I would be a non-participant observer at the Bangladeshi advice sessions, I ended up engaging with the worker and lone mothers. I became somewhat of a participant observer. However this was a less active role compared to observations with Pakistani lone mothers. Occasionally I would help Halimah ring a service when she was busy and had to ring multiple services. One advantage of taking a less active role was that I had more time to write descriptive fieldnotes in my notebook during the sessions. This did however mean that lone mothers and Halimah were very aware of my note taking. In

contrast, in observations with Pakistani lone mothers notes were made after supporting lone mothers. The details of the notes depended upon how busy the organisation was. On quiet occasions I could write detailed notes after an observation. Otherwise, later on the way home or in the evening much detailed notes were made. In fact, in Bangladeshi sessions I had more space to observe whereas in observations with Pakistani lone mothers as I was caught up in solving the issue at hand, I was not always observing per se. Thus being an 'outsider' played to an advantage in this sense.

Language played another significant aspect in my insider-outsider identity and conducting observations. All of the observations with the four Bangladeshi lone mothers, apart from a one-off observation with Noor who spoke both English and Bengali, involved the worker and lone mothers communicating in Bengali, specifically Sylheti. This is a popular Bengali dialect, as I found out during observations. Thus, most of the time when lone mothers and Halimah were communicating I did not have a grasp on what was being said. When Halimah and lone mothers would be conversing in Bengali about an issue at hand I would try and guess what they were saying, playing a linguistic 'guessing game'. To assist in guessing what was being said there were a number of components. Firstly, there were letters which participants (especially Hira) would present after sitting by the desk. Most of the time I was sat on a medical bed which was a little higher up and away from the desk and chairs lone mothers and Halimah were sat at. Thus, I could clearly see the letters. Importantly, the logos of a service would be on the heading. For example, if there was a HM Revenue logo, I would know the lone mother's query was benefits related and so on. Secondly, while speaking both lone mothers and Halimah would mention some English words and services. This reflected Halimah's identity as a British Bangladeshi and English being her main form of communication. I would also do the same when speaking to Pakistani lone mothers. Lone mothers also often mentioned some English words which reflects the neo-colonial use of English and its increased use in non-western societies (Shackle 1970; Subedi 2006), in addition to the fact that lone mothers attended English classes. This was also the case in interviews. The following extract illustrates this:

Halimah explains to Hira in Bengali what tax is, why the system is free, because we pay tax which covers things like Fire services, NHS. This is explained in Bengali but with

some English e.g. words like 'NHS' and 'free'...Therefore, I can understand what she is saying... (Fieldnote 01.02.19)

By putting the puzzle together of English words, I could guess what the conversation was about. Over time I also realised that some of the words in Bengali were in some ways similar to Urdu words. For example, in one session where the worker was making a development plan with Hira, Halimah said "baby steps" and later "asthay". In Urdu this means "slowly". She was telling her to take small steps to developing her skills. But was I guessing right? There were multiple ways of finding out if I guessed correctly. Halimah would often explain the issue at hand to me during or after supporting a lone mother. Secondly, when there was a need to call services the worker would explain the issue to an adviser. In this way I would gain more in-depth insight into the issue and consequently validate my guesses.

James' (2014) reflection on research with children, their analytical imagination and analysing data is relevant here. James (2014 p. 84-85) argues that children "construct imaginative knowledge" and "piece together the bits of a social jigsaw...to try and make sense of the world". It is a process of trial and error and their understandings are "partial, incomplete and subject to revision" (ibid). In guessing, much like children do to understand their social worlds, I was also completing a jigsaw, fitting "a piece here and a piece there, moving them around until a picture begins to build" (James 2014, p. 85). It was a process of attentive listening, imaginative reconstruction and then validating my constructions. Although this process can raise concerns about the validity and accuracy of the conversations captured it also challenges the perception that it is impossible to do research if you do not understand the language of a particular social world.

Employment course

The last set of observations entailed an employment course which prepares women for employment. I took part in two employment courses. In the first course I only volunteered as part of the volunteer stage of the research design. I was also waiting for ethical approval to begin data collection at the time. After familiarising myself with the course I took part in the second running of the course as a participant observer. The course consisted of five sessions

lasting around two hours each. The rationale behind observing the employment course was that lone mothers are increasingly pressured to commit and prepare for paid employment and it is also recognised PBM women face many barriers to employment (both identified in Chapter 2). The course was a good opportunity for service users at SAW's Place to develop skills and prepare for employment. Although one migrant Pakistani Muslim lone mother took part in the first running of the course, and I did a one-off observation with an external employment agency worker supporting this lone mother with CV making, the second course had no lone mothers, which I found out on the day. This demonstrates that ethnographic fieldwork is often shaped by elements beyond the researcher's control.

Observing the second course, in the first session I introduced my research and gained informed consent. Observations began from the second session. Five Pakistani Muslim women took part in the course. They were of various ages, all were migrants and included a divorced woman (no children), a separated woman living away from her children and married women with or without children. In the first session where I volunteered there was a Bangladeshi woman however, she did not attend the following sessions. Although I was initially disappointed that there were no lone mothers who took part, which is a significant finding in itself given the construction and policy focus of lone mothers, PBM women and employment, I decided to continue observing. I wanted to gain an insight into how courses were run at SAW's Place, the support offered and outcomes for women in relation to the third research question regarding SAW's Place and facilitating women's agency (see Chapter 6). Additionally, I was also able to compare the skills and barriers non-lone mother PBM women had to lone mothers in the study (see Chapter 5).

3.3.3 Interviews and insider-outsider positionalities

Recruiting lone mothers

Overall, as summarised in the below table twenty lone mothers took part in the study. The thesis will predominately focus on the sixteen lone mothers who took part in both observations and interviews or interviews only. The remaining four participants only took part

in one-off observations; two citing ill health as the reason for not taking part and two deciding not to participate in an interview.

Table 1: Lone mothers sample

Sample	
Observations and interviews	11 2 out of 11 took part in observations after interviews
Interviews only	5
Observations only (one-off observations)	4
Total participants	20

Of the sixteen lone mothers involved in interviews, nine were recruited through observations at the advice sessions. Workers also introduced lone mothers. For example, Khadijah introduced me to Zahra asking me to support her in overcoming barriers associated with entering lone motherhood. Prior to this Khadijah had been supporting her. Of the other seven lone mothers I met one lone mother at a finance session the employment worker had arranged, another (Nafeesah) was a worker at SAW's Place. An organisation worker (Hafsa), who I worked closely with at the volunteering stage, was always happy to help recruit lone mothers. Two lone mothers would come to the organisation on the same day as myself to attend a course, after the course they would come to Hafsa for support. After encouragement from Hafsa, one of these lone mothers (Tahira) decided to take part. Similarly, another worker (Riya) referred a lone mother who she had been supporting over a long period of time. Halimah introduced Bangladeshi lone mothers. Zainab was recruited through introducing my project at the start of an English class session. Finally, as I had not come across many British born lone mothers as they were less likely to use advice session services (only two had been interviewed at the time), Hafsa was happy to forward names of lone mothers who had previously come to SAW's Place. Out of the three contacts forwarded, one lone mother (Maymoona) took part. This demonstrates workers playing a significant role as gatekeepers

which Britton (2020) argues can shape the knowledge which is produced. It is important to note here that four lone mothers who were interviewed have previously been interviewed as part of my MA dissertation project (Fatimah, Ruqayyah, Haajirah and Nafeesah). For instance, I met Ruqayyah outside the organisation one day, we began talking and I asked her if she was interested in taking part in my PhD project. An interview was arranged for the following week.

Overall, the sampling method for recruiting lone mothers entailed a mix of opportunistic and snowball sampling. Opportunistic sampling involves the researcher taking advantage of whatever unfolds in the field (Patton 1990). This reflects my time in observations as I would never know who would come for support to the advice sessions. Alongside this a snowball sampling approach is useful for locating information-rich informants and involves asking well situated individuals for further informants (Patton 1990). In this case the well-situated informants were the organisation workers.

The following table provides a summary of key demographics of lone mothers who took part in interviews:

Table 2: Lone mothers key demographics summary

Demographics	Lone mothers (16)
Ethnicity	
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	3
Migration status	
Migrant (migrant bride)	10
Migrant (other - family migration, visitor)	3
British born (first and second generation)	3
Age group	
21-30	1
31-40	9
41-50	6
Marital status	
Separated/Divorced	15

Widowed	1
Never Married	0
Employment status	
Unemployed (never worked)	7
Unemployed (employed before)	4
Total unemployed	11
Employment (part-time)	4
Employment (self-employed, part-time)	1
Total employed	5

The make-up of age groups reflects Mokhtar and Platt's (2009) statement that Pakistani lone mothers tend to be 'slightly older'. During my time at SAW's Place I did not come across a never-married lone mother and neither had Hafsa. This raises questions regarding why 'single mothers' do not utilise the service. This may also be associated with traditional cultural and religious norms of childbearing within marriage and thus a stigma associated with having children outside marriage. With a total of eleven PBM lone mothers being unemployed at the time of interviews this reflects wider trends and statistics of economic inactivity amongst PBM women in England (Wigfield and Turner 2013; 2016). Many were unemployed in the long-term; three participants cited long-term ill health as the reason behind unemployment (Fatimah also stated she received widow's pension). Khattab and Modood (2015) have found that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely to experience long-term unemployment. The reason behind migration for all Pakistani born lone mothers was marriage. They were 'migrant brides' (Charsley 2005b; Alexander 2013) as they came to England after marriage to a spouse from England. The migration story of Bangladeshi lone mothers was more diverse; two came under family reunification migration, one came after marriage and finally one came on a visitors/family visa and was later married in England. Of the three British born lone mothers, Ruqayyah (first generation) went to Pakistan when she was a child, later returning to the UK. The sample reflects the make-up of service users at SAW's Place, predominately consisting of migrant women with low English language skills. However, as I mainly focused on recruiting lone mothers through the advice sessions, I could have missed out lone mothers attending other activities ran by the organisation, thus questioning the representativeness of the sample to some extent. Additionally, as a case study approach was taken focusing on only one

single case (SAW's Place), the representativeness of the sample of lone mothers to the wider population in England can be questioned. Although, in interpretivist research and ethnography representativeness (or external validity) is of less importance in contrast to the emphasis on doing in-depth research (Seale 2004). Finally, it is also important to note participants had different experiences and perceptions of their identities as 'lone mothers' in relation to the official definition of lone mother introduced in Chapter 1 and how many years they had been lone mothers (see Appendix 1, no. of years LM in table of lone mothers' demographic information). This will be later extended upon in relation to the findings in Chapter 4 (Section 4.5.1). The table in Appendix 1 provides a much detailed background to the sixteen lone mothers interviewed.

Recruiting SAW's Place workers and external partners

Eight workers at SAW's Place were interviewed and again an opportunistic sample was employed (Patton 1990). None of these workers were lone mothers. I had met them all throughout my time at the organisation: at the sessions, attending staff meetings or in the office. Five of the workers were involved in observations; Khadijah, Hafsa, Riya (all provided support throughout), Halimah (Bangladeshi worker) and Juwariya (employment course). All of the workers were more than willing to take part in the interviews.

Table 3: SAW's Place workers

Int no.	Worker name (pseudonym)	Role	Background information
1	Khadijah	Head worker (head of project)	Pakistani ethnic background, Muslim
2	Riya	Adviser/support worker	Indian ethnic background, Hindu
3	Hafsa	Adviser/support worker	Pakistani ethnic background, Muslim
4	Aishah	Receptionist and English class teacher	Pakistani ethnic background, Muslim

5	Juwariya	Adviser and employment support	Mixed-race (Pakistani-Polish), Muslim
6	Saffiyah	Manager	Pakistani ethnic background, Muslim
7	Sawdah	Adviser/support worker Also well-being counsellor	Indian ethnic background, Muslim
8	Halimah	Bengali worker	British Bengali ethnic background, Muslim

Finally, six external partners who were involved in SAW's Place were interviewed (see summary in Table 4 below). Trustees were included in data collection as they were key to the success, reviewing and funding of SAW's Place and its services. In particular I recruited two trustees by attending a trustees meeting Saffiyah had invited me to. I was permitted to stay for the start of the meeting where I had a discussion with the trustees, answering questions about my PhD. All of the four trustees present were very willing to take part and asked me to choose who I wanted to interview. I decided to interview the chair trustee and the trustees came to a conclusion that I could interview a trustee who had much insight into the organisation and, as they concluded, had more spare time to take part. Four workers from external mainstream organisations were included as engagement with mainstream organisations was a key component of SAW's Place services. Setting up an interview with a mainstream DA organisation worker took the most time, after contacting them several times my interview request was referred to a British Pakistani worker. All of the interviewees were from a BME/ethnic minority background apart from the solicitor who was of a British White background. The rationale for choosing these particular external partners was that they were involved in the organisation in some capacity while I was present there. Additionally, barriers to employment and DA were two reoccurring themes during interviews with lone mothers, thus I wanted to gain a more in-depth insight into expertise support provided in these areas. There were many other mainstream organisations involved with SAW's Place. I chose the ones most relevant to issues lone mothers face.

Table 4: External partners

Int no.	Organisation	Role	Recruitment for interview
1	National employment and education agency	Adviser	Adviser attended employment course, CV support to service users. Conducted one observation.
2	Chair trustee/management committee	Trustee	I attended the start of a trustees meeting (invited by manager).
3	Mainstream advise centre (Citizens Advice Bureau)	Adviser	I was asked to ring her for advice in one observation support session.
4	Trustee/management committee (also a lone mother)	Trustee	I attended the start of a trustees meeting (invited by manager).
5	Domestic abuse mainstream organisation	Domestic abuse support team leader	Referred to by Hafsa (worker). DA organisations also provide training to volunteers at SAW's Place.
6	Law (family law mainly divorce)	Solicitor (advise)	A poster was seen at the organisation that a solicitor is offering support sessions. Khadijah provided contact details.

Interviews with lone mothers: an insider-outsider's reflection

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with lone mothers, enabling the active involvement of lone mothers, allowing them to answer upon their own terms and for the interviewer to further delve into their responses (May 1997). Feminist approaches of interviewing argue this allows for interactive conversations to develop amongst women, facilitating co-construction of meaning (Bergen 1993; Phoenix 1994; Bryman 2012). Here shared gender identity is considered as central. However, going back to Phoenix's (1994)

argument and as I found here in relation to my insider-outsider identity, simply matching identities does not necessarily produce better data. The section begins with summarising some of the practicalities in interviewing, moving onto my insider-outsider positionalities.

Interviews focused on lone mothers' lived experiences. Interviews were divided into three sections: experiences before lone motherhood, experiences of lone motherhood and SAW's Place and support networks. Some of the specific areas of exploration included marriage experiences, process of separation, financial experiences, motherhood and cultural and religious perceptions of lone mothers (see Appendix 7). A pilot interview was conducted just over one month into fieldwork. This was beneficial as I was able to reflect on questions which required to be articulated better in Urdu so participants could easily understand what was being asked, for example a question on community cultural perceptions. A choice of either English, Urdu, Punjabi (Mirpuri/Pahari dialects) and Bengali (Sylheti) interviews was given to make sure participants could speak in the language they were most confident and comfortable with. Four interviews were conducted in English and nine in Urdu or Punjabi with Pakistani participants. With Bangladeshi participants one interview was conducted in English, one in Urdu as Hira states she knew Urdu to some extent and was happy for me to conduct the interview and one in Bengali. The interview in Bengali involved the assistance of Halimah interpreting. It was felt that participants would be more confident communicating with someone they were familiar with rather than someone they had not met before; they may have been reluctant to share in-depth lived experiences in such cases. Halimah already had an established relationship of trust with the participant from her time at the advice sessions. It is important to also note that basic Urdu was spoken by myself (and the Bangladeshi participant Hira) with English words mixed into this. At times I could not come up with the appropriate Urdu word and relied on English terms. For example, it was easier for participants to understand the word 'experience' than the Urdu alternative.

The interviews took place at SAW's Place with Pakistani lone mothers and at the centre where Bangladeshi advice sessions took place with Bangladeshi lone mothers. Interviews took place in rooms which were available at the time. This was mostly in the office space where I was usually situated for advice sessions. Four interviews took place in a room which was often used for counselling. This room was more informal than the office as it had a home feeling

with chairs, a rug, table and ornaments. Interviews were not conducted in participants' homes as Khadijah stated participants would be comfortable coming to the organisation and due to issues of volunteer safety. Thus, as a gatekeeper, Khadijah had control over where interviews took place. The location of interviews shaped the research and interacted with my volunteer positionality. Due to my volunteer positionality, at times participants would want me to help them with an issue before or after I conducted an interview, such as applying for a provisional driving license on the office computer. At times, interviews had to be rescheduled due to lone mothers being busy at work or not turning up. Interviews took place over six months. The longest interview was one hour, forty minutes and the shortest thirty minutes. Interviews tended to be longer where lone mothers discussed detailed stories of life before lone motherhood. It was important to give lone mothers space to discuss such experiences. For instance, the longest interview with Zainab had over one hour of discussion on experiences of marriage, DA and a lengthy separation process. Two participants, Kulsoom and Tahira, chose not to be recorded. Upon reflection, most time was spent concentrating on what the interviewee said and noting it down. In one interview I had to ask a participant to 'rewind' and repeat so I could note responses down. Rapley (2011, p. 6) states recording provides a "much more detailed record of the verbal interaction than any amount of note-taking or reflection could offer", thus bits of data was missing. Busy writing, I also felt I could not interact with interviewees as much (Rapley 2011). Thus it disrupted the feminist approach to interviewing which was taken with the rest of the interviews. However, it was important for participants to be able to exercise their choice of not being recorded.

As the interviews involved discussions of a sensitive, emotionally distressing nature it was important to manage this taking an ethically sensitive approach to interviewing. Lone mothers were informed that they did not have to answer any questions they were not comfortable with. I also asked them before beginning the interview whether they wanted to discuss experiences before lone motherhood. Hira opted to not discuss her past due to the traumatic experiences she had encountered and the unease she felt in recollecting them. Understandably, in some interviews, while describing their experiences, lone mothers got upset. Such interviews were then paused for a few minutes and continued when they were ready to do so. In interviews I took on the role of an 'empathic listener'. This involved giving space to interviewees to talk openly, being a good listener, probing further where relevant

and making them feel comfortable so they could articulate their experiences and perspectives (Bergen 1993; Mason 2002). As interviews progressed, there was less reliance on the interview schedule creating a more informal environment. For example, the interview with Nafeesah gave her space to reflect on her journey and life experiences, she very much guided the interview. Interviews were thus presented as a chance for lone mothers to have their experiences listened to, with "feelings of empathy for informants" that enabled them to "open up about their feelings" (Taylor and Bogdan 1998, p. 48).

However, one dynamic which created formality was the audio recording. For example, in an interview with Zahra I noticed that towards the end she was holding her tears back. As soon as the audio was off she began to articulate her frustrations about her situation. As I had developed a sense of friendship with Zahra over the months of supporting her during observations she felt she could share her feelings with me (Dwyer and Buckle 2009; Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach 2009). A similar account occurred with Fatimah. Participants disclosing details after recorders have been turned off is well-documented (Phoenix 1994; Rapley 2011). For ethical reasons, the details disclosed at this point are not included in the thesis. Research practices can be viewed by marginalised groups as a symbol of bureaucratic institutions, formality and authority (Zubair and Victor 2015), audio recording is one such practice.

My insider-outsider positionality also played a key role in interviews and is important to discuss here. Researchers bring their own life experiences to their research; what Lewis and Meredith (1988) and Edwards (1993) term "double subjectivity". Coming from the Pakistani Muslim community I have my own (both critical and positive) perceptions of culture, community and cultural takes on religion. At times I was interested in bringing forward the differences between culture and Islam, specifically regarding women's rights in Islam. Therefore, if it was mentioned, I was interested in following it through. Like Hamdan (2009) has experienced herself I was conscious about participating in regenerating stereotypical images of culture and Islam. However, I was aware that it is important to acknowledge these "double subjectivities" from the onset, to not prescribe my own prejudgements, give space for participants to express their views in their own terms (Edwards 1993; Bhopal 2010) and respect these views as they were derived from their experiences.

When conducting interviews with Bangladeshi lone mothers to some extent being a naïve 'ethnic outsider' who did not know much about Bangladeshi culture was advantageous. I asked lone mothers to tell me about Bangladeshi culture, whether it was similar to Pakistani culture and what impact it had on them as lone mothers. As researchers in Ryan, Kofman and Aaron's (2011) study point out in relation to their 'outsider' positionalities researching Muslim communities, rather than assuming a shared understanding, Bangladeshi lone mothers explained their culture. In contrast, in interviews with Pakistani lone mothers they may have assumed I had a shared understanding of culture, consequently not giving much depth. However, the extent to which this is true can be questioned. As I was a young British born individual, lone mothers brought up in Pakistan or from older generations may have also felt that I had different values and perceptions of culture and practices therefore further justifying their views, such as views on traditional gender roles. Thus age was a significant identity.

Furthermore, as I was considerably younger than the lone mothers, predominately they did not discuss experiences of intimacy within marriage. However, in Pakistani culture and Islamic practices this is an extremely personal aspect of life and is especially not discussed with a young unmarried woman. There is also a cultural importance of young people being respectful to elders. Again, in engaging with a 'reflexivity of discomfort' (Hamdan 2009) this was something I did not feel comfortable with inquiring into and thus did not ask questions about it. However, taking one lone mother's example, Asma did briefly discuss this topic herself and the importance of overcoming the taboo of discussing it openly. This also challenges the feminist argument that female interviewers have "some special sort of non-hierarchical woman-to-woman link with their female interview subjects" allowing for personal experiences to be shared (Edwards 1993, p. 184; Phoenix 1994). This does not account for intersecting identities and intracategorical differences (McCall 2005; Bhopal 2010).

Lone mothers were able to present Pakistani cultural and Islamic perceptions. Views differ on how participants present themselves to 'ethnic insider' researchers. For instance, Ryan, Kofman and Aaron (2011) mention participants may want to present their cultures and communities in a positive way to outsiders, thus may be more critical to insiders. Britton

(2020, p. 234) argues participants can be "less willing to disclose" information that is frowned upon by ethnic insiders. Here lone mothers presented both negative and positive views of the Pakistani community, culture and practices reflecting their own lived experiences. My presumed knowledge of Pakistani communities and cultural sensitivities may have allowed them to openly discuss this aspect, for example lone mothers like Nafeesah were able to discuss in depth married life and family relationships within the household.

Furthermore, some Pakistani lone mothers did not provide in-depth details of their marriage or family breakdown experiences, even where I had built up a good relationship with lone mothers throughout my time at SAW's Place. For example, Fatimah did not reveal in detail how her relationship with her in-laws deteriorated. When I further probed into why she felt their behaviour towards her was "*bad*", she said "*don't have a clue, I do not understand*". She did not want to discuss this for the research project, although she was happy to share this with me 'personally' after the interview. Due to my positionality as an insider at the wider Pakistani community level she feared that someone may find out she had told me, despite confidentiality being promised and my unfamiliarity on a personal level with the local Pakistani community. In speaking to an 'ethnic outsider' perhaps more detail may have been given regarding these family experiences. This also illustrates PBM women's agency in choosing what to disclose and when. However, these reflective thoughts can be questioned. How do I really know my participants felt this way without explicitly asking them? This can problematise some acts of reflexivity in research (Rose 2016).

Lastly, my positionality as a volunteer impacted the interviewing process. On one occasion I interviewed a lone mother who I had supported as a volunteer and later recruited at an English class. She came to me after her class expressing interest to take part. However, during the interview, at a later date, she became quite nervous, her responses were closed and towards the end she contemplated about withdrawing from the interview. At first, she was hesitant to do this and expressed that she felt if she withdrew I would not support her as a volunteer. I reassured her that this was not the case and I would support her either way, consequently she decided to withdraw. At this point my positionality as a volunteer came to the forefront. It presented a challenge to my strategy of building trust, familiarity and reciprocity through volunteering. This can also be an ethically challenging situation; it was

important to remind participants that they would receive support from me as a volunteer either way and are not obliged to take part. As argued in relation to conducting observations this reflects my transition to an insider at SAW's Place as a volunteer.

Interviews with SAW's Place workers and external partners

Given the research question of exploring the role of SA women's organisations and their partners in supporting and facilitating agency of lone mothers, semi-structured interviews were conducted with SAW's Place and external partner workers. Kapur and Zujicek (2018, p. 1932) argue advocates in women's organisations have unique positions as they interact with women seeking support and have "insight into the meaning and implications of the social locations represented by the women they serve". They also come into contact with organisations which support women (Kapur and Zujicek 2018). Through interviews with professional workers I was able to gain further insider insight into how the organisation ran and supported lone mothers, helping to gain in-depth rich data about the case study (Morse 2019). Interview questions covered the following areas: day-to-day work supporting women/lone mothers and the impact on lone mothers' everyday lives and independence, wider issues impacting lone mothers and SAW's Place, working with organisation partners and future developments (see Appendix 7). Drawing on my 'insider' knowledge reflecting my time at SAW's Place, there were also specific questions asked to some workers, such as questions about the employment course to Juwariya. Five interviews focused on the everyday support workers provided whereas interviews with Khadijah, Saffiyah and Sawdah more specifically focused on the overall picture of SAW's Place as a service and the vital work it does to support lone mothers. Again interviews were conducted with workers at SAW's Place, taking place during workers' working hours. Interviews with external partners focused on their specific expertise (e.g. employment and DA) and the support or advice provided to PBM lone mothers. The interview questions were specific to their area of expertise, services, advice and support offered to women, the wider context such as barriers to accessing mainstream services and future developments (see Appendix 7). Interviews took place at their workplaces or coffee shops.

All interviewees were women. In comparison to interviews with lone mothers, where the researcher is normally seen as having more power (Neal and McLaughlin 2009), there was a sense of shared professionalism between myself and interviewees. With SAW's Place workers there was a shared positionality of supporting lone mothers, particularly in interviews with those who I spent the most time with. For example, with Halimah we were able to reflect on the Bangladeshi advise sessions. However, it is also important to note that there was not always an equal power dynamic as I also interviewed senior workers who had more knowledge and experience in relation to SAW's Place and the local communities, thus they had a slight advantage of power in the interview. Nevertheless it was a very friendly encounter. Out of the external partner interviews I was perhaps most nervous for interviews with the two trustees given their wealth of experience and critical insights as I discovered during the first time I met them. While I did feel a sense of authority from trustees we were able to engage in in-depth critical conversations about SA women organising, culture, communities and the wider political context. Furthermore, when the second trustee opened up about her lived experiences it was evident that they shaped her personal views on culture (see Chapter 6) and there was an emotional feel to the interview reflecting on personal memories (Neal and McLaughlin 2009).

This relates back to arguments made throughout this chapter demonstrating that having a shared identity, here as professionals, does not necessarily mean better researcher positionality (Phoenix 1994). There can be hierarchical differences, in this case regarding experience, and there is not always a straightforward 'top-down' relationship in interviewing professionals (Neal and McLaughlin 2009). Overall interviews with these diverse range of professionals brought different dynamics to interviews and nevertheless provided rich data complementing interviews with lone mothers.

3.3.4 Ethics

Ethics in practice

Ethical approval was gained through the University of Sheffield ethical approval procedure. During fieldwork, it was found that in some respects the formal ethics procedure can be at

odds with the actual realities of fieldwork (Zubair and Victor 2015; Robinson 2020). This is reflected upon here in relation to the practicalities of gaining informed consent from participants. The process of gaining informed consent from SAW's Place workers, external partners and lone mothers fluent in English was straightforward compared to lone mothers with low English literacy and linguistic skills. However for the former, as Zubair and Victor (2015) have experienced, participants may not have fully read the information sheet. For instance, some workers were happy to take part in an interview without reading the information sheet because by this stage they already knew about the research project through our informal chats throughout my time at SAW's place or had gone through the observations information sheet before. Although they did read through the consent form. For the latter, Khadijah had advised that an Urdu information sheet was not appropriate as many women cannot read Urdu (Zubair and Victors 2015). This can reflect the class make-up of service users as Urdu proficiency is often associated with the middle-class of Pakistan (Shackle 1970). The same can be said for Bangladeshi women. Instead it was more appropriate in the context of the study to verbally translate the information sheets. In doing so I felt a lot of the ethical responsibility was placed upon me as the researcher. The information sheet was interpreted to lone mothers during observations, mostly during the first or second time we met, and interviews.

To aid in explaining the project a picture diagram was utilised (see Appendix 3). This visual communication method was a useful tool in explaining what observations and interviews entailed in a simple straightforward manner, especially as I felt lone mothers may have lost concentration at times when I was reading out the (quite long) information sheet. It relayed the process of taking part in the research. However, I was cautious of not over-relying on the picture diagram as I felt there was an importance to convey the research to participants through discussion. I was also conscious of not oversimplifying the process to participants as if they cannot understand research at all, in a sense taking away their agency. Although one aspect I found difficult to convey in Urdu was the GDPR statement regarding the 'legal basis for data processing' (see Appendix 2). Thus I had to explain it in a simple manner, for example, as the research focused on PBMs it was necessary to collect data on ethnicity and religion and personal data would not be shared and would be destroyed after the project.

Although the sheets were read verbally, written consent was gained. Lone mothers were happy to do this. During my time at SAW's Place I noticed that written consent occurred in other scenarios. For instance, in the one-off observation with a lone mother and the employment agency worker the same procedure was used. Additionally, when Halimah was filling in a development plan with Hira, she would ask her questions from the form and note down their discussions, once completed she got her to sign it. Similarly, I assume lone mothers are familiar with this in their everyday lives due to highly bureaucratic systems at places like the job centre. Lone mothers were given copies of the information and consent sheet to keep which they could refer to in the future with support from me or Khadijah.

During observations, due to the busy nature of advice sessions most of the time formal consent was gained immediately after I had supported lone mothers. It was sometimes difficult and uncomfortable trying to keep my volunteer and researcher positions distinct. Although I introduced myself and the project at the start sometimes lone mothers would want me to support them first. After this, we went through the consent procedure and they were happy for me to write about the session. For example, the first time I met Suwaybah I began by helping her fill out a job application. During our conversation I found she was a lone mother and told her more about the project while filling in the application. After I completed the task, we went through the sheets. She was happy for me to write about the session. As consent was always taken during the session, in the moment, and not at a later time it could be argued retrospective consent was not taken. Whenever lone mothers would come for support again, I would remind them that I would be observing and ask if they were happy with this.

Additionally, for the Bangladeshi observation sessions and the employment course I had to reduce the length and content of the information sheet (see Appendices 2 and 4). Due to the busy nature of the Bangladeshi sessions and only Halimah being on hand to support women most weeks, I later shortened the information sheet to focus on the observation stage of the research. Practically this was much easier for Halimah to translate in an environment where the primary concern was helping lone mothers, particularly if this involved calling services which would take up much time. Halimah translated the information and consent sheet for two participants (Hira and Asiyah), Noor went through them herself in English and I went through the information sheet with Ayman in English and Urdu while Halimah was supporting

another service user. When the first observation began with Ayman the worker gained consent in Bengali. The original full information sheets were used later in interviews.

The process of gaining consent in the employment course was informed by a conversation I had with Juwariya when I asked her whether I could have some time at the start of the session to introduce the study and obtain consent. When she looked through the information sheet she said, *"this will be too much for the women, it is too long, they will get bored"* (loosely quoted - fieldnote 10.01.19). Instead she emphasised that basic information should be stated verbally followed by signed informed consent. Furthermore, she said as long as I behave in a good ethical manner there was no need to go into detail. I stated that the University ethics procedure requires me to go through a consent form. Having been involved in research before herself, she said that there was a mismatch between University standards (or 'paper ethics') and 'real world research' (Robinson 2020). She gave me no more than fifteen minutes in the second session. Therefore, the information sheet was simplified (two pages), read out to women in Urdu and then group consent was achieved where all of the women agreed to participate and signed a group consent sheet passed around the table. They also received a copy of the information sheet and an individual consent sheet.

Overall these experiences of ethics in practice, reassert Zubair and Victor's (2015, p. 968) reflection of the realities and challenges faced in fieldwork as a result of "institutionally defined ethical requirements" which enforce "the dominant, White middle-class (and institutionally defined), 'ethical' norms, standards and processes" (p. 966). These can be at odds with realities in the field, as illustrated through the examples provided here. As a researcher from a University institution I reinforced institutionalised ethical standards however was met with challenges and had to adapt to the context, circumstances and responses in the field. Without undermining the importance of conducting ethically sound research, the reflections illustrate the importance of raising ethical issues, adaptations in the field and applying this to future research, especially if it is conducted in other languages and in busy settings.

An ethics of reciprocity and practices of giving back

Moving beyond practical ethics, I will now focus on an ethics of reciprocity in research. During fieldwork on many occasions lone mothers asked me about the benefits the research would have for them; what change can come about as a result of their participation (Phoenix 1994). For example, this occurred when I introduced the study at the start of an English class to recruit lone mothers for interviews. Again, this challenges the perception of PBM women being passive individuals and also reflects the 'research savviness' of research populations (Neal et al 2016, p. 501). I was honest that the research was for my PhD and mindful of not making unrealistic claims. I informed them that it could potentially inform service needs for lone mothers and it was a chance for them to share experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women, an under-researched area.

This reflection brings me back to the issue of research being 'extractively orientated' (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Neal et al 2016) and the need to engage in an ethics of reciprocity (Huisman 2008), especially when an organisation has been willing enough to put up resources for a research project as is the case here, such as use of office space. Reciprocity is a core feminist value of doing research and is:

"based on the belief that researchers and participants are equal, and that research should be mutually beneficial, characterized by give-and-take. Reciprocity is intertwined with the value of reflexivity" (Huisman 2008, p. 374)

Huisman (2008, p. 382) also argues although feminist approaches value reciprocity within the broader academic system, this is "relatively unimportant compared to the value attached to research."

Yet, I felt that there was an importance of giving back to the organisation and lone mothers in any way I could. This may not be directly related to the research project or in expectation of getting anything in return. During fieldwork I took part in and helped arrange activities for an Eid celebration. Another way of giving back to the organisation was continuing volunteering. I took a break from the organisation over the summer, which allowed me to separate fieldwork from volunteering, and came back as a volunteer, completing fifty-six hours of volunteering spread out over seven months. Additionally, when I went to speak to

the manager (Saffiyah) to arrange an interview, she asked me whether I would be willing to write up a short report which she could use for her own report to organisation funders. I agreed to do this after negotiating preserving the anonymity of the organisation. We agreed that the report findings would remain internal to the manager and funders, a statement would accompany it requesting findings not be shared further than this point to preserve anonymity and confidentiality. This was then completed for the organisation.

The decision to anonymise the organisation and city it is located in reflected concerns about how to best uphold anonymity of lone mothers (Guenther 2009; Neal et al 2016). Due to exploring in-depth lived experiences including DA, the stigmatisation associated with lone motherhood and not living with husbands (so much so that some women do not want people to find out they are lone mothers) and the fact that some lone mothers lived in the same city as in-laws or (ex)partners, anonymising place was seen as important. Additionally, a balance had to be kept between not being too descriptive and in-depth presenting findings of specific life experiences to prevent any potential damage to participants' anonymity (Guenther 2009). Although it is important to acknowledge here that anonymity can be imperfect. Guenther (2009) argues anonymity cannot always be guaranteed stating several reasons, such as researchers in the same field being able to identify organisations. Additionally, in concerns for lone mothers to remain anonymous there is a question of whether I may be denying the organisation of potential benefits they could have gained in the recognition of their work (Guenther 2009). However, my commitment to volunteering and report writing meant that this was less of a concern for the organisation workers and it can be argued that the research may contribute to recognising the wider work of SA women's organisations.

I have presented ways in which I strived to give back to SAW's Place and addressed the concerns of the extractiveness of research. However, the lack of reciprocity in research and critique of research being extractively orientated is challenged by Neal et al (2016) as it suggests there is unequal power between researchers and the researched. Participants can benefit from the process of research itself as it is a site where research and the social world merge (Neal et al 2016). This is evident in interviewing reflections where lone mothers were given the opportunity to be listened to, articulate feelings and share their experiences. Thus, in the process of interviewing itself there was a sense of 'mutual exchange' (Huisman 2008).

Overall, these debates reflect previous calls for a 'public sociology' where sociology provides 'meaningful social contributions' (Aidnik 2015) and a sense of 'mutual education' (Buroway 2005). It also reflects the feminist approach to research as one which gives voice to the marginalised as a political project and makes the invisible visible (Mcintosh and Wright 2019). This can be achieved through both academic work and work outside of academia.

3.4 Transcription and translation

Interviews were transcribed during and after fieldwork. To transcribe (ten) interviews conducted in Urdu or Punjabi a transliteration approach was used. Transliteration is where the sound of how a word is pronounced is expressed in the source language (Urdu) using the alphabet of the target language (English). For example, in Urdu "what" is "کیا", in transliteration style this is expressed using the English alphabet as "kya". This approach reflects my own positionality as a young British born woman of a Pakistani ethnic background with English as my first language. I learnt basic spoken and written Urdu in mosque and at home but did not pursue this further. I later learnt the transliteration approach in communicating with relatives from abroad. For this reason, interviews were not transcribed in original Urdu text. It was useful to first use this approach rather than translating while listening to the interviews as it allowed for a more in-depth approach and immersion into the data. The transliteration text could always be referred back to alongside the translated English, for instance to double check the translation at a later stage when analysing (Anitha 2011).

After the transcription stage the interviews were translated into English and then analysed. Two interviews with Zainab and Maryam describe detailed (and possibly unique) stories of significant violent events in participants' lives before and after they became lone mothers involving (ex)partners and their family. Due to the in-depth detail and breadth of the stories it would not have been possible to include whole stories as quotes in the thesis and due to time constraints, these interviews were not fully translated. Instead quotes included in the thesis were translated into English. The main approach of translating first has been taken for several reasons; practically it is much simpler to translate and then analyse, it allows for an

in-depth familiarisation with the data before analysis and full translation allows for a more holistic account of lone mothers' experiences.

At its simplest "translation is to transfer from one to the other" (Spivak 2000, p. 21) and involves "the most intimate act of reading" (Spivak 2012, p. 205). Translation cannot be "treated as mere technical exercises" (Temple 2008) rather translation of interviews into English allowed for the voices of an otherwise marginalised group to be heard and brought forward into academia (Temple 2008). "Language is power" and therefore individuals who cannot speak the dominant language become dependent on those who can speak for them (Temple and Young 2004, p. 164). Therefore, in translation the researcher is speaking for the participants and has an ethical task and responsibility to articulate the voice of participants to a further extent (Subedi 2006; Gawlewicz 2016).

Translators are also part of knowledge production therefore it is important to again consider my positionality (Temple and Young 2004; Temple 2008). As Urdu, Punjabi and related dialects are not my first languages an in-depth approach to translation was taken. It was a learning process. At times I did not know the translation of certain words and had to look them up. Due to a less developed understanding of the language than a native speaker the translation's reliability can be challenged to a certain extent. Although it can be argued no two translations of a single piece of work can be the same due to the interpretative process involved (Subedi 2006).

It is also important to illustrate some of the experiences and practical challenges that emerged in the translation process. Firstly, some Urdu words can have more than one meaning. For example, "acha" means "nice", "good" and is often used to acknowledge something ("okay", "oh really?"), although the actual translation of the word "okay" is "teek hai" in Urdu. Importantly the translation of a word is context dependent. For example, in one section of Sadiyyah's interview when she talks about *izaat* she is referring to "respect" because she is discussing losing respect from her family due to not living with a husband. In another section she refers to *izzat* as "honour" when discussing remarriage. Therefore, the context in which participants speak is essential in determining the translation and meaning of a word. *Sabar* is also another term which cannot simply be translated into one word and is

context dependent. This will be vastly expanded upon in Chapter 4 in relation to findings regarding lone mothers' lived experiences. Words such as *sabar* and *izzat* will be used in this thesis in their original form as they are difficult to simply translate into one word. This will stay true to their meaning.

Furthermore, there were idioms used by lone mothers at many points which are difficult to understand from the ordinary meanings of the words. At such points word-for-word translation would not have been enough and had to be explained further. For example, Zahra stated "*woman doesn't take divorce, she just stays sat down*" [*vaho bahs behayti rehthi hai*]. This does not mean that she literally stays sat down rather she is stating that a woman does not take divorce and waits for the husband to take an action, either coming back or divorcing her. This further illustrates that translation involves a lot of interpretation and meaning making. It is more than "mere technical exercises" (Temple 2008, p. 361).

Finally as stated, in interviews both myself and the (Urdu/Bengali speaking) participants used English words. It is important to retain these words and show the use of English language especially by participants. Therefore, original English words from interviews are quoted in apostrophes and untranslatable words such as *sabar* in *italics*.

3.5 Analysis

After eight months of conducting fieldwork I had reached a point of data saturation finding much repetition in observations (Goffman 1989). I finished off conducting an observation with a lone mother, Maryam, regarding social housing. Interviews also naturally ended when there were no new lone mothers who wanted to take part in the study and I felt I reached a good number of participants given recruitment taking place in one small organisation. During fieldwork, I had reflected on and analysed some field notes to inform questions for interviews with workers, such as analysing written notes from the employment course picking up key themes to inform interview questions for Juwariya. I also made brief notes of emerging patterns, but nothing too substantial as much time was dedicated to typing up the extensive fieldnotes. Reading and typing up observation notes, transcribing and translating interviews

was the first stage of analysis, familiarising myself with the data. This is key to analysis (Brewer 2005; Gilbert and Stoneman 2016).

Both interviews and observations were analysed using a thematic approach (Braun and Clarke 2006; Gilbert and Stoneman 2016). For interviews, firstly descriptive codes were created categorising segments of interviews, looking for "similarities, differences and variations across what has been said" (Gilbert and Stoneman 2016, p. 446). Examples of codes are 'struggle', 'motherhood' and 'culture'. This was done electronically and involved colour coding transcripts. Memos were also made reflecting on the data. I began taking an inductive approach allowing participants' experiences (or expertise) to shape initial codes and patterns (Boytazis 1998; Gilbert and Stoneman 2016). Later broader themes were shaped in relation to the data saying something about the research questions (Braun and Clarke 2006; Gilbert and Stoneman 2016). In relation to addressing the first and second research questions I analysed which identities, positionalities and structures were salient in shaping the lived experiences lone mothers described, such as their gendered positionalities. Theoretically, intersectionality approaches also drove analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). I looked for intersectional differences and similarities in experiences amongst lone mothers, such as well-educated, middle class versus little-educated migrant brides and intersectional differences in support provided to different groups of women by SAW's Place. Thus, I aimed to build upon concepts and theorise discovered at the start of the research process from the data and exploring how participants' constructed their experiences.

In relation to ethnographic notes Brewer (2005) argues analysis is about ordering data, identifying patterns, categorise and relationships while interpreting meaning of the data. Again, it involves finding reoccurring themes and memo writing. It also involves highlighting key vignettes from the data. I engaged in this latter approach, looking out for examples of support provided to lone mothers in observations which could illustrate key themes discovered from analysis (Brewer 2005), such as examples of supporting lone mothers to find social housing in relation to the 'housing' code or illustrating initial experiences of lone motherhood through Zahra's case study. It is also important to note that analysis is messy, occurred overtime and iterative, involving a process of coming back to parts of data when writing up the findings. Overall, the themes discussed in the three findings chapters to follow

are those that are advanced by participants' lived experiences. The findings present both broader themes as well as providing an in-depth exploration of specific lone mothers' experiences, thus capturing depth and breadth amongst participants' experiences.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research process and the black feminist methodological and epistemological approach taken to explore PBM lone mothers' lived experiences. I have illustrated the practicalities and challenges involved in conducting qualitative research within an organisational setting. Significantly, by engaging with reflexivity throughout (Huisman 2008), the chapter illustrates how my multiple and intersecting standpoints, as a researcher, young British Pakistani Muslim woman, with a situational identity as a (new) volunteer shaped the research process. This resulted in different advantages, disadvantages, and situations being played out amongst different settings, circumstances and groups of participants. For example, my linguistic (in)abilities and being an ethnic outsider shaped how observations were conducted with Bangladeshi lone mothers. Furthermore, there was also a sense of shared professionalism and differing power dynamics played out in interviews with workers and trustees. Tensions between my volunteer and researcher identity were also illustrated.

Overall, the chapter advances and adds further nuance to black feminist standpoint debates, by Phoenix (1994) and Bhopal (2001; 2009; 2010), contesting that the researcher can fit neatly into either an insider or outsider positionality and occupy one standpoint. It is critical of simply matching the researcher and researched (ethnic and gender matching) and problematises placing researchers in broader categories. These debates are also intersectional in nature as they acknowledge shifting positionalities of the researcher and multiple identities, such as ethnicity, gender, religion and age, intersecting to shape the research process. Importantly, beyond this debate, the chapter also presents significant tensions of institutionalised research practices when conducting research, such as audio-recording interviews and ethics procedures. Experiences and challenges of ethics in practice and an importance of reciprocity as an ethical endeavour are presented. It also forwards the use of visual communication methods as a different way of communicating research to participants, provides reflections

on translating and possibilities of conducting research in an somewhat unfamiliar language and social world.

A number of these themes reappear in the following three chapters as they focus on the findings and the analytical discussion of these.

Chapter 4: Lived experiences of lone motherhood

4.1 Introduction

The literature review (Chapter 2) presented a need to unpack the categories of lone mother and PBM women, addressing similarities, differences and diversity within these groups (Duncan and Edwards 1999; McCall 2005; Salway 2007; May 2010). Significantly, throughout this chapter it is explored whether PBM lone mothers' experiences are distinct or similar in relation to previous studies of lone motherhood and PBM women. Furthermore, it was also questioned whether the 'lone mother' identity is central in determining positions and shaping lived experiences of PBM women or whether gendered, racialised, ethnic, religious and class identities are more significant. In analysing interviews with lone mothers, one significant axis of identity which determined participants' trajectories and experiences was gender. Brah (1996) has stated that in an intersectionality approach priority can be given to one axis and explored in relation to others. In this study, the data show lone mothers' positionalities as women intersecting with their ethnic, cultural, religious, generational and class identities and migrant status shaped routes into and experiences of lone motherhood. In presenting findings that were central to participants' narratives, the chapter draws on Duncan and Edwards' (1996a; 1999) 'escaping patriarchy' discourse and Kandiyoti's (1988) theorization of 'patriarchal bargains' and 'classic patriarchy', which were outlined in Chapter 2, to show how participants' intersectional identities result in unique experiences of lone motherhood. The extent to which PBM women escape patriarchy through lone motherhood is questioned. It is also acknowledged that while still relevant and valuable the above literatures are now over two decades old and need to be renewed in relation to experiences of lone mothers in this study.

Overall, in taking a theoretical lens of gender and patriarchy situated in multiple axis of identity this chapter will be divided into four main sections reflecting significant themes from interviews with lone mothers and fieldnotes. The first section focuses on routes into lone motherhood presenting experiences of marriage and DA. It is important to discover what leads to and influences experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women and whether this is similar or different to lone mothers of other backgrounds. The next section presents

the journey of becoming a lone mother and initial experiences. There is a specific focus on one lone mother's initial experiences. Zahra was the only participant in the study who had most recently become a lone mother. Significantly, this enabled me to observe her experiences in real time. At SAW's Place I provided extensive practical support to Zahra over seven months, providing an in-depth account of the barriers and difficulties recent 'migrant brides' can face in initial experiences of lone motherhood. The third section of the chapter examines experiences of stigma amongst participants. This section specifically questions the extent to which women escape patriarchy through lone motherhood. The last section focuses on participants' identities as mothers and children's upbringing. For most participants this identity was central to their lives and thus presented itself as a significant theme. The analysis also explores PBM women's active agency when negotiating various constraints.

4.2 Routes into lone motherhood

This section focuses on the circumstances of participants' lives that led to lone motherhood, an important narrative in interviews for lone mothers. It is important to explore this as depending on the routes into lone motherhood, in addition to class and ethnic background, "the needs, opportunities and experiences of these groups may be quite disparate" (Song and Edwards 1997, p. 242; Crow and Hardey 1992). Although Song and Edwards (1997) point out the problematic nature of focusing (policy) analysis on routes into lone motherhood, as it can further stigmatise lone mothers as a social threat, in relation to this study analysis shows experiences before lone motherhood are indeed diverse and one significant factor in determining experiences of lone motherhood. Thus it is an area of significant exploration.

Previous studies have found widowhood, marital breakdown (divorce and separation) or single motherhood as routes into lone motherhood (e.g. Song and Edwards 1997; Sinha 1998; Duncan and Edwards 1999). Over time the most common route became marital breakdown (Millar 1996). A recent report by Rabindrakumar (2018) suggests "around half (45 percent) of single parents were once part of a married couple" or they were part of a cohabitating couple. All of the participants in this study were married before lone motherhood, reflecting the high importance of marriage in SA and Muslim cultures (Charsley 2005b; Bhopal 2009; Yeung and Park 2016). Of the sixteen participants interviewed, fifteen went through marital breakdown

and one was widowed. Experiences of marriage were central to participants' accounts. Thus, there will be an expanded discussion of marriage experiences, situating participants' experiences in relation to their intersecting positionalities as women within Pakistani and Bangladeshi cultures, systems of patriarchy and the institution of marriage. Most of the women in this study were migrant brides (ten Pakistani and one Bangladeshi woman) thus their experiences will be focused upon first. The next sub-section will focus on marriage patterns amongst British born or brought up participants.

4.2.1 Experiences of marriage

Migrant brides and realities of marriage

Transnational (particularly kin) marriage has been highly valued amongst PBM families in Pakistan, Bangladesh and England. There are many mutual benefits perceived of this, which have been listed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.1), for example a facilitation of migration (Shaw 2001; Charsley 2005b; Gardner 2006). In relation to 'migrant brides', marriage in England is perceived as creating a better life in material terms for daughters, representing an opportunity for a secure financial future (Charsley 2005b; Kallivayalil 2010; Charsley, Benson and Hear 2012). This is reflected in Sadiyyah's view on parents' perceptions of daughters' migration to England:

Sadiyyah: "...our mothers fathers give us away, oooh they will go to 'Englaynd', easy, they will have an easier 'life' than us..."

However, as Sadiyyah found these expectations can be far off from realities for some women. Charsley (2005b) argues, one reason behind parents marrying sons from Pakistan is, when a (young) man's behaviour, such as having a girlfriend, worries parents they believe or hope that marrying a woman from Pakistan will bring them back on the desired path. A Pakistani spouse is seen as more religious and traditional; these values can be passed on to the next generation (Charsley 2005b; Shaw and Charsley 2006). However, when this does not work out it can leave migrant brides in difficult situations as Sadiyyah's experience illustrates. After coming to England Sadiyyah found her husband was busy in his own '*interest*' involved in

another relationship. Sadiyyah said he told her: "*my mother chose you, I wanted to get married from here [UK]*". For three years Sadiyyah found herself having to fulfil duties of the ideal daughter-in-law in an extended family, doing all the housework for everyone including her sisters-in-law, while her husband was away. She stated: "*we become slaves of their house to their 'family'*". As Charsley (2005b) has previously asserted, this example may also affirm the outcomes of concealed forms of men's forced marriage and one of the consequences for migrant brides as a result. This shows the expectations and plight of women's circumstances in the patriarchal extended family household, closely associated with traditional cultural gendered norms (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). It is one circumstance leading to lone motherhood presented in participants' narratives.

Bhopal (1997) has previously argued that household structure is the greatest difference between White and SA groups. Although there can be variations in family structures (Harriet 2008) and women's positionality, such as social class differences (see Evans and Bowlby 2000), traditionally in SA cultures women are viewed as being dependent upon men with a devalued position particularly in the extended family. There are distinct gender roles; men are providers for the family, women's primary role is towards the family and household (Dale et al 2002; Salway 2007); expectations of women are to be self-sacrificing, good wives who maintain the harmony of the home (Sinha 1998; Shankar, Das and Atwal 2013; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019). Reflecting classic patriarchy and culture, the household is a site where gender and age intersect. Young women are seen as being subordinate to older women particularly in relation to their mothers-in-law (Kandiyoti 1988). Shankar, Das and Atwal (2013, p. 249) argue these distinct gender roles "are closely held by many SA families despite changing social context". Previous studies, such as Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling's (2014) in the US and Tonsing and Tonsing's (2019) in Hong Kong, have also found this, showing that the SA diaspora can recreate and uphold cultural gendered roles in diverse locations (Brubaker 2005). Thus, the household can become a site of women's oppression, where cultural traditional patriarchal ideologies are still deeply embedded.

These cultural gendered expectations of women, as wives and daughters-in-law, were clearly embedded in Nafeesah's experiences of married life. Nafeesah was educated to college level (FSc) in Pakistan, after marrying at a young age (arranged marriage) she came to England. She

described having mixed experiences of marriage. Nafeesah was interested in pursuing education and wanted to attend college, her husband supported this decision (Britton 2019). This depicts transnational marriage as an opportunity for women to fulfil their own expectations such as studying, based upon assumptions about Western life (Anitha 2011), showing intergenerational change compared to early SA migrant settlers (see Gardner 2006). However, Nafeesah's mother-in-law had "*different expectations*", reflecting the traditional gender roles described above:

Sarah: "What were their expectations?"

Nafeesah: "They wanted me to be a typical housewife erm I had [states amount] sister-in-laws at home joint family system...you know obviously when there's that many people somebody's got to cook somebody's got to clean (Sarah: yeah) so all of those responsibilities kind of landed on me and I was told this is your responsibility...I accepted that along with the marriage"

As is demonstrated in Nafeesah's experience, "daughters-in-law are expected to obey their parents-in-law and to work hard on domestic chores" (Gardner 2006, p. 378; Charsley and Liversage 2015). It demonstrates gender, culture and age intersect as older women have authority over younger women (Shaw 2000). It seems Nafeesah was aware of these expectations and thus accommodated to the patriarchal system (Kandiyoti 1988). However, Nafeesah later challenged this when she was overwhelmed with everyone's demands and responsibility, feeling it was "*unfair*". When her husband spoke to his family Nafeesah described the reaction: her husband was blamed for "*taking his wife's side, he was the perfect son before, now she's come into the family things have just gone upside down*". This again reflects another aspect of classic patriarchy. Sons are women's most critical resource, they are their carers and providers in old age, thus ensuring their life-long loyalty is an enduring preoccupation for mothers (Kandiyoti 1988; Charsley 2005b; Mirza 2017). The daughter-in-law is seen as threatening this. Nafeesah felt her husband was always stuck between her and his family, showing the difficult positionalities men can be placed in. Overall although Nafeesah was able to pursue college education, she had to operate within the parameters of such dominant gender ideologies (Kandiyoti 1998), fulfilling her obligations as a wife and daughter-in-law.

The extended household and particularly women's subordination to mothers-in-law and men are described as having a 'cyclical nature' by Kandiyoti (1988); women play an active role in their own subordination. In relation to patriarchal bargains women are able to reap the benefits once they become mothers-in-law themselves later or gradually acquire a major role in managing the household (Kandiyoti 1988; Shaw 2000). However, some participants in this study moved away from the extended household to live with their husbands and children. In doing so they paid the price of an earlier patriarchal bargain (Kandiyoti 1988). Notably, all of the participants (Nafeesah, Noor, Suwaybah) who were well educated, from middle-class families or urban settings in Pakistan or Bangladesh moved from the extended household. For example, living in an extended family Noor was given a "*really small box room*" to live in with her child and husband. Shaw (2001, p. 101) has stated that where a family becomes too large "they may consider dividing into separate households". Although there are pressures against this happening, related to son's loyalty sought by mothers (Mirza 2017), couples may move out. In such cases they may live in a nearby house (Shaw 2001). This was true of most women's experiences. For instance Maryam (low educated background) separated into a house close to her in-laws. However, when Noor decided to move, she chose to live in another city near her sibling as it had "*low rent*". Thus, moving can be a strategy used to attempt to break away from patriarchal extended household structures but does not always play out positively (see Section 4.2.3).

Finally, in contesting Western stereotypes of arranged marriages being oppressive some participants described good experiences of marriage (Gardner 2006) and some participants did not live in an extended family. Fatimah who lived with her husband and child described "*very good time passed*" and after her husband's death, she was now "*passing*" life with "*too much difficulty*". Nafeesah told me she got to know her husband before marriage and reminisced the "*good times*" she spent with him.

Changing marriage patterns?

Reflecting increase in male spouse migration (Charsley 2005b), three participants situated in England got married from Pakistan or Bangladesh. This included two first generation lone

mothers born in England and Ayman, a Bangladeshi participant who migrated to England as a teenager under family reunification migration. Ayman later got married to a cousin from Bangladesh. Both British born participants, Asma and Ruqayyah, were pressurised to marry. Describing a forced marriage (Charsley and Shaw 2006; Anitha 2011), Asma was "*sent back home*" to get married at a very "*premature*" age. It is important to note this occurred around thirty years ago. Ruqayyah was pressurised to marry after her father passed away:

"...my heart was not in it that I go towards marriage (Sarah: yes) then you know if your father is not on your head [meaning no support from father] then brothers that there are, then (Sarah: yes) they had troubled/annoyed me a lot (Sarah: yes) then I got married..."

Her marriage dissolved as her husband did not want to come to England and was involved with another woman in Pakistan. On the other hand, Asma's husband migrated to England. After forced pregnancies (Kallivayalil 2010) and finding out she could not give birth to a son her husband decided the "*solution*" was remarriage. Resultingly, Asma's husband engaged in polygamous marriage. Under a patriarchal SA family system sons are highly sought after: Ahmed and Bould (2004, p. 1334) state "women and men must have sons because sons are the key to security in old age". Giving birth to a son is of prime importance to a woman's status and happiness in her husband's home (Kandiyoti 1988; Mirza 2017). With her husband giving attention to his new wife, this essentially led to the break-up of Asma's marriage. This shows the constraints women face under patriarchal systems.

One participant in this study who is a second-generation British born got married outside of family and caste to a man of her choice, what she termed 'love marriage'. Although her father encouraged her to study first (see Bhopal 2009 and Ijaz and Abbas 2010 about changing generational educational aspirations amongst parents), Maymoona described her parents as being supportive of her decision to marry. Maymoona felt that she was not accepted into her husband's family due to differences of caste: traditionally a significant social consideration in marriage selections (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). However, Maymoona attributed her husband's absence and lack of provision for his family as leading to marital breakdown (Sinha 1998):

"but when I think about it I don't think the family was the main problem because the throughout the whole marriage erm with him erm you know he never lived with me"

These four participants' experiences reflect both intergenerational continuation and change of marriage practices and preferences amongst SA women and communities. Maymoona's example demonstrates both acceptance and contestation of Western non-kin marriages and marriages outside caste. Experiences also highlight men's engagement in other relationships while being married, which I now consider below.

4.2.2 Polygamy and affairs

Pakistani Muslim women's experiences of marriage highlight husband's engagement in polygamy or an affair as a significant route into lone motherhood. It should be noted that it cannot be ascertained from accounts of participants in all cases that their husbands were engaging in polygamy per se but it is certain in five participants' narratives that husbands were at least involved in affairs. Polygamy practices vary considerably. The literature review defined polygamy as "being simultaneously married to more than one spouse" (Charsley and Liversage 2013, p. 62). Today polygamy is prohibited by English law and is particularly associated with Muslim men as Islamic law allows polygamy (polygamy), although certain conditions are emphasised, for example each wife must be treated equally (Charsley and Liversage 2013). A form of polygamy that Charsley and Liversage (2013) present, which resonates with participants' experiences, reflects the intergenerational challenges between cultural traditions of migrant or ethnic minority communities (in this case transnational, arranged and kin marriages) and the practices of 'modern' Western society. Here the 'dual aspirations' of Muslim men clash with traditional forms of marriages. As asserted here, Charsley and Liversage (2013) state young men may want a love match of their choosing from the UK but are also caught in pleasing parents' desires for arranged marriage. Further geographical distance can facilitate the concealment of relationships men are engaged in, resulting in polygamy or involvement in affairs. This can be demonstrated in Sadiyyah's experience presented in Section 4.2.1 (and possibly Tahira's experience as well).

However, as findings show polygamy is not bound solely to relationships before arranged marriage but also after marriage (Anitha 2011). As Asma's story demonstrates polygamy can be as a result of a desire for a son. Taking another example, at the time of the interview it had been around eight years since Kulsoom found out her husband, at the time, had married another woman. I asked Kulsoom how she had found out:

Kulsoom: "Just like this, people told he has got married, then I found out."

Sarah: "And at that time how did you feel?"

Kulsoom: "Just I felt really bad, if your husband lets in another woman then you cannot take it, 'depression', very worried"

In discussing polygamy amongst men in Bangladesh, Ahmed and Bould (2004) argue that consent from the first wife rarely occurs. Further, Charsley and Liversage (2013) have stated that second marriage can be a source of marital conflict particularly if it takes place without the current wife's consent, as can be seen above in Kulsoom's case. Eventually this led to arguments and the break-up of Kulsoom's marriage. However, this experience cannot be solely attributed to Muslim men and lone mothers. Challenging the racialisation of Muslim men's engagement in multiple relationships, Charsley and Liversage (2013) state that these relationships are common occurrences irrespective of ethnic or religious group. In regard to routes into lone motherhood a Black lone mother interviewed in Duncan and Edward's (1996b) study (quoted in Song and Edwards 1997, p. 236) stated, 'most people are by themselves because men have more than one woman'. While acknowledging that this one participant may not represent the views of other Black lone mothers, in challenging public stereotypes of Black lone mothers' roots into lone motherhood, Song and Edwards (1997) state that this is an acceptable norm. Thus, this cannot be solely attributed to Pakistani Muslim lone mothers' experiences. The findings also reassert men's involvement in another relationship as a significant route to lone motherhood. Although men's misuse of polygamy adds an extra dimension. Another route into lone motherhood was experiencing DA, which is presented below reflecting on the narratives of eleven participants.

4.2.3 Domestic abuse

DA (and DV) effects women regardless of cultural and ethnic background (Tonsing and Tonsing 2019). It is argued as being embedded within and specifically a consequence of patriarchy (Hunnicuttt 2009). However, the experiences of DA amongst eleven participants in this study are specifically embedded in the gendered cultural patriarchal systems and ideologies presented in marriage, the arranged marriage system, family and extended household (Kallivayali 2010; Mirza 2017). Experiences of DA are presented in four sub-sections: women's experiences of controlling behaviour, violence against women, women strategising and finally *sabar*. The findings will be discussed in relation to the conceptualisation of patriarchy (Kandiyoti 1988; 1998) and violence against women (Hunnicuttt 2008), as well as recent studies of domestic violence amongst Pakistani women (e.g. Chowbey 2016; 2017; Mirza 2017; Tonsing and Tonsing, 2019). There were various perpetrators of abuse including the husband, mother-in-law and husband's sisters. DA was prevalent amongst both migrant and British born women's experiences.

Controlling behaviour

There were many forms of controlling behaviour experienced by women in marriage. Stark's (2013) theory of coercive control (utilised by Mirza 2017) shows that perpetrators can control women by regulating their behaviour and movements. For women in this study husbands and in some cases mothers-in-law exerted control. In relation to the mother-in-law, Mirza (2017 p. 406) argues this links with the social-cultural norms of the extended family household (presented in Section 4.2.1) "in which mothers-in-law have a vested interest in exerting power and control over their daughters-in-law". This combines gendered and generational (age) hierarchies where dominance over the son's wife is "women's only culturally sanctioned power" (Anitha 2011, p. 1273; Kandiyoti 1988). For instance, after Saddiyah's husband left, her mother-in-law would control what she did. Sadiyyah was left with doing the housework and caring for family members:

Sadiyyah: "here they did not even let us out, we did not even have 'phone' just be quite and do the house's cleaning, make their chapatis [round bread]"

Mirza (2017) argues overwhelming the daughter-in-law in housework is a subtle tactic of control used by the mother-in-law. Perhaps due to housework and caring often being seen as a normal everyday task and a gendered expectation of women, this aspect of abuse has not been given attention to and is often ignored (Mirza 2017). However, Mirza (2017, p. 402) argues it can be used "to regulate, monitor and control the movements" of the daughter-in-law.

Another form of control is financial (Chowbey 2016; Mirza 2017). Zahra described her husband "*sometimes used to give ten 'pound' even that after a 'month' "*. Maryam's mother-in-law exerted financial control over benefits both herself and her husband received. This persisted even when Maryam was able to break away from the extended household with her husband:

Maryam: " 'still' [after moving] expenditure my mother-in-law used to get and give it to me (Sarah: okay)...they used to bring the shopping after a month after two months like this..."

Thus, this finding shows that control of the daughter-in-law can perhaps extend beyond the household, especially where the daughter-in-law has moved to a house close by.

Women also encountered controlling behaviour from their husbands. This included not being allowed to go outside alone, controlling interactions, friendships and use of mobile phones or social media. For instance, Maymoona's husband would not allow her to pursue education. She stated, "*he didn't like the fact that there was gonna be guys there*". Ayman described her husband wanted her to be a traditional Bangladeshi housewife and would control her phone use:

Ayman (via interpreter): "she said that she wanted a bit of freedom at least you know to even be able to view her to you know use her phone which was not allowed she she's got a [social media] account she likes to go on [social media]"

Such controlling behaviour led to tensions in the household and the eventual breakup of the marriage. For example, when a schoolteacher found out Maryam's mother-in-law had financial control when inquiring into benefit reciprocity this led to a string of events (including involvement of social workers) where Maryam tried to gain financial control, in turn leading to arguments and marriage breakup where her husband sided with his mother and family.

Violence against women

At least seven participants reported experiencing some form of violence including: physical, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse from husbands. For example, Suwaybah and Maymoona described their experiences of abuse:

Suwaybah: "...he break things make children upset...when he came back [from work] he's very you know grumpy and violent (Sarah: yeah) erm he tried to you know [quietly] hhit different type of tools (Sarah: yeah) specially hammer knives"

Maymoona: "when he was around me I suffered a lot of mental and emotional abuse from him (Sarah: okay) eeerm you know he never provided as a husband never provided as a father...you know at one point it was physical abuse"

Furthermore Kallivayalil (2010) argues that physical and emotional health implications of violence must also be considered. When Noor became ill, she experienced psychological and physical abuse from her husband which created emotional stress (Kallivayalil 2010). In misusing religious beliefs and blaming Noor for her condition, by saying things like "you know Allah doesn't like you, that's why you've got that disease", her husband created more emotional stress. Noor also recounted a time when her husband locked her inside the home stating "he he physically abused me really badly and he locked me in home and he got take key, he gone out...". Thus, some participants like Noor and Maymoona faced more than one form of abuse. As these experiences show DA resulted in potentially life-threatening situations. This also impacted participants' mental wellbeing.

Strategising against domestic abuse

Kandiyoti (1998, p. 136) presents women as "rational actors deploying a range of strategies" within patriarchal constraints, arguing they know where their interests lie. Some participants discussed the strategies they employed to contest and cope with DA. Chowbey (2017) has previously argued women suffering financial abuse, such as a lack of financial provision, adopt strategies to gain financial independence. One strategy used by some participants in this study was earning through employment. Chowbey (2016) has argued that women are able to uphold their rights depending on their economic positioning and education. Noor and Suwaybah who were well educated began education and formal part-time employment. On the other hand, Maryam entered the informal economy sewing clothes from home to fulfil her own and children's needs. Whereas Zahra did not work remaining dependent on her husband. Noor's husband did not want her to work, although she later went to college and then entered employment, she suffered much DA in the process:

Noor: "Whenever I er ask job he started arg-argument with me sometime"

Sarah: "So you wanted to work?"

Noor: "Yeah so sometime shouting sometimeeee he mmhm thingy he'd hit me as well punching face push push...thennn I decided no better to thingy live that way better to I go, go out do something...I admitted in college I started beginning like English classes"

Hunnicutt (2009) argues to understand male perpetration of abuse such as that of Noor's husband, it is important to understand how men are situated in their own scheme of domination. Hunnicutt (2009, p. 559) argues it is often least powerful men who victimise women under social pressures to redeem their "wounded masculinity". Hunnicutt (2009) argues this is embedded in interlocking systems of patriarchy and capitalism which dictate men as breadwinners. This is challenged by changing gender roles and women's employment (Chowbey 2016). Chowbey (2016, p. 499) has previously found "where men were significantly less well-employed than their wives, or unable to find employment, violence was more likely to occur". For Pakistani men (this can also be extended to Bangladeshi men) this experience can be heightened by their disempowerment through labour market disadvantage, for instance experiencing discrimination (Chowbey 2016). Thus, women's employment can challenge masculinities and increase the likelihood of violence.

This example emphasises the active agency of women in such circumstances and the bargains made while being situated in abusive relationships within patriarchal constraints (Kandiyoti 1998; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). However, many participants endured DA and broken marriages for many years before they became lone mothers. Such experiences illustrate women's *sabar* in the most difficult of times. *Sabar* is another strategy used in coping with and responding to DA, it is discussed below.

***Sabar* and suffering**

Although *sabar* (an Islamic, Arabic and Urdu term) is often translated to "patience", it has "different dimensions, meanings and uses" (Qureshi 2013, p. 123). Qureshi (2013) explores the complex textures of *sabar* in the context of her study of Pakistani women situating their illnesses. Of relevance to women's experiences here, she challenges the emphasis by feminist writing that *sabar* represents "passive acceptance or fatalism" and is as part of a SA dominant patriarchal model in which women passively endure and are submissive to husbands and senior kin (Qureshi 2013, p. 121-122). Rather Qureshi (2013, p. 120) argues it is a feminine capacity involving self-sacrifice and silent suffering, here *sabar* is an "agential capacity". Qureshi (2013; 2016) further argues women can claim *sabar* as an 'ethical form' and moral high ground. *Sabar* can be essential at the time of suffering.

Thus, exercising *sabar* can demonstrate the 'strength' of a woman and is an act of 'agency', 'perseverance', 'resilience' and 'endurance' as much as 'patience'. In the context of this study some participants discussed 'exercising' *sabar* when they experienced hardships such as DA and marital breakdown. However, here the concept of *sabar* presents itself as both a positive and negative tool, facilitating and inhibiting agency. Women practice *sabar* themselves as a coping strategy and can also be told to have *sabar* by family reflecting patriarchal norms and their positionalities as women within these. Overall participants' stories and narratives of enacting *sabar* and suffering through DA or marriage underlines their strength, resourcefulness and endurance as women (Rodger and Herbert 2008). This can be illustrated in Zainab's experience of DA.

The most extreme case of DA amongst participants was experienced by Zainab, a migrant bride from Pakistan. In her interview she extensively discussed her poor living conditions in marriage. Zainab lived in an extended household, with her husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law. Her husband's siblings would always come and go, she was made to cook and clean for them and take care of their children. Zainab was also made to feel isolated and alone by her in-laws through various mechanisms including not being able to: meet or contact her siblings who lived in the same city, use the home phone or own a mobile, have any friends or leave the house (even to drop her children to school at times). This is in line with previous studies which have found controlling or preventing women's contact with family as a form of controlling behaviour and isolation perpetrated by abusers (Anitha 2011; Mirza 2017; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019). Due to this isolation Zainab could not tell her family of her situation. She was also reluctant to tell her parents. Zainab stated: *"I was alone, there were all of them"*. Furthermore, she could not even eat or drink on her own will. She also experienced physical abuse; she recalled arguments, being hit and beaten:

Zainab: "...every single day they hit [me] I never even used to do 'uff' so I don't even tell anyone after crying it out I used to go back fine..."

She even recalled being beaten during pregnancy. She had once told a Pakistani schoolteacher of her circumstance who told Zainab support could be offered to leave but Zainab did not feel she could leave at the time. Her children were also aware of her abuse and questioned why she did not do anything. Again reflecting the patriarchal household structure, Zainab would refrain against reacting to abuse due to her in-laws status as elders and ultimately the fear of facing further abuse:

Sarah: "It looks like you had a lot of 'sabar' in you, like?"

Zainab: "Yes (Sarah: yes) so I used to say that do 'sabar' child shouldn't do like this so you shouldn't do like this so you shouldn't give a reply back... so then I used to forget, used to say tomorrow's morning will be fine, tomorrow's morning will be good (Sarah: okay) look by doing this...twenty twenty-two years went by"

It was evident Zainab endured abuse for many years. Religious practices and beliefs were also important in enacting *sabar* (Qureshi 2013). Zainab used religious practices like praying (*namaz*) in which she felt a sense of "*sakoon*" (peace). Together, such experiences of suffering and enacting *sabar* show the strength of women. The strategies used by Zainab cannot be presented as passiveness; instead they show agency as Zainab made an active decision that her best interests lay in keeping quiet to cope with and avoid further DA (Kandiyoti 1998). *Sabar* in this case presents itself as not complaining about suffering, remaining strong and carrying on for her children (Qureshi 2013) with the belief that her situation would improve over time (Charsley 2005b; Qureshi 2018).

In contrast, Noor's experience illustrates that *sabar* can be used negatively by family (in-laws) to constrain women to remaining in and enduring an abusive relationship:

Noor: "...that's why I suffer long time, maybe I every year every year I think you know maybe he gonna change, (Sarah: yeah) he gonna change, he gonna go back to work and the, and er after one after one I got three kids then when I I thingy tell his family he says "oh, you because you girl you have to know do 'sabar' and er you have to er because you've got three children as well you need to think that as well"

Sarah: "So you wanted to separate from him but (Noor: yeah yeah) they were stopping you?"

Noor: "Yeah yeah, they are stopping, they says you know what gonna er society gonna tell you"

Her in-laws also draw upon a cultural (both Bangladeshi and Muslim culture in Noor's view) emphasis on *izzat* (honour) and thinking about her children to maintain the marriage. Noor's experience depicted in the quote above reflects traditional patriarchal and gendered expectations of women. Tonsing and Tonsing (2019) have found in their study, focusing on intimate partner violence amongst SA women in Hong Kong, women are expected to bear abuse, be self-sacrificing and preserve the family reputation (*izzat*) amongst the SA community. Women are expected to have *sabar*. "Patriarchy is maintained and reproduced through the socialisation of patriarchal norms and values" (Tonsing and Tonsing 2019, p. 165) and women are called upon to preserve norms (Dasgupta 1989). This oppressive patriarchy

can prevent women from seeking help for DA (Shankar, Das and Atwal 2013). Thus, although Qureshi (2013; 2016) advocates for *sabar* to be seen in a more positive light, in relation to the SA patriarchal practice and experiences of DA and marriage amongst PBM women, *sabar* can be utilised negatively to maintain marriage and the patriarchal expectations of women. This prevents women from 'escaping patriarchy'. However, it is well documented that in Western cultures spouses also stay in 'troubled marriages' thinking of children's best interests (Previti and Amato 2003). Here this is presented in a cultural context.

Much like the vast majority of lone mothers in England, PBM women's route into lone motherhood is marital breakdown. However, PBM lone mothers' experiences of marriage are embedded in their location as women within Pakistani and Bangladeshi traditional cultures in relation to both men and generational hierarchies giving power to the senior mother-in-law, systems of patriarchy and the prevailing importance of the institution of (arranged kinship) marriage. There are diverse situations within marriage leading to lone motherhood, such as DA. Experiences also show PBM women can endure much *sabar* and suffering within marriage while strategising to contest/avoid patriarchal constraints, before entering lone motherhood. However, findings show that women are eventually able to gain the strength to leave their marital situations or are compelled to do so by their circumstances. As Zahra stated:

*"she should put up with everything...she should 'manage' so I say that this is wrong
(Sarah: yes) I have thought till when shall a human put up with it..."*

The above quote illustrates that individuals can only enact *sabar*, cope with DA or negative marital situations to a certain extent. Exploring participants' marriage experiences and routes into lone motherhood is significant as such lived experiences go on to shape both women's decisions to enter lone motherhood and circumstances as lone mothers (see sections below and Chapter 5). The next section explores participants' stories of entering lone motherhood and initial experiences. This includes the support networks women drew upon, complexities in leaving relationships and navigating everyday life alone.

4.3 Entering lone motherhood and initial experiences

It has been widely recognised lone motherhood is an unforeseen and unplanned event, "women very rarely 'choose' lone motherhood" (Song 1996; Duncan and Edwards 1999, p. 39). As the previous section emphasises, for participants in this study it was "*unfortunate circumstances*" (Asma) that led to lone motherhood including escaping DA, widowhood, husband's involvement in affairs, polygamy or inability to provide for the family. Of relevance here is Duncan and Edward's (1999) discourse of lone motherhood as 'escaping patriarchy' introduced in Chapter 2. The extent to which participants in this study were able to fully escape patriarchal relationships through lone motherhood can be questioned. Especially as patriarchy extends beyond male-female gender power imbalance in relation to SA women.

4.3.1 Points of contact

Participants demonstrated agency in their narratives of marital breakdown (Rodger and Herbert 2008): in most cases women were finally able to challenge their husbands or in-laws. There were a range of actors and services involved in the process of entering lone motherhood. Many services have previously been cited as supporting SA women including community services, local SA advice agencies and the justice system, including the police (Guru 2009; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014; Chowbey 2016). In addition to family, friends, schools and teachers such services supported participants in this study.

Chowbey (2016) has previously found women suffering DV engage with police services in extreme life-threatening situations. Noor and Suwaybah called or threatened to call the police when violent incidents occurred with their husbands. For example, Suwaybah called the police twice. Reflecting on her first experience she described the police as being "racist" as she received no support (Chowbey 2016). Suwaybah called the police on another occasion:

"and then again because he was breaking things then I called police and that time it's really good you know (Sarah: yeah) professional people came and they took him away..."

Noor previously called the police when she was locked in the home but decided to give her husband another chance, although the abuse continued. Her sister became an instrumental form of support in Noor's decision to break with DA:

"I decide...I'm not gonna stay with him anymore eer then last year (Sarah: yeah) it's er [states year] was er like middle of the night but for nothing he just started shouting started shouting screaming (Sarah: yeah) and I call my sister and my sister saying if you want to eer live that way live yourself otherwise you do something..."

Noor gave him a chance to leave while alternatively threatening to call the police. Thus, this illustrates women can benefit from state institutions like the police in breaking with DA (Chowbey 2016). After asking Noor how she felt after separation she stated:

Noor: "mhm no I I'm fine because any anyway he doesn't do anything... everything I have to do it (Sarah: yeah) so I don't feel you know much different (Sarah: yeah) much different because you know before that I have to do now you know same job"

Similarly, after an initial visit from social workers Suwaybah continued to do everything herself. Both Noor and Suwaybah were independent (e.g. through already being engaged in employment). This may suggest where women are income earners, they are in a better position upon breaking with DA and entering lone motherhood (Guru 2009; Chowbey 2016).

Another point of contact for participants in this study was schools and teachers. Although studies by Guru (2009) and Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling (2014) focusing on SA women's experience of separation, DA and divorce have not reported schools as a form of support, previous non-UK dated studies have discussed community service integration between schools and social workers being used to help deal with social problems such as family violence or children facing family adversity (Franklin and Streeter 1995; Gilligan 1998). Chowbey (2016) also briefly mentions schools being involved in safeguarding children from being taken away by fathers. Schools and teachers became vital points of contact for four migrant women (Kulsoom, Maryam, Sadiyyah and Zainab) who were not sure where to go to ask for support. Sadiyyah's experience illustrates this:

Sadiyyah: "...we do not know how to get out and even cannot speak 'English' [at] 'that time', (Sarah: okay) then there is one [option] that I went to the 'school' and cried (Sarah: yes) that I do not understand what I should do now this is the issue with me, my 'husband' is not even here, (Sarah: yes) then shall I ask for my clothes and money from someone... so then after 3 years then I 'phone[d]' the 'teacher' at that time they sent me to the 'refuge' (Sarah: okay) I lived in the 'refuge' for 3 years"

The school was a local familiar place as in most cases participants' children went there. When Zainab's in-laws forced her out of the home one day (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014) she found her way to her children's school and the police were then called. Similarly, when Kulsoom asked for support a teacher helped her, she was referred to social workers who provided support in gaining housing. Schools were able to refer women to the correct services such as the police, social workers or a refuge. Thus, adding to existing literature on schools as embedded within local communities (Vincent, Neal and Iqbal 2018), the findings bring forward schools as a crucial point of support and an intermediary site of welfare and care for women, referring them to relevant state actors.

Family and friends were also a crucial form of support. When Haajrah's husband essentially deserted her, she received support from an uncle and auntie. Furthermore, Fatimah, the only widow amongst participants, described going through much "*afflictions*" and receiving a lack of support from in-laws when her husband died. Instead her friend who "*did very good treatment with me like your own real sister does*" provided practical support, helping with the shopping and housework, and emotional support, keeping in contact and looking out for her (Smart et al 2012). Her friend also referred her to SAW's Place where Fatimah has been receiving both practical and moral support. Her friend was continuing to support her at the time of the research.

4.3.2 Complexities in leaving relationships

Entering lone motherhood was not a linear process for all lone mothers, rather there were complexities involved in this. In a previous study by Harriet (2008) with SA families, four

families were separated with the father living away from the family. Similarly, in the process of separation children overwhelmingly remained with the participants. However, three lone mothers (Asma, Kulsoom, Zainab) were separated from (some of) their children who remained or later went with their husband, in-laws or natal family. Nafeesah's children lived between her and her husband. Taking one complex example, in the process of later gaining Islamic divorce (a *Khula* - divorce petitioned by women) with the support of a local imam, Asma temporarily lost her children to her husband and own family. She was placed in a difficult position; her family sided with her husband as she "*escaped*" from home and the community she lived in. Her husband had said of Asma that "*she's not a good woman, she's escaped, brought shame to the family*". In fearing for her life Asma felt she could not challenge her children informally being taken away:

Asma: "I've already left home, I've done this for my daughters and now being selfish for myself I've applied for a divorce which means I've traded in my daughters for my divorce I haven't made any difference to my children's life because I've sent them back to that (pause) back to that community again"

Eventually after the divorce process the children came back to live with Asma as they were neglected, "*very distressed*" and "*becoming a burden*" upon the family. This illustrates the negative impact divorce processes and family breakup can have on children, particularly in regards to their mental health, wellbeing and sense of displacement.

Women were still constrained due to the high emphasis on kinship and family relationships in the institution of marriage. Both Zainab and Kulsoom ended up going back to live with their in-laws for some time. Zainab's experience was embedded in kinship ties as she was married to a relative. Her sibling and mother-in-law convinced her to go back to her in-laws. After much pressure Zainab decided to go back temporarily. Later she was being convinced to stay but after arguments over financial provision she was again ousted from the house, this time accompanied with a divorce. Similarly, while helping Kulsoom apply for social housing at SAW's Place, the application form required a history of previous addresses she had lived at, from which I gained some insight into her experiences of separation:

...she moved to a lot of properties over the years. In trying to make sense of this she did tell me that she moved into a home (after separation?) but then moved back with her in-laws or a member of her in-laws house? And then she fell out with them again and moved into another property. (Fieldnote 23.01.19)

This was further expanded upon in the interview. After separation and moving into social housing she then went to live in her husband's property where her husband *"used to come and go"*. She was later divorced. In both Zainab and Kulsoom's experiences some of their children were still living with their father and/or grandparents at the time of the interview. These complexities challenge lone motherhood as escaping patriarchal relationships. After separation it is evident some lone mothers' experienced precarity in living arrangements and continuous dependency on husbands and in-laws, which drew women back into patriarchal constraints.

The next sub-section particularly focuses on the difficulties migrant women face in navigating everyday circumstances upon becoming lone mothers. It specifically focuses on one participant, called Zahra, whose positionality as a migrant bride and migration status alongside various institutional systems of power associated with this, shaped initial experiences.

4.3.3 Navigating place: supporting Zahra

Migrant women in particular described the difficulties of navigating everyday life alone, this was embedded and exacerbated in experiences of marriage, DA and an identity as 'migrant brides' where participants' experienced isolation, dependency on husbands, little local and English language knowledge (Charsley and Liversage 2015). It took some time to adapt to their new circumstances. This included mundane, often taken for granted aspects such as using a bus, finding shops and setting up benefits. For instance, Haajrah described her experience of learning to use the bus which took *"two three times"* to get used to. Zainab described the difficulties of navigating her surroundings:

"I didn't know where the 'town' was...I didn't know from where [to get] a 'gallon' of milk, where the 'shop' is, where the 'school' is, where the mosque is, where it is not, I could not even ever talk to anyone..."

Zainab said since she came to SAW's Place they *"put me on my two feet, now I can go alone"*. This brings forward SAW's Place as a crucial source of support for migrant PBM lone mothers. This will be further expanded upon by taking an in-depth focus on the support provided to Zahra by SAW's Place. Zahra was the only participant who had most recently become a lone mother and whom I provided the most extensive support to over seven months of observations with her. Fieldnotes provide a much more in-depth and situated account of initial experience than offered by interview accounts of past events.

During the initial stage of observing, Khadijah (head worker) introduced me to Zahra and asked me to show her to a bus stop. A week later I was asked to support her with a radiator issue at her council house. In our initial conversation I found out about Zahra's situation and the support provided by SAW's Place when her husband left:

She informed me her husband left her (tenancy in his name), she has no eligibility to welfare state benefits because of legal/migrant status...She said that first when her husband left she came to the organisation really upset, crying, Khadijah supported her a lot, even helped with giving clothes. She also said living on money received from social services is difficult, she saves up to buy kids clothing. Money is spent on everyday food things. (Fieldnote 14.11.18)

Zahra's immigration status impacted her experiences as a lone mother. In her interview, Zahra mentioned: *"I first came to [names EU country] after that I stayed there for 'four month[s]...' then I came here in the UK"*. I clarified Zahra's settlement story later with Khadijah, as this was complex and not clear via the interview and fieldnotes with Zahra. As her husband could not meet the high income requirements of spousal immigration rules (earning £18,600 a year with extra money for bringing over children) he utilised his EU free movement rights and applied for a visa from a EU country to call Zahra over (see Wray, Kofman and Simic 2019). Zahra's visa expired and they came to the UK. Having no visa or immigration status, she had

no recourse to public funds meaning the EU migration route placed her in a precarious positionality. Anitha (2011) states recent marriage migrants are less likely to be financially independent through employment, thus can be highly dependent on welfare provision to leave a (abusive) relationship. Insecure or no immigration status can mean they are left without state financial support due to no recourse to public funds (Anitha 2008; 2011; Guru 2009). Upon coming to SAW's Place, Zahra was supported by Khadijah, solicitors and social workers who applied for a visa which allowed her to remain in the UK under the 'right to family life' immigration rule, as she had children in the UK. I supported Zahra in accessing benefits which involved engaging with an endless cycle of bureaucracy including applying for benefits via the phone and online, failed job centre trips and trying to open a bank account. Upon attending appointments an 'uncle' or friend would look after her children, she told me she had to think about these arrangements each time. To access benefits, claimants are required to have a bank account:

Khadijah also told me that she has no bank account before I called the [benefit] service, I informed the advisor of this and she now has to set one up to receive her benefit in. (Fieldnote 09.01.19)

Zahra and I went to set this up. However, an account was not opened as Zahra could not provide a valid letter with proof of name and address (very specific types are required), which Zahra could not provide until the house tenancy was in her name. The tenancy would not be transferred to her name until her immigration status was sorted. Consequently, benefits were delayed. Alongside social workers, Khadijah supported Zahra in transferring the tenancy into her name and accessing child benefits. In the meantime, Zahra received financial support from social services. She described the everyday financial struggles she faced living on little money, although her husband was still covering some utility bills. She had to shop tactically for food looking for the cheapest prices (Ponsford 2011):

On the bus back Zahra also mentioned how after getting support money from social services she would get shopping for the kitchen (mostly food) and told me about the supermarkets she went to and that she could get some good priced food at certain supermarkets e.g. flour. (Fieldnote 06.02.19)

The experiences of Zahra powerfully demonstrate the bureaucratic nature of the welfare system as well as the constraints complex immigration controls place upon recent marriage related migrants facing neglect from husbands, exiting abuse and entering lone motherhood. As Chowbey (2016, p. 507) has previously found "women in marginalised groups in stable states may find they face challenges in accessing state institutional support". This certainly created a sense of frustration and uncertainty for Zahra. Our discussions on the bus or waiting at the job centre and my reflection during fieldwork illustrate this:

She said she was tired of running around and having to sort everything, she almost wanted to give up, maybe even go back to Pakistan. That's how her situation makes her feel. But she had to go and get money (e.g. from social services) for her children, to support them, feed them. (Fieldnote 17.01.19)

There seems to be many barriers and stumbles. Applying for benefits and other processes (like setting up a bank account) seem to take a long time. The system which both the participant, workers, volunteers and the organisation have to navigate and deal with feels very difficult to get around. (Fieldnote 06.02.19)

Workers at SAW's Place are well aware of this. Upon discussing this frustration with Khadijah she said, *we have to be calm and try, keep on persevering and that we would get there (fieldnote 06.02.09)*. In my volunteer role, I then instilled the same concept of *sabar* conceptualised here to encourage Zahra not to give up. This was reflected upon in the interview with Zahra:

Zahra: "I received a lot of 'support' received from you as well you me all meaning-er going coming explained to me everything gave me support that you do a little bit 'sabar' (Sarah: yes) all your work has been done if you do a little more 'sabar' then 'InshaAllah' everything (Sarah: yes) will be better"

We were able to persevere through these systems; Zahra was granted a visa, the tenancy was transferred, her benefits were set up and a bank account was opened. In the process Zahra was also able to navigate her way through the city on the bus:

On two occasions I went on appointments with her...She told me that she never went out alone when she was married and only went to the city centre a few times with her husband. Today I went with Zahra to the bank (appointment). She was now able to purchase the bus ticket herself and had been to the city for appointments by herself a few times. She was more familiar with the city centre. (Fieldnote 03.04.19)

Overall, in focusing on one migrant bride's initial experiences of lone motherhood this illustrates the distinct challenges migrant brides can face, shaped not only by their experiences in marriage but also the systems of power they find themselves in England in relation to constraining transnational immigration laws and the highly bureaucratic nature of welfare systems. It also demonstrates that in entering lone motherhood, unemployed migrant women can move from being dependent on husbands to entering dependency upon state provision (public patriarchy). An in-depth analysis of Zahra's experience demonstrates the importance of treating narratives holistically and presenting sustained and detailed individual accounts to examine initial experiences of lone motherhood (Vincent, Neal and Iqbal 2018).

4.4 Stigma, izzat and surveillance

A significant theme within participants' accounts of lone motherhood was experiences of stigma. Chapter 2 discussed the stigmatisation lone mothers have faced for family breakdown. Lone mothers have been branded as immoral and benefit reliant with negative representation in media and state policy (Song 1996; Song and Edwards 1997; Carroll 2018; 2019). The findings in this study illustrate the stigma PBM lone mothers faced on a more mundane and everyday level within their localities (Ponsford 2011). Although there is a similar gendered notion of stigma to White and Black lone mothers, participants' identities as women intersect with SA cultural notions of *izzat*, kinship and the sanctity placed upon marriage. This also questions the extent to which PBM lone mothers are able to 'escape patriarchy' through

lone motherhood. Experiences of stigma associated with *izzat*, surveillance of participants and how participants strategise against this shall be presented here.

It is useful to explain *izzat* here, drawing on literature which shows its operation and importance in Pakistani communities. The concept of *izzat* is gendered. As outlined, *izzat* relates to 'honour' and 'respect' and is often associated with *purdah* (Shaw 2000; Shariff 2012); thus, women have traditionally been associated with the private sphere of the home. For women there is an importance placed upon maintaining personal honour as they are seen as guardians of family honour (Hopkins 2009; Kallivayalil 2010; Anitha 2011; Shariff 2012). It relates to controlling female sexuality, guarding women and their bodies from men and the importance of female chastity (Shaw 2000; Hopkins 2009; Shariff 2012). As such young unmarried women often have less freedom than men. There is scrutiny and surveillance of women to prevent deviation from this norm, their behaviour is constantly judged and closely monitored (Bhopal 1997; Shaw 2000; Anitha 2011; Sanghera and Thapar-Björkert 2012). Marriage is seen as essential in preserving honour and respectable femininities (Hopkins 2009). Further a man's honour is achieved through the reputation of the women he is responsible for, such as his sister or daughter (Alvi 2001). Significant to participants' experiences here, Alvi (2001) argues honour is "the public part of the self" and about conforming to social expectations. An individual without honour may not be able to face others in the community (Alvi 2001). Although there are arguments that the reproduction of *izzat* and *purdah* has not consistently endured over time, that is with generational change and women's employment (Shariff 2012), it is evident in the data that participants, many of whom were lone mothers for a significant amount of time, faced stigma and challenges to their *izzat* in relation to separation and lone motherhood. This demonstrates the enduring importance of *izzat*.

4.4.1 Blaming women for marital breakdown

Participants described feeling looked down upon and degraded within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi community. For example, Fatimah said for a widowed lone mother "*her 'izzat' (honour) that is does not be anything her life is nothing*" and Sadiyyah stated "*they say to us you are 'gaiya guzariyah' [gone]*" (Lawson and Satti 2016). As Haajrah's experience shows,

blame was placed upon lone mothers for marital breakdown even where there was no fault of their own:

Sarah: "And erm what do you think that erm like Pakistani community there is how do they see a lone mother?"

Haajirah: "...some people are fine they say, so some people are like this as well yes they don't say this that it will be that boy's fault that she is living alone (Sarah: yes) they don't think this they say, think this it will be her own fault that's why she is alone...."

This blame for marital breakdown is a key commonality PBM lone mothers share with lone mothers of White and Black backgrounds due to their shared identities as women. Song and Edwards (1997, p. 242) have previously asserted that both Black and White lone mothers have had to "bear the onus for concerns about 'family breakdown'." Carroll (2019) has stated divorce has lost its stigma in Western society today. However, the stigma of marital breakdown is very much persistent amongst SA communities (Guru 2009). Furthermore, this finding is similar to a previous study by Ponsford (2011) where young mothers, who have long been a stigmatised group in Britain, reported feeling 'looked down upon' in their local communities. Thus, it can be argued that stigma can be faced where women deviate from social norms (Goffman 1963; Carroll 2019) which in the context of these participants' experiences is in relation to the high emphasis placed upon marriage in SA cultures, which lone motherhood challenges. However, stigma can be more substantial for participants in this study due to the impact on family ties and relationships.

Some participants also described facing stigmatisation from their own family, being blamed for not trying hard at their marriage. This was particularly evident where kinship/inter-family marriages were involved, leading to strained family relationships. Asma's experiences (Section 4.3.2) already began to show this. This was exacerbated by the fact that her family never had divorce and "*rarely*" (emphasised placed upon 'rarely') had lone parents, thus she felt even her own siblings failed to understand why she left home. A striking comment from Asma was "*I am the outsider*", this described how she felt at family get-togethers (e.g. funerals). Ayman, who separated from her husband on more mutual terms found that her

own family sided with her husband (kin marriage). She described the blame she faced after separation:

Ayman (via interpreter): "okay she said that it wasn't a good experience erm she felt like (pause) her family thought that it was her fault (Sarah: mhm) that this marriage broke (Sarah: yeah) and the fact that she didn't try hard enough to actually, be in the marriage and they just assumed that it was her behaviour, because of her behaviour her husband left her...not once they came and asked her anything about him (Sarah: yeah) so they kind of blamed her all the time so she felt like she was pushed to one corner"

After two years Ayman was able to tell her side of the story and made up with her family, although her brother was still not talking to her at the time of the interview. This again demonstrates the blame women have to bear for family and marital breakdown and the complexities created in familial relationships as a result, for example creating conflict in sibling relationships (Davies 2018). This experience is more specific to PBM lone mothers. Seemingly, going against the expectation of women to be self-sacrificing and stay in marriage (*sabar*) and the high emphasis placed upon marriage, kin and family obligations creates such stigma and tensions. Stigma from local SA communities and family extended to experiences of surveillance of women's everyday lives. Women also contest stigma as will be discussed in the next sub-section.

4.4.2 Surveillance and strategising against stigma

There was a sense of vulnerability and evidence of surveillance upon lone mothers by the local community and family (extended and immediate family such as in-laws), this included people gossiping and everyday suspicions. There was evidence of surveillance and control of women's movements in public spaces (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Ponsford 2011). As Ponsford (2011, p. 549) found in her study with young mothers, participants "felt aware that they were often subject to the surveillance and negative judgement of 'Others' in the local context they inhabited." For instance, Ruqayyah described everyday incidents such as giving directions to a man on the street. If some *apna* (local community member/family/relative) went past they

would create gossip: *"this they make gossip why was she stood next to them, what is their relationship/link, it is this it is that our [people] do this a lot"*. Ruqayyah contested and was frustrated of such behaviour, questioning how others would feel if the same was said to their own daughters or wives. Further illustrating public surveillance, Haajirah describes consequences of going outside at night:

" when my children are small something finishes at my house and at night ten o'clock I went outside or something so in the morning after getting up I [heard] this about myself here there all 'at night after ten o'clock I saw her don't know what 'yaar' [lover] she went to meet"

This reflects perceptions about acceptable behaviour for women such as the manner of interaction between men and women. It created everyday suspicions and operates to control women's movement, reducing their agency and creating a sense of vulnerability.

On the other hand, illustrating their agency, lone mothers engaged with strategies to cope with, avoid or resist stigma. Stigmatisation, taint upon ones *izzat* and surveillance can have lasting effects, one of which is engagement in remarriage. One *"big reason"* behind Haajirah's remarriage was to avoid being taken advantage of:

Haajirah: "...my own 'cousin' that there were even their bad eye happened 'that's why' I did second marriage then (Sarah: okay) so whatever lone woman there is like this 'special' all 'Asian' people (Sarah: yes) they say she is alone take advantage of her (Sarah: yes) this happens"

Sarah: "So then for this reason [you decided to] get married?"

Haajirah: "I for this reason got troubled and got married I said when I will get married then nobody will look at me with a bad eye (Sarah: yes) and this was also a big 'reason' for me (Sarah: yes) I had not got married till ten years (Sarah: yes) and I would have not even done it going ahead but there was this that I did not feel I was 'safe'."

Sadiyyah was also pressured to remarry (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014) and told by family she had no *"izzat"* living alone (i.e. without a husband). This marriage later dissolved.

This demonstrates the vulnerabilities lone unmarried women face due to stigmatisation. Women's *izzat* can be protected through marriage and thus the honour of women seems to rest with men. It can therefore be argued that women do not always escape patriarchy via lone motherhood as the stigma associated with this can still result in reliance upon men, through remarriage.

Women in Guru's (2009) study have previously described having to self-police themselves to not give any cause of gossip that would taint their *izzat*. In this study, a strategy used to avoid this by Fatimah was not opening the door when someone unknown knocked. She feared that this would create gossip which could be used against her by her in-laws. She felt this strategy had to be used to protect herself from further stigmatisation, as she said: "*to save myself from these talks*". At a family gathering Asma was asked where her (second) husband was. Asma used strategies to avoid further questions and having to reveal she was a lone mother:

"...all the society including my direct family member were there but I've kind of learnt to avoid questions and just keep myself to myself even though it was hard because they were like ooh! they're saying your husband's not in the men's side ...I was like able to get myself out of it I was like yeah because he's got to look after my children and one of us have got to be here..."

Another strategy used by lone mothers was directly challenging stigmatisation from family or society and not giving importance to it. This was common amongst participants who gave less importance to negative traditional SA cultural norms, gossip and had educational capital at their disposal to contest stigma:

Nafeesah: "...one thing that I've realised over years is extended family very very important... but they, I shouldn't give them more importance than they are worth...I don't want the the unnecessary negativity in my life..."

Maymoona: "...my mindset is that I'm here I'm raising my five kids my happiness it means a lot because if I'm not happy my kids aren't gonna be happy you know (pause)

if I think about what people are gonna say it's just gonna affect my future it's gonna affect my life and I'm not like that."

It is noteworthy that women also used Islamic beliefs and knowledge to challenge cultural norms and contest stigmatisation. For instance, Suwaybah argued "*Islam not saying er oh don't be a sinngle m-mother*", women have a right and "*choice*" in Islam to break up the marriage if the situation is intolerable (e.g. experiencing DA). Suwaybah also argued that stigma against lone mothers was universal. This view also reflected the dominant stigma of women being welfare reliant embedded in media and policy (Carroll 2019). This still seems to persist:

Suwaybah: "Anywhere in the world people think single being single is not good man or woman ... [later in interview] so many people I heard oh they doing for money..."

Participants' experiences also demonstrate some changing attitudes towards lone motherhood as some participants argued there was more acceptance of lone motherhood. Some participants felt their local community was more supportive:

Sarah: "What do you think how does the Pakistani community see a lone mother?"

Tahira: "They look okay, they 'respect' "

Maymoona: "...where I live now...they're all Muslims on that road you know it's a mixture of Bengalis Arabs Somalis and Pakistanis and at first I thought to myself what are these people gonna think? She's a single mum, you know are they going to think anything but they've not said anything they're all supportive... [parents at children's school] a few of them have said to me you know you're really strong for doing what you do (Sarah: yeah!) erm and I feel there are some that actually look down on you for doing being on your own"

Hira: ". ..this 'England people' eer all of them 'help' (Sarah: yes) there is a 'single mother' they all 'help', they do not say anything Bengali 'people' do like this"

Carroll (2019, para. 9.) has asserted that "non-marital birth and divorce have lost their stigma in Western society" which can somewhat explain acceptance from English people. Participants' views seem to suggest less stigma and a gradual change in attitudes towards lone mothers amongst PBM or ethnic minority communities.

The data discussed in this section demonstrates a key commonality amongst different ethnic and racial groups of lone mothers; PBM women are also blamed and stigmatised for marital breakdown. However, their experiences are largely situated within the SA community. Significantly, it contests the extent to which these women are 'escaping patriarchy' through lone motherhood as they are still bound to the importance of maintaining *izzat* (embedded in patriarchal cultural norms), which living without a husband challenges. This had severe impacts on the mundane everyday lives of some participants, subjecting women to surveillance, regulation of their own actions and tensions with family ties. Experiences illustrate an intersectional relationship between education, class, generation and religion allowing women to resist stigma. Some women were able to contest stigma, challenging the dominant construction of SA women's passivity (Charsley 2005a; Bhopal 2009; Alexander 2013), and more positive attitudes towards lone motherhood were also demonstrated.

Another significant aspect in lone mothers' lives was their identities as mothers, which the next section will present.

4.5 Motherhood, absent fathers and sacrifices

After experiencing marital breakdown and stigma, for most women their identities as mothers and children's upbringing became central to their lives. It is important to focus on these experiences as Head (2005) has previously argued there is a lack of understanding of lone mothers' maternal worlds which is evident in the heavy social policy and employment focus of lone motherhood research. Thus, this section will focus on motherhood experiences, embedded in traditional cultural gender roles, involvement of fathers and the sacrifices and struggles participants' have experienced parenting alone, significant themes which emerged in participants' responses.

4.5.1 Changing parenting roles upon entering lone motherhood?

Reflecting traditional cultural gendered expectations where primary responsibility for care falls on women (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Ahmed 2008; Harriet 2008; Nadim 2014), upon entering lone motherhood caring responsibilities were nothing new for participants. Motherhood is also given great importance in Islam (Harriet 2008; Oh 2010; Al-Jayyousi, Roy and Al-Salim 2014; Din 2017). However, it is argued motherhood "transcends time, culture and place" (Din 2017, p. 1). In Britain there is an overt patriarchal system where women's responsibility to care especially for children remains a dominant expectation (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Jackson 2008; Nygren et al 2018). Previous critiques argue against portraying cultural understandings in minority and immigrant families as "overly static, consistent, uniformly shared by all members of a group, and as determining for action" (Nadim 2014 p. 497; Brah 1996). Nadim (2014) argues cultural conceptions do not continue unchanged but are redefined. Drawing on cultural and religious value systems or wider perceptions of motherhood, similar to a study by Harriet (2008), participants had mixed views on childcare responsibilities and caring roles, from this being a mother's responsibility to emphasis on shared responsibility between mothers and fathers:

Fatimah: "...if there isn't [a mother] it is difficult because a mother, ay, 'look[s] after' the children so she brings clothes (Sarah: yes) she makes food and gives it she does every work (Sarah: yes) so if there is no mother so a father cannot also do this work"

Ruqayyah: "...Islam says mother father it is both right/responsibility...but 'culture' that there is it says this it is the mother's responsibility, it isn't the father's ...Father creates them (Sarah: yes) and is it not his right/responsibility that he brings up the child?"

Ayman (via interpreter): "a mother's role is to look after the child properly...it's nothing to do with religion (Sarah: yeah) it's nothing to do with culture nothing like that, that's just a mother's role"

Despite such views they all agreed that the mother is the front line parent. Participants had always been the primary carers, some parenting alone in marriage. This can suggest a continuation of understandings that a mother's role is to care (even where they were also

working) (Jackson 2008; Nygren et al 2018). For example, when collecting demographic information on the duration of lone motherhood, Asma stated that she had been a lone mother all her life, in relation to parenting alone, and found it difficult to immediately pin down the number of years she had been a lone mother for. When interviewing Zahra it was evident that she had been parenting alone even when she was technically living in the same household as her husband. Her husband received child benefit expenses but would not provide financial support to the children. Providing financial support is associated with the father's traditional breadwinner role still prevalent amongst many cultures and societies, including amongst PBMs and in Western societies (Harriet 2008; Hewitt 2009). These reflections are also at odds with official lone parent definitions where lone parenthood is associated with living in a separate household to a partner (Churchill 2007). Participants described being lone mothers and essentially caring for children alone during marriage, before officially moving into the category of 'lone mother'.

Lone motherhood pushed some dependent women into taking on the role of both carers and earners, as Ruqayyah's experience demonstrates: *"all the responsibility is on the mother she has to go out as well, has to come inside as well"*. This positioning moves women away from traditional gendered roles. In fact, it was this 'breadwinner' responsibility which gave Haajrah the strength to not give up after her first husband left her. As Tonsing and Tonsing (2019) state, shifting attention from bad marriage experiences to children can be used as a way of overcoming grief:

Sarah: "And like what were your experiences of being a lone mother?"

Haajrah: "The 'experience' of being a lone mother is this like that's it a mother should not break should stand up for the children with strength I got a job then first when like I was in a lot of 'depression'...I got strength I then stood up for those children...then I slowly slowly I started to learn car started going to 'class' 'English class' ...I knew this these are my children, [they] are my life"

Participants such as Suwaybah and Maryam were already earning before moving into lone motherhood and continued this role (as illustrated in Section 4.2.3). This sub-section illustrates how through a lack of financial and parenting support in marriage, the absence of

fathers and participants entering lone motherhood, mothers are seen to acquire parental roles by default such as decision making and earning. This is a shared experience amongst lone mothers irrespective of race, ethnicity, culture and class (Song and Edwards 1997; Reynolds 2001; Harriet 2008; Lawson and Satti 2016). Participants also described the sacrifices and struggles they faced bringing up children alone, which will be discussed in the below sub-section.

4.5.2 Mothers' concerns, sacrifices and struggles

In policy and political debates lone parents have been a cause of concern in regard to parenting and childcare with claims that they are less likely to deliver positive outcomes for children compared to couple families, due to unstable family arrangements and poor-quality parenting (Dermott and Pomati 2016). Amongst lone mothers in this study it was evident that, for many, their lives revolved around their children. Illustrating lone mothers' sacrifices, the central role of children in lone mothers' lives led to some participants avoiding remarriage. For instance, although Ruqayyah and Suwaybah acknowledged remarriage is permissible for women in Islam, they emphasised the risks of remarriage (Charsley 2005b), fearing the negative impact upon children. They felt that a stepfather would not be able to care for another's child:

Suwaybah: "...I don't want to do it because my children grow up I want to give them better life I don't want to even say wrong stuff front of them"

Sarah: "Do you think it'll get ruined if you get married?"

Suwaybah: "Yeah of course (Sarah: why?) if if them er father is not looking after them (Sarah: hmm) how can is the other one other person (Sarah: yeah) come then give a better life, I can't believe it"

This reflects women being self-sacrificing as mothers and has been found previously in a study by Mitchell and Green (2002) where White young mothers prioritised their relationship with children over potential future relationships. However, Ayman did not view remarriage as having a negative impact on children. After her divorce, Ayman had remarried by choice in

Bangladesh, she got to know her husband before marriage and he was yet to come to England. She felt her husband would care for her children:

Sarah: "Do you think like, like a stepfather can take care of the stepchildren as, much like?"

Ayman (via interpreter): "... she said I believe that he would come and help me out (Sarah: yeah) however she's not putting that burden on him ...she said besides my children are a lot older now (Sarah: yeah) the hard bits gone yeah it's gonna get harder but she said that if he can't support my children in that end she will always be there for her children (Sarah: yeah) but she goes I do still believe that he will (Sarah: yeah) because he he he cares for her (Sarah: yeah) he will care for her children."

As Ayman's husband had yet to come to England under official definitions she was classed as a lone mother and was, at the time of the interview, still parenting his child alone. Lone mothers emphasised the struggles they faced in parenting alone. Participants expressed concerns about providing good *tarbiyah* (upbringing and education, including an Islamic upbringing). Although the mother is primarily responsible for this (Din 2017) and is seen as 'the child's first teacher' in Islam, Harriet (2008) notes that some Muslim mothers and fathers have complementary roles in upbringing: mothers have a strong role in day-to-day religious nurture, such as teaching children how to pray, and fathers coach and motivate children to success and reinforce religious upbringing. This links back to Ruqayyah's point of view. As a lone mother this responsibility was upon mothers. Haajrah gave importance to her role of providing good religious upbringing, teaching and character development to children:

"...from everything a bit big role/characteristic in children's life is of a mothers (Sarah: yes) so how the mother will take the children the children will also go like that"

In exploring their maternal lives, lone mothers expressed concerns for their children's future, including education and upbringing. As found in previous studies (Ahmed and Bould 2004; Nadim 2014; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019), mothers expressed high educational aspirations for their children. As Ahmed and Bould (2004) found, participants understood the importance of education and wanted their children to have a good education, which they could not pursue

themselves. Ruqayyah and Sadiyyah paid for tuition to facilitate children's learning despite struggling financially. There was an importance of investing in children's future and wellbeing.

However lone mothers were particularly concerned about children when they were becoming "javan" (maturing, teenage years). There was a concern of being blamed and deemed responsible if children became involved in deviant behaviour. Lone mothers expressed worries about not knowing what their children were up to outside of the home, something they felt fathers and their networks could normally keep tabs on (Shaw 2001), although the extent to which this happens is not clear:

Haajrah: "the ones of 'single mother[s]' they know this that my mother is not getting out of the house I can do whatever I want (Sarah: yes) by going outside, so the ones that have a 'father' they know this that our father is going out as well (Sarah: yes) he will also keep an eye on us, we, some friend of his can tell him"

Reflecting traditional gendered parenting roles and expectations of women as mothers, although Ruqayyah stated that in couple families if a child "turns out ruined" the father argues he was outside earning and the mother is blamed, it seems this blame may be heightened amongst lone mothers. In turn, this could question the upbringing they provide as lone mothers, impacting lone mothers' *izzat* as Ayman and Haajrah's reflections suggest:

Ayman (interpreter): "the Bengali community will immediately not look at the son but look at the mum saying the mother's not taught the child properly because the mother's in this situation because she's a lone mother the child's gone astray the child's done this (Sarah: yeah) because of the mom..."

Haajrah: "... I have always explained to my children this "son look if your father was with us (Sarah: yes) so then that many fingers would not be pointed at me okay."

However, this cannot solely be attributed to attitudes amongst SA communities as there has long been wider criticisms of lone mothers' parenting abilities and children's behaviour, particularly where there is a lack of male role models for children (Reynolds 2009; Dermott

and Pomati 2016; Crossley and Lambert 2017). By situating themselves as being responsible for failure of children's upbringing, this can position SA fathers as 'absent' just as Black fathers have previously been positioned (see Song and Edwards 1997; Reynolds 2009; Gupta and Featherstone 2015). It is important to note here that although some children's fathers were absent, what Poole et al (2016) term 'disengaged' fathers, such as in Sadiyyah, Noor, Hira, Suwaybah and Ruqayyah's case, other participants did state that fathers were still "involved" (Nygren et al 2018). Contact included informally meeting with children, children moving between parents' homes in Nafeesah's case, fathers providing informal financial provisions such as pocket money or talking to children over the phone. Non-resident fathers spending time with children and providing little financial support is illustrated through Ayman's experience:

Ayman (via interpreter): "...some of his days off he'll take the kids out (Sarah: yeah) spend the evening with them and everything so he does all of that ... the children are (Sarah: yeah) happy with their dad and mum and they go spend time with their dad."

Sarah: "And is she happy with the support that the father provides them?"

Ayman (via interpreter): "a little bit... like sweet crisps that's how he supports them... she's saying that she she you know if he was to give more that would be brilliant (Sarah: yeah) but she goes she's not really fussedshe would never ask him to give more to her children because, he's taking them out (Sarah: yeah) he's he should do that willingly and if he wants to he can but she's never gonna ask him..."

Although Ayman was struggling she did not want to ask her children's father for financial support. Apart from Nafeesah, who was able to obtain financial rights upon divorcing her husband, participants did not mention any significant financial support from children's fathers (Lawson and Satti 2016). However, as Poole et al (2016) argue it is important to note that asking lone mothers about fathers' involvement with children cannot comprehensively capture fathers' perspectives or pin down the reasons behind a lack of involvement or contact. Poole et al (2016) cite many reasons for a lack of involvement including men having disadvantaged economic positions or re-partnering. A lack of financial support and provision resulted in adverse financial positions, leading to lone mothers sacrificing their own needs for children. There was a constant "*struggle*" to provide for children, particularly in relation to

material needs. This is discussed in-depth in the next chapter in relation to lone mothers' 'financial struggles' (Section 5.2), their employment status, and the impact policy has on their circumstances. Mothers caring roles and responsibilities are also discussed in relation to employment barriers and gendered moral rationalities.

Overall, it is evident that children's upbringing and participants' identity as 'mothers' was central to their everyday lives. Findings show changing gender roles amongst participants once they become lone mothers; those who were dependent upon others (husbands, in-laws) were now essentially pushed into the role of the earner as well as carer, be that through employment or benefit reliance. For Ruqayyah who had a son, there was also a sense of hope and investment that she would be able to rely on him in her old age as a form of support. This circles back to the positionality of sons as carers and providers for mothers in their old age presented in 'patriarchal bargains' (Kandiyoti 1988). Thus, lone mothers can move to dependence upon sons in later ages, questioning the extent to which there is long term independence through lone motherhood. Lone mothers' journeys to achieving independence will be focused upon in the next chapter.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter sought to begin to identify which identities shape PBM women's experiences of lone motherhood. It demonstrates that experiences of lone motherhood are embedded in relation to their intersecting positionalities as women within PBM cultures, traditional marriage and gendered expectations of women, family and kinship networks and 'classic patriarchy'. Their positionality as women is central in this. There are also intersectional class, generational and educational differences amongst participants. This is a significant finding, as where SA/PBM women are not marginalised in research their experiences are often homogenised. Here the findings articulate diversity and nuances of their experiences, identities and positionings. The chapter has also explored whether PBM women are 'escaping patriarchy' through lone motherhood (Duncan and Edwards 1999). The findings suggest that women are able to escape patriarchy through lone motherhood in some respects, such as being able to break with the extended household or DA, however in other aspects are still constrained by patriarchal practices within families and communities. This is particularly

illustrated in experiences of stigma and still being embedded in family and kinship ties. Significantly, the findings reassert that patriarchy manifests differently across cultures (Hunnicut 2009) thus adding another dimension to the discourse of 'escaping patriarchy'. It focuses beyond patriarchy centred in gender inequality, where men are privileged over women, showing patriarchy within Pakistani and Bangladeshi culture can situate men and women in both privileged and disadvantaged positions, like where generational and aged hierarchies privilege the mother-in-law over the daughter-in-law in the extended household (Kandiyoti 1988) or where men are pressured into transnational marriages. Women's identities as mothers also become central to their lives.

In exploring such experiences this has begun to unpack the category of 'lone mother', showing both similarities and differences in participants' experiences to previous lone mother and PBM women studies. Although similarities have been found there are extra dimensions creating unique experience. For example, marital breakdown is a key route to lone motherhood but men's engagement in polygamy or the cultural emphasis on *sabar* creates a unique additional and little examined layer in these experiences. Similarly, lone mothers have always experienced stigma but participants' experiences of stigma here are embedded in the importance of *izzat* which is directly attached to marriage, a central traditional institution among SA communities shaping experiences. Thus, these findings contribute to further unpacking lone motherhood as a category.

Significantly, the findings show the central importance of a range of external actors in participants' lived experiences, particularly when entering lone motherhood, such as teachers, the local imam, family and friends. It also demonstrates the wider family networks and relationships women's experiences are embedded in and a mix of both supportive and hindering relationships influencing experiences of lone motherhood. Finally, there are also wider structural aspects shaping experiences. This was illustrated in Zahra's experience navigating through immigration and welfare systems which are shaped by women's identities as migrants or 'migrant brides'. Furthermore, structures of capitalism, racism and patriarchy result in men's unemployment which in turn can contribute to violence against women and stresses within marriage. It is important to bring forward these structural constraints and barriers lone mothers' face. The next chapter will explore wider structures in relation to

constraints and barriers in facilitating lone mothers' independency focusing on financial struggles, employment barriers, English language, social isolation and loneliness and housing while again keeping lived experiences and participants' narratives central.

Chapter 5: Journeys to Independence

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on experiences of lone motherhood from the perspectives of lone mothers in this study. This chapter further expands on the lived experiences of lone mothers, specifically in relation to their journeys towards independence once entering lone motherhood. Chapter 2 draws together social constructions of lone motherhood and social policy literature contrasting this with lone mothers' actual lived realities. The lived realities of PBM lone motherhood will be explored contrasting popular constructions of them. The chapter will draw on fieldnotes and interviews with lone mothers, SAW's Place workers and the employment external partner. Drawing on these different perspectives of lived experiences and professional expertise a comprehensive account will be provided demonstrating the barriers, struggles, challenges and opportunities lone mothers' face in their journeys to independence, alongside how they can be, are or are not overcome.

Focusing on five areas derived from data analysis: financial struggles, barriers to employment, English language, social isolation and loneliness, and housing, the chapter will draw attention to obstructions which hinder participants' independence. Again, the chapter draws comparisons with previous lone motherhood and PBM women studies and looks at differences and similarities amongst different groups of participants. It will also illustrate the structural barriers lone mothers face on their journeys to independence. Independence has been discussed in many contexts in relation to lone mothers and PBM women. It has been constructed in relation to fostering lone mothers' independence and reducing dependency on the welfare state which is particularly viewed as achievable through entering employment (Rafferty and Wiggan 2011; Kowalewska 2015). Further, divorce is seen as an opportunity to foster SA women's independence (Guru 2009) and lone motherhood is viewed as allowing women to escape patriarchy, and thus become independent from men (Duncan and Edwards 1999). The findings of this study emphasise the importance of leading a more independent life for lone mothers, being able to do things for themselves and their children but also articulates the many barriers participants have to overcome in their journeys to independence.

5.2 Financial struggles

Lone motherhood and divorce is often perceived as an opportunity for women to achieve financial independence (Sinha 1998; Duncan and Edwards 1999; Guru 2009). This was the case of lone mothers in this study. Upon becoming lone mothers and receiving their own welfare benefits many lone mothers had their own money for the first time and were able to spend this on themselves and their children. Significantly, particularly for migrant women finding themselves financially independent for the first time was integral to greater self-determination and their capacity to exercise agency. For example, Zahra expressed happiness in being able to spend money as she wished (Guru 2009; Lawson and Satti 2016), before she relied upon her husband who gave her little money (see Chapter 4). Furthermore as one participant, Maryam, stated "*there is no dependence on anyone*" as a lone mother. As lone mothers, participants in this study were responsible for finances, managing the household and providing for children. However, at the same time, lone mothers both inside and outside employment also described the financial struggles they experienced. Thus, becoming financially independent was not straightforwardly positive as lone motherhood increased responsibility and insecurity (Lawson and Satti 2016). There was also an increased likelihood of experiencing poverty, financial insecurity and material deprivation. This supports findings of previous studies (Lawson and Satti 2016; Stack and Meredith 2018 etc.). This was particularly prevalent amongst those receiving unemployment related social security, this included: JSA, Income Support, Housing Benefit, sickness related benefits, and those moving onto Universal Credit which combines various benefits into one monthly lumpsum payment. As a result of their financial circumstances lone mothers described some of the tough decisions they had to make in order to financially manage and provide for their children and themselves.

5.2.1 Unemployed lone mothers

Strategising

Unemployed lone mothers used different strategies to save money. For example, in her interview, Zainab stated she received unemployment benefits, sometimes sewed people's clothes and one child was working and studying. She said they were getting by. In the below observation fieldnote extract experiences of fuel poverty were also illustrated (Hills 2011; Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015a; Stack and Meredith 2018). Zainab discussed limiting the use of heating in her home as a strategy to save money:

Zainab says her siblings help her with money, she can't afford it. She says that she doesn't even put the heaters on much, herself and her children wrap up in blankets or use water bottles. She only uses the heaters when it is very cold or when her sibling and nieces and nephews come over to her house. Zainab tells me that she's mostly at SAW's Place throughout the week, on weekends she goes to her siblings house and eats there. (Fieldnote 06.03.19)

Similarly, in a previous study focusing on the impact of financial hardship on single parents Stack and Meredith (2018) found participants facing fuel poverty made decisions to not heat the home to save money. Zainab's account also shows that spending time at other places outside of the home is another strategy used to save money. The social networks of support lone mothers have in their lives can be central in helping them to survive financially, in this case SAW's Place and Zainab's siblings including her brother (Hill, Hirsch and Davis 2020). Zainab's financial circumstances demonstrate how state benefits can be inadequate in allowing women and families to fulfil their basic necessities such as a warm heated home. There were a range of other strategies used by participants to save money including walking to the shops rather than getting a taxi or using a car and shopping for cheaper items of food and clothing for example (Patrick 2014). Further demonstrating financial hardship, Sadiyyah stated "my table it has been six months since it broke we eat on the floor, I cannot save this much that I can buy a table". She stated the benefits she did receive went towards things that were necessary in the home, such as paying internet and phone bills (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015a; 2015b) and she managed on a "tight" budget. On occasions she also had to borrow money from friends and later pay them back. This contrasts Miller and Ridge's (2013) findings where lone mothers took out loans. Instead those who mentioned borrowing money in this study borrowed informally, for example from siblings, family or friends, rather than

taking loans. These choices are likely to be influenced by religion and rules against Muslims borrowing interest based money (de Gayardon, Callender and Green 2019). Thus, this is a key intersectional difference and consideration in borrowing decisions compared to non-Muslim lone mothers. Although, a recent study by Hill, Hirsch and Davis (2020) finds that lone mothers increasingly rely on financial support from family and friends to avoid large unmanageable debt. Thus, such support networks are more broadly a growing third source of welfare amongst lone mothers. Sadiyyah also had no long term savings. This further illustrates that for individuals living on benefits managing money can entail some very hard choices (Patrick 2014). It was quite evident that lone mothers were getting by "*with difficulty*" (*Ruqayyah*).

Struggling: Maymoona's experience of the Benefit Cap

Much like lone parents in Stack and Meredith's (2018) study, participants described their ongoing financial "struggle". The term "struggle" was constantly used throughout interviews by many lone mothers to describe their everyday financial circumstances. At times it was evident that participants were surviving rather than thriving. This can be illustrated through the example of Maymoona's financial circumstances. She had five dependent children.

Maymoona: "I still get my income support and (Sarah: okay) stuff like that but they capped it down so I my Housing Benefit I get like 50p a week (Sarah: oh) so rent I'm having to pay out of my own money from what I get for my kids (Sarah: yeah) erm and d'you know it's really hard because I've got five kids and like you know what I'm left with (Sarah: yeah) is hardly enough for us to survive on so there's my struggles there, you know, their dads don't give me anything, I don't get any from them erm and it's really (Sarah: yeah) big struggle for me"

Maymoona's situation is as a result of the Benefit Cap austerity measure. As Chapter 2 outlined, the Benefit Cap limits the amount of benefits non-working households can receive per week. It can discriminate against lone parent households, and thus women as they make up the majority of lone parents, as they receive the highest levels of benefits (Fenton-Glynn 2015). Dowler and Lambie-Mumford (2015a; 2015b) argue budgeting priorities tend to go towards expenditures such as rent or utility bills because not paying these result in more

severe consequences, such as accumulating rent arrears. The real life implications of such measures is clearly demonstrated through the lived reality of Maymoona's everyday life in which she struggled to manage financially. Her reflection shows how the cap compromised her ability to provide for her children as she had no choice but to pay the rent using the child benefit she received (Fenton-Glynn 2015). Further adding to hardship, she did not receive any support from the children's fathers (Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2 discussed different degrees of fathers involvement and contributions). Maymoona struggled to afford necessities such as paying for children's clothing (Stack and Meredith 2018), school activities, bills and, at times, also had no money:

Maymoona: "...I'm having to pay for the rent fully myself and I'm only left with a bit during the week and there's only so much I can buy and then either there's times where weekends I've gone without any money d'you know and it's been such a struggle and on top of that you get all these you know school trips as well (Sarah: yeah) and (pause) so much money's coming out and then it comes to you know the end of the year and kids have ruined their uniforms and (Sarah: yeah) it's like it never stops."

Furthermore, she stated that there was further "struggle" during the school holidays especially in relation to food expenses:

Maymoona: "...it's a struggle (Sarah: yeah) so now the kids are gonna be home every day you know at least when they're at school they get that meal there and stuff like that, now it's that you're gonna have to do that extra shopping but there's only so much you can do you know I cook at home and everything erm there's food they eat but they always eat that extra in the holidays..."

This illustrates how austerity and inadequate benefit levels can lead to households experiencing food insecurity and food poverty (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015a; 2015b; Elliot, Squire and O'Connell 2017). This particularly affects lone mothers adversely (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015b). Maymoona's experiences further illustrate Dowler and Lambie-Mumford's (2015b) assertion that parents can find long school vacations extremely difficult where term time benefits, such as a free midday meal, are unavailable.

Lone parent's financial positionings and having sole responsibility for finances have been found to impact upon their psychological health by Stack and Meredith (2018), causing stress, anxiety and sleeplessness. During the interview the emotional and mental stress Maymoona was experiencing was evident, she described always being busy and run down, only really being able to have a chance to pause and talk about her circumstances in the interview, stating *"everything builds up because you don't get a chance to breathe"*. Asma (another lone mother) stated that there was a lot of hidden depression and stress as lone mothers due to financial insecurity.

Putting children first

Furthermore, due to their financial circumstances lone mothers had to prioritise needs, often putting their children's needs first. They expressed "struggle" in providing for children in terms of material demands which grew in secondary school. They described how their children compared themselves to their peers at school, asking them to buy expensive material items, such as the latest technology, make-up and clothes, and how they sometimes gave into demands (Ponsford 2011). Both unemployed and employed lone mothers expressed difficulties in providing for children but did not want their children to be left behind. As Ponsford (2011) has previously found, this often led to self-sacrifice, managing on small amounts of money and restraining spending:

Sadiyyah (unemployed): "...when the child is small whatever clothes you give to him he will take 'even Primark'...but especially teenagers that there are especially when they go to big 'school' 'secondary' 'it's very hard it's very hard' (Sarah: yeah) the child does not look that we have one mother she is alone she 'struggle[s]' there is no 'job' we are on 'benefit[s]' he will say I want to buy sixty pound 'trainers' ...it is so 'hard' that I 'struggle' and do it all (Sarah: yes) don't do it 'easy' I myself 'I forget myself' I forget myself I do not get my own things for six six months a year..."

Suwaybah (part-time employed): "I have to before I spend the money I have to think, I have to make a list, if I spend like a twenty thirty pound erm err my you know budget

(Sarah: yeah) then it's things go wrong so I have to sacrifice myself (Sarah: yeah) I never think about me, I have to buy this for myself I buy things but when I need it [emphasis on "need it"] (Sarah: yeah) and my life's very simple"

This again illustrates the struggles and sacrifices lone mothers have to make, putting their children's needs above their own. The real everyday financial struggles participants receiving unemployment benefits experience are presented here and are predominately similar to women and lone mothers interviewed in previous studies (e.g. Ponsford 2011; Stack and Meredith 2018). Although there can be differences, for example PBM lone mothers' choices of borrowing money are likely to be influenced by religious rules. Their shared positionalities as lone mothers, women and being working class result in similar experiences of financial struggle, poverty and deprivation. However, Suwaybah's description of her experience above questions the extent to which employment improves the financial circumstances of lone mothers, which is explored in the next section.

5.2.2 Employed lone mothers

In this study, three participants had part time jobs (Kulsoom, Noor and Suwaybah), Nafeesah was employed at SAW's Place but her job was coming to an end soon and Maryam was self-employed part time. Suwaybah was doing two part-time jobs. Jobs include working in schools and cleaning, which tend to have lower income. As asserted in Chapter 2, a previous study by Miller and Ridge (2013) focusing on lone mothers' employment found financial security through employment to be challenging, despite lone mothers feeling better off than being on Income Support, an unemployment benefit. It was difficult to escape poverty through employment (Miller and Ridge 2013). As the below quotes illustrate, for employed lone mothers in this study, employment did bring about a sense of independence in regards to having their own money and being able to provide for their children:

Sarah: "and erm what do you think are the good things about working, for yourself"

Noor: "yeah it's independent, I don't need to because he nev never help me anything so it's my own money I can (Sarah: yeah) do whatever I can do (says while laughing)"

*(Sarah: yeah) I can I want it, so it's good thing innit you don't need to ask anybody
(Sarah: yeah) yeah independent yeah independently you can use it".*

Maryam: "It is not 'easy', it is 'hard' but it is thanks to Allah still there is no dependence on anyone, I can do all the work myself and I have this much strength that even if there isn't money, I can sew clothes-shothes, I can feed my children, there is this much"

Although there is a sense of financial independence through employment participants still faced financial challenges. For example, although she felt her situation was better in employment, similarly to Ruqayyah (unemployed), Kulsoom stated that she "can get by". Furthermore, as is illustrated in Suwaybah's experiences she had to carefully manage her budget and sacrifice her own needs to cope financially. These experiences further reiterate findings from Miller and Ridge's (2013) study and question the extent to which lone mothers in this study are better-off in work as well.

Maryam and self-employment

Poor financial circumstances were further exacerbated for Maryam who was self-employed, sewing clothes within the home. Sewing within the home was a traditional route taken by Pakistani women where there were few formal labour market opportunities for them in the past (see Werbner 1990; Brah 1994; Shaw 2000). Although it helped balance childcare responsibilities, homeworking was restrictive and exploitative, particularly where women worked for sewing manufactures, characterised with low pay, insecurity and a lack of employment protection (Brah 1994). Maryam's example illustrates that sewing as a form of self-employment still persists amongst Pakistani women today and continues to entail insecurity and precarity. Although there was a sense of independence and strength in being able to provide for her children herself, Maryam faced many difficulties being self-employed. Self-employment was quite precarious, she wasn't certain how many clothes she would be sewing each week and customers were gained by word-of-mouth through established personal networked. She had also gone into unemployment in the past due to losing customers and then later re-entered self-employment. She experienced ill health and back problems from sewing. Maryam also fell into difficulties not being able to afford the rent and

had to arrange payments of arrears. At the time of the interview she was still in self-employment but contemplated finishing it. She was waiting for a reply to a letter which her accountant had sent explaining her situation.

Maryam: "Now I have an 'accountant' but 'accountant' I said to the 'accountant' I don't want to work (Sarah: yes) so they wrote a 'letter' and told that she doesn't want to work this this month she started it and this month she has finished (Sarah: yes) and she cannot work and she cannot give this much rentthere was a lot of 'problem[s]' with the rent I came to SAW's Place they 'phone[d]' for me everything got the 'rent sort[ed]' out"

In the past she explored alternative options of finding a job in Pakistani shops, such as clothes shops. However, she stated she was not comfortable working in shops and coming across relatives. Such shops are embedded in local ethnic enclaves (Modood 2004; Khattab et al 2010). However, Khattab et al (2010) find that ethnic enclaves can be precarious characterised with low pay and a lack of job opportunities. The other option was going into unemployment.

Maryam's experience illustrates the financial hardship and instability that can be faced being self-employed working from home, relying on established personal networks for customers. It is evident that this is not viable to pursue in the long term and to lead a financially stable life.

5.2.3 Financial considerations in pursuing employment

Interestingly, some unemployed lone mothers questioned whether employment would improve their financial circumstances and were well aware of financial circumstances in employment. For example, Maymoona participated in single parent groups on social media where experiences of employment and financial hardship are posted by both lone mothers and fathers:

Maymoona: "I'm on single parent groups and stuff like that and parents where they're working erm full time and it's still a struggle for them financially, it's a struggle for them ...they've said how it's hard you know even working full time it's still not enough because they're having to pay for childcare and it's like you're stuck because what are you meant to do...you know they'll say you're better off working I mean I want to work I don't want to be sat at home I want to work, I can work but what if I'm not still better off?"

Although Maymoona wanted to work she questioned the extent to which she would be better off in work than on benefits. Furthermore, Sadiyyah felt she would end up in the same financial position in employment as she was currently in receiving unemployment benefits. However, Sadiyyah and other lone mothers still had to actively look for work due to increasing pressures from the job centre to commit to employment. Looking for employment is a responsibility increasingly required of mothers, despite having young children (Rafferty and Wiggan 2011; Andersen 2020):

Sadiyyah: "...now they are troubling me they are also saying do work because because my [child] has become 'full time' in 'nursery' 'you have to do work'..."

Asma: "...then there's constantly you know the benefit office want you to go back to work"

Furthermore, the perceived stigma and shame of receiving unemployment benefits and worklessness was also stated by Hira (Ponsford 2011). Although she thought initially receiving benefits was good as she had her own money, she felt remaining on unemployment benefits was "*not good*" and it was better to work. This can reflect popular discourses and assumptions of lone mothers being welfare dependent and a 'social threat' (Duncan and Edwards 1999). Finally, during my time observing at the Bangladeshi support sessions Halimah (worker) supported Ayman to sort out her benefits when she moved into employment, including applying for working tax credit and stopping unemployment benefits. It was a very long process contacting different benefit services. Ayman wanted to work to enable her to bring over her second husband on a spousal visa. There are now more stringent requirements for

marriage migration including high income requirements from sponsors and high fees (Wray, Kofman and Simic 2019). This is an important intersectional difference illustrating the consequences of immigration policy for PBM lone mothers whose spouses are abroad (Charsley, Benson and Hear 2012) and is another factor which needs to be considered when women decide about paid work engagement. It can provide a barrier to choosing not to work and concentrating on upbringing children. However, after a few days Ayman stopped working and Halimah had to support her in applying for unemployment benefits, as I found out the next time I saw Halimah and Ayman:

...she had to fill out another change in circumstance form as Ayman left work as she was working sixteen hours and was worse off in work now than before when she was out of work and receiving benefits. Therefore, that is why she's now applied for UC. (Fieldnote 10.05.19)

This demonstrates in practice how part time employment may not be a viable and financially secure option for lone mothers. It seems that both in and outside employment lone mothers' face financial hardship and insecurity. This illustrates financial considerations as one key aspect lone mothers consider in relation to pursuing employment. Despite feeling they will not be better off in employment, participants face various pressures to commit to work. However, there are further considerations which lone mothers have to take into account when pursuing employment, beyond financial considerations (Duncan and Edwards 1999). They also face many barriers to employment associated with their intersecting identities, which the next section shall now focus upon.

5.3 Barriers to employment

As asserted in the introduction lone mothers entering employment has been given much attention to as it is seen as central to reducing dependency on the state. At the time of the interviews eleven participants were unemployed; seven were unemployed and had never worked (Ayman, Fatimah, Hira, Sadiyyah, Tahira, Zahra, Zainab) and four were unemployed but had previously worked (Asma, Maymoona, Haajirah, Ruqayyah). Haajirah and Ruqayyah cited being unemployed due to ill health at the time of the interview. Fatimah received

widow's pension but also had ill health. It can be argued that lone motherhood and stringent welfare-to-work policies push PBM women to look for employment. Entering employment can be particularly difficult for those who have never been in employment before as a result of different life-stage factors related to marriage and child-bearing (Salway 2007). This section will explore the barriers participants in this study face to employment. In Chapter 2, a range of barriers to employment for lone mothers and PBM women were illustrated, including a lack of job availability, English language fluency and work experience (Dale et al 2002; Haux 2011; Rafferty and Wiggan 2011; Miller and Ridge 2013; Turner and Wigfield 2013). Participants identities as lone mothers and PBM women intersect to create barriers to employment. Therefore this section will draw on studies explored in Chapter 2 as well as comparing similarities and differences in the barriers participants' face to those faced by other groups of women, such as non-lone mothers and lone mothers of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. There can also be difference in experiences depending on generational, education and class variances. Participants' positionality as women intersecting with their positionalities as lone mothers and their ethnic, religious and class identities shape experiences.

In the following discussion, the barriers to employment of participants are examined in relation to three groups: 1) migrant less-well educated women 2) migrant well-educated women 3) women born in England. Education is associated with individuals' class position (Evans and Bowlby 2000). Ten Participants from more rural working class backgrounds or of older ages were less-well educated or not at all educated from Pakistan or Bangladesh (Brah 1994). Three migrant brides (Noor, Nafeesah and Suwaybah) from more urban and middle-class backgrounds were educated to college level in Pakistan or Bangladesh (equivalent to A-levels in the UK). There will first be an exploration of the barriers to employment for these three groups of lone mothers. Both diversity and similarities amongst participants will be highlighted in relation to employment.

5.3.1 Building skills

There were multiple barriers and steps required to enter employment for migrant lone mothers. Interviews with SAW's Place workers who support service users in employment

preparation and the employment agency worker (external partner), Ayanna, provided detailed accounts of the process required for employment preparation, particularly building skills. For both migrant groups in particular, this entailed firstly attending English classes (ESOL), volunteering to build up work experience, completing courses such as a college vocational childcare course, creating a CV and actively looking for jobs. This reflects Miller and Ridge's (2013) findings that moving into employment is not a 'single event' but is rather a process which takes place overtime, where individuals are engaged in building skills to prepare for employment.

Reflecting previous studies (e.g. Dale et al 2002; Ahmed 2008; Turner and Wigfield 2013), the most central barrier to employment cited in interviews with migrant women, particularly those belonging to less-well educated groups, was a lack of English language proficiency. This includes a lack of English writing, reading and speaking proficiency (Turner and Wigfield 2013). Overall, learning English came forward in interviews as the first step required in preparation for employment for this group:

Sarah: "How do you like support them in getting work?"

Hafsa: "First trying to you know go and sort your English out ehrr so they need to be able to read and write (Sarah: mhm) speak it as well...so encouraging them to attend classes if they can't come here then college or (Sarah: yeah) you know wherever whatever's local..."

Although there is recognition of declining funding for English classes and opportunities to learn (Turner and Wigfield 2013), lone mothers cited community spaces in which they would attend English classes, including local community centres, college and SAW's Place. For example, Tahira attended English classes at SAW's Place while her child had recently started full-time school. Upon asking Tahira what type of job she wanted she stated: *"for now how will I get it I don't even know 'English'"*. Evidently, Tahira felt her chance of gaining employment was limited due to a lack of English language proficiency (Ahmed 2008; Turner and Wigfield 2013). One significant finding that was established in this study through workers' accounts was English language proficiency being a key requirement that employers look for.

Juwariya, a SAW's Place worker specialising in employment support, stated it has now become an important requirement even in recruiting for low skilled jobs such as cleaning:

Juwariya: "...even those basic jobs like for example the women who wanted to apply for jobs as a cleaner they're required to say to speak English language they're required to have a basic understanding of hygiene eer erm and and er cleansing products (Sarah: yeah) so even during interview they know what they're talking about...it's changed its became more sophisticated and more requirements"

Thus, to prepare for employment and improve English, women are advised and referred to attend English classes by SAW's Place, the jobcentre and the local employment agency which unemployed benefit claimants can be referred to. Further barriers that participants of all three groups face are a lack of educational qualifications and work experience (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Haux 2011; Turner and Wigfield 2013). Employers often asked lone mothers for work experience over specific months, for example in the past employers asked Ruqayyah (born in England) for six months of work experience for a sewing job, which she did not have. Taking another example, Sadiyyah completed some voluntary work experience in a nursery setting however did not get a job as the employers required further qualifications at college level associated with the job. However, a lack of English language proficiency and confidence created a barrier in pursuing this. Furthermore, negative impact on Sadiyyah's mental health, responsibilities as lone motherhood and (financial) struggles (Stack and Meredith 2018) created an additional barrier in her ability to learn and process new information. However due to continuing pressures to commit to employment from the jobcentre Sadiyyah had to explore other routes into employment which required less qualifications such as jobs in the caring sector. Consequently, a lack of 'human capital' is a key barrier to employment for all three groups (Salway 2007). However, many lone mothers completed vocational courses to prepare for employment. For example Noor, a migrant well-educated participant, developed her English skills, completed a college course, gained work experience and later gained a job in the same workplace. Although, quite notably, the findings show that for participants with good English skills (those born in England and well-educated migrant women) developing capital, skills and qualifications for employment is less of a struggle than migrant participants with a lack of English language skills, education and opportunities to develop skills during

marriage. Thus, less well-educated migrant women face an extra layer of disadvantage in their journey of skills building.

There can also be generational differences amongst women born in England. For instance Asma, who was a second generation British-Pakistani, stated that she was brought up in "*a tight knit community who didn't believe in women going into school, young girls going into school educating themselves*". Thus, after having children she had to take it upon her own initiative to learn English. As a lone mother she studied gaining level three qualifications and worked in a school. She left employment when she remarried and had children, again showing how life-stage factors can impact on participation in employment (Salway 2007). On the other hand Maymoona did go to school and completed her GCSEs. More recently her child started nursery, she had completed a college course and was now looking for a job. These experiences will be expanded upon later in the chapter in relation to gendered barriers.

However, pressures to commit to employment can create a barrier in developing human capital (Salway 2007) and resources which can equip individuals for better jobs and opportunities. Government work programmes take a standardised 'work first' approach pushing people into work and pressuring them "to accept any job, irrespective of appropriateness" (Lindsay et al 2019, p. 648). This policy approach can limit women's options in developing skills and interests. During her interview, Ayanna criticised this approach and placed much emphasis on "*training first*", "*rather than just shove them out the door*" into low-paid jobs which individuals do not necessarily want to do. Importance was placed upon building skills first through taking up courses, for example IT courses, vocational qualifications and ESOL classes:

Ayanna: "we don't want people to go into low level jobs just because they don't speak good English but if we can get them into training and push them that way first so that the ESOL skills that are more developed and then that'll lead to the road that they want because the the er not everybody wants to be a cleaner and and and which is quite right d'you what I mean..."

Ayanna supports the unemployed in developing skills and looking for courses. This can be demonstrated through the example of her supporting a lone mother at SAW's Place. The lone mother only took part in this one-off observation. Ayanna was providing CV support, adding more detail to the lone mother's CV about her employment skills. The lone mother was looking for a job in the caring sector. Although she had some previous experience, the adviser suggested she should also pursue attaining relevant qualifications, this would increase her chances of employment. This further demonstrates an emphasis on building skills and qualifications first. This reiterates recommendations from Turner and Wigfield's (2013) study in which they argue that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women distant from the labour market require pre-interventionist support and assistance in developing their skills and interests. In relation to participants' positionality as lone mothers, lone motherhood can be an opportunity for women to work on themselves (Guru 2009) and develop skills which are essential in gaining better quality jobs to improve their living conditions and situations of poverty.

Furthermore, CV making is a skill which has not been given much attention to in previous studies. The findings in this study demonstrate the importance of having a good CV when applying for jobs. Not having a CV or a well-developed one can be another barrier to employment. Juwariya stated some women may not have a CV or *"even know what a CV is"*. Thus, for SAW's Place workers and Ayanna, supporting women in creating CVs and highlighting the skills they have is an important aspect in employment preparation. As many women may not have previous work experience, have never worked before or stop working after having children due to the significance of upbringing children, especially amongst SA and Muslim women (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Ahmed 2008), the importance of displaying valuable skills gained through experiences and responsibilities as lone mothers was discussed:

Ayanna: "...a lady who's a lone parent looking after her children, keeping house tidy, budgeting (Sarah: yeah) having to do all those things, organised, school runs and this all those skills are fantastic (Sarah: yeah) to go on a CV cause a lot lone parents think they've got nothing to offer and they've got a lot to offer"

This illustrates skills associated with motherhood and the domestic sphere as being undervalued, particularly in British society. As Andersen (2020, p. 434) has previously argued "unpaid care work has not been viewed as an integral part of citizenship and as such women's caring roles have been devalued". It reflects feminist arguments of recognising the importance of women's unpaid care (Smith et al 2008). There is a need and importance of valuing women's contributions to society in their role as mothers as much as in any paid employment role they have (Smith et al 2008). Raising good citizens who can contribute to society in the future is an overlooked contribution of PBM women. It should also be recognised that in their role as mothers, and responsibilities as lone mothers in particular, women acquire valuable skills and experiences that can serve them well in employment. It is argued that employers should value such skills. This brings forward gendered barriers to employment.

5.3.2 Gendered barriers to employment

Lone mothers in this study faced barriers to employment associated with their positionalities as women. Here the concept of 'gendered moral rationalities' introduced by Edwards and Duncan (1999) is useful in assessing lone mothers' decisions to take up employment. Additionally, women also face barriers to pursuing education and employment associated with a lack of childcare provision in England (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004; Smith et al 2008).

Women can have differing expectations of what it means to be a 'good mother' in relation to balancing paid work and unpaid childcare (Andersen 2020). These can also be underpinned by cultural norms and expectations. For most participants in this study there was a 'primarily mother' identity (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Duncan and Irwin 2004) where their role as mothers was prioritised over personal career aspirations, especially where participants had dependent children. This adds to findings from Evan and Bowlby's (2000) study focusing on first-generation Pakistani Muslim women in Redding and Ahmed's (2008) study of Bangladeshi women, which are now quite dated studies. However this attitude is not only contained to PBM women as the British labour market culture attaches importance to the notion of women as caregivers and reproducers (Evans and Bowlby 2000). The 'primarily mother' identity was also found to be common amongst White working class lone mothers in

Duncan and Edwards (1999) study. While having a 'primarily mother' positioning, all of the lone mothers in this study did display positive attitudes towards employment and felt that it was good for women to work. For instance, Hira and Noor cited that many Bangladeshi women were pursuing employment. This can show a change of attitudes towards employment over time, for example in Evans and Bowlby's (2000) study there were a mix of attitudes.

Asma and Maymoona's experiences represented in Section 5.3.1 demonstrate a 'primarily mother' identity. Their experiences also show a lack of affordable childcare options resulting in mothers having to wait till children start school to find time for education and employment. A 'primarily mother' identity and lack of childcare availability can also influence the type of employment PBM lone mothers pursued. For example, Maymoona chose to pursue employment in the education setting as she felt that it would fit with her childcare needs and meant that she would also have the school holidays off with her children. Those with older children could be more flexible with the type of employment they did. For example, at the weekend Suwaybah could work a few hours because her elder children were old enough to stay at home and look after their siblings:

Sarah: "What about childcare then?"

Suwaybah: "No I don't need that time childcare because it is in like three four hour

(Sarah: okay) erm job and my eldest [child] my oldest [child] they can look after them

(Sarah: yeah) two, because it's a few hours "

As Miller and Ridge (2008; 2013) assert older siblings have an important role in domestic life and care, caring for siblings while their mothers are at work. Furthermore, as Nafeesah's children were now much older she had an opportunity to concentrate on her own career and setting up a small business. Thus, this shows that the age of children can be a significant factor in decisions of the type of employment participants take up. Importantly those actively looking for employment preferred working hours which would fit around their childcare and family needs (Miller and Ridge 2013). As lone mothers, many without practical support networks, they were responsible for dropping and collecting children from school. Lone mothers in this study who were in employment at the time also discussed how their

employment fit in with such needs. For instance Suwaybah stated her job allowed her to take and pick up her children from school herself. Participants with young children looking for employment also wanted part-time work within school times (Miller and Ridge 2013):

Sarah: "What kind of job do you want to do, part time or full time?"

Tahira: " 'Part time' because I cannot do 'full time' 'drop' the children off to 'school', I cannot do 'full time'."

However, reiterating Miller and Ridge's (2008; 2013) findings and illustrating further structural barriers, it became evident that such jobs were difficult to attain and potential jobs' working hours did not fit around parenting needs. This shows that there were a lack of jobs available in the local labour market fitting needs (Duncan and Edwards 1996a), something which is out of the control of lone mothers:

Asma: "...my eldest child right now at home she's [states age] years old so any most employers either want you to be in a in the evening or they want you in the day time and it's for day time as well if I'm there was a like an [states type] factory where I applied for a job ...which was in [states place] (Sarah: was that) far out yeah, that's the nearest within you know but if my youngest is you know she's at nursery at [states time] they it just doesn't it wasn't gonna work out..."

Maymoona: "you know and then a lot of places they want you there like half eight in the morning you're doing the school runs at that time, I think there are some places I know that will employ between you know they can go to work between ten and two o'clock (Sarah: yeah) but there's not enough places like that and it's so hard you know what am I meant to do..."

Ayanna argued that the need for jobs fitting around childcare and parenting responsibilities was "across the board" and further emphasised the lack of availability of such jobs:

Ayanna: "...every single mum even when I was single mum wanted those hours (Sarah: yeah everybody) yeah because you can take your child to school, pick your child up and so on but it I think that's across the board..."

Thus, this is a common barrier to employment that can be faced by lone mothers of all groups and mothers who are not single parents due to their positionality as women (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). In observations at the organisation's employment course one married participant described facing similar childcare barriers (Evans and Bowlby 2000). There also seemed to be a lack of childcare options (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004) as Maymoona and other lone mothers only discussed school provisions. In fact, (after) school clubs were the main form of childcare used by Kulsoom and Suwaybah in this study, who were in employment. Suwaybah said she gained childcare expenses support from the government. This indicates the valuable support of schools in providing affordable wrap around care where funding is available (Smith et al 2008). Again, schools can be an important source of support for women. It is also important to note that due to declining local funding some schools may not be able to offer such options (Dowler and Lambie-Mumford 2015b). Due to the financial struggles Maymoona already faced living on poor amounts of benefits she felt that she would not be able to afford taking children to breakfast clubs if a job didn't fit within normal school hours:

Maymoona (carrying on): "and then on top of that like if you do take your children to school earlier you have to pay for it and it's not like you know for me that's gonna be a struggle (Sarah: yeah) because I'm gonna have to pay for you know breakfast club and then if I can't pick them for quarter past three I'll have to pick them up at a later time and then you have to pay for after school club as well."

A further responsibility which is specific to Muslim mothers is sending children to mosque after school. This is a significant intersectional difference and responsibility in Muslim mothers' lives. Fulfilling this duty is instrumental in being a good mother and Muslim. Thus it is an aspect of mothers' gendered moral rationalities. One participant, Sadiyyah, stated she required a job where timings fitted with these needs:

Sadiyyah: "...I have 'time' from 'nine thirty to two thirty', wherever I go they say we do not have a 'job' in this 'limited time' (Sarah: yes) or the shifts start 'too early' (Sarah: yeah) or finish 'too late'...there is no one to pick up my girl from school there is no one, her"

Sarah: "Is there no after 'school clubs'?"

Sadiyyah: "they give me 'after school' option but the 'problem' is this I send her to 'mosque' (Sarah: yeah) it is in my heart she gets educated that 'mosque' if I send her to 'after school club' then she will miss 'mosque'..."

This additional layer of parental responsibilities means after school clubs are not always a good option. Sadiyyah did not want to deprive her children of attending mosque just because she wanted to enter employment. Thus, children's needs were put above her own again demonstrating a 'primarily mother' identity associated with her religious identity. It also shows lone mothers as having a lack of social support networks meaning that they are often solely responsible for picking up younger children from school and mosque. The local neighbourhood they live in can also play a significant factor in this. Sadiyyah described a lack of social connectedness amongst individuals in her community who could potentially support her, for example in doing school runs. This is also coupled with a lack of trust in others taking care of children and having a lack of extended family support, the latter usually provide childcare in SA families (Ahmad, Modood and Lissenburgh 2003; Smith et al 2018). This links to the stigma of separation and reduction of family support. Sadiyyah's experience also demonstrates a reduction of close-knit ties amongst Pakistani communities and more of an emphasis on individualisation:

Sadiyyah: "...my neighbours go my neighbours' daughter is in this 'school' in 'nursery' but they cannot think this much what like I am picking up my own child same like this, but relying this much I do not even have this much 'trust' (Sarah: yes) because they are a bit moody the 'parents' there are 'at the moment around' now in my area they (Sarah: is it) 'reliable' (Sarah: Pakistani?) they are 'Pakistani' but are 'moody' they do not even speak straight how will I tell them will you pick up my child..."

Another gendered barrier faced by one lone mother was discrimination. Maymoona reported facing discrimination from potential employers on the basis of her identity as a lone mother and not being flexible to cover working hours when she has childcare responsibilities (Reynolds 2001):

Maymoona: "I don't think they still erm do enough for parents (Sarah: yeah) especially single mothers you know the moment you tell them you're a single mum that you know when they say are you flexible enough, (Sarah: yeah) I'm not flexible enough I can't be because I've got kids you know if one of them is ill I've got to stay home with them (Sarah: yeah) and if you know in case they had an accident at school or something (Sarah: yeah) I'm the one that's gonna have to go (Sarah: yeah) so the moment you tell them you're not flexible enough and you know you're a single parent and you've got to do school runs they don't want to know"

This can also potentially be coupled with employers stereotypical racialised assumptions of PBM women where their traditional roles as mothers are seen as conflicting with commitments to the workplace (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Tariq and Syed 2017). Finally, the social networks and connections women are involved in can also determine opportunities and options in finding jobs (Evans and Bowlby 2000; Khattab et al 2010). This can be illustrated in Kulsoom's case. Despite having a lack of English language fluency and no formal employment experience Kulsoom was able to gain a cleaning job through a female friend who worked recommending her to apply for a job. Thus, social networks and contacts can be as important and key in attaining jobs as human capital.

Employment has been viewed as central in facilitating independence for lone mothers, in particular reducing dependency on the welfare state. This section illustrates a range of barriers to employment for PBM lone mothers associated with their intersectional ethnic, religious, gender and class identities and their wider positionalities as migrants, women and (lone) mothers being central. The importance of attending to children's religious needs and education illustrates one unique difference in relation to non-Muslim lone mothers. PBM lone mothers also face similar barriers to employment as found in previous lone motherhood and PBM women studies, such as childcare barriers and a lack of human capital (Salway 2007).

5.4 English language and everyday life

In the previous section English language was discussed in relation to being a central barrier to employment, particularly for migrant participants. Additionally, a lack of English language proficiency, particularly reading and speaking, also impacted lone mothers in their everyday lives. In Chapter 2 (Section 2.3.3) it was recognised that English language is presented in public discourses and literature as a key barrier to employment and integration. With the exception of Ahmed's (2008) study, less attention has been paid to the impact a lack of English language skills has on PBM women's everyday experiences. However significantly, findings from this study illustrate the impact it has on lone mothers' lives, leading to dependency and impeding their ability to act independently. This was particularly so for lone mothers with very low levels of English proficiency, lack of literacy in their own languages and little or no formal education (Ahmed 2008).

5.4.1 Everyday difficulties

As Ahmed (2008) previously found, participants in this study also wanted to learn English to become more independent on a day-to-day basis. Participants explained the multiple everyday difficulties they faced due to not being able to speak or read English well. This occurs in everyday settings such as the doctors, hospitals, asking for directions or travelling on the bus. Below are some examples of the difficulties lone mothers faced in communicating:

Fatimah: "there is an appointment I have to go somewhere if you do not know 'English' then it becomes difficult"

Kulsoom: "if something breaks in the house that becomes difficult, to do a 'phone' call... I have to come here [referring to SAW's Place]..."

Sarah: "Now you're learning 'English' and how will you be 'better'?"

Kulsoom: "just no dependence, if there is any work a person could 'phone' themselves, don't have to ask someone."

Not being able to communicate well can create an extra layer of difficulty and disadvantage for this group of lone mothers in comparison to English speaking lone mothers. Kulsoom's example demonstrates that this can lead to dependence on others, in this case SAW's Place, to get small tasks accomplished. In fact, during my time at SAW's Place lone mothers (such as Fatimah, Haajirah, Hira and Zahra) came to the support sessions to get letters they had received interpreted and explained to them in their preferred language, such as Bengali. Lone mothers may also ask friends, teachers or go to local mainstream advice centres to interpret letters. Even for lone mothers who had previously attended or were now attending English classes there was an emphasis on lacking confidence and difficulty in contacting services, such as the council, by themselves. This can be illustrated in Sadiyyah and Ayman's experiences:

Sadiyyah: " 'for example' some letters will come it feels like this to me they will speak so 'fast' (Sarah: yes) I will 'misunderstand'...but I especially the council's like these kinds of 'letter' 'benefit' (Sarah: yeah) I do not ever myself because I know they some people speak 'English' so 'fast' that I will 'misunderstand'"

Sarah (via interpreter): "so is there any difficulties she faces from not fully knowing English?"

Ayman: "yeah"

Sarah: "How?"

Ayman (via interpreter): "she said if she were to make a phone call somewhere (Sarah: mhm) if she were to make a phone call somewhere the erm she she finds it really hard to explain it to that other person about what she's calling him (Sarah: yeah) for however she clearly understands what they say but she can't explain everything (Sarah: okay) properly, that's yeah"

This also brings forward service providers not tailoring towards linguistic needs. Consequently not knowing English well can result in women feeling misunderstood or not able to articulate their points of view. As Ahmed (2008) has argued and is further demonstrated here not knowing English well can result in a lack of ability to voice one's frustrations, prevent access to rights and result in dependency on others to access services and provisions, among other things (e.g. increasing isolation and exclusion). Beyond organisations, a lack of English

language proficiency can also lead to dependency on children. This was illustrated in Fatimah's account of attending parents' evening at her child's school where her child would explain what the teacher was saying:

Sarah: "Okay when it's 'parents evening' do you go?"

Fatimah: "No I go to 'parents evening' so then that is the 'teachers' say themselves to my [son/daughter] make your 'mum mamma understand' "

Sarah: "Oh so she tells [him/her] and then [he/she] tells you"

Fatimah: "I 'understand' it"

This is one aspect which has not been presented in Ahmed's (2008) study and forwards questions about how this can impact children, both in positive and negative ways. Again it shows another institution that does not tailor towards these lone mothers' linguistic needs, leading to dependency on others to interpret, in this case their children. It also demonstrates the diverse methods women utilise to communicate and understand in order to fulfil responsibilities such as monitoring children's behaviour and attainment at school in this case. Another example of this is Zahra using a Urdu to English translation app when communicating in English to a social worker, who used to visit her home upon initial separation from her husband, when she could not explain certain aspects herself. Thus women adopt various strategies to address lack of proficiency in English, illustrating initiative and agency.

5.4.2 Improving English skills

The everyday barriers and disadvantages faced by lone mothers due to having a lack of English language proficiency meant that they recognised the need to improve their speaking, reading and writing skills to improve their day-to-day lives (Ahmed 2008). It can be certainly argued that as a lone mother it became all the more important to learn English as women did not have the support of husbands and importantly because of the increasing responsibilities they had as heads of the household. It can be argued that their positionality as lone mothers exposed them to learning more English, be that through attending English classes or everyday experiences. This was articulated in both Ayman and Tahira's accounts:

Ayman (Interpreter): "because she has to do things on her own it's made her learn more English (Sarah: okay) going out there doing this, paying bills and it's just made her wiser in talking English"

Sarah: "And you go to English class here so how [have you] improved?"

Tahira: "Yes, it is much better."

Sarah: "How is it better what 'difference' have you seen?"

Tahira: "Bit bit I can do, it is difficult very difficult because the lone mother that there is (Sarah: yes) it is very hard, when there are two mother father [said those that are good fathers] then they do it together but a lone mother cannot do it alone but still we do try" (interview was not audio recorded)

Thus, learning English is an important aspect for lone mothers to become more independent in their daily lives, it can be argued more so than non-lone mother migrant PBM women. In Ahmed's (2008, para. 4.4.) study women had a desire to learn English to create a "greater sense of independence and agency", for lone mothers it becomes a necessity. Improving English can result in leading a more independent life in turn reducing dependency on others and organisations like SAW's Place. This can be illustrated using the examples of lone mothers Noor and Suwaybah. During the five months observing Bengali support sessions Noor came only once for support and during observing Pakistani lone mothers support sessions, Suwaybah came for support twice. As they were well educated at a college level from Pakistan or Bangladesh and had improved their English language further through English classes they were less dependent upon SAW's Place unless they required more professional expert support, for example applying for jobs (Suwaybah) or sorting out welfare benefits (Noor). As Noor stated in her interview:

Sarah: "mhm, do you use it [SAW's Place services] often or?"

Noor: "yeeeah yeah yeah when I need it not regularly."

Sarah: "but do you think you're quite independent?"

Noor: "yeah yeah, yeah I can do, like if I need anything like officially I came here, otherwise I can you know phone and thingy, yeah."

This illustrates how learning English can allow lone mothers to lead a more independent life. However, for migrant participants of low or no education, working class and rural backgrounds it can take more time to develop English skills. Comparing migrant women brought up and educated in the 'simple' 'village school' versus the 'city', which is associated with class positionings (Brah 1994), Sadiyyah said in her interview for *"those that are not educated it is hard for them"* and there is more *"struggle"* and *"challenge"* in their daily lives as a result. In addition to this, for many lone mothers not having the chance to attend English classes while being married added another layer of disadvantage. Many of the lone mothers in this study had or were currently attending English classes to improve their English skills. Participants discussed the different ways in which learning English had already improved their day-to-day lives, creating more independence (Ahmed 2008). For example, through attending English classes and going on outings organised by the refuge which Sadiyyah was taken to upon separation, Sadiyyah described how this vastly improved her everyday life:

Sadiyyah: "...now today I can even go to the 'hospital', speak with teachers, I can go to 'parent[s] evening', I can do 'shopping', 'you know' from that day to 'today' I am 'better', 50% has been done (Sarah: yes) 'that day to now', when I came (Sarah: mhm) but still if I say I am 'full' that I can do eveything that is a bit 'hard'.....'maybe sometimes' I get 'stuck' I get 'stuck' from a lot of things"

Other lone mothers also described how their English improved by attending classes in their localities or at SAW's Place:

Sarah: "Now a little but you can speak yourself?"

Hira: " 'Yeah' it happens to me a bit at the 'doctor' all I go I can get by"

Sarah: "... Like how from going to 'class' how did it help you about [in relation to] 'English'?"

Zainab: "'English' this just they teach so nice do talks they say you speak so then when before before I didn't used to do it [talk in English] it was like I know it but 'erm' I used to be very shy that I don't know it'll be wrong (Sarah: yes) what will I do what, now I

*can speak it, wherever I go I can do it now I will 'drive' as well (Sarah: you will learn?)
yes I am also 'learn[ing]' that, I am 'try[ing]' that as well."*

Evidently learning English improved lone mothers' everyday lives in many ways. It particularly improves their ability to communicate in various settings they engage with and opens opportunities for further independence, such as starting to learn to drive. Learning English can create positive social impacts in relation to living a better quality life and creating a sense of inclusion. However there are various barriers to learning English which PBM lone mothers face. As already highlighted (Section 5.3.1), not having anyone to take care of children is one barrier to attending English classes (Ahmed 2008). Zahra had started attending an English class once a week and had started to improve her English however she could not always arrange childcare and missed classes. During the interview she stated that she would focus on learning English once her child had started school. Ill health, such as depression, and old age was another barrier to learning English for middle aged (41-50 age group) participants Fatimah and Haajrah. These lone mothers recognised that they would probably not be able to further learn English going forward:

Fatimah: "first still I 'understand' a lot when I I my health happens like this I don't go to the classes much so very much 'difficult' from time to time that is I can't 'understand', first I used to 'try' to write (Sarah: yeah) so I have left it."

Thus, in relation to the findings of this study it is recognised that women may not always attain intermediate or basic English language skills, resulting in a continuation in support required to interpret in their everyday lives and dependency on support networks such as SAW's Place. This questions the extent to which this group of lone mothers can achieve a sense of independence in their everyday lives. There is also a recognition that lone mothers are not required to fully understand English. As Ayanna stated in her interview *"if you could just learn a little bit"* this can help achieve a sense of independence in small mundane aspects of their everyday lives. A final barrier to learning English found in Ahmed's (2008) study is women not having the opportunity to practice their English skills in their everyday settings due to living in segregated communities and being surrounded by Bangladeshis. Here Ayanna

(external employment worker) cited women not speaking English in the home as a barrier to not being able to learn English:

Ayanna: "... it's all well and good ESOL classes but then they go home and go back to speaking (Sarah: yeah) their own language so it's like learning to use a computer if you don't use it every day (Sarah: yeah) you soon lose them skills..."

However, when discussing how learning English improved lone mothers' lives it was evident that they were able to apply the skills to everyday situations. Examples of this have been given throughout this section, for example at the doctors, appointments and when using the bus. Other examples include talking to children's friends when they come over to play, talking to children and attempting to read letters. Furthermore, SAW's Place also offered English classes in which women act out scenarios to put their English skills to practice (see Chapter 6 for a further discussion in relation to SAW's Place). Significantly, the findings of this study demonstrate, that compared to married migrant PBM women, as lone mothers the responsibilities and necessities attached to being the sole provider for their children can provide an opportunity and push migrant PBM women to apply and practice their skills in everyday settings. In turn they can achieve a sense of independence.

Overall, these findings demonstrate learning and applying English speaking, reading and writing skills are significant and important achievements for migrant lone mothers allowing them to better navigate their everyday lives and articulate their needs and concerns. Thus learning English is a significant step and barrier to overcome in lone mothers' journeys to leading more independent lives.

5.5 Housing

Under a 'social threat' discourse lone mothers, particularly never-married teenage mothers who are characterised as 'undeserving groups' (Fitzpatrick and Pawson 2007), have previously been accused of entering lone motherhood to obtain social housing (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Ponsford 2011). Thus, access to social housing is a traditional area of stigmatisation in relation to lone motherhood. Furthermore, ethnic minority groups are overall more likely to

experience poor housing and inequality in housing than the white majority (Ratcliffe 1998; Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013; Salway et al 2020). Further, housing has been a marginalised area of exploration in regards to race debates and ethnic minorities in comparison to a focus on maintaining social order and integration (Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013). More recently social housing in England has been described as a "broken system" and housing availability as "a defining social policy issue of our time" (Robbins 2020, p. 2). This can impact poorer and disadvantaged groups, including lone mothers' access to housing which in turn creates a significant barrier in their journeys to independence. The findings of this study illustrate in particular the more precarious housing arrangements of five lone mothers (Asma, Kulsoom, Maymoona, Maryam and Suwaybah) brought forward by participants in both interviews and observations as a central concern in their lives at the time of fieldwork. It also highlights the barriers they faced in attaining more secure long term living arrangements.

Two lone mothers were still living in a house that was mortgaged in their husband's name. Suwaybah had invested much time and money, including her own money and borrowing from friends, into buying a house alongside her husband. The house was brought in her husband's name. This reflects how men can exploit women's resources and finances meaning women can remain powerless in the face of patriarchal control (Chowbey 2017). Chowbey (2017) has previously found that Pakistani husbands make long term investments in their own names, a key intersectional difference for Pakistani women. Consequently, men can retain control after the breakdown of marriage. After reporting her husband to the police due to DA he was now restricted from seeing her, she had received verbal Islamic divorce. Suwaybah expressed concern about her housing situation:

Sarah: "Oh so you live in that house?"

Suwaybah: "Yeah, I live in that house because I got kids and I'm worried about sometimes sometime maybe he say get out from my house (Sarah: yeah) and what can I do about that might the council (Sarah: yeah) give me you know the area which is not suitable for my children"

Thus, there was a sense of insecurity in her housing arrangements. This also reflects the (local) housing system which can place people in any house, in any area under priority and

emergency circumstances. Similarly, Asma's husband owned the property she lived in with her children. When inquiring into moving into social housing she found that she could not be rehoused through housing priority as she was still married to him and could not "afford" to divorce him. Thus, he could not legally remove her from the house meaning she could not qualify for priority:

Sarah: "Do you ever think about moving from the property?"

Asma: "...I tried they tried to apply for a council house and said has she been removed, is he trying to remove her, because if she's his wife and they're still married he can't legally remove her from the property so I'm not an emergency, I can't be rehoused (Sarah: okay) because he's not throwing me out, but he he's got access in and out of my property anytime..."

The above quote also shows these circumstances can lead to a continuation of her husband's involvement in her life. Asma further stated that "he's still got control over my life". Asma was trapped in her housing situation (Thurston et al 2013); she had on one hand security that her husband could not remove her from the house and on the other hand could not gain social housing due to stringent priority restrictions. For both lone mothers, such circumstances can result in continued dependency on their (ex)husbands, a sense of control and potentially a danger of abuse in the future. Indeed, Asma did describe incidents where her husband would create arguments and take things from her house, in informing the police there was nothing that could be done:

Asma: "...the police just gave me a reference number and said there's nothing we can do cause he's the house owner (Sarah: yeah) he still he's not committed an offense he lives in the house it's his property cause the property's on his name and he can enter, we can't change the locks (Sarah: yeah) and I had to stay in that property because I had more than five children so I couldn't be rehoused anywhere so there's a lot of things that system let me down with but hey"

Evidently Asma felt let down by a welfare system that is in place to protect the most vulnerable. The insecure circumstance of living in a house owned by their (ex)husbands,

meant both lone mothers continued to be dependent on their (ex)husbands, halting a sense of independence. Although Suwaybah felt she now lived a more independent life as a lone mother this situation created uncertainty. Altogether, current housing policy can thus work against the interest, security and wellbeing of women which can potentially create danger of abuse and control from (ex)husbands and a sense of insecurity going further. It also demonstrates how the patriarchal and economic abuse women face from men can have a lasting long term impact (Chowbey 2017). This can be further illustrated in Maryam's experiences.

In the last few weeks of observations as part of my role in providing support to lone mothers, I helped Maryam, over three occasions, who wanted to move into a new house preferably in another part of the city or a city where a friend lived. This was due to previous experiences of violent behaviour from her husband and in-laws and fears of experiencing further harassment, as well as an ongoing issue of harassment she faced which had left her in a bad position within her local community and receiving threatening phone calls. She expressed that her children were "*scared*" due to this situation (Thurston et al 2013). At the time she was still in the house she lived in with her husband (see Section 4.2.1). The process of obtaining housing can be time-consuming and complex to navigate through particularly for migrant women who are not familiar with the process. Therefore, SAW's Place can be an essential source of support in helping to navigate this terrain. In supporting Maryam, myself and Maryam reapplied for housing to a housing association as in the previous process they had not received relevant documents from Maryam, although she was not aware of any correspondence asking her to do so. I also supported Maryam to apply for local council housing which involved contacting various council services to explain her situation. The last time I supported her she was given an "*anti-social behaviour harassment case*" which would be assessed to see if she could get priority. Thus as found in a previous Canadian study by Thurston et al (2013), exploring immigrant DV victims and housing security, a fear of personal and children's safety from abusers was a reason behind wanting to relocate. Women can face threats from abusers who know their location (Thurston et al 2013). Other reasons for moving in lone mothers' experiences included inaccessibility to services (Thurston et al 2013) such as school, mosques and Pakistani Muslim communities as well as practical aspects such as needing a bigger house. However, Ratcliffe (1998) has highlighted local authorities and

housing associations can fail to recognise or respond to specific needs of minority groups, such as wanting to live closer to the mosque.

Taking another example, during observations, Kulsoom was looking for a council housing property. Those looking for local council housing have to bid for houses online. This involves registering, searching for properties on an online portal and then putting a bid on properties of interest. Individuals thus compete with others in bidding. An interview with a worker who supported women in bidding for housing as part of her role reflected how time consuming and stressful bidding can be. It can evidently take a very long time to attain a property:

Aaishah (worker): "lot of, most of the people that do bidding are single mothers... I think they find it a bit tiring cause bidding is like really hard it takes a lot [emphasis on lot] like it takes a lonng period for you to actually get the house so there's been ladies that have been coming here for like more than three years and doing bidding right and they still haven't found a house...for them it gets really tiring.... firstly cause they don't understand English and they don't understand the procedure either"

Women can also face barriers in being able to bid by themselves such as not understanding English or the procedure, thus I explained the process of looking for council housing to Kulsoom while supporting her in one observation session. In the first session, I supported Kulsoom to look for properties online however we could not find properties that she liked or in her preferred area. Kulsoom wanted to apply for housing priority, after ringing the council I found that priority is provided to those *"living in an overcrowded house or for medical reasons"* (fieldnote 09.01.19). Kulsoom could potentially gain this priority due to *"medical problems which impacted her ability to walk"* (fieldnote 16.01.19). Thus, Kulsoom got a letter from her GP as proof. Reading the letter, I gained full insight into the reasons Kulsoom wanted to move houses:

Looking at the letter, this was a formal letter she got from her doctor stating that she isn't happy with where she lives and wants to apply for a house, she doesn't like the community she lives in, the house is located far from her children's school and she finds it difficult to walk there. Kulsoom told me about this difficulty last week and on her

own initiative has got this doctor's note hoping she will get priority to get a house through this. The letter also stated that she had medical problems which impacted her ability to walk, especially when taking children to school. (Supporting Kulsoom - fieldnote 16.01.19)

The last time I saw Kulsoom during observations I helped her fill in the priority application and she would have to wait for a reply. It is evident that access to services such as schools and importance of living in a good (Pakistani Muslim) community can be crucial in women's housing considerations. The importance of accessibility was further emphasised by Sawdah, a SAW's Place worker:

Sawdah: "...they like to live in an in an area where there's community where there's access to a mosque, where there's access to a maybe like a bit of shops and they find it difficult if they are moved to parts of city where they do not have a community..."

Although I did not know the outcome of the lone mothers' applications by the end of fieldwork an interview with Maymoona who had most recently shifted from private housing to a newly built home by a housing association provided further insight into the process of finding housing. Maymoona had decided to live in an area where the rent was cheaper rather than living close by to her family. She had been on the council list and bidding for houses for a very long period due to requiring more space:

Maymoona: "...I needed a bit of a bigger house and that erm but a lot of things had changed like you know erm there was a rule of with council that you can use your living room as a bedroom as well and stuff like that so they din't see it as a priority or anything eerrm when I had my youngest I was still bidding erm and I'd been on the list at that point I think it had been like eleven years or something (Sarah: okay) errrm and then what had happened last year was it was around end of [states month] that I signed for this new property it was through hous, it's not a council house, it's a housing association..."

Thus, housing associations can be an alternative where social housing cannot meet needs. This can also demonstrate the difficulties local councils are facing to meet housing needs. As Robbin (2020) argues council housing seems to be portrayed as a last resort. This experience can be as a result of a declining investment in building council housing since the 90s despite increasing needs and instead the government promoting housing associations which Robbins (2020) argues operate more like the private industry rather than social housing. The experiences of lone mothers in this study go further in this analysis, to show the real impact that structural aspects such as stringent priority requirements, the bidding system and a lack of council or social housing can have. This can particularly create vulnerability amongst lone mothers, DA or DV victims, those with health barriers, accessibility and living needs. This restricts an ability to leading more independent secure lives and women's prospects for the future.

5.6 Social isolation and loneliness

This section focuses on lone mothers' experiences of social isolation and loneliness. This was slightly touched upon in discussing DA (Section 4.2.3) and a lack of support networks throughout Chapter 4. It gains further significance in this chapter in relation to lone mothers' journeys to independence as entering lone motherhood, employment, developing social support networks and being solely responsible for children can both positively and negatively impact social isolation and loneliness amongst PBM lone mothers. This can also have an impact on their mental wellbeing. In interviews with lone mothers they discussed the everyday feelings of social isolation and loneliness they experienced. Both migrant and British born lone mothers described facing social isolation and loneliness. The organisation workers also pointed out social isolation and loneliness as being a significant issue faced by lone mothers.

It is important here to make a distinction between 'social isolation' and 'loneliness', which are often conflated (Wigfield and Alden 2018). Both are associated with a lack of 'social connectiveness'. However social isolation can be seen as "an objective assessment of social contacts" whereas loneliness, which is more difficult to measure (Wigfield and Alden 2018, p. 1019), is "the subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship" (Cattan et al

2005, p. 42). Thus a person who is not socially isolated can still feel lonely, for example not achieving meaningful relationships from social contacts. Being socially isolated is seen as providing an indication of loneliness (Wigfield and Alden 2018). Social isolation and loneliness has also been cited in wider literature on lone motherhood where lone mothers have been found to experience social isolation and loneliness linked to having relatively little social networks of support, such as family or friends (Phoenix 1991; Sinha 1998; Allan and Crow 2001; Head 2005). Social isolation and adverse mental health has also been found to be prevalent amongst SA women in a review by Anand and Cochrane (2005).

5.6.1 Lack of social support networks

A reoccurring theme in interviews with workers was lone mothers having a lack of social support networks, be that family or friends. This can result in experiences of social isolation. Lone mothers were seen as living "*very isolated lives*" (Saffiyah, worker) especially where they were migrant women with family living in Pakistan or Bangladesh. Sawdah emphasised family and community support was important for 'Asian women' (Shaw 2000; Anand and Cochrane 2005):

Sawdah: "they struggle with the fact that they're isolated erm they generally don't seem to have a lot of family support er Asian women particularly are used to being in a family (Sarah: yeah) in a community and they find it very difficult to be on their own..."

Anand and Cochrane (2005) have previously found that variation in the structure of family life can negatively impact the mental health of SA women, particularly older generations who have been imbedded in strong family and cultural ties. For migrant women, there can be a feeling of displacement from their home countries and loneliness (Alexander 2013). The findings here add to how lone motherhood and not having much family support can create social isolation and impact mental health. Hafsa stated that it can be difficult financially for migrant lone mothers to save money so they can visit family abroad. However, lone mothers who do have family in England can also be socially isolated (such as Sadiyyah, Ayman and Asma). A reduction in close family and kinship ties is associated with the stigma attached to

lone motherhood, being a divorcee and losing one's *izzat* amongst family (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4). Sadiyyah's experiences demonstrate this, she felt she had a lack of *izzat* amongst her natal family in England. Social isolation from family resulted in feelings of loneliness:

Sadiyyah: "...because if a person does not have 'family' in a 'country' a person says I am alone I do not have anyone (Sarah: yes) there is one whooole 'family' being present within this yet they are alone then he is 'depress[ed]' that it becomes 'point' for me that she has a 'family' but they are not with her..."

PBM lone mothers can also struggle to manage their responsibilities alone, which are often new to them, without a support structure. This is linked to having distinct traditional gender roles within marriage where men have a dominant breadwinner role (Dale et al 2002; Salway 2007) (see Chapter 2). Upon separation women are left to be the sole providers and have increasing responsibilities:

Saffiyah (worker): "...erm so that that's the thing I think they struggle with then it's the erm so isolation erm not having family around them, being completely responsible, managing finances on their own they've never done things like that before..."

However, the findings of this study also show diversity in experience amongst this group of lone mothers. Lone motherhood is an opportunity to reduce social isolation (see Chapter 4 for experiences of social isolation due to DA). This can be illustrated through Zainab's experiences. In regard to family support Zainab said:

"Yes first I didn't have this support with me so I used to think I am very alone (Sarah: yes) am very alone"

Becoming a lone mother and escaping DA reduced social isolation for Zainab as she was now able to meet and talk to her siblings whenever she wanted, for example when she was alone in the home and remembered her children that were separated from her in the process of separation. Lone motherhood can be an opportunity to increase social ties and thus alleviate social isolation and loneliness.

Where family ties were reduced, for some Pakistani lone mothers their Pakistani female friends were an integral form of support, especially during the initial stages of lone motherhood (see Fatimah's experiences in Section 4.3). Ruqayyah's friend provided practical support in caring for her new-born baby while her family was abroad. Practical and emotional support from friends can help reduce social isolation and therein feelings of loneliness in such crucial life stages. This shows the growing importance of friendships as much as family ties (Spencer and Pahl 2006; Smart et al 2012). Individuals increasingly look towards friends in times of need and particularly amongst women there is a duty, emotional investment and strong moral feeling to help friends through tough patches (Spencer and Pahl 2006; Smart et al 2012).

5.6.2 Emotional dimensions of loneliness

Lone mothers also discussed not having an integral form of support from their husband/children's father. This resulted in feelings of loneliness. It impacted them on both an emotional and practical level. In terms of emotional feelings of loneliness lone mothers felt that there was no one to share their feelings with, particularly at times of difficulty. There was particularly emotional stress of having to practically manage everything alone as Zahra's experience demonstrate. Zahra expressed the difficulties and fears of living and bringing up children alone. She felt that it is better when both the husband and wife can support each other in the upbringing of children:

Sarah: "And what is not a good thing for you about being a lone mother?"

Zahra: "Yees, being alone this not that just-er alone is not good 'because' you even feel scared that one that 'life' that is a-alone that doesn't go by good that children there are they as well, meaning a bit that what do they say don't stay in 'control' (Sarah: yes) when there is both 'husband wife' that both of their 'focus' is upon the children their life that there is can be good (Sarah: yes) okay sooo I say this."

Ayman expressed the lack of practical support she had due to her husband being away from her, he was yet to come to England. Although she did express that she was able to obtain more emotional support talking to him over the phone:

Sarah: "...being a lone mother does it make her feel lonely?"

Ayman (Interpreter): "Yeah she said that she said that when she's going through a difficult time when she's having some issues and problems you know she's got no one to really talk to about it erm or no one to support her (Sarah: yeah) erm but she said she does ring her husband in Bangladesh and discuss it with him but although he supports her over the phone there's nothing that he physically can do to support her (Sarah: yeah, cause he's not here) he's not here."

Loneliness can also be presented in feelings of exclusion. Hafsa discussed the exclusion lone mothers could experience being around women at SAW's Place who lived in an idealised nuclear family (both in the mainstream British and SA culture). This also relates to how they are situated within the wider community:

Hafsa (worker): "ermm it must be hard for them when they sit with you know their friends and they've got yeah their husbands and they're doing stuff for them doing stuff for the children they probably feel a bit left out..."

On the other hand, attending group sessions at SAW's Place can reduce feelings of loneliness amongst lone mothers in the sense that they can see they are not the only ones going through difficult life circumstances, there are other women within the community in similar circumstances, as Fatimah found when she attended:

Sarah: "And erm how like how did those classes help you?"

Fatimah: "They I have been coming to the 'class', this it was a 'group' between yourself whatever circumstances in the house 'share' your own to your 'friend', listen to each other, that one tells listen to the other, the other tells listen (Sarah: yes) what is with them what is with you, so yourself between each other that is"

Sarah: "How does it feel to you?"

Fatimah: "It was very good, I used to say at that time I used to think that maybe it is wrong with me (Sarah: yes) when I everyone's mixed women were sat so they told their own 'story' (Sarah: yes) then I thought it is like this for everyone (Sarah: yes) hmm"

This illustrates the importance of co-ethnic shared-identity networks in reducing social isolation and loneliness as most recently found by Salway et al (2020). Overall, being involved in organisations, social support networks and wider friendship circles can both reduce and increase feelings of loneliness and create both feelings of exclusion or inclusion for lone mothers due to differences or similarities in their circumstances and family structures.

5.6.3 Social isolation and loneliness in the home

Aishah (worker) touched upon lone mothers being "*always stuck in the house ready to look after their children and doing stuff for their children*". Lone mothers expressed a sense of social isolation in the home. Head (2005) has argued that the home and mothering can be a site of oppressiveness, boredom and isolation. Furthermore, Gavron (1966, p. 150) has called motherhood "a kind of captivity". One route of escaping this captivity was through employment. In fact, when I asked lone mothers about the reasons behind engaging in employment, or wanting to do so in the future, overcoming social isolation and loneliness was highlighted a few times. One reason for Asma now wanting to find a job was to overcome the boredom and loneliness of being at home:

Asma: "...life is very boring at home (Sarah: yeah) especi you know I'm not I'm not going out and about and chilling or anything I'm not I'm at home and it does get boring and I do have time and I'd love to meet other people and start earning my own bread and finding my wings again that you know that once upon a time the woman that I knew you know who whose working and had a circle of friends it might find my confidence again"

During supporting Suwaybah to fill in a job application at SAW's Place "*she told me that she thinks it is better to work, rather than to stay at home, it is lonely*" (fieldnote 19.12.18). This matches previous findings by Brah (1994, p. 161) where employment outside of the home

was cited "as an antidote to the boredom and isolation of staying at home". Employment can be a chance for women to create social connections or engage with people outside of the home (Brah 1994). Haajrah took up employment when she first became a lone mother, it helped her overcome the depression and social isolation she felt after her husband left her:

Sarah: "So what were your 'experience[s]' of working?"

Haajrah: "They were good (Sarah: yes) hmm, it felt good like I used to go there and meeting someone talking (Sarah: yes) and-er I was also going to learn a thing as well..."

In this sense the home can be seen as 'a prison' (Allan and Crow 2001) for some lone mothers and employment as key in reducing loneliness. However it is also recognised that they need to overcome the barriers to employment cited here to then commit to employment, elevate the boredom of staying at home and reduce social isolation and loneliness (Brah 1994). It can offer a chance to meet new people, socialise and also learn new things. Finally, as lone mothers may also be rehoused upon separation in new areas or cities it can also take time to build up networks, friendships and access services which can help overcome social isolation. Overall, various dimensions of social isolation and loneliness are illustrated in this section.

5.7 Conclusion

Through exploring five diverse areas which interrelate to shape PBM lone mothers' journeys to independence this chapter has illustrated the independence, dependency, barriers, disadvantages and opportunities participants' face in the process. There were both similarities and differences in PBM lone mothers' experiences compared to lone mothers and PBM women in previous studies. For instance, in regards to similarities, through lone motherhood and separation women were able to feel greater self-determination via financial independence (Duncan and Edwards 1999; Guru 2009). However, adding to more recent studies (e.g. Lawson and Satti 2016; Stack and Meredith 2018), it was also found that financial independence was not straightforward as participants were facing financial struggles, poverty and insecurity. Their gendered, class and lone mother identities shaped such experiences as well as structural aspects, for example the Benefit Cap impacting Maymoona.

Furthermore, a range of barriers to employment were found, such as a lack of human capital (Salway 2007) and structural barriers which include job availability and fitting work around childcare (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). Whether employment improves living standards was also questioned through working mothers' accounts of getting by, having to budget or facing precarity (Maryam's case). Lack of English language proficiency is an intersectional difference. It is a key barrier to employment. Significantly, apart from Ahmed's (2008) study, there has been a lack of exploration of the everyday impacts English language has in migrant PBM women's lives. This study addresses this gap illustrating the specific barriers lone mothers' face and opportunities learning English provides in improving their quality of life. Differences and similarities were also found among different groups of participants, with migrant low-educated lone mothers facing multiple layers of barriers in their journeys to independence. It has to be recognised that women may not fully achieve independence, for example those with health barriers.

More specific differences in experience are illustrated related to PBM women's intersectional religious, ethnic, cultural and gendered identities including money borrowing decisions likely to be shaped by religious considerations, attending to children's religious educational needs, women still earning money sewing from home and engaging in ethnic enclaves (questioning assumptions of generational change in employment) and facing loneliness due to a lack of family support which is related to the stigma of separation. Another intersectional difference is in relation to spousal visa requirements which can impact mothers' decisions to pursuing employment. Furthermore, some Pakistani lone mothers continue to face patriarchal control and vulnerabilities to abuse due to their housing situation, for instance where houses were brought in husbands' names (Chowbey 2017). This again questions the extent to which lone motherhood allows participants to escape patriarchy and achieve independence (Duncan and Edwards 1999). Structural barriers to attaining social housing halt women from moving forward in their lives, improving their living conditions and having better access to resources (Thurston 2013). Poor provisions, austerity measures and broken housing systems place lone mothers in adverse circumstances. Lone mothers' experienced multiple dimensions of loneliness in their lives. The chapter thus contributes to addressing the research questions in relation to lone motherhood experiences, the wider structures shaping their lives and again shows intersectionality as a useful tool to examining experiences.

Finally, the chapter touches upon the essential role of SAW's Place in supporting lone mothers, especially for those with English language barriers. It brings attention to the everyday difficulties they would face in navigating systems, such as the local housing system, without the support of SAW's Place. The next chapter will focus more specifically on addressing the last research question regarding the role of SAW's Place in facilitating lone mothers' agency and independence.

Chapter 6: "If it weren't for SAW's Place" The role of SA women's organisations

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 (Section 1.3) provided details of SAW's Place as an organisation. As the previous two findings chapters argue SAW's Place played an essential role in the lives of many of the participants in this study. This chapter will focus on the services offered by SAW's Place as a case study to demonstrate the role played by SA women's organisations in facilitating agency amongst PBM lone mothers through an emphasis on independence, thus addressing the last research question (Takhar 2011; Reddy 2019). Overall, bearing in mind the long history of black women's organisations in ethnic minority women's lives, the chapter provides an in-depth continuation of exploring and analysing the multi-dimensional support SAW's Place offers to lone mothers. Applying an intersectional lens, it will present similarities and differences in service provision to different groups of service users. The chapter continues to focus on the distinct disadvantages and barriers participants face, due to their intersecting identities and positionalities in wider society, for example as Muslim women and ethnic minorities. Discussions will be framed by participant observations at SAW's Place, experiences of lone mothers using SAW's Place services and more specifically interviews that explored the professional experiences and perspectives of SAW's Place workers and external partners.

Central to SAW's Place services is encouraging women's independence (a wider social policy emphasis on independence was outlined in Chapters 2 and 5). This was embedded in many of their services, as found in observation and interview analysis, thus is a core theme cutting across this chapter. There is a particular emphasis on encouraging '*confidence*' and building '*self-esteem*' particularly amongst women who have been through traumatic experiences, such as some of the lone mothers in this study who have survived DA. More broadly, SA women's organisations are located at the intersection of women's organisations, ethnic minority organisations (often referred to as 'BME' organisations) and the wider third or voluntary sector. As established in Chapter 2, such organisations have historically supported those whose needs were not met by formal mainstream channels (Craig 2014). SA women's organisations have particularly been recognised as challenging gendered oppression and racism through activism (Takhar 2011). Serving their own communities needs continues

today. Resultingly, the chapter will also focus on the barriers PBM women face to accessing mainstream organisations and the role of SAW's Place in overcoming this. Overall, the chapter will be divided into four sections: facilitating '*independence*' and '*confidence*' amongst women, barriers and solutions to accessing mainstream services, activism and, lastly, developing SAW's Place's areas of activism.

6.2 Facilitating '*independence*' and '*confidence*' amongst women

Facilitating independence and building confidence was the main overall theme drawn particularly from interviews with SAW's Place workers as well as observations and interviews with lone mothers who used the service regularly. It was evidently embedded throughout the services and support SAW's Place offered. The multi-dimensional forms of support, such as practical, emotional, psychological and social support, offered by SAW's Place workers were also observed.

Khadijah, the head worker at SAW's Place introduced in Chapter 3, described the make-up of women who used the service most frequently due to the disadvantages and barriers they faced associated with their intersecting identities as migrants, SA women, "*women of colour*", being working class as well as being survivors of DA or DV and having a lack of human capital (Salway 2007) at their disposal (see Chapter 5, for example lack of English language skills as a barrier in everyday life). Lone motherhood can add another layer of disadvantage:

Khadijah: "I suppose it adds an extra layer of disadvantage when you're a lone mother."

Sarah: "How?"

Khadijah: "Yeah because you know if you're, our services is for disadvantageded women and their disadvantages that they are erm (brief pause) because of they are erm being an emigrant, disadvantageded because they are a woman because they're South Asian women women of colour eeerm they have lower educational background, that's an disadvantage eer they don't know English to a high level, that's a disadvantage and then they're lone parents, that's another disadvantage they might be abused in in (Sarah: yeah) suffering domestic violence that's another ad disadvantage yeah (Sarah:

yeah) so th there's just different different kinds of disadvantage that just all adds up then doesn't it."

As Khadijah argues above, together these identities and life circumstances create accumulating layers of disadvantage (Crenshaw 1991), barriers and exclusion which particularly impact migrant less-well educated PBM lone mothers' everyday lives and ability to operate independently. Thus, SAW's Place supports this group of women in navigating and overcoming such disadvantages. This can be achieved through workers supporting women via advocacy support to build confidence, to learn new skills and encouraging independence over time. For lone mothers this includes, encouraging financial independence; developing parenting skills; handling everyday service issues themselves, such as making phone calls, reading letters and going to appointments; women being aware of their rights (see Section 6.4) and being offered education opportunities, like a course at SAW's Place. This can also extend to making sure women have the skills and resources available to manage their everyday lives. However, the first step in supporting lone mothers is workers building a relationship of trust with them, which the below sub-section will discuss. This is particularly important in providing continued support.

6.2.1 Building a relationship of trust with lone mothers

A key aspect identified in interviews with workers as the first step in providing continued support to women is building a relationship of trust over time. Workers discussed how they sought to build trust and rapport with women, particularly those who have experienced exclusion and been through traumatic life experiences (see Chapter 4, DA and marital breakdown for example):

Sarah: "In your own experience how do you build up like a relationship of trust with the lone mothers that you support?"

Sawdah: "I think it's to to really understand their experience you know and not make assumptions...what is it that they're struggling with you know it could be it could be completely different from my perception of what it is to be a single parent and I need

to put that aside er and I think that's really helped erm take my take my lead from my clients what they need and support them that's really helped build the trust."

Halimah: "I made them feel comfortable and let them open up so I dealt with the issues that they wanted me to deal with...and then kind of building that trust slowly and let them open up to me in their own time..."

It is evident from Sawdah and Halimah's comments that building trust takes a user led approach. Having a shared gender identity as women is important. Workers engage in emotional labour and empathy, a role often associated with women's traditional gender roles (Hochschild 2012). Women are given space and time to open up on their own terms, importance is attached to listening to their stories, problems and needs first, being understanding and not making assumptions about their circumstances (Reddy 2019). As a result of negative experiences, women can have low self-esteem and a lack of confidence. Consequently, *"it's very difficult for them to trust"* (Sawdah). They *"need someone who can hear their problems"* (Khadijah) and SAW's Place workers offer this very opportunity through the emotional support they provide. As the above interview extracts illustrate, lone mothers are able to express the difficulties they face and share their story in a confidential non-judgemental space, on their own terms. The addition of the organisation being a women's only space is also important as being in a comfortable and safe environment enables them to share their stories.

Griffith and Malik's (2018) report argues that community-based organisations, like SAW's Place, have greater ability to provide personalised support and relationships of trust. There is not only an importance here of having a shared gendered identity between service users and workers, but also a significance of being a culturally sensitive co-ethnic organisation. *"Culturally congruent care is at the core of South Asian women's organizations"*, they offer linguistic and culturally sensitive services (Reddy 2019, p. 135). As the workers are from similar cultural and religious backgrounds, from the SA diaspora, they can understand cultural sensitivities and needs of women. This can allow for more understanding of women's lived experiences, such as marriage experiences (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014; Reddy 2019).

Building trust was also reflected in my own experiences of supporting lone mothers. In relation to this, time was an important theme which came through in participant observations. As established in Chapter 3, despite my shared gendered, ethnic and religious identity, on occasions it took time to convince women to come to me for support rather than a worker they had an established rapport with. Interviews with workers revealed that there was also a practical reason behind this: women would much rather go to a worker who already knew of their situation or an ongoing issue instead of having to explain their situation again. Most often women wanted to go to Hafsa for support due to her continuous presence at SAW's Place, experience and specialist expertise. Hafsa was evidently a key worker at SAW's Place. However workers try to convince women to receive support from whoever is available at the time to reduce dependency on one worker, as illustrated in the below fieldnote. Again, it also illustrates my outsider status as a relatively new volunteer:

A lot of times I have noticed that women want to see a particular worker, one that has helped them before either on several occasions or with a specific query/issue. However the sessions are random, so clients have to go to whoever is available. Sometimes this has to be reiterated to the women. I have found that sometimes women don't want to see me but another specific worker, mostly Hafsa, I try to persuade them that I will help them but often they still want to go to the worker they normally go to. (Fieldnote 06.03.19)

Simultaneously, it is important upon first accessing SAW's Place vulnerable women in particular have continuous support from one worker. This has been reflected in myself supporting Zahra (see Chapter 4). Clearly there is an importance of building a relationship of trust, listening to women's stories and experiences, much like feminist interviewing. This involves emotional labour from workers while practically supporting women (Bergen 1993; Hochschild 2012). Service users also have the opportunity to book a longer one-to-one appointment for more in-depth support from a specific worker. Thus, SAW's Place is able to offer a range of advocacy support to women. This is explored in the next sub-section.

6.2.2 Advocacy service

During my time at SAW's Place I observed a wide range of support offered to PBM lone mothers through advocacy, both by myself and workers. This included translating letters, making phone calls to services (including benefits, local council and utility bills services), applying for housing, liaising with social workers, supporting mothers with school issues (e.g. looking for schools for children), applying for benefits, CV making and filling job and driving licence applications. Thus, there is a wide breadth of support offered. Throughout supporting service users, Hafsa informed me of the importance of women having a lead and input in informing workers about the support they require:

The woman that came upstairs with me was a lone mother, the first time I had seen and supported her –Kulsoom. She showed me her gas bill, saying that it had come but she has already paid a whole year till [month]...She wanted to know why this bill had come. (Fieldnote 09.01.19)

Migrant less well-educated lone mothers came to SAW's Place for help with everyday mundane issues. They required support on an everyday basis due to a lack of English skills (as discussed in Chapter 5), not having handled such issues alone prior to becoming a lone mother and having a lack of confidence in being able to contact services independently. On many occasions like the above, the next step would be to help them with the query at hand. While supporting lone mothers it was important to inform them of what was being said, for instance during a phone call. The organisation always reiterates that workers can support women, provide them with the necessary information but ultimately the decision of what to do next is theirs. Focusing again on supporting Kulsoom on this occasion, the below extract shows the process after I had enquired into the situation:

I explained this [explanation given over the phone about the bill] to Kulsoom, she said okay she will pay. I asked if she had any questions for the adviser, she said no and then I put the phone down. I explained everything again, and she said she will pay. She asked should she give it all at once, I said yes, she said she will...pay half half, half at once and half the week after. I said okay it asks for one payment. Then I said okay because it is ultimately up to her how she pays. (Fieldnote 09.01.19)

Thus, in supporting women again there is a sense of instilling confidence and agency for them to make their own decisions with the support of workers as advocates. I supported the same lone mothers over a few occasions (Kulsoom, Maryam, Zahra). This was often due to the need of continuous support regarding a certain issue, such as searching for housing. Women also would come with more than one query during an appointment. While supporting lone mothers there were many occasions where we were waiting in a queue for services to answer the call. Often there were less women coming for support on the day I attended due to the service being busier earlier in the week. Together this provided a good opportunity to chat with lone mothers, they could express how their day was going and share concerns they had while I was supporting them:

...Therefore I called UC [Universal Credit], went through the options and we waited for them to pick up. While we were waiting Zainab told me that she also wants her [household item] to get fixed [discusses specific difficulty faced due to this]...Then she told me about going into town this morning on the way to her children's school. She said there were some bus and vehicle accidents. I said that the weather is nice today and we began to talk about the weather... While we were talking a UC adviser picked up the line. (Fieldnote 27.02.19)

This was further reiterated as a practice used by workers in an interview with Hafsa:

Hafsa: "Yeah I try to yeah build rapport with them so if it's some- at to do with benefits always asking how are you doing how are the kids what you doing are you planning anything in the school holidays just generally and just (Sarah: yeah) talking about other things as well not just benefits you know all the letters that they've brought with them trying to kind of distract them away from all the stress as well."

Sarah: "And what kind of like stress would you say?"

Hafsa: "Like all the, you know benefits stopping and then they've got all these bills ...they're really worried and they need the money for food and basic stuff (Sarah: yeah) so most of them come in really you know just stressed and depressed and you know

worried, worried about how are they gonna you know make everything meet and then we try to establish why the money was stopped to help them..."

Therefore, the sessions offer more than solely practical support. There is also an opportunity for lone mothers to gain emotional support, demonstrating another dimension of support provided. This illustrates the impact having to navigate through everyday barriers, the welfare state, coping and managing through deprivation and meeting basic necessities, can have on lone mothers' mental wellbeing. Linking back to discussions on social isolation and loneliness (Chapter 5, Section 5.6), SAW's Place is a site for everyday sociality where lone mothers have someone who they can share their circumstances and feelings with, contributing to improving their quality of life. Working one-to-one with lone mothers and providing emotional support as advocates can help them through precarious situations and offers a mental break from the everyday.

This practical and emotional dimension was also observed in advocacy sessions with Bangladeshi service users. Throughout observations, I observed Halimah providing support to four lone mothers. As Halimah was the only Bangladeshi advocacy worker at the time of fieldwork I found that the service was often very busy, meaning that she had to prioritise supporting women with their most pressing needs. She often had to book further one-to-one appointments to provide more time. This was further reflected upon in the interview:

Halimah: "The task that I do (Sarah: yeah) whether it's going over my time but as long as I know the client are happy are left happy but there are times where the [states office and area] is absolutely crazy and I have kind of turn some of the clients, not turn them down like I will see them but I won't see every so they'll probably come with five (Sarah: yeah) five things for me to do but then I kind of limit it so I take the most pri I prioritise the the the things that I need doing and I go from there really and then I tell them to come back the following week or book them an appointment to see me in the afternoon (Sarah: yeah) so I can spend more time with them..."

SAW's Place is located within the wider voluntary sector and ethnic minority organisations. Harries et al (2020) have most recently stated that limited resources, as a result of austerity

measures, result in larger workloads for services and extra pressure for workers, while an increasing number of people require help with complex problems. Ethnic minority services are particularly impacted and disproportionately under pressure (Craig 2014; Tilki et al 2015). This is clearly illustrated in Halimah's experiences above, demonstrating both the demand for SAW's Place services and stretched resources hindering Halimah's ability to provide comprehensive support. Lone mothers, Hira and Ayman, who had more complex issues, often came back for support later in the day when it was less busy. It also demonstrates the commitment of workers to help women despite drawbacks. Each lone mother was provided with support tailored to their specific situation, a key strength of SAW's Place. For example, Hira would often come with a bunch of letters ready in her bag to be interpreted:

Hira has got a pile of letters out on the desk which she got out from her bag when she came in. (Fieldnote 01.03.19)

Halimah would go through them one by one explaining what they encompassed. They usually included utility bill letters (e.g. she required support in arranging payments) and letters for her child who required specific learning support. Thus, a lot of time was spent observing Halimah ringing services and reading letters. Furthermore, as presented in Chapter 5 in relation to financial struggles, Halimah provided continuous support to Ayman with entering and leaving employment. To support Ayman with her childcare needs, Halimah had also offered extra support to Ayman through a home visit:

She said that she went to a home visit to Ayman's house yesterday and she got so much done, she also applied for UC for Ayman using the laptop and internet. (Fieldnote 03.05.19)

The worker is explaining a Housing Benefit letter to Ayman. I say to Halimah hasn't it stopped because she applied for UC. But then Halimah explains to me the letter came before they applied for UC and after she filled out a change of circumstances form online for Ayman stating that she started work. She then explains to me that after two days this was done she had to fill out another change in circumstance form as Halimah left work ... Therefore, that is why she's now applied for UC. (Fieldnote 10.05.19)

Much like my experiences supporting Zahra, this fieldnote reveals the complexities of the benefit system. This form of support was integral because "poor language skills and a lack of basic system literacy render such negotiations impossible for most claimants" (Forbess and James 2014, p. 82). Thus, women can face difficulties in navigating an array of welfare services on their own. Looking back at the fieldnotes it is quite evident that Halimah had to navigate through various services and messy procedures to help Ayman in and out of employment over a relatively short period of time. Both Ayman and Hira had support networks, such as family and friends, that could potentially support them through these issues, however they came to Halimah for regular professional and confidential support. Thus, the availability of SAW's Place as a resource means that:

Halimah: "...they don't have to go to extra you know random people and ask for support (Sarah: yeah) because then they're gonna know their business and they don't want not everybody wants lone parents nobody really wants other people to know their own business..."

During my time at SAW's Place, one emerging concern was that facilitating independence through ongoing support risks creating dependency upon workers (Forbess and James 2014). This can particularly be reflected in lone mothers, such as Hira, coming regularly (almost every week in some cases) to gain support for everyday tasks such as reading letters or calling services. Furthermore, a sense of dependency can be illustrated in an observation where I was supporting Maryam with applying for social housing:

At one point, Maryam said to me "you speak softly" and if she knew English well she would speak to the council herself in such a manner that they would help her "straightaway". This shows an awareness of the ways in which being able to confidently and fluently speak in English would be an advantage to her, reducing dependency. (Fieldnote 24.06.19)

This demonstrates how dependency on others makes lone mothers feel and their awareness of the barriers they need to overcome to reduce dependency, in this case learning English.

Thus, although fostering independence is a key aim of SAW's Place, workers know the journey is long.

6.2.3 Facilitating women's long journeys to independence

Workers acknowledge that the journey to independence does take time and, while women develop their skills, ongoing support is essential. One underlying objective of SA women's organisations cited by Takhar (2011) is empowering women towards independence. This involves helping lone mothers overcome barriers. As mentioned, in the early stages of lone motherhood and accessing SAW's Place, women require continuous support. However gradually this dependency is reduced:

Juwariya: "at the beginning they come very very frequently to SAW's Place almost every day they come here to see us and er once they get on get on their feet er (Sarah: yeah) they they you know they don't require more support from us they become independent empowered and independent and that they are able to do their own stuff for themselves and that's that's one of the goals (Sarah: yeah) and purposes for er er er SAW's Place has."

I found workers facilitating independence taking a step-by-step approach, through encouraging women to do small tasks themselves. This was demonstrated in many observation accounts of support being provided to lone mothers by both myself and workers. One such account is presented here:

Then Halimah shows her how to search for them [visual learning aids for child] online and explains in Bengali what visual aids are e.g. books. She shows her [Hira] how to select an item and put it in the basket, how to carry on shopping and then check out...Then she speaks in Bengali. She tells her to "browse", "have a look", [encouraging her to be more independent]. (Fieldnote 15.02.19)

The above encounter demonstrates the strategies used by workers to encourage independence. Women are encouraged to complete tasks themselves in a supportive

environment. What may seem like small steps are integral in fostering confidence amongst lone mothers, transforming their lives and helping to reduce dependency on the organisation. Although, while supporting Zahra, I found that reducing dependency was also a practical necessity for SAW's Place. Khadijah stated in her interview:

Khadijah: "...so we're quite caring you know and we're quite well resourced as well thankfully that we can book a taxi sometimes (Sarah: yeah) erm but erm well not resourceful but we have those financial resources at the moment to help in that way but we do give them a push.... I do remind staff quite regularly the little pushes that we need to do (Sarah: yeah) and everybody does it because you know obviously we're working with li er limited resources...we have an ever increasing workload (Sarah: yeah) you know because we're then new clients come in and the old ones we never close any files... so we put our foot down we have to work in the constraints as well..."

This again relates to the wider issue of voluntary sector services having constrained resources while demand for services increase, in this case an increasing need to support new service users (Forbes and James 2014; Griffith and Malik 2018; Harries et al 2020). This is another reason why there is a "push" towards independence. A constraint in resources was apparent while supporting Zahra. Khadijah asked me to accompany Zahra to some of her appointments. At first they were providing her with a taxi to get to relevant places:

Khadijah told me that she wanted her to learn how to get to the buildings by bus. She said currently they were arranging a taxi for her, however this costs too much for the organisation and they try to save money for the organisation where they can. (Fieldnote 21.02.19)

SAW's Place does not have resources to provide this level of continued support. Thus as discussed in Chapter 4, I supported Zahra in becoming familiar with the bus service and travel. One day while I was sat in the office making some notes Khadijah said she required a volunteer to accompany Zahra to appointments. I was not able to provide support on the day required and there were no volunteers available to accompany her. This demonstrates how a lack of resources in terms of volunteer availability, which many community organisations rely upon

under austerity (Harries et al 2020), can constrain the support SAW's Place is able to offer. Thus, arrangements were made for Zahra to go alone:

...as there was no one to go with her Khadijah said that she will arrange a taxi for her. She also said that on the way back Zahra has to go and pick up her money from [states place]. I told Khadijah that she can go on the bus and figured out how she can go...Khadijah asked me to call Zahra to explain the route to her...where to get the bus, where to get off and on. She said that Zahra will say that she cannot do it however I should persist, telling her that she can and that I would probably have to repeat things. Therefore I rang Zahra and [informed her about the situation]. I also told her how to get to the [state place] from the job centre...She said at one point that she is getting a paper to note this down. I encouraged her saying that she will be able to do this... (Fieldnote 27.02.19)

As Khadijah later stated, for Zahra this may have "felt like a bit of abandonment" however she had "to make this journey". This illustrates the decisions SAW's Place workers have to make on how to allocate limited resources, reserving them for those who need them the most while aiming to encourage women to do things for themselves. They equip women with the resources, practice and skills to do so. Later during an observation and in the interview, Zahra said she had been to the city centre alone on a few occasions:

Zahra: "...they used to tell me you have to go there 'sometime[s]' they used to get a 'taxi' for me I didn't used to know so er"

Sarah: "Afterwards you went on the bus?"

Zahra: "Yes I went on the 'bus' I also go on the 'bus' four five times I went on the 'bus' as well...so it used to be difficult for me then they [SAW's Place] taught me then I, used to go"

When we got off the bus she said she was familiar with the area. She said last time when she was getting the bus she went further down and couldn't find the stop. She then asked a "gori" [white lady] who then told her where to get the bus. She said she

walked around and got a bit lost but found it. She said she was embarrassed but I said to her at least at the end she found it. (Fieldnote 03.04.19)

It is important not to underestimate how difficult travelling alone without support would have been for Zahra, but as the above data illustrates with practice and a use of initiative she was able to achieve a sense of independence. The practical support from myself, other volunteers and workers at SAW's Place was key to this transformation. Another dimension of support provided by SA women's organisations, including SAW's Place, is group activities (Griffith and Malik 2018). While providing continued advocacy support the workers also encourage women to take part in other activities organised by SAW's Place, particularly attending English classes and courses (Takhar 2011). Riya, another advocacy worker with a background of providing free legal aid to women in India, stated:

"...when they come to SAW's Place...they don't have much knowledge about about their rights erm it could be rights about where to go, what to do and how to look after children they have that fear (Sarah: yeah) in the mind that what to do so once slowly once they start to er get used to that and also after attending in the classes and counselling with regular counselling...and English classes and when they try to expose outside world (Sarah: yeah) they try to build up their confidence..."

Chapter 5 (Section 5.4) has already highlighted the barriers lone mothers face in their everyday lives due to a lack of English skills, the barriers to learning English and how doing so has or would improve their lives. It is a key step to building confidence and reducing dependency on SAW's Place, as emphasised by workers and lone mothers in interviews. Through attending courses, learning English and new skills (e.g. parenting practices or how to read a letter) women are equipped with skills to enable them to navigate their everyday surroundings and services. An English class ran by SAW's Place is a good example of the multi-dimensional support offered through courses. Women who attend are provided with an opportunity to learn conversational English, such as how to speak over the phone to book an appointment at the doctors. Two workers (Aishah and Halimah) had been involved in delivering these classes. Aishah described what it entailed:

Aaishah: "...we teach them how to make their own you know phone calls, make appointments, how to speak to the doctors erm you know if they've got any aches and pains and about their children so they need an emergency appointments ... so you have like full certain topics that you do (Sarah: yeah) moving houses, school erm shopping, doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, there's a lot of topics... we do role play with them so in real life if they do ever get stuck they, you know they can remember an action...it's basically, trying to build their confidence."

Sarah: "Do you think it has done that like built their confidence over time?"

Aaishah: "...like there's five of the ladies [not specifically lone mothers] that have like I've had them all the way through and I can see a big difference in them... their English has improved as well their confidence has improved A LOT [emphasis here]..."

Thus, taking a practical scenario based approach the class equips women with speaking skills which are essential for their day-to-day lives. It helps women develop confidence to communicate in English. It can also be motivating for lone mothers to see other women develop skills and confidence as Tahira, an English class attendee, stated: *"we think she has done it I am also going to do it"*. Some lone mothers in the study had previously completed courses at SAW's Place, such as childcare, or found out about courses that were offered externally through SAW's Place. Maymoona, a British born lone mother, was able to access a course via SAW's Place:

Maymoona: "...another thing how I came through SAW's Place as well was when I did my [states course name] they called [names training company] erm they it's was through SAW's Place I did it....so they do help I think it's really good what they do..."

Thus, SAW's Place can offer access to resources and opportunities to gain vocational educational qualification for lone mothers using their services. The courses on offer always reflect the needs of service users and strive to facilitate independence, as I also discovered in the employment course. This will now be discussed in detail. As outlined in Chapter 3 (methodology), taking on a social policy perspective and being aware of the pressures PBM women and lone mothers face to commit to employment, I endeavoured to observe an employment course ran by Juwariya at SAW's Place. I intended to explore how the course

helped with employment. While it did prepare women for employment it achieved much more, as I found.

The employment course ran by SAW's Place further illustrates how an encouragement of independence and building of confidence is embedded within courses. It aims to facilitate women's agency through their active involvement. The employment course takes a skills first approach encouraging women to develop their skills and experiences, rather than simply pushing them into employment. The course gave space for women to think about career choices, the barriers they faced to employment and skills they required to develop. They were able to learn about basic aspects of employment, for example what is a job and a career, what skills are employers looking for? Through activities and discussions throughout the five sessions it was quite evident that the course helped women build their self-esteem and confidence. Juwariya established a comfortable and safe space for women to share their views. Participants were encouraged to reflect and think more positively about themselves through tasks such as thinking about: what are you grateful for or *"Who am I? What is my aim?"* Thus, it is evident that an emphasis on independence and facilitating women's confidence and agency is sewn into the different services offered by SAW's Place. This can be illustrated both through one-to-one advocacy support and group sessions, and especially in relation to long term support provided to migrant less-well educated lone mothers.

There is much work done by the workers to build lone mothers' confidence. Saffiyah (manager) acknowledged that it can be a long process for women to heal from the traumas they have experienced, particularly in relation to DA. This is consistent with previous DA studies which find high levels of depression, self-blame and trauma amongst abused SA women (Kallivayalil 2010; Shankar, Das and Atwal 2013; Reddy 2019). Women can also face trauma as a result of the shame attached to divorce (Kapur and Zajicek 2018). Thus, the process of independence and moving forward in their lives takes time. She also alluded to the reality that many women may not heal or become fully independent. Something which was also reflected in some of the older lone mothers' accounts in Chapter 5 (Section 5.4.2), Fatimah and Haajirah stated they will not be able to learn English due to long term ill health:

Saffiyah (worker): "...they feel that they can't empower cause they have cause they suffer from depression, anxiety, they've got hundreds of things running through their minds they just when we put them in classes a lot of them saying they can't understand ...they're not er er at a point where they're ready to learn then the system is saying to them you've got to learn and you've got to go and find jobs and you know move on with your life but it's really difficult for a lot of women it takes (Sarah: yeah) it takes years for them to heal if ever but the system don't wait that long..."

Much like it was argued in Chapter 4 in relation to employment barriers, the above extract from Saffiyah's interview demonstrates that the approach used by the wider system to push lone mothers into independence rather prematurely, for example through employment commitment pressures and expectation to manage their own finances under UC, is at odds with the needs of migrant less-well educated women and the approach taken by SAW's Place. Here there is a more individualised approach (Reddy 2019), acknowledging that for the most disadvantaged and excluded healing and independence takes time or may never be fully achieved.

Predominately the support provided in observations (particularly continuous support) was to lone mothers with the intersecting identities and disadvantages described by Khadijah here. However, highlighting another intersectional difference in the types of support provided, support was also provided to migrant women who are seen as more independent (through their education and employment). They came for more one-off professional support. For example, when I supported Suwaybah to fill in a job application she stated she tried to fill in parts of the application herself but required support. This is another area of specialist support SAW's Place can offer to women. Furthermore, although I did not conduct any observations with Maymoona (British Pakistani lone mother) in the interview we reflected on the advocacy support provided by SAW's Place to help Maymoona with her financial struggles (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1):

Maymoona: "... I even applied for I think it was a council you know they do that grant (Sarah: yeah) that din't go through erm so I was struggling like with appliances and stuff like that and erm (pause) I'd spoken toooo erm I think I spoken to a friend or

something and she was telling me that SAW's Place help they can help you you know it's good to have that support from like you know erm an organisation (Sarah: yeah) because they can you know if you want to put something through they can put it put it better words for you and stuff like that as well..... you need that support because otherwise you don't know where to go, you don't know where to turn"

Maymoona was able to apply for the essential kitchen appliance from an organisation with the support of SAW's Place. She further stated that she would not have known about organisations providing such support *"if it weren't for SAW's Place"*. The resources and connections at SAW's Place disposal enabled her to attain the grant. This demonstrates the vital work advocacy does to enable women experiencing material deprivation access to essential resources. Informal networks are also important here (Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012). Most women come to know about SAW's Place through informal networks such as friends, family and the community as well as officials, such as the police and social workers. Such networks are crucial for identifying resources within the SA community (Werbner 1990; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). The quote also shows a sense of exclusion and not feeling sure where to go for support. Where mainstream services could not support her and the council failed to provide a grant, Maymoona was able to approach one of the workers who was engaged in the local community. In this case ethnic networks and organisations can become vital lifelines (Cederberg 2012; Nayak 2012). Thus, another component of the multi-dimensional support provided by SAW's Place is being a mediator between service users and mainstream organisations for both migrant and non-migrant women. This also questions the support offered by mainstream services. If language is cited as a barrier to mainstream service access, why then are those with the language skills not always able to gain support from mainstream services and come to SAW's Place instead? Is it their positionality as ethnic minorities or racialised others that creates exclusion from resources (Cederberg, 2012)? The next section seeks to address this by discussing the barriers and solutions to accessing mainstream services and the mediating role SAW's Place plays.

Overall, this section illustrates the strategies used to facilitate lone mothers' agency and the multi-dimensional forms of support offered to lone mothers. There is a diverse range of

support required for different groups of lone mothers including more long-term and everyday support for migrant less-well educated, or elder lone mothers with long-term ill health, and more professional support required for well-educated PBM migrant and British Pakistani lone mothers who do not use the service as frequently. SAW's Place is also embedded within the wider ethnic minority and third/voluntary sector; austerity driven measures and a lack of resources impacts the services workers can provide. As this section has shown this interplays with the emphasis upon independence.

6.3 Barriers and solutions to accessing mainstream services

As part of the ethnic minority voluntary and community sector SAW's Place is positioned outside mainstream services. The latter are predominately dominated by white individuals and are documented as being unresponsive to the needs of ethnic minority communities (Nayak 2012; Craig 2014). PBM lone mothers face barriers to accessing mainstream services (Craig 2014). Language is one much discussed barrier (Mirza, 2016), however interviews with SAW's Place workers and the chair trustee delved deeper. Barriers cited by these interviewees included mainstream services having a lack of cultural understanding, SA women's needs not being catered for, women not feeling comfortable or heard (particularly where interpreters are involved), lack of confidence in access and discrimination (Nayak 2012; Griffith and Malik 2018). Sawdah stated women *"feel very alien...they do feel judged they do feel looked down upon"* when accessing mainstream services. This is similar to Griffith and Malik's (2018, p. 8) finding where PBM women felt mainstream services were *"intimidating and hostile"*. Cederberg (2012) argues these forms of exclusion go beyond overt othering practices and are more subtle discrete processes. This perspective was stressed by SAW's Place's chair trustee:

Chair Trustee: "we are more diverse in this country than we ever have been (we have got not it's not just the Pakistani Bangladeshi community we got a whole range of communities out there that don't speak it well English isn't first language how are they getting on how are they managing to get the point of view over some of it is about colour perception erm religion.... I think those are the barriers that are more discriminatory because it's we are more visible the the Pakistani community the Bangladeshi community is more visible so you may speak perfect English which you do

and I may speak perfect English which I think I do sometimes erm but we are always going to be visible and er we're going to get treated slightly differently until you open your mouth it's true though isn't it (Sarah: yeah) erm and I think that's that's the big kind of erm for me that's the bigger barrier than language"

Taking this critical racialised lens there is an importance of moving away from focusing on solely language as a barrier to access. This represents a deracialised language of community cohesion or integration placing more emphasis and onus on culture, religion and ethnic minorities, in this case PBM women, than on racialised relationships (Craig 2014). Instead the chair trustee focuses on the latter, as well as discriminatory practices and how racism and Islamophobia creates disadvantage resulting in this group of women being treated differently and their needs being overlooked (Nayak 2012; Craig 2014). As ethnic minorities, PBM women are excluded from wider support networks and the associated resources (Cederberg, 2012; Nayak 2012; Craig 2014). This highlights the exclusionary, marginalising and 'othering' practices of mainstream services which result in ethnic community networks becoming a vital lifeline for individuals (Alexander, Edwards and Temple 2007; Cederberg 2012; Craig 2014); in this case SAW's Place. As the second trustee stated: *"the things we [that] should have been mainstream are being done by places like SAW's Place"*.

Craig (2014) argues an emphasis on ethnic minority organisations being best placed to provide culturally sensitive services can have drawbacks; it can free mainstream organisations from dealing with the needs of ethnic minorities. One common response to this marginalisation highlighted by Craig (2014) is ethnic minority organisations trying to work with mainstream organisations. One strong approach found in this study was SAW's Place helping SA women to navigate their surroundings and as a mediator equipping and supporting them to gain 'confidence' in accessing mainstream services and resources (Alexander, Edwards and Temple 2007), while also calling for mainstream services to tailor provisions towards the needs of PBM women (Craig 2014), as further argued by Saffiyah:

Sarah: "Do you think sometimes the organisation is taking on work that wider organisations should be taking on?"

Saffiyah: "Yeah so I always say that one day SAW's Place should not be needed because wider organisations are doing their jobs properly yeah so wider organisations should be able to cater for the needs of erm all communities so their services should be adaptable and flexible and culturally specific so people feel that they can go to them directly (Sarah: yeah) yeah but at the moment that's not the case and so you know we have we have a huge role in engaging with people in the community even accessing services... helping engage the community I think is a really big role for us erm but once mainstream organisations can do that, know how to do that, then the[re] won't be need for organisations like us but for now there is"

Over the years SAW's Place has worked with a range of mainstream services, including advice and counselling services, solicitor firms and employment agencies. However, in the past this has not always worked well. Workers discussed mainstream service approaches not always matching the needs of PBM women. Taking the example of counselling, Khadijah stated in the past an external counsellor supported women at SAW's Place. The approach used "*didn't match*" service users' needs (*Khadijah*). It took a set psychological behavioural therapy approach which focuses on changing behaviour whereas women's needs were different:

Khadijah: "...the women are just so full of trauma hhm they aren't at that stage where they can get a handle on their own thoughts by you know checking their thoughts etcetera, and changing their behaviour etcetera they just need a space to erm a confidential space where they can tell their story for the first time (Sarah: yeah) or something like this there's no room for that in the [service]"

In contrast SAW's Place has a more individual and personalised counselling service (Reddy 2019). Sawdah provided counselling support. Through a steady approach lone mothers are again given a confidential environment, time to develop trust and to discuss their experiences:

Sarah: "So what does your role involve? Like what kind of counselling work do you do with them?"

Sawdah: "Well it's for them they're as single erm mums they're dealing with a lot of erm a lot of pressure on their own and I think it it's helpful to come to therapy....it's a trusted environment (Sarah: yeah) they trust the person there they know their safe they know it's confidential space for them to even bounce ideas of another adult....[giving an example of a service user] she feels she's heard she can talk about her worries, her fears, her anxieties without being judged (Sarah: yeah) so that's the space that I I I offer"

In Reddy's (2019, p. 142) study, focusing on professional experiences of therapists working in SA women's organisations, it was found that being of SA background resulted in therapists being "intimately familiar with clients' cultural norms and values, which allowed for a more personal understanding of their experiences" while at the same time being cautious of not making assumptions of ethnic identity. Such understanding also comes forward in Sawdah's approach.

Sawdah: "...again it's it's important to understand so if someone's coming and telling me that they're really struggling with their with their in-laws or mother-in-law like you know it it the answer or the help the person doesn't want me to to help them to get out of there (Sarah: yeah) they're looking to see how they can make it work... the assumption within the mainstream service as well if you're unhappy someplace you need to be out of it (Sarah: yeah) but that's not the experience of Asian women that's not what they're looking for"

Sarah: "Just want to talk about it"

Sawdah: "They just want to talk, they want some ideas some ways of working how can they make things better you know so I think it's it's understanding of that really understanding rather than assuming things."

Thus the organisation offers a tailored service for SA women and is understanding of their individual needs, situations and cultural context (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). Mainstream approaches predominately work through more essentialised assumptions (Turner and Wigfield 2016). Instead Sawdah works with women to find a solution through their problems such as parenting and marriage issues, rather than assuming women always

require to be removed and saving from a situation. Furthermore, in interviews with Sawdah and Halimah it was argued mainstream services need a workforce reflecting the population, so they can meet specific needs, such as language needs and cultural understandings. Not having an ethnically diverse workforce is one reason mainstream services fail to support SA women according to SAW's Place workers (Craig 2014):

Halimah: "like I find now SAW's Place's getting busier and busier and busier especially in the Bengali community I'm just talking for them and I think they need more Bengali advocates even working in CAB [Citizens Advice Bureau] (Sarah: yeah) so rather than employing a White British person (Sarah: yeah) no disrespect to them why not have a few Bengali workers working there?... rather than just spending crazy money on getting interpreters in..."

This is reflected in Halimah's experience of supporting Hira. During observations, Hira received support for a benefits application from the local CAB, involving an interpreter. Having to leave the appointment early due to childcare responsibilities and being misinterpreted/misrepresented by the interpreter and CAB worker, Hira's application was rejected. Halimah supported Hira through this by inquiring into the situation. Again, this demonstrates SAW's Place having to support women in areas where mainstream services should be providing specialist support in the first instance. SAW's Place is left to fill the gap.

However, it is important to note that local mainstream organisations also face cuts. For example, Craig (2014) found the budget of mainstream organisations with specialist services for minorities, such as CAB, have also experienced cuts despite being services which serve the government. This was reflected in an interview with a SA CAB advice worker who stated she faced challenges in supporting SA women due to having a lack of capacity, funding and reduced working hours:

Sarah: "And why do you choose to refer clients to them [SAW's Place]?"

CAB worker: "Well basically because of our workload, if it's just er reading a letter or just doing an initial claim or if it's just filling a simple form in then that's what the advocacy's there for that's why that's the network, that's the contract we have with

them so they do the basic (Sarah: okay) erm erm advocacy work and the more in-depth we do, we used to do it but we haven't got capacity to do it anymore because it's too much workload to do it."

She often referred women to SAW's Place for everyday support while providing more specialist in-depth support herself. Ruqayyah and Suwaybah mentioned previously accessing CAB services. Ruqayyah sometimes preferred to go to SAW's Place as the CAB was often busy with people queuing outside. The CAB worker also wanted SAW's Place to work together with CAB stating: *"they [SAW's Place] don't really liaise with us much"* and *"they're only seeing their own clients"*. Interestingly, this illustrates tensions between the organisations, they are pitted against each other, while both grapple with structural issues, for example increasing workload and funding cuts. It illustrates how cuts can disproportionately impact services that are targeted at ethnic minority populations (Craig 2014), creating inequality and disadvantage. This illustrates the challenges and complexities of providing support to SA women.

However, there was also evidence of mainstream organisations engaging with SAW's Place and having a more inclusive/representative workforce to support SA women. In this study workers from a law firm, DA and employment mainstream organisations were interviewed (see Chapter 5 regarding the mainstream employment worker). The mainstream DA agency has a team of advocates of SA backgrounds who, led by the worker interviewed here, work to provide services targeted and tailored specifically for SA women experiencing DA (see Section 6.4). Furthermore, a law firm solicitor (White ethnic background) offered a family law legal clinic, for example providing advice on divorce, DV cases and access to public funds, at SAW's Place during my time there. I saw this advertised on the organisation's noticeboard and after gaining details from Khadijah, arranged to interview the solicitor. In the interview she informed me of how she was introduced to SAW's Place:

Sarah: "Did you approach SAW's Place or did they approach you?"

Solicitor: "Erm (pause) it were kind of a bit of both so from memory they telephoned our offices because they got a potential client that needed some advice and I happened to phone them back and we just got chatting and I just happened to mention that I

was looking to want to start doing a legal clinic in the community erm and would they be interested, so I went down and had an initial chat with them..."

This illustrates ethnic minority organisations and mainstream agencies reaching out to collectively offer SA women support, in this case offering legal advice. Although this was a relatively new partnership, thus long-term outcomes were not possible to discern at the time, the below quote illustrates the importance of organisations working together. It can help SA women access services, learn about their legal rights and mainstream services can also access SA women. Both may find it difficult to gain access independently. Thus, SAW's Place is an important intermediary:

Sarah: "Mm do you think any like Pakistani or Bangladeshi women they ff-find any difficulties in accessing like services like law firms and"

Solicitor: "Erm (quite long pause) I don't know to be honest with ya erm"

Sarah: "Do you think you would get like more clients? Obviously you're going through the community and SAW's Place then"

Solicitor: "I think yeah I've definitely got more client or met more client potential clients more people things like that through SAW's Place than what I had either (pause) coming on their own volition (Sarah: yeah) erm so I suspect it probably does erm but I'm not quite sure first-hand ... if I think about it I hadn't (pause) yeah really got any clients who were from like you say Bangladesh Pakistan erm prior to starting work with SAW's Place."

The solicitor stated even service users with little English speaking skills were able to have conversations with her or brought along friends or family to interpret, showing that debates should be careful in over-emphasising the importance of ethnically matching workers and service users and ethnic minorities and organisations' reluctance to integrate (Nayak 2012). Furthermore the DA agency worker also stated that SA women are often referred to them via a range of actors, such as local organisations and police. They also hoped to collaborate with SA women's organisations such as SAW's Place in the future.

Overall, this section presents barriers to accessing mainstream services for SA women, how these are embedded in structural issues of racism and a lack of understanding of their needs. Again, austerity measures impact the services organisations are able to provide which places organisations against each other and leaves ethnic minority organisations like SAW's Place to fill service provision gaps. It also presents the potential and some solutions of how ethnic minority and mainstream organisations can work together so SA women can access services and their needs can be met. A final dimension of SAW's Place is its engagement in activism.

6.4 Activism

6.4.1 Activism on the local, micro and macro level

A older but nevertheless relevant paper by Siddique (2000) has criticised women's groups in the UK for not being as politically active as in the past (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5). Many are preoccupied with service provision (Siddique 2000; Takhar 2003). However this seeks to undermine the everyday work that women's organisations such as SAW's Place do to facilitate women's agency and to instil change in the immediate community and wider society. For instance, SAW's Place has worked hard over time to gain acceptance in the local community (Takhar 2003). The manager stated due to SAW's Place helping a young woman leave a DA situation, the local community previously felt the organisation was "*threatening*" and "*breaking our families*". However, as presented in Chapter 1 (Section 1.3), overtime they have gained the local community's trust arguing they are here for the benefit of the community, to challenge negative practices like DA and support women. Saffiyah strongly emphasised "*if you're not abusing them [women, daughters, daughters-in-law] then you shouldn't feel threatened*". Thus, establishing a somewhat accepted place in the community and explicitly raising voices and action against practices such as DA in the past is a form of political and feminist activism.

It can be argued that advocacy support and equipping lone mothers with embodied knowledge, resources and skills required to successfully manage their lives independently is a form of activism in itself. And these dimensions of activism are ones Siddique (2000) and Takhar (2003) do not fully acknowledge. This can be demonstrated using the example of

supporting DV survivors. Hafsa reflected upon supporting migrant women experiencing DV and challenging the fear they are filled with by perpetrators, which prevents them from leaving violent situations (Anitha 2008):

Sarah: "What do you mean by like them not knowing their rights?"

Hafsa: "So some ladies come to us you know especially the ones that have been through domestic violence their partners have told them that you've got no rights here 'if you go outside police or anybody they're going to take you back to your country' ... like they're really they're really confused and they don't know so when we tell them that 'you have got rights here' (Sarah: yeah) you know 'don't believe everything they're telling you' know you know because they don't want them to leave and they don't want them to access services you know learn English you know that kind of thing...many of the ladies told me erm saying that 'Oh my husband says that if you leave me then they're going to deport you they're gonna take your children off you' (Sarah: yeah) erm 'you know lock you up, put you in jail' you know all these scare stories and then they believe it because they don't know anything different."

Often such experiences of abuse amongst SA women are seen as 'harmful cultural practices' in mainstream practitioner approaches, again reflecting racialised discourses of SA women and the dominance of a cultural deficit model, however this fails to acknowledge forces beyond culture that further facilitate perpetrators' control of victims (Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Mirza 2016). Mirza (2016) argues this overlooks state immigration policy as facilitating and intensifying abuse at the micro everyday level. The immigration system gives spouses a probationary period of residency, if a relationship breaks down they no longer have a right to remain, have no recourse to public funds and face deportation (see Anitha 2008; 2011). However, for DV victims the state offers a concession (the Domestic Violence Rule) if the victim can provide certain proofs of DV. This enables women to leave relationships while gaining residency and public funds rights (Anitha 2008; 2011).

However, due to language difficulties and a lack of access to information on rights in many cases perpetrators become women's only source of information (Anitha 2008; Mirza 2016). As is reflected in Hafsa's experiences supporting women. Women's immigration status is

dependent upon their husband and thus this immigration system gives more power to men, or even family members, to misinform women of their rights and state policy (Mirza 2016). Consequently, women can feel they are left with no choice; for them leaving a relationship can result in deportation (Anitha 2008; 2011; Mirza 2016). Therefore, this creates an extra layer of vulnerability and risk for migrant SA women compared to non-migrant SA women. It is important here to deconstruct the narrative. As Anitha, Pearson and McDowell (2012) argues a focus on culture leads to a neglect of structural inequalities which are significant in shaping women's everyday lives. This links to debates of intersectionality presented in Chapter 2, illustrating the importance of accounting for how structure and relations of power shape the micro individual experiences rather than solely focusing on (ethnic and cultural) identities (Collins and Bilge 2016).

SA women's organisations such as SAW's Place play a key role in educating women, providing correct information and raising awareness of rights (Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014; Mirza 2016). This enables women to make an informed decision on dealing with DV and realise their potential to act (Takhar 2011). It is then their choice as to whether they want to leave, unless this involves children as this creates implications for child safeguarding as emphasised by the external DV advocate. Workers complete a DASH form, this is a checklist which recognises the level of risk a client is at from DV and assesses needs. Workers refer women to the relevant services, such as the GP and mainstream DV organisations, to gain support.

Women have long come together to challenge oppression; be that within their own culture or wider society (see Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985; Brah 2009; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012). Similarly women's organisations have been central in challenging immigration laws such as the probationary period and 'no recourse to public funds' rules (Anitha 2008; Mirza 2016). Saffiyah stated SAW's Place has a *"duty to look at issues that keep recurring and look at how we can contribute to making a change in society"*. In the past, SAW's Place has also been involved alongside other women's organisations in challenging these immigration systems and campaigning against the 'no recourse to public funds' law:

Saffiyah: "it's really important not just to accept things the way they are (Sarah: mm, yeah) and to do something about it cause sometimes the injustice is just so great that you just can't stay quiet and it's about you know what kind of society are we [something] (Sarah: yeah) for things like that to happen as well so that was an example you know us erm so social policy and the wider environment affecting us but similarly we can affect (Sarah: yeah) it as well and make change as well"

Although this is not particularly overt political or feminist campaigning, this illustrates the distinct slow burn activism SAW's Place is involved in at the local community level and micro one-to-one scale changing women's lives. SAW's Place also works together with other women's organisations to raise awareness and challenge the macro structural level and policies which disadvantage and create vulnerabilities for migrant SA women experiencing DA or DV.

6.4.2 Faith and activism: an intersectional difference

Siddique (2000) has previously been highly critical of religion (as well as culture) confining women in situations of DV. Particularly after the Rushdie Affair and an increase in anti-Muslim sentiments (Craig 2014) there has been an emphasis on women's organisations moving away from religion (Islam), which was emphasised by Siddique (2000) herself as undermining feminism and anti-racism work. Siddique (2000, p. 92) argues organisations "can be compromised by their underlying religious belief". However such an approach can be disempowering and take away women's agency in itself as it fails to recognise that religion can be an important source of inspiration for Muslim women (Islamic feminism), as McGinty (2012) has previously found. Although workers emphasised SAW's Place is not a faith based organisation and is open to SA women of any background, the service users are predominately Muslim women. Thus, at times religion is a resource to build women's self-esteem and confidence. This was observed in the employment course and then later reflected upon by Juwariya, a Muslim worker, in an interview:

Juwariya: "...women who came to my course they found it er really helpful because er in Islam we've got certain you know er tips or advises which are not necessarily they

are sort of universal ...these are basic things (Sarah: yeah) but I think it's important for women from our background to have that connection....for them it's really easier to maybe to have that belief and that conviction that you know that whatever I'm going to do that I will get blessings in that and I will get reward if I do with open heart with right intention ... I found er from my own experience and from teaching other courses that these are really important tips for the development of self-esteem and confidence in women"

The service users face many difficult situations in life and workers cannot always immediately get them out of such situations. In such cases faith can create a sense of hope, as Khadijah described:

Khadijah: "I think I just I I'm myself in the way I deal with people (Sarah: yeah) and because I have faithto just help the person think about their faith because they are in such difficult situations and erm yeah and I think clients erm are usually helped by that!"

Furthermore, these criticisms can be embedded in Islamophobia, the assumption that Islam serves to oppress women, a misinterpretation of religion and cultural and religious practices being conflated (McGinty 2012; Nayak 2012). However, as a trustee said: *"it's not Islam it's the way our religion is being conducted"*. This can be through community members themselves, such as mosque leaders, and wider society where there is an increase in Islamophobia (Nayak 2012). This can be illustrated taking the case of marriage breakdown, DA and education. In supporting women experiencing marriage breakdown, involving DA and neglection by husbands, Khadijah emphasised that there can be stigma associated with women leaving marriage (Chapter 4 discusses stigma). Religious belief was useful in bringing a service user she supported *"out of self-blame"* and the *"feeling that you've done something wrong if you divorce"*. In Khadijah's view through drawing on Islam women's rights can be emphasised (Lawson and Satti 2016; Qureshi 2018):

Khadijah: "...because everybody knows that you know your religion does not, g gives you your rights (Sarah: yeah) as women you erm you have rights if your husband

violates them you have a right to leave him you know but it's a very cruel kind of cultural practice that (Sarah: yeah) you just have to make the marriage work and the blame goes on the erm woman."

Again, as demonstrated by Khadijah's practice, there is an emphasis on educating women about their rights. A sense of agency can be fostered through educating and reclaiming the rights Islam has provided to women (McGinty 2012). This can be drawn as a strength and shows activism through religion. There are often more critical views on cultural norms which were also brought to attention by a trustee and external DV worker. The second trustee was particularly critical of the Pakistani community in the UK throughout the interview, embedded in her own lived experience of marriage where she felt *"like an independent girl whose feathers are cut and put in a cage"*. Although she felt there has been some progress as women have more opportunities for education. However, the external DV worker acknowledged that DA and DV is a universal problem beyond a specific culture or religious group and SA women's experiences should not be homogenised as each individual case of DA is different. She was quite keen on creating an educational programme for women to recognise what DA is, its triggers, educating them of their rights and misconceptions:

"it's cultural beliefs too it's that I think many women South Asian women and especially Muslim women believe it's religiously they have to remain with their husband despite their husband being physically or emotionally sexually abusive to them so it's educating them that Islam doesn't say you need to remain in a relationship (Sarah: yeah, there's a misconception) yeah you that you remain in that relationship till death does you apart it you know in a way it's it's a sin being allowing someone to abuse you when you know it's wrong and you, there are other options erm so it's getting that message through"

"what I feel me personally a lot of culture was mingled into the religion so it, it's not the religion but they put the culture there and said no it's religion".

The DA advocate felt the government would not introduce a programme educating women about DA, its triggers and rights *"for a long time"*, thus the mainstream DA organisation took

such an approach on their own initiative. There was also an emphasis on educating both women and men that DA is wrong. Although the organisation was not working with SAW's Place at the time (SAW's Place was looking to arrange DA training sessions for workers and volunteers through them) there is a potential for advocates to come together in the future to tackle such practices. Thus religion can be an integral source of support for Muslim women, both service users and service providers. It is a tool for agency and helping women to cope with and re-evaluate oppressive practices. Denying this intersectional difference of religion as an integral identity for women and instead constructing religion as compromising organisations (Siddique 2000) can only seek to disempower or exclude Muslim women. This illustrates a key intersectional difference in service provision and needs for Muslim women.

Overall, these different aspects demonstrate that women's organisations such as SAW's Place continue to be involved in activism. However, it is not always at the macro or political level but can be found on the micro everyday level. Providing women support, education and confidence even through one-to-one discussions drawing on religious rights can result in their everyday lives being improved and an increase in self-esteem and agency. This is an act of activism in itself. However to maintain such practices the organisation faces many barriers in the future.

6.5 Developing SAW's Place's areas of activism

Finally, developing and building SAW's Place services and areas of activism was a reoccurring theme in interviews with workers and trustees, particularly in relation to the challenges SAW's Place faced in maintaining and expanding services for service users. Funding issues were cited as key barriers. This section will focus on areas that workers wanted to expand or introduce to further facilitate independence and confidence amongst women.

6.5.1 Lone mother specific services?

The services offered by SAW's Place are catered towards SA women. They have tailored services for Bangladeshi and Pakistani women but do not offer services solely dedicated to lone mothers. One question I posed to SAW's Place workers was whether they think SAW's

Place should offer services that are catered specifically towards lone mothers. Workers argued that specific services for lone mothers would not be appropriate. The services and courses they already offer are inclusive of lone mothers. There was a concern that separate services would lead to further marginalisation, stigmatisation and isolation amongst lone mothers:

Sarah: "And do you think the organisation should have more kind of services specifically for lone mothers or do you think it's better mixed?"

Sawdah: "...I do feel like it's it's it's good that they have a mix of services I don't want to isolate them further into this this marginalised group of you know that's all you can you know so I do like I would encourage them to be part of of of erm the the whole whole SAW's Place service and attend all of that I think it gives them an an erm an experience of being in the world cause you can't be in a tiny little bubble erm er but if there's if the one-to-one if they need any extra support then I do think that should be encouraged erm but I I think on the whole I would want them to be encouraged to be part of the whole and make friendships within erm you know er not just within lone mothers group but outside as well...I don't want any kind of groups being formed within groups...it comes again them and us again and I won't want that"

Halimah: "No because I think that you're kind of dividing a lone mother from (pause) a married co (Sarah: yeah) married mum ... there's gonna be a lot more stigma there"

Above there is recognition that lone motherhood is one part of women's journeys and the importance of not reducing women as 'lone mothers' which creates a separate group resulting in further stigma. Rather SAW's Place gives them an opportunity to make friendships, discuss experiences with all women involved in the service and feel part of a wider collective. However, this shows intersectional tensions as although Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic differences and needs are recognised and catered for separately, the same is not done more explicitly for lone mothers who experience further marginalisation and barriers than, for example, married women. On the other hand, SAW's Place services are embedded in creating independence which is particularly essential for lone mothers and they are mindful

of lone mothers' needs. Other workers suggested activities that could benefit lone mothers specifically:

Hafsa: "maybe we could yeah have like group sessions tailored for those ladies yeah like have like budgeting... it must be hard for them when they sit with you know their friends and they've got yeah their husbands and (Sarah: yeah) they're doing stuff for them doing stuff for the children they probably feel a bit left out so maybe you know organising like trips things for them as well (Sarah: yeah) so they can go with their children somewhere.."

As argued in Chapter 5, there can be a sense of 'loneliness' as a lone mother and exclusion when talking to non-lone mothers in regards to family activities. Offering small tailored activities such as budgeting or arranging trips particularly for lone mothers with small children can help lone mothers to successfully cope and manage financially, help with parenting responsibilities and worries in their everyday lives. For instance, at the end of our interview Maymoona mentioned finding it difficult to take children out for leisure activities due to her financial struggles.

6.5.2 Securing funding and widening service provision

Over the years SAW's Place has responded to the needs of the growing Bangladeshi community in the area reflecting changing migration settlements and as stated in Section 6.2.2, offers advocacy tailored to their language and cultural needs. As observed and discussed by Halimah the service can be very busy and challenging to handle alone. Thus Halimah argued that the service required expansion: *"they definitely need another Bengali advocacy worker from my point of view"*. Thus, there is a need for attracting a more diverse and representative workforce or volunteers even within ethnic minority organisations. This would allow for better service provision, increased and more regular advocacy support for Bangladeshi women as is provided for Pakistani women at SAW's Place. Furthermore, during observations I saw that there were a lack of resources for Halimah to enable her to support women more efficiently compared to the support offered at SAW's Place. Towards the start Halimah did not have access to Wi-Fi or a regular laptop. Such resources are vital as

increasingly services and applications have turned online. Having an old phone to make calls also proved problematic sometimes resulting in Halimah having to use her own phone:

Halimah says it is difficult to work here than the office because she doesn't have all the resources (e.g. a computer, internet, a good phone - these are essential things there are at the organisation office). (Fieldnote 01.03.19)

Thus, the Bangladeshi service away from the organisation is less well-resourced compared to services at SAW's Place. However it is important to acknowledge that expansion of services is again dependent on access to sufficient funding. Maintaining and bidding for funding is a big barrier SAW's Place and the voluntary sector as a whole faces going forward (Craig 2014; Harries et al 2020).

"My biggest fear at the moment it's kind of how do we maintain the services" (Chair trustee)

Although SAW's Place had a good pot of funding for their advocacy services at the time, in all of the interviews workers and trustees cited funding as the biggest barrier to continuing, expanding, running or introducing services. Overall the voluntary sector has been hit by austerity, cuts in funding and increasing competitiveness (Featherstone et al 2012; Harries et al 2020) to the extent that *"securing funding is not as easy it used to be ten years ago when there was er, more opportunities now ...we're competing with other organisations"* (Chair trustees). Overtime SAW's Place has been experiencing cutbacks from their funders and yet expanding services. There are many barriers the organisation already faces as a result, as presented in Sections 6.2 and 6.3 here. Taking another example, there was an increasing demand and waiting list for counselling however at the time of the interview Sawdah stated they could not employ an additional bi-lingual (e.g. speaks Urdu) counsellor due to the costs, including wages and travel costs. Particularly as she had to look for a counsellor beyond the city in which SAW's Place was located as she could not find a counsellor located there.

With a reduction of funding SAW's Place uses innovative methods to fund some services. During my time at SAW's Place I found that it acted as a food bank at times providing hot food

to women. They provide money and clothing to women who experience hardship and destitution, for example those that are waiting for benefit reciprocity. The waiting area often had a rail of used clothing which women could buy for small prices. To fund some hardship money, lunch was given to staff regularly, charged at a small price. Thus, SAW's Place uses small innovative methods to raise additional funds. Furthermore, Aishah who started off as a volunteer herself stated that the organisation "*mostly runs on volunteers*". Thus, volunteers are a valuable resource (Harries et al 2020) where funding and working hours of contracted staff are reduced due to funding cuts. Furthermore, Saffiyah and Khadijah persist tirelessly to look and bid for funding in a competitive environment (Harries et al 2020):

Saffiyah: "...you know putting funding bids in is soo resource intensive so time intensive and (Sarah: yeah) then if you get knocked back it just you know it puts you off and then you know having to put another application in is just is just you know it's such hard work that (Sarah: yeah) erm and so the environment we're in it's very competitive and I think we're quite fortunate to still be around..."

SAW's Place was also exploring innovative ways to expand services in the future, reflecting the increasingly competitive funding arena, to continue facilitating women's agency. The chair trustee discussed forming a small self-sustaining enterprise. This does not aim to replace existing services as there is an ongoing need for advocacy support. It aims to play to women's strengths, unique skills and services that they can offer, such as cuisine. A key challenge is thinking about how the service can be self-maintained. This approach can be more successful than women and lone mothers such as Maryam pursuing self-employment alone as it can be a struggle maintaining and navigating self-employment (see Chapter 5). This idea instils a sense of activism, facilitation of independence and confidence, through SA women coming together as a collective, including working with professional SA businesswomen. There is a notion of self-help (Craig 2014) and supporting each other as a counter to the hostility, racism, Islamophobia and sexism that SA women may face in the community and wider third sector. This reflects back to the history of SA women's activism and organising in the past (Brah 2009; Takhar 2011; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012) but through more contemporary means.

6.6 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter contributes to addressing the fourth research question illustrating the different dimensions of support offered by SAW's Place to PBM women and lone mothers and its mediating role. Revealing intersectional differences (McCall 2005; Yuval-Davis 2006) support also differs between Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and women of different educational backgrounds with some requiring more long-term support compared to others (see Section 6.2). The diverse methods utilised to facilitate lone mothers' agency are illustrated particularly through an encouragement of independence (Takhar 2011), confidence, building of self-esteem and overcoming barriers such as learning English or travelling alone. The chapter also locates SAW's Place within the wider voluntary sector, ethnic minority organisations and of course women's organisations. This is associated with many structural barriers and challenges, including facing funding cuts (Craig 2014; Harries et al 2020), increasing service provision pressures and barriers associated with how ethnic and religious minorities are situated in relation to racism, religion (Islamophobia) and gendered identities which is of course intersectional (Brah 1996; Patel 2013). This particularly relates back to the importance of considering structural relations of power in intersectional approaches (Bryson 2016) as they influence the kinds of exclusion and marginalisation PBM women face both as a collective and in their personal circumstances (Brah 1996).

Interventions that are required to best meet the needs and rights of PBM women are also articulated including continuous engagement in activism (at the local, micro and macro level), mainstream services being more inclusive of PBM women's needs, ethnic minority and mainstream services working together and providing educational opportunities for PBM women. Examples of this include DA and immigration law awareness and learning English. This is something which SAW's Place and external partners are already doing as articulated in interviews. Funding is observed as a central concern for such interventions to be expanded. There also needs to be an acknowledgement of PBM women's identities and positionalities as Muslims as a key intersectional difference. Religion is viewed as opposing work of women's organisations (Siddique 2000; Takhar 2003). However it is evident here that the articulation of women's rights through religion can be a source of agency, developing self-esteem and confidence for Muslim women (McGinty 2012). The chapter makes many contributions in relation to wider literature on the mainstream and ethnic minority voluntary sector, SA

women organising, experiences of PBM women, intersectionality and the wider socio-political context of racism, Islamophobia and feminism. SA women's organisations continue to support the most marginalised populations of women. An emphasis on both older collectivism and transforming women's lives on an individual basis is drawn together to shape the activism work SA women's organisations do today.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

An interest in researching PBM lone motherhood emerged through my own personal biography of coming from a lone mother headed family (see Chapter 1) and a resulted curiosity of exploring other lone mothers' experiences. The most comprehensive study of lone motherhood by Duncan and Edwards (1999) examined lone mothers' experiences through a comparative lens, including a focus on class, ethnic and racial difference amongst lone mothers. Although Duncan and Edwards (1999) did address race and Black lone motherhood further experiences and diversity among ethnic minority lone parents, particularly PBM lone motherhood, were ignored. Other studies which have included Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers (Sinha 1998; Mokhtar and Platt 2009) have not been advanced further. More widely there has been an invisibility of PBM lone mothers despite considerable attention given to lone motherhood within sociology and social policy. Furthermore, studies have overwhelmingly focused on employment and less so on the everyday lived experiences, barriers and opportunities of lone motherhood (Head 2005; Mokhtar and Platt 2009). To address these research gaps the main aim of the thesis was to explore lived experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women. In exploring experiences through a lens of ethnicity, religion and gender it examined the distinctions and overlaps in experiences to lone mothers and PBM women in previous studies (McCall 2005).

The study set out to achieve this overall aim by conducting eight months of fieldwork at a SA women's organisation, SAW's Place. This involved participant observations with PBM lone mothers and organisation workers and interviews with sixteen lone mothers, eight organisation workers and six external partners (including two trustees). The role of SA women's organisations became a significant dimension in exploring lone mothers' experiences, marginalisation, exclusion and struggles. Black and SA women's organisations have been previously recognised as crucial voices for marginalised, underprivileged and oppressed women (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985; Song and Edwards 1997; Takhar 2011; Chaudhuri, Morash and Yingling 2014). Nevertheless little is known about the support SA women's organisations provide to PBM lone mothers. Thus the thesis aimed to fill this gap. In

analysing and presenting key themes from the thesis and situating the lived experiences of lone motherhood, the study drew upon intersectionality theory influenced by key black feminist thinkers (Crenshaw 1991; Phoenix 1994; Brah 1996; Yuval-Davis 2006).

This study makes several original and significant empirical, theoretical, conceptual, policy related and methodological contributions, presented throughout the thesis, and drawn together here in relation to the key findings and addressing the following research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences, perspectives, barriers and opportunities faced by PBM lone mothers?
2. Which identities and wider structures become salient in shaping their experiences of lone motherhood?
3. How useful is an 'intersectionality' framework for exploring experiences of lone motherhood amongst PBM women?
4. In what ways do SA women's organisations and their partners support and facilitate the agency of PBM lone mothers and what interventions are required?

In doing so the thesis brings together and is situated more broadly in gender, race and ethnicity, family and policy studies. The first three sections of this concluding chapter focus on empirical and theoretical, social policy related and methodological contributions. Discussions refer back to key themes, findings and conclusions from the three data chapters and methodology chapter. Vignettes of participants' experiences are also presented. Following on from methodological contributions reflection of the research design are presented. The final sections focus on the research agendas this study has opened up for further empirical investigation, with some concluding thoughts.

7.2 Empirical and theoretical contributions

The thesis develops an understanding of PBM women's lived experiences of lone motherhood, which have until now largely been marginalised in gender and family studies. In addressing the first two interlinking research questions, it explores the disadvantages, barriers and opportunities faced by PBM women as lone mothers. Their perspectives and the

wider intersecting collective identities and structures that are significant in shaping their lived experiences are articulated. Additionally, in addressing the third research question intersectionality has proven to be a useful theoretical framework in exploring such lived experiences.

7.2.1 Exploring lived experiences and intersectionality

Understanding similarities, differences and diversity

Chapters 4 and 5 explored the diverse lived experiences of PBM lone mothers drawing comparisons amongst participants with experiences of lone mothers and women in previous studies (McCall 2005). Taking an intersectional lens allowed for an understanding of how such experiences were shaped by participants' intersecting collective identities with gender at heart (Brah 1996). As a result, in Chapter 4 significant similar and distinctive accounts were presented. For example, as previously found by Millar (1996) and Sinha (1998), marital breakdown was the predominant route to lone motherhood. On the other hand, through women's narratives, important differences were found in what led to marital breakdown, including men's engagement in 'polygamy' and participants' unique experiences of DA which were embedded in hierarchical, aged and generational relationships between women within the household, in addition to experiencing DA and DV by husbands (Kandiyoti 1988; Chowbey 2016; 2017; Mirza 2016). I have also developed the existing work in the field through my focus on how participants experienced stigma. Stigma has previously been attached to lone motherhood in Britain in relation to the breakdown of the traditional nuclear family and benefit reliance (Song 1996; Song and Edwards 1997; Carroll 2018; 2019). However, reflecting participants' positionalities as women within Pakistani and Bangladeshi culture, stigma is attached to cultural notions of women's *izzat* which is documented as being directly attached to marriage (Guru 2009). Thus, such experiences of stigma are unique to PBM lone mothers, and more broadly SA women. Taking a final example, in Chapter 5's discussions of barriers to employment these were shaped by participants' wider gendered positionalities as women and mothers. For example, requiring jobs which fit around childcare needs (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004). Again some specific and distinctive differences in experience were also found such as spousal immigration rules shaping decisions on whether to engage in employment, a

need to fit jobs around attending to children's religious educational needs and continuous engagement in precarious sewing work from home in Maryam's case (Brah 1994).

Significantly, the study asserts the importance of exploring women's maternal worlds. In contrast to employment, this has often been ignored in lone motherhood research (Head 2005). For many participants, their identities as mothers were crucial to their everyday lives and futures. For example, there was an importance of providing a good upbringing to children and meeting their educational and material needs, despite facing financial struggles. This study argues for an importance of valuing women's contributions to society in their role as mothers and raising good citizens. In the highly racialised contexts in which PBM women are situated, this is an often overlooked contribution of PBM mothers.

In understanding participants' subjective experiences of lone motherhood differences emerged between PBM women, who were divided into three groups. Experiences as migrants or 'migrant brides' created an extra layer of disadvantage for women upon entering lone motherhood, particularly amongst those participants with lower levels of education or no formal education associated with their class positionalities (Evans and Bowlby 2000) who come from poorer, lower class or rural backgrounds. Although there is an abundance of studies which look at experiences of marriage and DA amongst PBM women (for example Charsley 2005a; 2005b; Tonsing and Tonsing 2019), the uniqueness of this study is that contextualising such experiences was important to understand how they then went on to shape participants' experiences and trajectories as lone mothers. Disadvantages for this group of PBM women included facing difficulties after leaving husbands, initially navigating everyday life alone in the UK and a lack of financial resources. A lack of English language skills, which was due to a lack of education and opportunity to attend classes during their marriage for some women, also created significant barriers in their everyday lives. On the other hand, a second group of migrant women of well-educated middle-class backgrounds, were able to pursue education during marriage. Two were employed part-time upon marital breakdown. They were thus able to draw upon social resources and what Salway (2007) defines as human capital, such as formal education, to live independent lives from the onset. It should be noted, one migrant lower educated lone mother (Maryam) was able to draw on her informal skills engaging in self-employment to attain some financial independence. This illustrates women's

resourcefulness and ability to adapt to survive financially. Finally, the third group of lone mothers were born in England across different generations (first and second generation) with diverse experiences across time. Differences in marriage patterns (forced marriage to love marriage), educational opportunities and qualifications were illustrated. Having a lone mother status did present participants with opportunities to engage in education and vocational courses. These groups also required different types and degrees of support from SAW's Place, including less-well educated participants requiring more everyday support and well-educated migrant brides requiring more one-off professional support.

Thus, in answering the third research question intersectionality has been a key lens for exploring subjective personal lives. As Yuval-Davis (2006) argues it allows for a deconstruction of broader categories of collective identity to illustrate similarities, differences and diversity in individuals' positionings and how they shape subjective experiences. This is consistent with classical intersectional debates and an intracategorical intersectional approach (McCall 2005). As discussed in Chapter 2 and confirming Brah's (1996) approach, intersectionality allows for a focus on different axes of collective identity and how they collide to shape subjective lived experiences of lone motherhood. It also helps locate subjective experiences within the broader structures in which participants' lives operate and helps articulate that participants' identity as women is central in shaping their journeys, intersecting with their ethnic, cultural and religious identities, generational and migrant status to create distinct disadvantages and barriers. Thus, participants' gendered identity is most salient in shaping experiences. More so, these findings are indicative of forms of superdiversity (Vertovec 2007) amongst PBM women, further develop the criticism of SA women's experiences as homogenised (Salway 2007; Bhopal 2009) and evidence the extent of the diversity within this group. The findings also contribute to deconstructing the broader category of lone motherhood (Duncan and Edwards 1999) and highlight the importance of situating and examining PBM lone mothers' voices and experiences.

Wider structures of power

In exploring PBM lone motherhood it is evident that participants' lived experiences were shaped by wider structures of power and institutions. This is also central to intersectional

approaches as those belonging within broader social categories of identity share similar locations within relations of power (Yuval-Davis 2006; Collins and Bilge 2016). There are many examples throughout the thesis. For instance, classical systems of patriarchy (Kandiyoti 1988; Hunnicutt 2009; Mirza 2016) located within SA families and households significantly shape women's marriage experiences. Women are located within broader traditional cultural expectations and the central importance given to marriage within SA cultures. As argued, this results in experiences of stigma. The thesis also goes beyond focusing on SA cultures and cultural deficit models, illustrating how wider structures of power, gender and racism in relation to social policy impact lone mothers' lives. A significant site in which this is visible is in relation to restrictive spousal immigration laws.

Three examples of how spousal immigration rules have or can create disadvantage for PBM women have been presented here. Firstly, Zahra's immigration story was presented in Chapter 4, where her husband could not meet the high income requirements and thus had to take the EU free movement route to inviting her over. Zahra's visa later expired and so she had no recourse to public funds, creating additional barriers upon separation. Chapter 4's presentation of Zahra's experiences of setting herself up after becoming a lone mother demonstrates how both the immigration system and bureaucratic welfare state created further vulnerabilities, precarity and financial insecurity for herself and her children. Furthermore, as presented in Chapter 5 (Section 5.2.3) it is Ayman's experience, which demonstrate how spousal immigration rules can result in women having no option but to undertake paid employment in order to reach the income threshold. Finally, insights from SAW's Place workers' professional experiences in Chapter 6 illustrate how spousal immigration structures create further vulnerabilities and difficulties for migrant women to leave abusive relationships and can advantage perpetrators (Anitha 2008; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Mirza 2016), particularly where there is a lack of awareness of the Domestic Violence Rule concession. Thus, these broader structures of power create further barriers for women and shape experiences of lone motherhood. Given this, the study argues for the importance of focusing on the wider structures of power that shape women's experiences as an integral part of an intersectional approach.

Overall, applying intersectionality from Crenshaw (1991) and others work, means that the study raises the visibility of these PBM lone mothers' experiences who have often been overlooked, neglected and marginalised. Taking a ground up approach (Collins and Bilge 2016) effectively it illustrates the multiple forms of oppression, disadvantage and barriers PBM lone mothers face bringing together different levels of analysis of subjective lived experiences and how these are located within broader intersecting collective identities and the wider systems of power in which they are located. It is more than just focusing on collective identity.

7.2.2 Conceptualising *sabar*

Informed by a ground up approach a particular focus of the thesis has been to further conceptualise *sabar* (see Chapter 4). Qureshi's (2013; 2016) work has been central in understanding *sabar* and how it operates in women's lives in relation to Pakistani women situating their illnesses. Just as Qureshi (2013) finds, this study argues that *sabar* is not solely passive acceptance by women, rather it shows their agency, self-sacrifice and endurance. In exploring DA experiences within marriage it was found that an emphasis on *sabar* and remaining steadfast while suffering was crucial in helping women to cope. This was particularly illustrated in Zainab's story which was discussed in depth in Chapter 4. Zainab's acute experiences of suffering through DA from in-laws over many years, enacting *sabar* and using various strategies to cope, such as remaining silent or engaging in religious practices to attain peace, were presented. With no other choices apparent, she actively decided her best interests lay in keeping quiet. Furthermore, as lone mothers, participants enacted *sabar* and drew upon their strength, perseverance and resilience to cope and manage through adverse circumstances such as financial struggles (Chapter 5, Section 5.2) and navigating through a complex and bureaucratic welfare system. An in-depth exploration of Zahra's experiences presented in Chapter 4 particularly illustrates this. Thus, the thesis provides a significant contribution to further conceptualising *sabar* and illustrating how it can be positively drawn upon in the context of marriage, DA and lone motherhood. However, the thesis goes even further in conceptualising *sabar*. It also illustrates how *sabar* can be drawn upon negatively by others to maintain marriage, the family reputation which is attached to women (*izzat*) and prevent women from escaping patriarchy (e.g. Noor's mother-in-law emphasising she stays in the marriage for the children in Chapter 4). This interlinks with Pakistani and Bangladeshi

cultural expectations of women and again highlights the intersection of participants' ethnic, cultural, religious and gendered identities.

7.2.3 Challenging mainstream discourses of PBM women, men and families

The above conclusions and conceptualisations drawn about *sabar* contribute to challenging popular public discourses and perceptions of PBM women who, as documented by much previous literature (e.g. Bhabha 2003; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012; Alexander 2013), are particularly viewed as oppressed, docile and passive victims. Instead in this thesis the strengths, perseverance, resilience and resourcefulness of PBM women are presented through a focus on lone motherhood and family relationships. Even at the most difficult times where women's relationships ended, they were forced to or chose to leave the home, women drew upon the resources that they were familiar with, such as local schools, teachers and threatening to call the police. PBM women's strengths are also demonstrated in discussions of stigma through the various strategies used to protect their *izzat* and challenge stigma (see Chapter 4). Although, Guru (2009) has also illustrated such experiences in relation to divorced SA women this study presents such findings as contributing to specifically illustrating PBM women's agency and strength. Additionally, presenting the support provided by SAW's Place workers to lone mothers also illustrates SA women's strength and resourcefulness in coming together to support marginalised women in overcoming barriers and helping them transform their lives. Thus, through exploring SA women's narratives, lived and professional experiences this thesis makes a significant contribution to presenting a full picture of PBM women's strength. This further challenges negative racialised conceptions of them.

Furthermore, in exploring lone mothers' lived experiences the thesis addresses the gap in knowledge around PBM men and wider gender relations. PBM men's lives have also been stereotyped and marginalised in terms of family studies (Britton 2019). In relation to marital breakdown lone mothers provided two narratives of men: first, as perpetrators in regards to DA, DV and their engagement in 'polygamy' or affairs and secondly, to a less extent, as victims. The latter is in regards to men being pressured into transnational marriages, as previously presented by Charsley (2005b) and Shaw and Charsley (2006) and reasserted here by lone mother Sadiyyah. Additionally, PBM men's disadvantaged position within the labour market,

which is associated with racism and discrimination, can result in unemployment. The loss of a traditional breadwinner role impacting masculinities can increase the likelihood of tensions in marriage, violence and abusive relationships (Hunnicuttt 2009; Chowbey 2016). Finally, they can also be caught in patriarchal, aged and household generational hierarchies. This is demonstrated in Nafeesah's account of her husband being caught between herself and his family. Although these points are briefly mentioned in lone mothers' narratives, this study shows the importance of seeking to understand the positionality of PBM men, the context and structures of power in which they are located, rather than taking a reductionist approach which presents negative racialised constructions of men (Song and Edwards 1997; Britton 2019). Furthermore, there were many positive roles of men mentioned in participants' experiences of lone motherhood. For example, a local mosque imam supported Asma in gaining divorce and some lone mothers with family in England were supported by elderly male family members like uncles and brothers, in providing financial, practical and childcare support for example. Moreover, Fatimah and Nafeesah had positive reflections of married life with their husbands. Overall, this adds further to Britton's (2019) recent study which provided more positive constructions of Muslim men and husbands, problematising racialised understandings which present all Muslim men as patriarchal and oppressive (Turner and Wigfield 2016; Britton 2019).

The study also contributes to providing an updated understanding of PBM families and marriages, particularly as much of this literature is now dated (e.g. Shaw 2000; Charsley 2005a; 2005b; Shaw and Charsley 2006). PBM communities are traditionally seen as having close family and kinship ties however in exploring lone motherhood reduction in family ties are observed. This is illustrated in Chapter 4 in experiences of stigma and women bearing the blame for family breakdown (Song and Edwards 1997; Guru 2009; Ponsford 2011; Carroll 2019). This resulted in a breakup of family ties. For instance, Asma and Ayman's families sided with their husbands upon separation. Asma felt like "*the outsider*" in her family and Ayman's brother was not talking to her at the time of the interview. Furthermore, a reduction or lack of family presence, such as participants' families living abroad, resulted in many lone mothers facing social isolation and loneliness (Chapter 5, Section 5.6). Where family ties reduced, the findings suggest close friendship networks can be key in offering practical and emotional support in times of need (see also Spencer and Pahl 2006; Smart et al 2012). Reflecting

findings from some friendship studies (e.g. Spencer and Pahl 2006) the data from this study indicate that some PBM lone mothers look towards friends and co-ethnic community organisations like SAW's Place, in time of needs in addition to or rather than family. Overall, it illustrates to some extent a shift in the importance of friendship ties and reduction of kinship amongst PBM lone mothers and families where marital breakdown is involved.

A final aspect in which the study challenges mainstream discourses is in relation to conceptualisations of patriarchy amongst mainstream feminists. Hunnicutt (2009) has previously argued that patriarchy manifests differently across cultures. This was demonstrated in participants' experiences of marriage, family structures and DA utilising Kandiyoti's (1988) work on classical patriarchy and more recent work by Mirza (2017). The study reiterates that patriarchy within Pakistani and Bangladeshi cultures manifests beyond simply gender inequalities between men and women. The latter is the predominate approach taken to patriarchy (Mirza 2017). Although some participants did experience DA and DV from husbands, women's experiences are also embedded within intersecting gender, generational and aged hierarchies amongst women within the household. Examples of this are presented in Chapter 4 (Section 4.2.3) in relation to DA, including subtle tactics of DA used by the mother-in-law such as overwhelming the daughter-in-law in housework and exerting financial control (Chowbey 2016; Mirza 2017).

Overall, the thesis contributes to challenging stereotypes and dominant perceptions regarding PBM women and men and demonstrates complexities and ambivalences in PBM family ties, differences in family structures and patriarchal relations. It also advocates for a recognition and visibility of lone mother families amongst PBM communities.

7.3 Rethinking social policy agendas

7.3.1 Independence vs. dependence

Independence and dependence was a significant theme that emerged throughout the three findings chapters. As argued independence is presented in social policy approaches as particularly being attainable through employment. Furthermore, Chapter 2 presented

Duncan and Edwards' (1999) 'escaping patriarchy' discourse of lone motherhood, which argues lone motherhood facilitates greater independence for women. This was then applied to understanding PBM lone mothers' experiences. It was concluded, although lone motherhood allowed participants to escape patriarchy in some respects, such as in relation to escaping DA (Chapter 4) and an opportunity for greater self-determination through financial independence (Chapter 5), in other aspects women were still embedded within patriarchal constraints and systems. For instance, this is illustrated in lone mothers' experiences of stigma, breakdown of family ties and some women's housing situations. Furthermore, participants did not always choose to leave a relationship to achieve independence, rather marital breakdown was a result of adverse circumstances such as DA or being forced to leave the home. Later it was illustrated that after leaving dependency upon husbands or in-laws, some lone mothers can become dependent upon the welfare state. However it is crucial to note, upon becoming lone mothers (and surviving DA) state support through benefits is essential for women to survive financially and while they develop skills to navigate their everyday life and enter employment. The thesis questions whether all PBM lone mothers in this study did escape patriarchy, problematizes the extent to which they can achieve independence through lone motherhood and argues that community based initiatives like SAW's Place are central to processes of independence.

Although participants were striving towards independence, by for example improving their English skills, it was acknowledged by SAW's Place workers that achieving independence can take time (see Chapter 6). As such there can be dependency upon others for participants in their everyday lives, such as dependency on SAW's Place whose role is to support and facilitate independence (see Section 7.3.3). Furthermore, older migrant lone mothers experiencing ill-health recognised that they may never fully learn English, hindering their independence. This thesis advocates for looking at the complexities in PBM lone mothers' journeys to 'independence' and questions whether independence can be fully achieved. The state can also hinder their ability to lead more independent lives, which is discussed in the next sub-section. This next section contributes to addressing the first and second research questions in regards to the barriers lone mothers' face and the wider social policy structures which shape their experiences.

7.3.2 Highlighting barriers to independence

In exploring lone mothers' journeys to independence, Chapter 5 details lone mothers' financial struggles, barriers to employment, English language barriers, experiences searching for housing and social isolation and loneliness. Together, these various dimensions impact lone mothers' everyday lives, hindering independence. The chapter illustrates the real life implications social policy measures, such as lack of housing investment and pressures to engage in paid work, have on PBM lone mothers in this study. Overall, it particularly demonstrates the vulnerabilities PBM lone mothers' face, experiencing financial struggles, material deprivation, poverty and precarity.

Racialised social policy agendas in relation to PBM women have largely focused on social ordering (Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013) and integration approaches (see Chapter 2 discussions on English language through an integration lens) and less so on areas which require development to improve lives. Instead this thesis presents the real policy-related requirements and needs of PBM lone mothers. An area which requires the most prominent attention is educational needs. Opportunities need to be generated so lone mothers can build skills and improve the quality of their everyday lives. In regards to employment a 'work-first' approach is taken (Lindsay et al 2019). However, this thesis iterates the importance of improving skills first. This can be achieved through educational opportunities such as offering vocational courses, work experience leading to employment, developing CVs and employment preparation courses such as the one ran by SAW's Place. In addition, more investment in English classes is required (Turner and Wigfield 2016). Learning English has been documented as creating positive social impacts in participants' everyday lives, allowing them to communicate in various settings, opening up opportunities for further independence and living a better quality life. Community based interventions like SAW's Place's women-only English classes, which use practical scenarios to improve everyday English skills, can be highly effective. But of course these require further investment and funded support from the government.

The findings also present the overlapping multiple structural and situational complexities in PBM lone mothers' lives. For example, as presented in Chapter 5, although Maymoona had

completed a vocational course equipping her with specialist employment skills, work experience and qualifications, at the time of the interview she could not find a job fitting with her childcare needs and faced discrimination as a mother (Reynolds 2001). Policies and initiatives which can support women to employment are identified here, including well-paid job opportunities, flexible part-time jobs fitting around childcare needs (Himmelweit and Sigala 2004), including religious educational needs for Muslim mothers, and provision and funding of wrap around childcare provided by schools (Smith et al 2008). Overall, there is a requirement to cater for the specific employment related needs of lone mother families. Better job and training opportunities for PBM migrant women with little formal qualifications and human capital are also required so they do not have to pursue precarious low-paid forms of employment such as sewing from home or engaging in ethnic enclaves (Khattab et al 2010).

Precarity is demonstrated via some lone mothers' housing arrangements. Suwaybah and Asma lived in homes mortgaged under their (ex)husband's names. Maryam lived in a home originally rented with her husband. This made them vulnerable or potentially vulnerable to abuse and (ex)husbands had continuous involvement and control in their lives. The findings showed the difficulties five lone mothers (Asma, Kulsoom, Maymoona, Maryam and Suwaybah) faced in searching for social housing. Accounts were provided of the long and time consuming process of applying and bidding for housing. Due to a lack of availability and the housing system structure it can become difficult to find housing that meets women's needs and preferences. This curtailed participants' ability to live fully independent lives.

Lone mothers' financial struggles also resulted in them placing their children's needs above their own. PBM lone mothers both in and outside employment faced financial struggles. Austerity measures like the Benefit Cap are documented as disproportionately impacting lone mothers (Fenton-Glynn 2015). This study goes further in providing an in-depth real life narrative and account of Maymoona's lived experiences of caps to her Housing Benefit and the resulting financial struggles and stress she faced (see Chapter 5). A provision of adequate benefit reciprocity can be crucial to improving financial circumstances and reducing insecurity. This can help mothers and their children to live a secure life. These accounts of lone mothers' lives again demonstrate their strength and resilience surviving through insecure

circumstances, navigating the welfare state, managing financially and striving to bring change in their lives in a system which fails to adequately support them.

Although it is argued that some experiences of PBM lone mothers in this study, such as financial struggles and loneliness, are shared more widely with lone mothers in previous studies (e.g. Sinha 1998; Head 2005; Miller and Ridge 2008; Patrick 2014; Stack and Meredith 2018) the thesis illustrates the importance of focusing on policy agendas in which PBM lone mothers, women and more widely ethnic minority experiences are more below the radar (Bloch, Solomos and Neal 2013) and the specific disadvantage and barriers that they face in areas such as housing, employment and welfare reciprocity. Lone mother studies predominantly have a focus on White lone mothers or ethnicity is not considered, as argued in Chapter 2. Much of the social policy interventions for marginalised women have come from community action and lobbying resulting in grassroots third sector organisations providing localised and micro levels of support. The chapter will now turn to focusing on the role of SA women's organisations who form part of this.

7.3.3 South Asian women's organisations

SA women's organisations have been a crucial political and community voice for marginalised women in the past (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012), yet as identified here there is little known about the support they provide to lone mothers. Through a case study approach exploring the services and support SAW's Place provides to PBM lone mothers and locating the organisation within the wider third/voluntary sector, ethnic minority and women's organisations, the thesis addresses the final research question providing an understanding of the role of SA women's organisations in facilitating lone mothers' agency.

The thesis provides an understanding of the different dimensions of support offered to PBM lone mothers by workers. This includes emotional, psychological, practical, advocacy support and mediating between service users and mainstream services. They play a crucial role in PBM lone mothers' lives, most significantly for migrant women. They become a crucial voice for lone mothers helping them tackle social exclusion and marginalisation, for example from

mainstream organisations, family and the community, and overcome traumatic life experiences such as DV. As evident in Chapters 5 (Section 5.6) and 6, such organisations provide PBM lone mothers with a space to develop networks, get to know others with similar experiences, via group sessions, and develop relationships of trust with workers. This offers a distraction from everyday struggles, is crucial for improving women's mental wellbeing and overcoming social isolation and feelings of loneliness. This adds to more recent work by Salway et al (2020) exploring the interventions required to reduce social isolation and loneliness amongst migrant and ethnic minorities. SA women's organisations play a crucial role in women's lives upon entering lone motherhood, supporting them to navigate the welfare state and services.

Another dimension of SA women's organisations illustrated here is their involvement in activism. Earlier literature presents women's organisations coming together in the past as a form of political collective activism (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe 1985; Siddique 2000; Anitha, Pearson and McDowell 2012) whereas more recent literature turns its focus to service provision (see Chapter 2). Moreover, women's groups have been criticised for being less politically active (Siddique 2000). However, in challenging this, Chapter 6 illustrates SAW's Place engaging in campaigns and lobbying, alongside other women's organisations, to challenging the probationary period and no recourse to public funds rules in immigration laws. The thesis moves debates forward by contributing to understanding the continuing and distinct slow burn practices of activism and doing politics today. Political and feminist activism is situated on the micro individual level, through transforming women's lives, encouraging confidence, self-esteem and independence. Chapter 6 demonstrates the diverse areas of support provided by SAW's Place to facilitate lone mothers' agency through the encouragement of independence. This is captured in small aspects which are big steps for migrant women in particular, such as encouraging women to learn English, travel alone to appointments and attending courses. Workers evidently transform lone mothers' everyday lives. This is not particularly overt political and feminist activism. Rather it is about slowly building up change in lone mothers' lives over time. It is important to recognise this as an act of activism in itself. Significantly, it also illustrates intersectional differences in supporting PBM lone mothers, one of which is in relation to their identity as Muslims. For instance advocates draw upon women's rights within Islam in relation to marriage, DA, separation and

helping build women's self-esteem. The thesis advocates for the importance of recognising political activism through the everyday support provided by workers in organisations like SAW's Place to facilitate women's agency.

There is again an emphasis on providing education for women particularly in relation to recognising DA and DV and awareness about what rights women have within spousal immigration laws and concessions in relation to leaving relationships involving DA. Thus, providing more opportunities to educate PBM women is a significant overall implication and recommendation of this study. It is central to improving and transforming women's lives. There is potential for SA women's organisations and DA agencies to work together to achieve this.

The study shows it is important to recognise the austerity and reduced welfare funding landscape in which SA women's organisations operate. Chapter 6 particularly illustrates the negative impact reduced funding and years of austerity measures have upon the resources and capacity to operate for organisations like SAW's Place. Previous research has already documented this disproportionately impacting services targeted at ethnic minority populations (Craig 2014; Harries et al 2020). However, the findings from my study go further demonstrating not only how it impacts the organisations' services but also the real life implications it has for PBM lone mothers and the support they are provided. This is, for instance, illustrated in the example of Khadijah encouraging Zahra to travel independently (Chapter 6) and how this decision is influenced by resource constraints such as a lack of volunteers or money to fund taxis. Furthermore, this influences ethnic minority and mainstream organisations ability to work together to provide crucial services.

This draws significant social policy associated implications in relation to addressing the last component of the fourth research question; interventions required to help facilitate PBM lone mothers' independence. There is a need to improve service access and provision for ethnic minority populations, which include PBM women. Wider interventions highlighted in the accounts and professional experiences of SAW's Place workers and external partners, include the need for a more representative workforce, tailoring services such as counselling services to the needs of PBM women, including language and culturally sensitive needs, and working

together with mainstream organisations to provide access to wider services. The potential of this is illustrated through the collaboration of SAW's Place and a family law firm example in Chapter 6. This can enable ethnic minorities and marginalised individuals, such as PBM lone mothers, to access services and help them obtain their rights. Funding provision is an area which requires particular attention as a lack of funding hinders service expansion and the continuous support SA women's organisations can offer to those in most need. Overall, this illustrates the multi-scale reliance of participants on SAW's Place, the continued importance of SA women's organisations in PBM women's lives and the various interventions required in improving services.

7.4 Methodological contributions

Chapter 3 presented a series of methodological reflections and debates in regards to the research process. They will be presented here in relation to the methodological contributions of the thesis which confirm and develop existing debates. The insights extend methods approaches for conducting research with PBM women, SA women's organisations and communities.

7.4.1 Researcher positionality

Throughout Chapter 3 reflections were presented on how my personal biography and multiple positionalities as a researcher, a (new) volunteer and young British Pakistani Muslim woman influenced different stages of the research process, such as access, building trust with lone mothers and interviews (Bhopal 2001; 2009; 2010; Britton 2020). In doing so the chapter engaged in standpoint feminist approaches (Collins 1991; Phoenix 1994; Bhopal 2001) and contemporary insider-outsider debates (e.g. Ryan, Kofman and Aaron 2010; Britton 2020), further contributing to challenging the assumption that researchers fit neatly into either an insider or outsider positionality.

The thesis highlights complexities in relation to having an insider-outsider positionality. For example as an insider my shared ethnicity, religion and gender (and personal experiences to an extent) allowed a sense of empathy, for women to share their experiences (Bhopal 2001)

and allowed access to a SA women's organisation which would have been denied to an outsider. On the other hand, being a young unmarried woman and reflecting cultural norms of respectability, I did not feel comfortable with inquiring into participants' experiences of intimacy in marriage. This challenges the feminist emphasis on interviews with women being non-hierarchical as presented by Edwards (1993). As an outsider, being a new volunteer at the organisation, it took time to develop trust with service users. There are other such examples provided throughout Chapter 3 associated with my multiple identities and roles. Thus, as Phoenix (1994) has previously argued researcher positionalities can shift throughout the research process. It is acknowledged that researchers cannot simply be matched to the researched by gender and/or ethnicity, especially in relation to research with SA women and communities where being an 'ethnic insider' and woman is often argued as being advantageous. This construction is problematised. Chapter 3 renews feminist methodological debates, questioning whether a researcher can truly be a symmetrical researcher, thus adding further nuance to standpoint feminist debates and the notion that a researcher can neatly fit into an insider or outsider positionality.

Furthermore, arguments surrounding insider-outsider fluidities are intersectional in nature as they account for intracategorical complexities (McCall 2005). There is an emphasis on the importance of researchers thinking about their intersectional identities, how they influence the research process and the challenges they will face in exploring experiences and fitting within a research setting. The importance of reflexivity throughout the research process is illustrated, in order for the researcher to be critical of their own positionality and influence on data collection (Huisman 2008). This is key to conducting feminist research.

7.4.2 Conducting research with SA women and organisations

The thesis also contributes to developing approaches to conducting research with SA women and organisations. Through engaging with existing sociological methodological debates regarding research being 'extractively orientated' (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Neal et al 2016) and the idea of a 'public sociology' (Buroway 2005), Chapter 3 discusses an ethics of reciprocity and 'giving back' to SAW's Place and lone mothers. It contributes to illustrating how researchers can support participants while conducting research, taking a practice of giving

back, something which was achievable via my active participant observer methodological approach to conducting research with lone mothers. It also presents ways in which researchers can give back to organisations who commit time and resources to supporting research, such as through report writing. Furthermore, Chapter 3 highlights participants' 'research savviness' (Neal et al 2016) via lone mothers' engagement in the research process, asking questions about my own biography and background as well as questioning the research and how it could possibly benefit them. This raises the importance of seeing participants as active agents in the research process. Significantly, in relation to contributions, this seeks to challenge the perception of PBM women as passive individuals and illustrates their active agency in the research process. Challenging such perceptions was a significant political endeavour of this thesis. Overall this contributes to advocating for conducting ethical and reciprocal research with SA women, organisations and communities beyond formal ethics procedures.

The thesis evidences the complexities of doing social research with PBM lone mothers. This has particularly been illustrated through the ethics process in the field. Examples of this include, verbally translating information sheets, adding visual communication methods and adapting information sheets. Furthermore, it illustrates tensions between institutionally defined components and the realities of the field where for example the new GDPR statement can be difficult to translate and explain in another language. Finally, further complexities are added when the researcher moves between their role as a volunteer supporting women while also trying to gain consent in their role as a researcher. Thus the thesis further articulates how institutional ethics procedures can be at odds with experiences in the field, adding to similar arguments by others (e.g. Zubair and Victor 2015). However, going further it also shows how adaptations can be made in an ethical manner to match needs of research populations.

My fieldwork experience has also highlighted the complexities of language. Participant observations with Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers and Halimah took place in Bengali (Sylheti dialect). Chapter 3 (Section 3.3.2) illustrated how, as an ethnic outsider, I sought to understand what was taking place, just as James (2014) reflected in his research with children, by constructing knowledge fitting together a jigsaw using various resources, for instance the letters lone mothers brought with them. This method contributes to demonstrating that it is

possible to conduct research which takes place in a partially unfamiliar language. This can particularly work well in settings such as advocacy sessions, where for instance both Bengali and English is utilised. Furthermore, it was also crucial giving lone mothers an opportunity to present their stories via an in-depth interview in the language they were most comfortable with. In doing so, underpinned by a black feminist epistemological and classical intersectional approach (Crenshaw 1991), this allows for their voices to be visible, privileged and heard and for their lived experiences of lone motherhood to be presented (Mirza 1998; Bhabha 2003; McIntosh and Wright 2009). Continuing a methodological focus the next section will provide a reflection on the research design.

7.5 Reflections on the research design

Taking an ethnographically informed approach situating myself in SAW's Place, building trust over time and spending time with lone mothers and workers in observations and interviews provided high quality, rich detailed data to draw conclusions from. This detail would not have been attainable without conducting participant observations exploring service provisions and lone mothers' experiences of navigating everyday life. On the other hand, it must be recognised that this approach resulted in a larger sample of migrant Pakistani women and a smaller sample of lone mothers of Bangladeshi ethnicity and those born in England. This reflected the make-up of the organisation. The research was also much less likely to include lone mothers with stronger practical support networks, such as support from families and (ex)husbands. This made it more difficult to draw broader conclusions of PBM lone motherhood.

Reflecting upon my experiences of translating interviews and Urdu and Punjabi (and its related dialects) not being my first language, the transcription and translation of interviews into English may lack reliability and validity to some extent, which can question whether voices and meanings are fully represented. I have aimed to mitigate for this by taking an in-depth approach to translating word-for-word. However, as argued in Chapter 3, translation "remains inappropriate, violent and alien with respect to its content" (Benjamin 1997, p. 158) and due to the interpretive process involved no two translations of a single piece of work can be the same (Subedi 2006). A translation will always be at odds with its original as it is tailored

to speak to the audience of the translated language (English). My approach to translation provides an understanding of the act of translating and its important, central and powerful role in presenting voices which would not have been reached otherwise. It is not merely a technical exercise.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the experiences presented here, particularly in relation to marriage and early experiences of lone motherhood, are situated across different time periods. For example, Asma's marriage experiences are situated around twenty-six years ago whereas Maryam's experiences were more recent. Thus, experiences of forced marriage (as Asma experienced) may not necessarily represent the practices and views of PBM communities today. This does however demonstrate change in cultural attitudes and traditions over time, for example more encouragement to pursue education by parents (Bhopal 2009; Ijaz and Abbas 2010) and acceptance of love marriages. Additionally, more recent migrant brides (and Ayman who wanted to apply for a spousal visa for her husband) are situated in more stringent spousal immigration and settlement policies which older migrant brides in this study, who came to the UK prior to such laws, did not have to experience. Recent migrant brides will thus face an extra layer of disadvantage after separation/divorce in relation to their immigration status.

The research was situated in one point of time. It would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study to analyse changes in women's circumstances over time. While I was volunteering at SAW's Place after the fieldwork stage I met Sadiyyah (a lone mother in this study) and found that she had attained a job. It would be interesting to follow through on such changes or even where circumstances do not change. Furthermore, at the time of the interviews Haajrah's husband had come back to live with her and Ayman had also remarried, although her spouse was still abroad. Thus, lone motherhood can be one life-stage of women's lives and a longitudinal approach could help discover such changes in circumstances, the impact this has on lone mothers and children's lives. This leads on to potential avenues for further research as set up by this thesis.

7.6 Opening up future research agendas

As one of the first studies to pay in-depth attention specifically to lone motherhood amongst PBM women, this study has provided important trajectories for further research in many areas, including experiences of social isolation and loneliness, motherhood, employment and stigma. Moreover a more comparative approach can be taken comparing experiences of lone motherhood across different localities, ethnicities, age groups and generations. Comparisons of PBM lone motherhood across different countries can also be drawn, for instance comparing experiences in England, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Participants in this study did briefly touch on feeling better off in England having access to welfare or finding it easier to live alone compared to if they were living in Pakistan or Bangladesh (Shaw 2000).

It would be interesting exploring narratives, perspectives and stories of absent and involved fathers, extended family members, such as mothers-in-law, and the children of lone mothers. The findings regarding these actors are illustrated in relation to lone mothers' perspectives here. It would be interesting to explore the impact of lone motherhood on children or young adults and their life experiences. Exploring further the relationship between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law would also be interesting, particularly investigating why women work against each other. Single motherhood can also be explored. In relation to services, it would be interesting to engage further with diverse mainstream services to explore the work they do to engage and support PBM women and communities, particularly service provision in regards to mental health, wellbeing and counselling. How spousal immigration policy and no recourse to public funds creates further vulnerabilities for migrant brides experiencing DA or DV and the role of SA women's and DA agencies in supporting women requires further attention.

Finally it is important to explore welfare sites and protection services such as the police, schools and social workers in regards to the role they play in supporting women through separation and DA. Schools as welfare sites for families would be particularly interesting to explore as this thesis shows the crucial role they can play in supporting women in emergencies, through separation processes, in getting professional help and providing wrap around childcare for working mothers. There has been a lack of attention given to this within sociology and social policy research.

7.7 Concluding thoughts

Through providing an often marginalised group in the public, policy and academic domain a platform to share their experiences as lone mothers this study has opened up debates surrounding Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone motherhood in today's society. It has reignited and provided new insights into traditional intersectionality and black feminist debates, adding religion as a significant dimension of identity into the mix of intersectionality studies. The thesis has provided a refocus on PBM women challenging popular stereotypical perceptions of them and instead illustrating their strength and agency. It has created visibility of the important and transformational work grassroots SA women's organisations continue to engage in today. It has been a real privilege to learn about lone mothers' social worlds and women's professional experiences.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Table of lone mothers' demographic information

Int no.	Lone mother (LM) name (pseudonym) (Interview language)	Marriage status	No. of years LM	LM age group	Ethnicity/Birthplace (migration)	Employment status (time of interview)	Qualifications	Children no. and age group
1	Fatimah (Urdu)	Widow	5 and 1/2 years	41-50	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Unemployed Receives widows pension and has ill health (never worked)	Little Pakistan education. England none	1 (over 10, under 16)
2	Zainab (Urdu)	Divorced	5 years	41-50	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Unemployed (never worked)	None	4 (only 2 live with her) (2 over 18, 2 over 10, under 18)
3	Maryam (Mirpuri dialect)	Separated	2 years	31-40	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Self-employed	5th grade in Pakistan, England none	3 (all under 11)

4	Kulsoom (Punjabi)	Divorced (Islamic)	1 year (was separated [housing] before but husband would come)	31-40	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Employed part time	None	4 live with her (another 3 don't live with her - no details given) (1 over 10 under 18 , 2 over 5 under 10 and 1 under 5)
5	Ruqayyah (Punjabi)	Divorced (court Khula)	12 years (divorce 4 years ago)	41-50	British Pakistani/ born in England but brought up in Pakistan and then returned to England.	Unemployed (worked before)	FA (college level/ like A-level) in Pakistan. BTEC in England.	1 (over 10, under 16)
6	Tahira (Urdu/Punjabi)	Separated/ Divorced	4 and 1/2 years	31-40	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Unemployed (never worked)	No England education	2 (1 under 5 and 1 over 5, under 10)

7	Hira (Urdu)	Separated	5 years	21-30	Bangladeshi/Bangladesh (visitor/family visa to UK)	Unemployed (never worked)	No England education	1 (over 5, under 10)
8	Asma (English)	Separated (married twice)	"all my life", 10 years (after first or second marriage?) towards end said 26 years.	41-50	British Pakistani-Afghani/1st generation born in England	Unemployed (worked before)	Never went to school but later did courses (see Chapter 5).	7 (3 over 18, 2 over 5 but under 18, 2 under 5)
9	Ayman (Bengali - interpreter)	Married (divorced/second marriage, husband in Bangladesh)	7 years (including second marriage life) Remarried 3 years ago but husband in Bangladesh.	31-40	Bangladeshi/Bangladesh (been in England for 16 years family migration)	Unemployed (never worked)	5th standard in Bangladesh, went to college in England (no formal qualifications stated), English classes.	3 (1 under 5 - 2nd marriage) 2 over 5, under 18)

10	Sadiyyah (Urdu/Punjabi)	Divorced	15 years (within this was a LM for 10 years, remarried, after 3 months marriage broke up)	31-40	Pakistan/Pakistani (migrant bride)	Unemployed (has voluntary work experience)	metric (10th standard) in Pakistan, ESOL classes in England up to level 3 and adult courses.	2 (1 over 5 under 10 - second marriage, 1 over 10, under 18)
11	Haajirah (Urdu)	Married (but was separated, second marriage)	18 years (within this got married, with second husband for 3 years then separated) now husband lives with her.	41-50	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Unemployed due to health (has previously worked)	None	4 (3 over 18 [adults], 1 over 5 under 10 - second marriage)
12	Suwaybah (English)	Separated?	3 years	31-40	Pakistani/Pakistan (Urban) (migrant bride)	Employed, 2 part time jobs.	FA (college level) in Pakistan	4 (2 over 10 under 18, 1 under 10 over 5, 1 under 5)

13	Nafeesah (English)	Separated (divorce in process)	3 and 1/2 years	41-50	Pakistani/Pakistan (Urban) (migrant bride - young age)	Employed	Intermediate FSC (which interviewee states is equivalent to A-levels), A-levels BTEC in UK	3 (2 over 18, 1 over 10 and under 18)
14	Noor (English)	Separated	1 year (married for 19 years)	31-40	Bangladesh/Bangladeshi (Urban) (migrant bride)	Employed, part time	A-level equivalent in Bangladesh and childcare course in England, college.	3 (1 18 and over, 2 over 5 and under 18)
15	Zahra (Mirpuri dialect)	Separated	1 year officially but says she feels like she has been separated from him for 2 to 3 years as	31-40	Pakistani/Pakistan (migrant bride)	Unemployed (never worked)	3rd standard (left 4th standard)	3 (1 under 5, 2 over 10 under 18)

			didn't have a "husband-wife relationship".					
16	Maymoona (English)	Separate (divorced/second marriage separate)	5 years (after second marriage) Been married for 4 years with first husband and 4 years with second. Although 5 years as lone mother, at times in the married relationship she was doing everything herself. Difficult for participant to think of duration.	31-40	British Pakistani/2nd generation born in England	Unemployed (some previous employment)	GCSEs, college level further education more recently as a LM.	5 (2 under 16 and over 10, 2 under 10 and over 5, 1 under 5)

Appendix 2: Lone mothers information sheets and consent forms

Information Sheet (for lone mothers)

1. Research Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

2. Invitation to participate and the project's purpose

My name is Sarah Baz and I am a PhD student at The University of Sheffield. You are invited to take part in my research project. Please take time to read this sheet. It is important to understand the research purpose and what it will involve before making your decision on participating. I can translate this sheet verbally in Urdu/Punjabi or in Bengali (using a Bengali interpreter). If you have any questions or need further information, please ask me.

The project aims to explore the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers in the UK. It will also explore the role of South Asian women's organisations in supporting lone mothers, looking at the services and resources they provide. The project will involve me observing day-to-day activities at [organisation name here] and conducting interviews with lone mothers who use the centre and those who work in it.

3. Why have I been chosen and do I have to take part?

You are invited to take part as you are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnicity and are lone mothers i.e. you live without a partner and with dependent children.

Taking part is up to you. If you do not want to take part, please tell me. This will NOT affect your involvement with the organisation and relationship with any worker or me as a volunteer. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw at any time before 31/07/19 without giving a reason.

If you do decide to participate you are not obliged to inform any worker or service user of your participation.

4. What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?

The research will involve observations and interviews. You may choose to take part in both, or only observations or an interview.

Observations will take place with myself observing drop-in sessions and one-to-one activities at the organisation. If you are a Pakistani or a Bangladeshi English or Urdu speaking lone mother, I will be observing as a volunteer providing advice to you. If you are a Bengali speaking lone mother, due to language barriers I will be observing the Bengali worker and yourself. I will take notes of what I observe and our conversations during and after the observations. If you do not want me to observe in an appointment, you have the right to inform me of this. I will not observe on that occasion.

In the interview I will ask about your experiences as a lone mother. You may tell me about any life experiences you feel are appropriate to the study, e.g. life experiences before lone motherhood. The interview will be conducted in your preferred language of English, Urdu/Punjabi or Bengali. For interviews in Bengali with your permission a translator (a Bengali worker from the organisation) will

be used. To ensure your safety the interview will take place at the organisation in a confidential room. I want to record the interview; however I can take written notes if you do not want to be recorded.

I will be taking and storing information from you (your name and first line of address) so I can get in touch with you via the organisation's service users contact log to arrange an interview. This personal data will only be used to contact you and will be destroyed at the end of the project.

You will be reimbursed for any travel costs for the interview (e.g. bus fare) to make sure you are not out-of-pocket as a result of participating; this will be in the form of a £5 Love2shop voucher. You will be required to sign a form as evidence of receiving the voucher. This is for financial records only and will be kept securely, separate from any data.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

I have not identified any significant risks from taking part in this study. Although some discussions may lead to you feeling upset e.g. when discussing your past marriage experiences. If this does happen the interview can be paused.

To adhere to safeguarding guidelines I will break confidentiality about anything you tell me that results in concerns about your safety or others safety. As I am not a trained counsellor, I will refer you to experienced workers in the organisation who can help you in finding the relevant support. You will be given the chance to discuss any concerns at the end of the interview. I will also be present at the organisation after interviews.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There has been a lack of research looking at the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers. This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences and contribute to a research project that aims to provide a better understanding of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone motherhood. The findings can inform the development of services and practice to support lone mothers.

7. Will my taking part in the project be kept confidential?

You will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. A pseudonym (another name instead of your real name) will be assigned to protect your identity. The organisation and city it is located in will be kept confidential, it will also be assigned a pseudonym. I will treat any data recorded (both digitally or in note form) strictly confidential. Conversations, notes and transcriptions from observations and interviews will be anonymised and unidentifiable. They will be used for my research purposes only; no other use will be made of them without your written permission.

Where an interpreter will be used in interviews, to ensure conversations remain confidential, she will sign a confidentiality agreement with The University of Sheffield. Organisation workers involved in observations will also keep your participation and conversations confidential.

8. What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

According to data protection legislation, I am required to inform you that the legal basis I am applying in order to process your personal data is that *'processing is necessary for the performance of a task*

carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general.>'

As I will be collecting some data that is defined in the legislation as more sensitive (information about ethnicity and religion), I also need to let you know that I am applying the following condition in the law: that the use of your data is 'necessary for scientific and historical research purposes'.

If you need support in accessing and reading this website and any documents or you have any concerns regarding personal data [head worker name here] will help you.

9. What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The results of the research will be published in my PhD thesis, other publications (e.g. academic journal articles), conference presentations and will help inform the organisation's practice. The thesis will be submitted online to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (the research funding body) and also kept at the University. You will not be identifiable in any output. Audio recording (from interviews) and written notes will be transferred to a personal university student file, a secure location only I have access to via a secure encrypted laptop/computer. Consent forms and written fieldnotes will be kept in a secure locker when not in use, which only I will have access to. Audio recording will be destroyed once fully transcribed by myself. Identifiable personal data will be destroyed when the research project ends.

You have the right to withdraw from the research project until 31/07/19 (end of fieldwork). If you want to withdraw please speak to me, my contact details are below. Observation notes taken before your withdrawal will be destroyed. I will specifically ask about this as you may want to withdraw from future observations but not want to withdraw data already collected. Interview data will also be destroyed and excluded from any outputs.

For Interviews Only It is likely that other researchers may find the interview transcripts (translated in English) useful in answering future research questions. I will ask for consent for your anonymised unidentifiable interview transcript to be shared to the ESRC/UK data service depository, an online service which provides data researchers can access for future research projects. It is your decision to consent to this. If you do not consent it will not impact your participation in the project.

10. Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and The University of Sheffield.

11. Who is the data controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

12. Who has ethically reviewed this project?

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by The Department of Sociological Studies.

13. What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research you should first contact the principle investigator:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Or the project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response then you should contact:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

For any concerns or query relating to the storage and use of your personal data, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer:

Anne Cutler

University's Secretary's Office, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

Email: A.Cutler@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone: 0114 22 21117

[Head worker name here] can support you in contacting the above contacts to address any concerns or complaints.

14. Contacts for Further Information

Researcher: Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

Please also contact [organisation name here] staff for any support you need beyond this project on the above phone number, they can also refer you to other organisations that can support you.

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and your signed consent form to keep for your record

Observations - lone mothers

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18 or the project has been fully explained/translated to me in my preferred language. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in observations. I agree to take part in observations each time I come to the organisation when the researcher is present.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if I come to a session and do not want the researcher to observe that specific session I can inform the researcher and this will not be observed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that I can inform the researcher to destroy any observation notes already taken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant [printed]

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher [printed]

Signature

Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department (**[Head worker]** at **[organisation name here]** can support you in this, see contact details below):

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the researcher.

Interviews - lone mothers

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18 or the project has been fully explained/translated to me in my preferred language. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in a one off interview. I agree to being interviewed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that the interview will be audio-recorded and that I can ask to stop the recording at any time if I do not feel comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I withdraw any recorded interview and transcript shall be destroyed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For interviews with support of interpreter		
I agree to the interpreter being involved in the interview to interpret between the researcher and myself. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential and that the interpreter will adhere to confidentiality agreements set out by The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give permission for the anonymised interview transcript to be deposited by the researcher to the ESRC in the UK data services depository so it can be used by other researchers for future research and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant [printed] Signature Date

Name of Researcher [printed] Signature Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department (**[Head worker]** at **[organisation name here]** can support you in this, see contact details below):

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the researcher.

Information Sheet

Bangladeshi lone mothers - observations

Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

My name is Sarah Baz, I am a PhD student at The University of Sheffield. My research aims to explore the lived experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers and the role of South Asian women's organisations in supporting them. The project will involve me observing day-to-day activities at [organisation name here] and conducting interviews with lone mothers who use the centre and those who work in it.

It is important to understand the research purpose and process before making a decision to participate. I can translate this sheet verbally in Urdu/Punjabi or in Bengali (using Bengali interpreter). If you have any questions or need further information, please ask me.

You are invited to take part as you are a Bangladeshi Muslim lone mother. Taking part is up to you. If you do not want to take part please tell me. This will NOT affect your involvement with the organisation and relationship with any worker or me as a volunteer. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. If you do decide to participate you are not obliged to inform any worker or service user of your participation.

What do I have to do?

The research will involve observations and interviews. You can take part in both, or only observations or an interview. If you want to take part in an interview about your experiences as a lone mother, we can discuss this separately. I have a separate information sheet and consent form for this.

Observations will involve myself observing drop-in and one-to-one appointments. I will be observing as a volunteer providing advice to you. If you are a Bengali speaking lone mother, because of language barriers I will observe the Bengali worker and yourself. I will take notes of what I observe and conversations during and after the observations. If you don't want me to observe in an appointment, you have the right to tell me about this. I will not observe on that occasion.

I will be taking and storing information from you (your name, first line of address or phone number) so I can get in touch with you via the organisation's service users contact log to arrange an interview. This personal data will only be used to contact you and will be destroyed when the research project ends.

Benefits and risks of taking part

I have not identified any significant risks from taking part in observations. Although some discussions may lead to you feeling upset, if this does happen the observation can be paused. To adhere to safeguarding guidelines I will break confidentiality about anything you tell me that results in concerns about your safety or the safety of others. I will refer you to experienced workers at the organisation who can help you in finding the relevant support.

This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences and contribute to this project that aims to provide a better understanding of lone motherhood amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim women. There is a lack of research on this. Findings can inform the development of services and practice to support lone mothers.

Confidentiality

You will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. A pseudonym (another name instead of your real name) will be assigned to protect your identity. The organisation and city will be assigned a pseudonym and kept confidential. Notes will be anonymised and unidentifiable. They will be used for my research purposes; no other use will be made of them without your written permission.

The organisation worker involved in observations will also keep your participation and conversations confidential.

Legal basis for data processing

The legal basis for processing your personal data is that *'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest'* (Article 6(1)(e)). As data will be collected on your ethnicity and religion which is defined as more sensitive the legal basis for this use of your data is that it is *'necessary for scientific and historical research purposes'*.

Information on the University's Privacy notice is available here:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>. If you need support in accessing this or have any concerns regarding personal data the Bangladeshi worker will support you.

Withdrawal

You have a right to withdraw from the research at any point until 31/07/19 without giving a reason. Please speak to me if you want to withdraw, my contact details are below.

Observation notes taken before your withdrawal will be destroyed. I will specifically ask about this as you may want to withdraw from future observations but not want to withdraw data already collected.

Data Collection and Results of the Research Project

Consent forms and written fieldnotes will be kept in a secure locker when not in use, only I can access this. Notes will be typed up and kept in a personal university student file, a secure location only I have access to via an encrypted laptop/computer.

The results of the research will be published in my PhD thesis, academic journal articles, books, conference presentations and can inform practice. The thesis will be submitted online (to my funding body the Economic Social Research Council) and kept at the university. You will not be identifiable in any output.

Research funders and data controller

Research funders: The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and The University of Sheffield. The University of Sheffield is the data controller for this study; it is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Ethical Review

This project has been ethically approved by the University's Ethical Review Procedure via The Department of Sociological Studies.

Contact Information

Researcher: Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Telephone: [inserted here](#)

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk

Supervisor: Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

For questions regarding personal data storage and use contact the University's data protection officer:

Anne Cutler

University's Secretary's Office, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

Email: A.Cutler@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone: 0114 22 21117

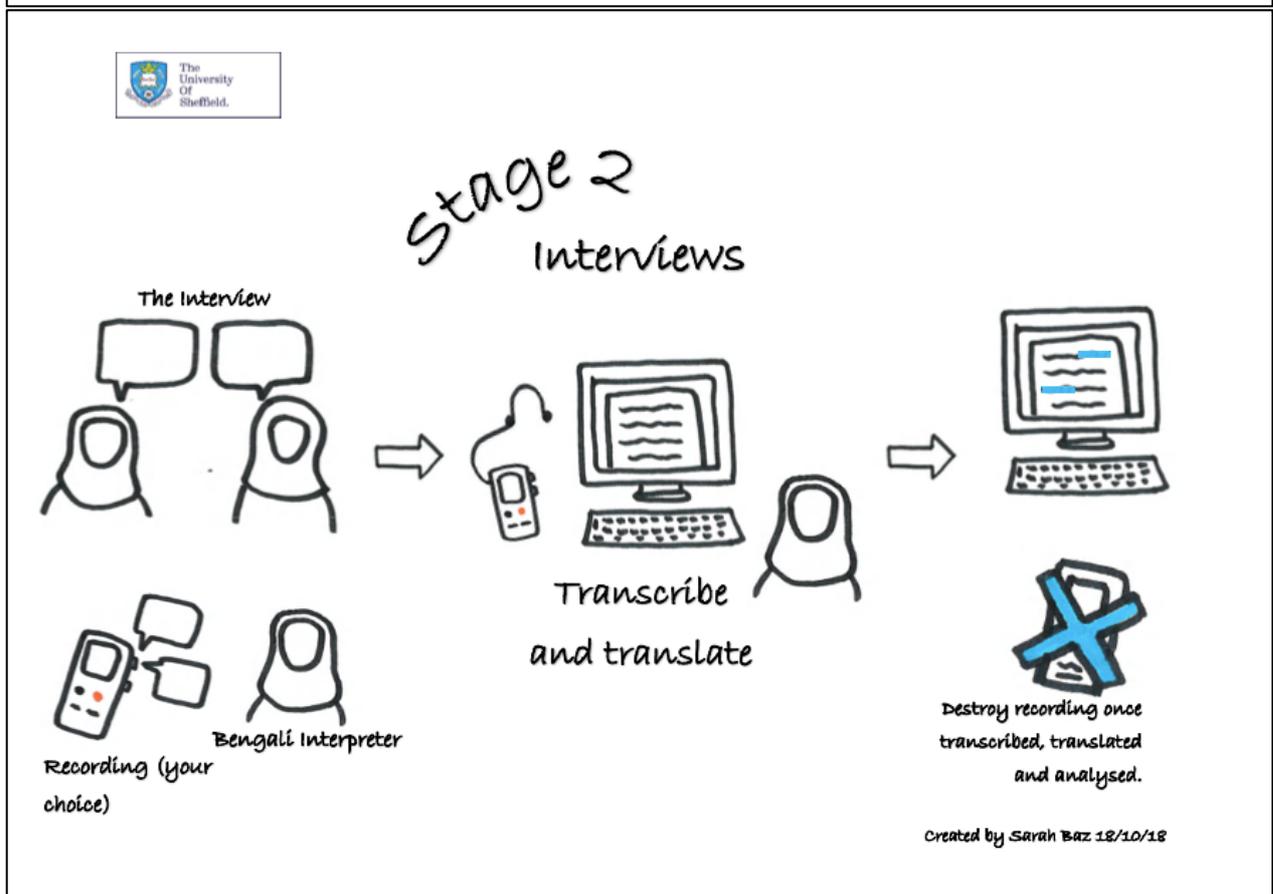
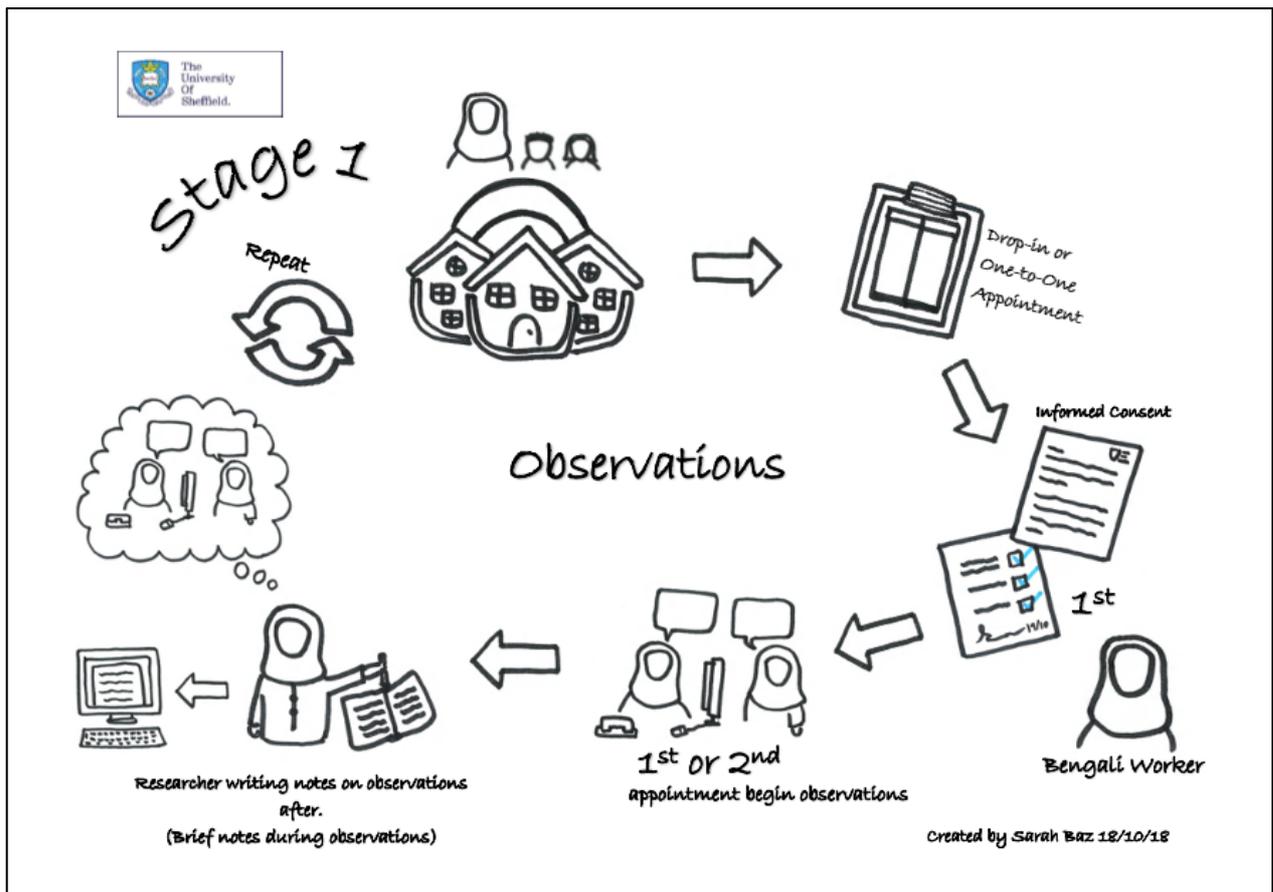
(a worker can assist you in contacting)

For support beyond the project contact:

[\[organisation name here\]](#) [\[contact details here\]](#)

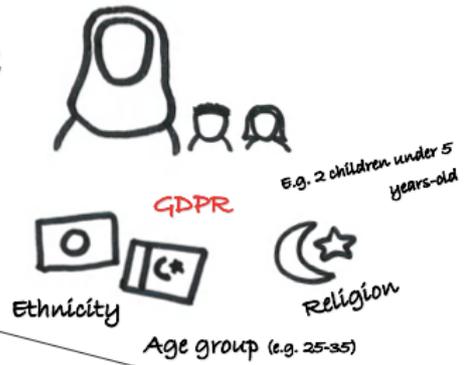
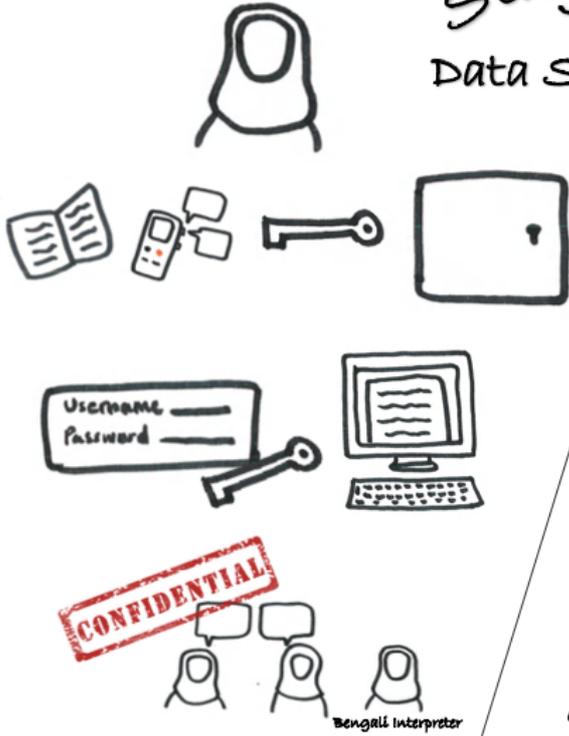
They can also refer you to other organisations that can support you.

Appendix 3: Lone mothers picture diagram





Stage 3 Data Storage



Project Questions or issues and



GDPR



The Researcher - Sarah Baz



Workers name can help you contact the researcher and the university too.

Created by Sarah Baz 18/10/18

Visual communication method utilised to explain the research process.

Appendix 4: Employment course shortened information sheet and group consent form

Information Sheet Employment course observations

Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

My name is Sarah Baz, I am a PhD student at The University of Sheffield. My research aims to explore the lived experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers. It will also explore how South Asian women's organisations support lone mothers. I want to understand how the employment course is experienced by lone mothers and South Asian Muslim women and the skills learned. You are invited to take part as you are taking part in the course.

It is important to understand the research purpose and process before making a decision to participate. I can translate this sheet verbally in Urdu/Punjabi if necessary. If you have any questions or need further information, please ask me.

What do I have to do?

You will not be required to do anything. I will observe the course by taking part in the group. I will include everyone in the session although will pay particular attention to lone mothers. I am including everyone as it is not possible to only focus on lone mothers as everyone will be interacting with each other. I will observe all sessions which take place, apart from the first session as in this session I have only introduced myself. I will be taking notes at each session. I will ask you all to sign a consent form as a group for your participation.

If you are a lone mother and are interested in taking part in an interview with me about lone motherhood experiences, I can discuss this separately.

Benefits and risks of taking part

I have not identified any significant risks from taking part.

This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences and contribute to this project that aims to provide a better understanding of lone motherhood. There is a lack of research on this.

Confidentiality

You will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. A pseudonym (another name instead of our real name) will be assigned to protect your identity. The organisation and city will be assigned a pseudonym and kept confidential. Notes will be anonymised and unidentifiable. They will be used for my research purposes; no other use will be made of them without your written permission.

I will ask everyone involved not to discuss their own and anybody else's participation in this project outside of the employment group. However, I can't guarantee everyone will maintain this confidentiality.

Legal Basis for Data Processing

I will not be taking any personal data apart from your name on the consent form for these observations. The legal basis for processing your personal data is that *'processing is necessary for the*

performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). As data will be collected on your ethnicity and religion which is defined as more sensitive the legal basis for this use of your data is that it is *'necessary for scientific and historical research proposes'*. Information on the University's Privacy notice is available here: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>. If you need support in accessing this or have any concerns regarding personal data [head worker name here] will support you.

Withdrawal

You have a right to withdraw from the research at any point before 31/07/19. Please speak to me if you want to withdraw. Observation notes taken specifically of you before your withdrawal will be destroyed if you decide you want this, I will ask you about this.

Data Collection and Results of the Research Project

Consent forms and written field notes will be kept in a secure locker when not in use, only I can access this. Notes will be typed up and kept in a personal university student file, a secure location only I have access to via an encrypted laptop/computer.

The results of the research will be published in my PhD thesis, academic journal articles, books, conference presentations and can inform practice. The thesis will be submitted online (to my funding body the ESRC) and kept at the university. You will not be identifiable in any output.

Research funders and data controller

Research funders: The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and The University of Sheffield. The University of Sheffield is the data controller for this study; it is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Ethical Review

This project has been ethically approved by the University's Ethical Review Procedure via The Department of Sociological Studies.

Contact Information

Researcher: Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Telephone: [inserted here](#)

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk

Supervisor: Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

Questions regarding personal data storage and use contact the University's data protection officer:

Anne Cutler

University's Secretary's Office, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

Email: A.Cutler@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone: 0114 22 21117

(a worker can assist you in contacting)

For support beyond the project contact [organisation name here]:
Organisation contact details inserted here

Observations – Employment Course

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

Please tick the appropriate boxes Taking part in the project	Yes	No
The project has been fully explained/translated to us in our preferred language. (If you the project has not been explained please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)		
We have been given a chance to ask questions about the project.		
Everyone in the group is 18 and over.		
We agree to take part in this research project. We understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in observations at the employment course.		
We agree to take part in observations at each session of the course when the researcher is present.		
We understand that taking part is voluntary and can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19. No reason has to be given for withdrawing and there will be no adverse consequences for withdrawing. The researcher can be informed to destroy any observation notes already taken.		
We understand that we are required to keep everyone's involvement in the observations at the employment course strictly confidential.		
How my information will be used during and after the project		
We understand our name will only be on the consent form and will not be revealed to anyone outside the project.		
We understand and agree that our words may be quoted in the researcher's publications.		

We understand that our names, the organisation's name and city location will not be named. We understand our participation will be kept strictly confidential.		
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researcher		
We agree to assign the copyright we hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.		

Name of participants [printed]

Signatures

Date

Name of Researcher [printed]

Signature

Date

You will receive an individual copy of the consent form signed by the researcher. This copy will say that you have signed consent in a group.

The researcher's contact details are on the information sheet attached if you have any questions regarding the research project.

Appendix 5: Organisation workers information sheet and consent forms

Information Sheet (for organisation workers)

1. Research Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

2. Invitation to participate and the project's purpose

My name is Sarah Baz and I am a PhD student at The University of Sheffield. You are invited to take part in my research project. Please take time to read this sheet. It is important to understand the research purpose and what it will involve before making your decision on participating. If you have any questions or need further information, please ask me.

The project aims to explore the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers in the UK. It will also explore the role of South Asian women's organisations in supporting lone mothers, looking at the services and resources they provide. The project will involve me observing day-to-day activities at [organisation name here] and conducting interviews with lone mothers who use the centre and those who work in it.

3. Why have I been chosen and do I have to take part?

You have been invited to take part as you are involved in service delivery for South Asian women, as either a worker, volunteer or external partner. I will specifically focus on the services and support provided to lone mothers.

Taking part is up to you. If you do not want to take part, please tell me. This will NOT affect your relationship with me as a volunteer. If you do decide to take part you will be given this sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can still withdraw at any time before 31/07/19 without giving a reason.

If you do decide to participate you are not obliged to inform any worker at the organisation of your participation.

4. What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?

Your participation will involve an interview. Also with your consent, where I cannot volunteer and observe as a participant I will observe you in drop-in sessions with lone mothers (e.g. with Bengali lone mothers who speak Bengali). I aim not to intrude and will take notes of conversations and activities. If you do not want me to observe in an appointment, you have the right to inform me of this. I will not observe on that occasion. I also want to take notes about the conversations we have regarding supporting lone mothers/service users e.g. how I can support them in drop-in sessions, I will specifically ask for consent to take these notes after each conversation.

The interview will explore the work the organisation does, your role, experiences and opinions of the service provided, as well as areas which you feel can be developed to facilitate the agency of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers. To ensure your safety the interview will take place at the organisation in a confidential room. I want to record the interview; however, I can take written notes if you prefer not to be recorded.

If you choose to take part, I will record your name and contact details so I can get in touch with you to arrange an interview. This personal data will only be used to contact you and will be destroyed at the end of the research project.

You will be reimbursed for any travel costs for the interview (e.g. bus fare) to make sure you are not out-of-pocket as a result of participating in an interview; this will be in the form of a £5 Love2shop voucher. You will be required to sign a form as evidence of receiving the voucher. This is for financial records only and will be kept securely, separate from any data.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

I have not identified any risks of taking part in this study. Taking part in the study will not impact your position within the organisation.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There has been a lack of research looking at the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers. This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences and contribute to a research project that aims to provide a better understanding of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone motherhood. The findings can inform the development of services and practice to support lone mothers.

7. Will my taking part in the project be kept confidential?

You will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. A pseudonym (another name instead of your real name) will be assigned to protect your identity. The organisation and city it is located in will be kept confidential, it will also be assigned a pseudonym. I will treat any data recorded (both digitally or in note form) strictly confidential. Conversations, notes and transcriptions from observations and interviews will be anonymised and unidentifiable. They will be used for my research purposes only; no other use will be made of them without your written permission.

8. What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

According to data protection legislation, I am required to inform you that the legal basis I am applying in order to process your personal data is that *'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e))*. Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

As I will be collecting some data that is defined in the legislation as more sensitive (information about ethnicity and religion), I also need to let you know that I am applying the following condition in the law: that the use of your data is *'necessary for scientific and historical research purposes'*.

9. What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The results of the research will be published in my PhD thesis, other publications (e.g. academic journal articles), conference presentations and will help inform the organisation's practice. The thesis will be submitted online to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (the research funding

body) and also kept at the University. You will not be identifiable in any output. Audio recording (from interviews) and written notes will be transferred to a personal university student file, a secure location only I have access to via a secure encrypted laptop/computer. Consent forms and written fieldnotes will be kept in a secure locker when not in use, which only I will have access to. Audio recording will be destroyed once fully transcribed by myself. Identifiable personal data will be destroyed when the research project ends.

You have the right to withdraw from the research project until 31/07/19 (end of fieldwork). If you want to withdraw please speak to me, my contact details are below. Observation notes taken before your withdrawal will be destroyed. I will specifically ask about this as you may want to withdraw from future observations but not want to withdraw data already collected. Interview data will also be destroyed and excluded from any outputs.

For Interviews Only It is likely that other researchers may find the interview transcripts (translated in English) useful in answering future research questions. I will ask for consent for your anonymised unidentifiable interview transcript to be shared to the ESRC/UK data service depository, an online service which provides data researchers can access for future research projects. It is your decision to consent to this. If you do not consent it will not impact your participation in the project.

10. Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and The University of Sheffield.

11. Who is the data controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

12. Who has ethically reviewed this project?

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by The Department of Sociological Studies.

13. What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research you should first contact the principle investigator:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: [inserted here](#)

Or the project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response then you should contact:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

For any concerns or query relating to the storage and use of your personal data, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer:

Anne Cutler

University's Secretary's Office, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

Email: A.Cutler@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone: 0114 22 21117

14. Contacts for Further Information

Researcher: Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and your signed consent form to keep for your records.

Thank you!

Observations – organisation workers

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in observations. I agree to take part in observations with lone mothers. I agree that the researcher can take notes of our conversations regarding supporting lone mothers/service users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that I will keep my own and the lone mothers' participation in observations confidential and any conversations in the sessions will also be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if I do not want the researcher to observe a specific session or take notes on our conversations regarding supporting lone mothers/service users I can inform the researcher and this will not be observed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that I can inform the researcher to destroy any observation notes already taken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant [printed] Signature Date

Name of Researcher [printed] Signature Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the research.

Interviews – organisation workers

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in a one off interview. I agree to being interviewed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that the interview will be audio-recorded and that I can ask to stop the recording at any time if I do not feel comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I withdraw any recorded interview and transcript shall be destroyed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give permission for the anonymised interview transcript to be deposited by the researcher to the ESRC in the UK data services depository so it can be used by other researchers for future research and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		

I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.

Name of participant [printed]

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher [printed]

Signature

Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the researcher.

Appendix 6: External partners information sheets and consent forms

Information Sheet (for organisation external actors)

1. Research Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

2. Invitation to participate and the project's purpose

My name is Sarah Baz and I am a PhD student at The University of Sheffield. You are invited to take part in my research project. Please take time to read this sheet. It is important to understand the research purpose and what it will involve before making your decision on participating. If you have any questions or need further information, please ask me.

The project aims to explore the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers in the UK. It will also explore the role of South Asian women's organisations in supporting lone mothers, looking at the services and resources they provide. The project will involve me observing day-to-day activities at [organisation name here] and conducting interviews with lone mothers who use the centre and those who work in it.

3. Why have I been chosen and do I have to take part?

You have been invited to take part as you are involved in service delivery for South Asian women, as either a worker, volunteer or external partner. I will specifically focus on the services and support provided to lone mothers.

Taking part is up to you. If you do not want to take part, please tell me. This will NOT affect your relationship with me as a volunteer. If you do decide to take part you will be given this sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can still withdraw at any time before 31/07/19 without giving a reason.

If you do decide to participate you are not obliged to inform any worker at the organisation of your participation.

4. What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?

Your participation will involve observations of any session or appointments you run at [organisation name here] and/or an interview. I will be observing yourself and lone mothers/service users in the session. I aim not to intrude and will take notes of conversations and activities. If you do not want me to observe in a session or appointment, you have the right to inform me of this. I will not observe on that occasion. I also want to take notes about conversations we have regarding supporting lone mothers/service users, I will specifically ask for consent to take these notes after each conversation.

The interview will explore the work the organisation does to support lone mothers, your role in supporting them, experiences and opinions on the services provided which you are involved in, as well as areas which you feel can be developed to facilitate the agency of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers. To ensure your safety the interview will take place at the organisation in a confidential room. I want to record the interview; however, I can take written notes if you prefer not to be recorded.

If you choose to take part, I will record your name and contact details so I can get in touch with you to arrange an interview. This personal data will only be used to contact you and will be destroyed at the end of the research project.

You will be reimbursed for any travel costs for the interview (e.g. bus fare) to make sure you are not out-of-pocket as a result of participating in an interview; this will be in the form of a £5 Love2shop voucher. You will be required to sign a form as evidence of receiving the voucher. This is for financial records only and will be kept securely, separate from any data.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

I have not identified any risks of taking part in this study. Taking part in the study will not impact your position with the organisation.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There has been a lack of research looking at the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers. This is an opportunity for you to share your experiences and contribute to a research project that aims to provide a better understanding of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone motherhood. The findings can inform the development of services and practice to support lone mothers.

7. Will my taking part in the project be kept confidential?

You will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. A pseudonym (another name instead of your real name) will be assigned to protect your identity. The organisation and city it is located in will be kept confidential, it will also be assigned a pseudonym. I will treat any data recorded (both digitally or in note form) strictly confidential. Conversations, notes and transcriptions from observations and interviews will be anonymised and unidentifiable. They will be used for my research purposes only; no other use will be made of them without your written permission.

8. What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

According to data protection legislation, I am required to inform you that the legal basis I am applying in order to process your personal data is that *'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e))*. Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

As I will be collecting some data that is defined in the legislation as more sensitive (information about ethnicity and religion), I also need to let you know that I am applying the following condition in the law: that the use of your data is *'necessary for scientific and historical research purposes'*.

9. What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The results of the research will be published in my PhD thesis, other publications (e.g. academic journal articles), conference presentations and will help inform the organisation's practice. The thesis will be submitted online to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (the research funding

body) and also kept at the University. You will not be identifiable in any output. Audio recording (from interviews) and written notes will be transferred to a personal university student file, a secure location only I have access to via a secure encrypted laptop/computer. Consent forms and written fieldnotes will be kept in a secure locker when not in use, which only I will have access to. Audio recording will be destroyed once fully transcribed by myself. Identifiable personal data will be destroyed when the research project ends.

You have the right to withdraw from the research project until 31/07/19 (end of fieldwork). If you want to withdraw please speak to me, my contact details are below. Observation notes taken before your withdrawal will be destroyed. I will specifically ask about this as you may want to withdraw from future observations but not want to withdraw data already collected. Interview data will also be destroyed and excluded from any outputs.

For Interviews Only It is likely that other researchers may find the interview transcripts (translated in English) useful in answering future research questions. I will ask for consent for your anonymised unidentifiable interview transcript to be shared to the ESRC/UK data service depository, an online service which provides data researchers can access for future research projects. It is your decision to consent to this. If you do not consent it will not impact your participation in the project.

10. Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and The University of Sheffield.

11. Who is the data controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

12. Who has ethically reviewed this project?

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by The Department of Sociological Studies.

13. What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?

If you have any concerns or complaints about this research you should first contact the principle investigator:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: [inserted here](#)

Or the project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you are not satisfied with the response then you should contact:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

For any concerns or query relating to the storage and use of your personal data, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer:

Anne Cutler

University's Secretary's Office, University of Sheffield, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN

Email: A.Cutler@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone: 0114 22 21117

14. Contacts for Further Information

Researcher: Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and your signed consent form to keep for your records.

Thank you!

Observations – organisation external actors

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in observations. I agree to take part in observations with lone mothers. I agree that the researcher can take notes of our conversations regarding supporting lone mothers/service users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that I will keep my own and the lone mothers' participation in observations confidential and any conversations in the sessions will also be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if I do not want the researcher to observe a specific session or take notes on our conversations regarding supporting lone mothers/service users I can inform the researcher and this will not be observed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that I can inform the researcher to destroy any observation notes already taken.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant [printed] Signature Date

Name of Researcher [printed] Signature Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the research.

Interviews – organisation external actors

Project Title: Exploring the lived experiences of South Asian Muslim (SAM) lone mothers and the role played by South Asian organisations in their lives.

Researcher: Sarah Akhtar Baz

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 30/10/18. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that I am over 18 years old.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will involve participating in a one off interview. I agree to being interviewed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am aware that the interview will be audio-recorded and that I can ask to stop the recording at any time if I do not feel comfortable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study by 31/07/19; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw. I understand that if I withdraw any recorded interview and transcript shall be destroyed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number and address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my name, the organisation's name and city location will not be named in these outputs. I understand my participation will be kept strictly confidential.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I give permission for the anonymised interview transcript to be deposited by the researcher to the ESRC in the UK data services depository so it can be used by other researchers for future research and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		

I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.

Name of participant [printed]

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher [printed]

Signature

Date

Project contact details for further information:

Principle investigator/lead researcher:

Sarah Baz

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: sbaz1@sheffield.ac.uk Mobile: **inserted here**

Project supervisor:

Dr Jo Britton

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

If you have any complaints, please contact the head of department:

Professor Kate Morris

The Department of Sociological Studies, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield S10 2TU

Email: kate.morris@sheffield.ac.uk

Organisation head worker contact details here

Telephone: **organisation telephone inserted here**

There will be 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant and 1 copy for the researcher.

Appendix 7: Interview schedules

Lone mothers interview schedule (with translation)

Opening paragraph/briefing:

As I have mentioned I am a university research student researching the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi single mothers (lone mothers – *akayli maa*). I want to learn about your experiences as lone mothers. The interview will last between 40 minutes and 1 ½ hours. Importantly, you do not have to answer any questions you aren't comfortable with. The interview can be stopped at any time. You have the right to withdraw at any time during the interview and after (until July) and withdraw any data collected by me from this interview.

Jehsay may nay ap say pehlay kaha hai, may university research student hu research kar rahi hu Pakistani aur Bangladeshi akayli maa kay tajurbay kay baray may. May seekna chathi hu ap kay tajurbay kay bahray may lone mother honay kay. Interview 40 minute to 1 ½ gehtany kay darmiyan may hoga. Importantly, agar ap comfortable nahi hai taho ap ko saval ka javab ni dehna partha. Interview koy bi time par ruk saktha hai. Ap ko hak hai koy bi vakt interview kay darmiyan may aur bahd may (July jiya) apna hisa vapas layna aur koy bi data jaho may nay liya hai hisa bar karna.

Yourself and the organisation will be made anonymous and our conversation will be kept confidential. Any recording from the interview shall be stored securely under a password protected environment (computer and locker). If you would like me to repeat any questions or further explain them please feel free to ask. There will also be an opportunity for you to ask any questions at the end.

Ap aur organisation ko anonymous kiya jayay ga (nam ni lahu gi) aur humari gufthagu bi confidential rahey gi. Jaho bi recording ho gi interview say vaho securely raku gi ik jaga may jihs may password hoga (computer aur locker may). Agar ap chahtay hai kay may koyi question dubara kahu yah ihs ka aur explain kary taho ap please muj say puchay. Ap ko moka bi diya jayay ga end par questions puchnay ka.

Before beginning I want to ask: do you want to speak about your experiences before becoming a lone mother?

Shuru karnay say pehlay may ap say puchna chathi hu: kay ap apni tajurbay akayli maa honay say pehlay kay baray may gal karna chaty ho?

Background/introduction: children no. and age group, LM age group, ethnicity, birthplace, education qualifications, employment status, no. of years been a lone mother.

Background/before lone motherhood:

Can you share your experiences before you were a lone mother? Ap apnay tajurbay akayli maa kay honay say pehlay share kar sakthi ho?

- Where were you born? Kaha pehda hui tahi?

- Abroad - Describe why you came to the UK. Describe karo ap UK may kyu ayi.
- Describe your experiences once you came to the UK. Describe karo apnay tajurbay jab ap UK may ayi.
- UK – describe your experiences of being brought up in the UK. Describe karo apnay tajurbay UK may palnay kay.

Explain what I am trying to get at with this.

Can you tell me about your experiences of married life (if you are happy to share this). Ap mujay bahta sakthi hai apnay tajurbay shadi shuda zindagi kay (agar ap khush hai ihs ko share karna).

- What were the good things? What were the bad things? Kya achi cheeza tahay? Kya buray cheez tahay?
- What were your living arrangements? Ap kay rehnay kay kya arrangements tahi?
- Who did you live with? (in-laws, husband, husband lives with in-laws) Kihs kay saath raythi tahi?
- How did you get along with in-laws? Ap in-laws kay saath kehsay rahi, milthi-julthi tahi?
- How did your family get along with your husband? Ap kay family kehsay ap kay husband kay saath rahi?
- How did this affect your marriage? Ihs sahay ap kay shaadi par kesay effect tahay?

Tell me about what led to you becoming a lone mother. Bahtho mujay kya hu kay ap akayli maa bani.

Widow: what were your initial experiences after your husband died? What difficulties did you face? Ap kay kya tajurbay tahay uhs vakth par ap kay husband kay fahoth honay kay bahd? Kya mushkilath ap ko samna karna para?

Separation: Tell me about your experience of separating from your husband. What was the process of separation from your husband? Bahtaho mujay ap kay tajurbay kay bahray may jab ap husband say alahda hui. Kya tah process apnay husband say separate honay ka?

- How much support did you get from your family and/or friends? Kithani support ap ko mili apnay family aur/ya friends sahay?
- Who else did you receive support from? How did they help? Aur kihs nay ap ko sahara diya? Kehsay ap ki mahdath ki?

Being a lone mother:

Describe your experiences as a lone mother. Describe karo apnay tajurbay akayli maa honay kay?

- What are the good things for you? Ap kay liyay kya achi cheeza hai?
- What are the bad things for you? Ap kay liyay kya buri cheeza hai?
- What effect has being a lone mother had on you? Kya ahsar ap par huaa hai akayli maa honay say?
- Tell me about a typical day as a lone mother, what do you do? Bahthaho mujay ik ahm dihn kay bahray may akayli maa ahay, kya karthi hai?
- Is it better or worse than being married? In what ways? Kya yeh shaadi may honay say behtar hai yah worse? Kihs tareekay say?

How do you think the Pakistani/Bangladeshi Muslim community perceives you as a lone mother? Ap kya sochthi hai, Pakistani Muslim community kehsay ap ko samjthi hai ap akayli maa hai?

- What do you think shapes these views? Kya ap sochthi hai yeh views ko shape kartha hai?
- In your views is there a sense of stigma attached being a lone mother and not living with a husband? Why? Ap kay view may kya akayli maa honay say aur husband kay saath na rahynay say ik stigma hai? Stigma - zehni amraaz, barabar salook nahi hotha, bahad saluki, sharmindagi.
- What are your experiences of this? Ihs kay bahray ap kay kya tajurbay hai?
- What are your own personal views of being a lone mother? Ap kay apnay personal kya view hai akayli maa honay kay?

Describe how lone motherhood has affected your health. Describe karo akaayli maa honay say ap ki sayhath (health) par kehsa asar hua hai.

- In what ways has it affected your health? Positively or negatively. Kihs tareekay say ap kay sayhath pahr ahsar hua hai? Achay tareekay say yah buray tareekay say.
- In what ways has lone motherhood affected you emotionally? Kihs tareekay say akayli maa honay say ap ko chazbathi tahor ahsar hua?
- What support have you received to overcome these issues? Kya sahara ap nay liya hai ihs issues (misal) pahr kahbu pahnay kay liyay?

English language: what English language skills do you have? *Kya English language skills ap kay pahs hai?*

Tell me about how a lack of English skills affects your everyday life as a lone mother. *Bahthayay mujay kehsay English skills ki kami ap ko har rahoz ki zindagi may ahsar karthi hai?*

- What difficulties do you face? *Kya mushkilath ap ko samna karna partha hai?*
- Do you attend or have attended English language classes? Where? Tell me about how this has helped you. *Kya ap English class par jathi ho yah kabi gahi ho? Kaha? Bahthayay mujay ihs say ap ki kehsay mahdath hui hai?*
- Good English: How has learning English improved your life? *Kehsay English seekna nay ap ki zindagi ko behthar kiya hai?*
- Tell me about how improving English will improve your daily life. *Bahthayay mujay kay English ko behthar bahana ap ki har rahoz ki zindagi ko kehsay behthar karay ga.*

Employment:

Do you have a job? *Ap kay pahs job hai?*

Yes

Tell me about your job. How did you find the job? *Bahthayay mujay apni job kay bahray may. Kehsay ap nay job duhndi?*

Tell me about your experiences working. *Bahthayay mujay ap kay kaham karnay kay tajurbay kay bahray may.*

- What are the good things about working? *Kya achi cheezay hai kam karnay may?*
- What are the bad things about working? *Kya buri cheezay hai kam karnay may?*
- What difficulties do you face? *Kya mushkilath ap ko samna karnay parthay hai?*
- How do you balance childcare and working? *Ap kehsay bacho ko samalana aur kam karna balance karthi hai?*
- Do you use formal childcare services? What are your experiences? Or why not? *Kya ap formal childcare kay services isthamal karthi hai? Kya hai ap kay tajurbay? Or Kyu nahi?*
- Who helps you out with taking care of children? How much do they help? How do you repay them? *Kohn ap ki mahdath kartha hai bacho ko samalnay may? Kithni mahdath karthay hai? Ap kehsay uhn ko yeh vahpas ahda karthi hai?*

No

How long have you been unemployed for? *Kithni dayr say ap unemployeed ho? (sahl/years)*

Are you currently looking for a job? *Ap abi job duhnd rahi hai?*

- No – why? What barriers do you face? *Kyu? Kya barriers ap face karthi hai?*
- Yes - what job do you want? *Kya job ap ko chayay?*

Tell me about your experiences of looking for a job. *Bahthayay apnay tajurbay kay bahray may job dundnay kay.*

- What support do you receive in finding a job or getting ready for work? *Kya sahara ap ko miltha hai job duhndnay may yah kam ki tayari karnay may?*
- In what ways would getting a job affect your life? *Kihs tareekay say job milna ap kay zindagi par ahsar karay ga?*
- Do you think you will find a job? *Kya ap sochthi hai ap ko job milay gi?*
- What barriers do you face? *Kya barriers ap ko samna karna partha hai?*

What are your experiences of living on benefits? *Kya hai ap kay tajurbay benefits par rehna?*

- What difficulties do you face? *Kya mushkilath ap ko samna karna partha hai?*
- What are your experiences of the job centre? *Kya hai ap kay tajurbay job centre may?*
- In what ways do they support you? *Ap ko kihs tareekay say sahara daythay hai?*

How do you think the Pakistani/Bangladeshi Muslim community sees you as being in work or wanting a job? *Ap kya sochthi hai, Pakistani Muslim community kehsay ap ko samjthi hai kay ap kam karthi hai yah karna chathi hai?*

How much does this affect your view on employment? *Kithna yeh ap kay views employment kay bahray par ahsar karthi hai?*

Motherhood and employment:

Tell me about your views on the role of a mother. *Bahthayay mujay ap kay views kay maa kay kya kiyrdahr hothay hai?*

What are your views on lone mothers working? *Ap kay kya views hai akayli maa kam karnay kay bahray may?*

- What type of job do you think a lone mother should do? (full time, part time) *Kihs tahra kay job ap sochthi hai akayli maa ko karnay chayay?*
- Do you think a lone mother should have to work? Why? *Kya ap sochthi hai kay akayli maa ko kam karna chayay? Kyu?*

What shapes your views? *Kya ap kay views ko shape kartha hai?*

- How important is Islam and Pakistani/Bangladeshi culture to how you see yourself as a mother? *Kithna ehem hai Islam aur Pakistani/Bangladeshi culture kay kehsay ap apnay ap ko dekthi hai maa ahay?*
- Is there a difference between views on the role of a mother in Islam and your culture? *Kya koy farak hai kay maa ka kya kiyrdahr hona chayay Islam may aur ap kay (Pakistani/Bangladesh) culture may?*

Working LMs – how has your uptake of work affected your role as a mother and child(ren)? *Kehsay ap kay kam karnay say ashah hua hai ap kay maa honay kay kiyrdahr par aur bacha (bacho) par?*

- What are the good and bad things? *Kay achi cheeza hai aur kya buri cheeza hai?*

The organisation and support networks:

Tell me about your experiences at the organisation. *Bahthayay mujay ap kay tajurbay organisation par.*

- How often do you come? *Kithani aksar ap athi hai?*
- In what ways does the organisation support you? *Kihs tareekay say organisation ap ko sahara daytha hai?*
- Tell me about the activities you are involved in. What are your experiences? *Bahthayay mujay activities kay baharay may jihs may ap shamil hai. Ap kay tarjurbay kya hai?*
- In what ways has the organisation helped you become more independent? *Kihs tareekay say organisation nay ap ki madath ki hai aur indepedent honay kay liyay?*
- In what ways would you like the organisation to support you more? *Kihs tareekay say ap chathi hai kay organisation ap ko aur sahara dahay?*

Tell me about other people or services you receive support from. *Mujay bathayay aur bahndo yah services kay bahray may jihs say ap sahara laythee hai.*

- In what ways do they support you? *Kihs tareekay say ap ko sahara daythay hai?*
- If you are happy to share this: What support does the child(ren)'s father provide for children? *Agar ap khush hai ihs ko share karna: Kya sahara ap kay bachay (bacho) ka bahp daytha hai bachay (bacho) ko?*
- Are you happy with the support the father provides? Why? *Ap khush hai saharay say jaho bahp dehtha hai. Kyu?*

Finishing off:

Is there anything you would like to add? *Kuj hai jaho ap aur kehna chathay ho?*

Any questions? *Koy saval hai?*

Thank you for taking part in an interview. I will still be at the organisation and if you have any questions or would like to have a chat, please do talk to me or contact me. My contact details are on the information sheet (show again).

Shukriya interview may hisa laynay ka. May abi bi organisation par hu gi aur agar ap kay pahs koy saval hai yah ap muj say bahth karna chathi hai, please mayray saht bahth kijayay yah muj ko contact ki jiyay. Mayray contact details information sheet par hai.

Workers/volunteers interview schedule

Briefing

As we have already discussed, I am university student exploring the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi lone mothers and the support provided to them by South Asian women's organisations. I want to learn more about your insights into the organisation and how you support lone mothers. The interview will last up to 1 hour. If you do not want to answer a question, please let me know and we can move onto another one. If you would like me to repeat any questions or give further explanation, please ask.

Yourself, the organisation and the city it is located in will be made anonymous and our conversations will be kept confidential. Any recording of the interview will be stored securely under a password protect environment. You can stop the recording and the interview at any time. You have a right to withdraw at any time during the interview and after (until July) and withdraw anything collected by me from this interview.

There will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions at the end.

Introduction: about the worker

Background: ethnic, religious etc.

What is your role at the organisation?

How long have you been working/volunteering here?

What do you enjoy about working at the organisation?

Day-to-day work at the organisation: supporting lone mothers

Tell me about the day to day work you do at the organisation.

Tell me about the background of women you support and specifically about lone mothers.
(demographic)

Tell me about your experience of building trust and a good relationship with lone mothers, especially marginalised women.

In what ways do you support lone mothers?

(I've found from observations/interviews so far: practical, emotional [encouraging and reflecting on the belief and trust in Allah], advice)

- How do you support women in separating from their husbands? In your experience, what are the issues they face in separation? How do you support women in addressing these issues?
- Reflecting on your experiences what are the everyday issues and barriers which lone mothers face?

- How does the organisation support lone mothers to overcome these barriers?

How are the issues lone mothers come with and support offered different to those who are not lone mothers? Or do they face similar issues? Why do you think this is?

How does support differ according to lone mother's backgrounds? e.g. Pakistani and Bangladeshi, those born in UK and from abroad.

Tell me about any other activities which lone mothers attend you are involved in at the organisation.

Day-to-day work at the organisation: wider issues and services

From your experience, what key issues in wider society and from government policy impact lone mothers and the organisation?

In what ways does this impact lone mothers and the work you do?

Why do you think lone mothers come to this organisation?

What does the organisation offer which mainstream services do not?

Do you feel the organisation is supporting lone mothers in areas where mainstream services should be?

What difficulties do you face in mediating between lone mothers and mainstream services? e.g. benefit services, social services.

Reflecting on your experience at the organisation, in what ways does culture and religion impact lone mothers?

Impact on everyday lives and creating independence

In your view, what impact does your support and the organisation have on the everyday lives of lone mothers?

- What role do you play in creating/encouraging lone mothers' independence and agency?
- What strategies are used?
- Do you think lone mothers have become independent over time or do they remain dependent on the organisation?
- What change have you seen overtime in lone mothers attending the organisation?
- What role has the organisation played in this?

Working with partners

Do you work with partners to deliver services and in which areas?

What role do they play in helping you to deliver services?

Issues and future development

What are some of the barriers yourself and the organisation faces in supporting lone mothers?

Is there any services you would like to develop or introduce to support lone mothers?

Do you think the organisation should have more services or sessions/courses specifically for lone mothers? Why?

Finishing off

Is there anything you would like to add?

Any questions?

Debrief: Thank you for taking part in the interview. If you have any questions regarding your interview and the research project please contact me (details are provided on the consent documents). I will also be present at the organisation so please feel free to have a chat with me.

External Actors/Partners Interview Schedule

Briefing

As we have already discussed, I am a university student exploring the experiences of Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers and the support provided to them by South Asian women's organisations. I want to learn more about your insights into working with the organisation and how you support lone mothers. The interview will last up to 1 hour. If you do not want to answer a question, please let me know and we can move onto another one. If you would like me to repeat any questions or give further explanation, please ask.

Yourself, the organisation and the city it is located in will be made anonymous and our conversations will be kept confidential. Any recording of the interview will be stored securely under a password protect environment. You can stop the recording and the interview at any time. You have a right to withdraw at any time during the interview and after (until July) and withdraw anything collected by me from this interview.

There will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions at the end.

Introduction

Tell me a bit about the organisation/company you work for.

Tell me about your role in this organisation.

What do you enjoy about your role? What are the main challenges in your role?

Tell me about how you are involved with SAW's Place and the work you do.

How long have you been working with SAW's Place for?

Specific questions

Tell me about the training you provide on domestic violence at SAW's Place.

Tell me about developing lone mothers' English language skills.

What difficulties do Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers face in the process of gaining a divorce or citizenship status in the UK?

Services offered

Tell me about your experiences of working with the organisation and its service users (particularly lone mothers) [or workers].

What is the background of women you support, specifically lone mothers?

Tell me about the issues that lone mothers come to you about.

How do you support and advise them to overcome these?

Why do you approach supporting lone mothers through SAW's Place?

After supporting lone mothers via SAW's Place have they approached your organisation/services going further?

Do you tailor your expertise or advice towards the South Asian Muslim community/audience? In what ways do you do this?

Do you think Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim women have unique experiences of [divorce/domestic abuse/employment barriers etc. \[say relevant one\]](#) to the mainstream (e.g. women of a white background) or are they similar?

Why do you think this?

Wider context

What wider policy impacts your work and in what ways? ([prompt: for example immigration policy, domestic abuse, employment, emphasis on learning English language, integration](#)).

From your experience, what key issues in wider society and from government policy impact Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim lone mothers?

What impact does your support and advice have on the everyday lives of lone mothers?

What difficulties do lone mothers face in accessing mainstream services?

Do you think there should be a mix of services, both mainstream and specific e.g. services specific to SAM women? Why?

Looking to the future, what are some of the challenges yourself and your organisation faces in supporting these lone mothers? ([prompt if not mentioned: for example, services funding or impact of government cuts](#)).

Finishing off

Is there anything you would like to add?

Any questions?

Debrief: Thank you for taking part in the interview. If you have any questions regarding your interview and the research project please contact me (details are provided on the consent documents). I will also be present at SAW's Place so please feel free to have a chat with me.